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THE PRIESTHOOD IN ANCIENT ISRAEL
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
THE STATUS AND FUNCTION OF THE LEVITES

By
M.W.T. Allan

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, 1971.

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SUMMARY

An attempt is made to trace the development of Israel's priesthood from the earliest traditions of the Old Testament down to the exile. An investigation is also made for the same period of the status and function of the Levites, as priests and Levites were often inextricably connected in ancient Israel.

Hence this historical survey begins with an examination of the early traditions relating to the name Levi in both its connotations. Although no definite relationship can be found between the secular tribe Levi and the later landless and non-tribal connotation of the word, it would appear that the latter meaning denoted priestly and non-priestly elements both sharing a common characteristic, their devotion to Yahweh. Both these elements seem to have existed contemporaneously in ancient Israel. The Levites' association with Moses as Yahweh's devotees, points to the wilderness period as the most likely time for the inauguration of the Levites to a distinct position among the tribes of Israel, and the fact that following the Israelite conquest of Canaan, levitical settlements are found in southern Palestine suggests their possible entrance into the land as part of the northward thrust led by Caleb from Kadesh.

The story of Micah's Levite is interpreted as illustrating the tendency of non-priestly Levites to seek priestly office either at private shrines or tribal

sanctuaries. The story is important for it shows a development away from the ancient custom by which the head of the household performed priestly duties, to the concept of one specifically appointed to discharge these functions. Both the traditions recorded in the closing chapters of the book of Judges illustrate how the Levite, although landless and tribeless, was a respected member of ancient Israelite society, who due to his unique relationship with Yahweh was considered especially eligible to function as Yahweh's priest, and was sufficiently esteemed to command national attention in redress of any wrong he might sustain.

The survey proceeds to the monarchic period, and deals with the narratives relating to the various priest-hoods of that time. The most notable of these was the family of Eli, at whose sanctuary the Ark was located. The priesthood at Gibeah, Saul's town, and that at Nob, as also the Shiloh priesthood, appear to represent three distinct and unrelated priestly families. The derivation of Zadok is considered, and a Gibeonite origin advanced as a possible solution to this problem. By a process of elimination the lists of levitical cities are assigned to the early years of Solomon's reign, and are identified with a possible arrangement of Levites in areas of doubtful allegiance to the Davidic monarchy. This religio-political network of government officials was broken up following the secession of the ten northern tribes from the two southern. As a result, the Levites of the northern kingdom being removed from

office, either fled to Judah or joined those elements which were actively critical of northern state policy.

The book of Deuteronomy contains traditions relating to Levites functioning as priests, priestly Levites who, as a result of the religious upheavals in both the northern and southern kingdoms, found themselves deprived of their shrines and therefore redundant, and non-priestly Levites enumerated amongst those who due to their poverty were considered worthy of public charity. Although the centralization of Yahweh worship ultimately succeeded, the attempted gathering together of all Yahweh's priests to function at the place of his choice largely failed. Some priests did gain access to the Jerusalem priesthood but the majority remained in the country deprived of their sanctuaries, and therefore unable to exercise their priestly office. During the exile however, it is possible that these redundant levitical priests made good their claim to officiate at Jerusalem, and provided some sort of cult amid its ruins. It seems probable that these circumstances may have provoked the polemic recorded in Ezek. 44 as a successful attempt by the Zadokites, who following the Deuteronomic reform had lost their overall monopoly of the Jerusalem cult, to reassert themselves in the post-exilic temple.

Finally, the significance of Aaron in the later literature of the Old Testament is discussed. Reference is made to his role as a tribal leader in the early

pentateuchal narratives, and the wilderness tabernacle of P is compared with Solomon's temple. It is concluded that the priestly writer authenticated the temple of Solomon by projecting it back into the wilderness period, and in a similar way projected the two central figures of the pre-exilic temple, i.e. the king and priest, into the source period by seeing Moses and Aaron as their earlier prototype. This, together with the fact that the high priest became the leader of the post-exilic state is the hypothesis advanced in explanation of Aaron's high priestly significance.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
	Summary.....	i
	List of Abbreviations.....	v
1.	The Early Traditions relating to Levi.....	1
2.	Levites during the Period of Israelite Settlement in Canaan.....	37
3.	Eli, Abiathar and Zadok.....	69
4.	Levitical Organization during the Period of the Monarchy.....	101
5.	Deuteronomy and the Priesthood.....	133
6.	The Priesthood and Exile.....	167
7.	The Development of the Significance and Office of Aaron.....	192
	Works consulted in the Preparation of this Thesis.....	222
	Appendix.	

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.J.S.L.	American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures.
A.R.W.	Archiv für Religionswissenschaft.
A.V.	Authorised King James version.
B.A.	Biblical Archaeologist.
B.A.S.O.R.	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research.
B.J.R.L.	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library.
B.W.A.N.T.	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten (und Neuen) Testament.
B.W.A.T.	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten Testament.
E.T.	Expository Times.
F.R.L.A.N.T.	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments.
J.A.O.S.	Journal of the American Oriental Society.
J.B.L.	Journal of Biblical Literature.
J.P.O.S.	Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society.
J.Q.R.	Jewish Quarterly Review.
J.S.S.	Journal of Semitic Studies.
J.T.S.	Journal of Theological Studies.
K.S.G.V.I.	Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel, A.Alt., I-III, München, 1953, 1959.
LXX	Septuagint.
M.T.	Massoretic text.
O.T.S.	Oudtestamentische Studiën.
P.E.Q.	Palestine Exploration Quarterly.
R.B.	Revue Biblique.

R.B.I.	Revue Biblique Internationale.
R.S.R.	Recherches de Science Religieuse.
R.S.V.	Revised Standard Version.
S.J.Th.	Scottish Journal of Theology.
S.T.I.	Swedish Theological Institute.
T.G.U.O.S.	Transactions of Glasgow University Oriental Society.
T.Z.L.	Theologische Literaturzeitung.
V.T.	Vetus Testamentum.
Z.A.W.	Zeitschrift für die altestamentliche Wissenschaft.
Z.Th.K.	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche.

THE EARLY TRADITIONS RELATING TO LEVI

The disintegration of the ancient Sumerian Empire of Babylon, brought about by the descent of the Hittites from the Taurus Mountains into Asia Minor, resulted in a great movement of peoples throughout the ancient Near East. Amongst this general movement of population were successive waves of Aramaean penetration from the Tigris-Euphrates area into Canaan. Old Testament tradition associates a group of these emigrants from Mesopotamia with Abram and his nephew Lot. According to Gen. 11.28 ff, the family of Terah moved from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran where Terah died, but Abram, who represented a prominent element in this group, advanced into Canaan¹. Abram subsequently became the progenitor of Israel, and Lot the ancestor of Ammon and Moab (cf. Gen. 19.37 f). Although Abraham is generally regarded as being more closely associated with Hebron, where there probably existed a strong Abraham tradition², he is also connected with Gerar (cf. Gen. 20.1) and Beersheba (cf. Gen. 21.31 ff). Isaac, whom tradition holds to have been Abraham's son (cf. Gen. 21.1-5) may represent a second Aramaean migration into Canaan which

1. cf. Gen. 15.7 and Nh. 9.7.

2. cf. Gen. 23.2; 35.27.

settled around Beersheba and Gerar (cf. Gen. 26.6)³, but the evidence for such a movement is much stronger in the case of Jacob. The refusal of Abraham to permit his son to marry one of the indigenous population, and the subsequent marriage of Isaac to Rebekah, brought from Mesopotamia, could indicate another migration of Aramaean stock which united with that already in the land⁴. The stories relating to Isaac's sons represent tribal traditions rather than incidents involving individual persons. Esau and Jacob dwell together for a time in southern Canaan until pressure from the former drives the latter across the Jordan in the direction of his ancestral home⁵. In the course of time Jacob unites with fresh Aramaean elements which are represented by his wives, Leah and Rachel. This group, now enlarged, is compelled by Aramaean pressure to return to Canaan⁶. Although the historicity of Jacob himself need not be questioned, the historicity of the Twelve Patriarchs is more doubtful, and it is problematical if any of them were actually Jacob's sons. It would seem more accurate to visualise Israel being formed by a federation of several groups of tribes, the order in which the children were born probably indicating the order in which,

3. See Note 1 in Appendix.

4. Gen. 24.10 ff. states that Rebekah came from the city of Nahor in Mesopotamia. Nahor is mentioned in Gen. 11.27 ff. as the brother of Abram in Ur, which shows the Aramaean origin of Rebekah to be similar to Isaac's background.

5. See Note 2 in Appendix.

6. See Note 3 in Appendix.

according to ancient tradition, the individual groups came together to form such a federation. The first group was loosely bound under the name Leah, and originally included only four independent tribes, i.e. Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah, but at a later period two more were added - Issachar and Zebulun (cf. Gen. 30.16-20) - and finally the two concubine tribes of the Zilpah group - Gad and Asher - were absorbed (cf. Gen. 30.9-13). It is possible that these Leah-Zilpah tribes may have been in Canaan earlier than the Jacob-Rachel and Bilhah groups, which on their settlement in the land were recognized as brothers of the older groups and consequently traced their ancestry back to a common 'father'. Owing to priority of settlement, Leah came to be regarded as the mother of the older tribes while Rachel, the more closely united and better loved wife, represents the younger elements. At the outset Reuben was the most important, but its eager grasp at the privileges of supreme power led to its early fortune, and ultimately to its disappearance.⁷ Simeon and Levi are characterized by extreme and brutal cruelty, and they too disappear from the scene, leaving Judah as the sole survivor and head of the group⁸. The affiliation

7. This is implied by the reference to Reuben being few in number, contained in the Blessing of Moses, cf. Dt. 33.6.
8. In the Blessing of Jacob (cf. Gen. 49) the oracles relating to Reuben, Simeon and Levi all record curses. Judah is the eldest 'son' to receive a blessing.

of Issachar and Zebulun and the two Zilpah tribes to this four tribe league is obviously much later. In the Rachel group the leadership from the beginning was taken by Joseph, which later divided into two sections - Ephraim and Manasseh⁹, but eventually the tribe Benjamin attained the supreme position though it was not permanently a leader in Israel¹⁰.

Our concern is with the tribe Levi. The earliest traditions in which it is found, mention it alongside Simeon in Gen. 34 and 49.5-7. In the first of these texts, Simeon and Levi are recorded as making an assault on Shechem. The chapter is regarded as one of the cruxes of Old Testament criticism and no definite conclusion has been reached with regard to its analysis. Some acknowledge the existence of two sources or two variants of a similar narrative, others assert additions and interpolations¹¹. It is noteworthy that in vv. 4, 6, 8-10 Hamor, Shechem's father, undertakes the suit for Dinah which in vv. 11 f. and 19 Shechem himself negotiates. The account of the attack in v. 25 led by Simeon and Levi, and the notice of their departure in the following verse is followed by the intervention of all Jacob's sons against Shechem in vv. 27 ff. presenting a further difficulty. However, the details of

9. cf. Gen. 48. 17-22.

10. The oracle relating to Benjamin in the Blessing of Moses may reflect the later pre-eminence of the tribe cf. Dt. 33.12.

11. See Note 4 in Appendix.

critical minutiae need not concern us here. The narrative relates how Dinah, an Israelitess, stepped outside the narrow confines of her tribal society and was seduced by Shechem. Shechem wished to marry her, but was rejected by her family because the Shechemites were uncircumcised. In fact that was only part of the trouble. The word denoting rape i.e. $\pi\zeta\eta$ is an ancient expression which was used to describe the most serious kind of immorality. References to this word show that a horror of sacrilege, which incriminated the whole community before Yahweh, surrounded it¹². Hamor in his speech to Jacob's sons (cf. vv. 8ff) transfers the matter from a personal sphere to a matter of principle. His proposal is that a universal connubium should commence between the people of Jacob and the Shechemites whereupon the people of Jacob would be permitted to settle in Shechemite territory. Shechem presents his case more impetuously in vv. 11 f. and offers whatever dowry the brothers of Dinah should demand. The uncircumcision of the Shechemites is the objection raised by the sons of Jacob (cf. vv. 14 ff.), but this difficulty is overcome due to Hamor's successful enticement of the Shechemites with the prospect of gaining the cattle and possessions of the sons of Jacob, and they accordingly undergo circumcision. All having gone according to plan, Simeon and Levi seize their opportunity and strike, slaying the Shechemites, and

12. This is especially evident in Ju. 19.23 ff.; 20.6.

taking back Dinah (cf. vv. 25 f.). The assault of all Jacob's sons in vv. 27 ff. is simply a variant narrative, Simeon and Levi murdered, while the other brothers plundered. The abrupt termination of the chapter need not necessarily be completed with an account of the downfall of Simeon and Levi. The defiant note in v.31, with which Simeon and Levi respond to Jacob's fear concerning the wisdom of their action would imply the reverse, and suggests the triumph of Simeon and Levi.

The other passage in the Old Testament in which Simeon and Levi are mentioned together occurs in the Blessing of Jacob (cf. Gen. 49.5-7). Some of the oracles in this poem are prophecies of the future, some contain censure or curse regarding events which have happened, others describe current events. There is no overall uniformity, and the picture at the beginning of the poem, of Jacob surrounded by his sons, is not consistently followed. Because of the use of the first person singular in v. 7b, it cannot be assumed that the oracle relating to Simeon and Levi was pronounced by Jacob. Perhaps one should think of a man of God who called a ban against the guilty. The personal pronoun in v.7b may then be interpreted as signifying God himself who announces the punishment for the crime imputed to these two tribes through the decisive saying of his authorized agent. The date of the individual sayings varies because the events described in them belong to different times. The author of the oracle on Reuben

(cf. vv. 3 f.) speaks of the early strength of this tribe, which, due to some reason that is not wholly clear, passed from it¹³. In the song of Deborah, dated in the twelfth century, Reuben is denounced for apathy towards the national cause (cf. Ju. 5.16), while in the Blessing of Moses the tribe appears to be greatly reduced in number (cf. Dt. 33.6). The Mesha inscription, c. 850, in reference to the territory of the Moabite high plateau north of the Arnon (which, at least according to later sources, was the territory of Reuben)¹⁴ speaks of the men of Gad occupying this area from ancient times. From the ninth century this territory was entirely in Moabite possession, and therefore it is reasonable to infer the extinction of the independent tribe Reuben subsequent to 900. The Israelite population east of the Jordan in the region south of the Jabbok is named from that time 'Gad', and amongst these Gadites the remnant of the tribe of Reuben had its domicile. On the other hand, the highly laudatory way in which the poem describes Judah suggests the period of the kingdom, the establishment of which rapidly advanced Judah from its isolated position in the south to the centre of political life in Canaan¹⁵.

13. The tribe's loss of power is here ascribed to the act of incest recorded in Gen. 35.22 and I Chr. 5.1. This fragment of what must originally have been a full account, may possibly contain in figurative language, some reminiscence of early tribal relations between Reuben and the Bilhah tribes, Dan and Naphtali.
14. cf. Num. 32.33; Jos. 13.23; 20.8; I Chron. 6.63 (E.vv. 74.),
15. See Note 5 in Appendix.

The mention of the sceptre and royal authority in v.10 suggests a date for this oracle not earlier than the reign of David. Thus it can be seen that, although the Blessing of Jacob may not have been compiled until well into the monarchic period, it contains, along with current traditions, also traditions of great antiquity¹⁶. The oracle relating to Simeon and Levi, as the preceding oracle on Reuben, takes the form of a curse. Simeon and Levi are referred to as brothers who indulge in activities of great cruelty, giving quarter to neither man nor beast. Their ferocity is cursed and they are condemned to dispersal in Jacob and division of Israel.

The purpose behind the narrative of Gen. 34 is to illustrate to the nomad the danger of being attracted to urban life. This alluring enticement to an urban existence from the traditional pastoral occupation and way of life, that provided a livelihood for the nomad, is shown to begin with trading and the inevitable encounter between the two peoples involved that this brings about. From an economic link there gradually developed a connubium that brought with it all the complications that are natural in the merging of two peoples. The action taken by Simeon and Levi was successful in terminating this union before it had a chance of coming into effect. Simeon as a tribal entity disappears after the period of Judges, and Levi,

16. G. Hölscher in his article 'Levi' in Pauly-Wissowa, Real-Encyclopädie..., XII 2, cols. 2155-2208 dates the compilation of the poem in the period following David.

apart from the two texts mentioned, appears throughout the rest of the Old Testament in a distinctive capacity, having no tribal territory, and incapable of a belligerent action such as Gen. 34 describes. Therefore this incident must belong to the period of Judges or even earlier. The problem of the dating of Gen. 34 may be aided by a brief consideration of Ju. 9, which has been adjudged to reflect the Simeon-Levi episode¹⁷. The account of the destruction of Shechem found in Ju. 9 provides a glimpse of the relationship that existed between the indigenous Canaanite population and the Israelites who were still trying to achieve a secure foothold in the land. In the circumstance of Gideon's refusal to accept kingly office, the narrative relates how the half Canaanite Abimelech, in a successful appeal to his maternal kindred, set himself up as king of Shechem with authority over the neighbouring Israelites. However, Abimelech and the people of Shechem enjoyed the fruits of their common crime for only a short space of time. Dissension arose amongst them, resulting in Abimelech's destruction of Shechem and the loss of his own life before Thebez, which had apparently conspired with Shechem in the revolt (cf. vv. 50 ff.). This righteous retribution is pronounced beforehand in the beautiful parable of Jotham (cf. vv. 7 - 21), and the writer closes by pointing out how signally Jotham's

17. See Note 6 in Appendix.

prophetic curse had been fulfilled. The narrative differs in many respects from Gen. 34. Apart from the fact that the names of the dramatis personae are different, the details of the respective plots are also different. Gen. 34 is a warning against intermarriage with the settled population, and the narrative recounts a successful attempt to prevent this taking place. The account in Ju. 9 takes intermarriage between the Canaanites and Israelites as a matter of course¹⁸. Gideon is in no way criticised for marrying a Shechemite, and in contrast with Gen. 34, in which the sons of Jacob object to a union with Shechem, it is the Shechemites who rebel at the idea of a half Israelite being their ruler (cf. v.28). In both accounts Shechem is destroyed, but the destruction in Gen. 34 is seen as a triumph for the victors, while the episode in Ju. 9 may be interpreted as a polemical warning against kingship. Moreover, the events in Ju. 9 are clearly depicted and every detail outlined as it occurred, whereas the typification of the tribes as individuals in Gen. 34 suggests a much remoter past. In the light of these considerations a connection between the two narratives seems improbable, and as the Canaanite city Shechem in later times became a Manassite city¹⁹, the incident recorded in Gen. 34 would

18. cf. 9.1 and also 8.31.

19. See Note 7 in Appendix.

appear to belong to a period earlier than the era of Judges.

Due to the fact that Simeon and Levi are mentioned simultaneously in the Old Testament only in Gen. 34 and 49.5-7, a possible connection may exist between these two texts. If Gen. 49.5-7 is taken as anterior to Gen. 34, then Simeon and Levi, subsequent to some humiliation, experienced a revival in strength. But if this were so, we would expect to find mention of further activities on the part of Simeon and Levi, the absence of which weakens this view. Simeon is nowhere else encountered in the Shechem vicinity. In the conquest narratives it takes up its position in the south in close association with Judah (cf. Ju. 1.1 ff; 6.27). Levi also appears to have connections with Judah (cf. Ju. 17.7; 19.1). If, on the other hand, the account in Gen. 34 can be attributed to a period prior to Gen. 49.5-7, a more tenable hypothesis may be achieved, whereby Simeon and Levi captured Shechem and put its inhabitants to the sword, but in the passage of time experienced the same fate as their victims. Whether they were living in this vicinity or had a southern domicile in the Negeb area is difficult to determine. If they lived in the Negeb, it is possible that from time to time they would have undertaken expeditions into the north, either as military campaigns, or peaceable migrations during the summer looking for change of pasturage, and in this way their encounter with Shechem would have taken place.

It is also feasible to conjecture that Simeon and Levi may have been associated with the Habiru who are recorded in the Amarna letters, dated around 1375, as infiltrating into Canaan on a semi-nomadic basis in much the same way as the episode of Shechem's capture is described in Gen. 34²⁰. However, the basic theme of the rejection of intermarriage between the sons of Jacob and Shechem suggests that Simeon and Levi represented fairly settled elements in the region around Shechem²¹. The fact that Shechem following the Abimelech episode became a Manassite city and prior to it was Canaanite, indicates that the historical situation of this narrative must be sought in the patriarchal era. This was evidently the view of the Yahwist who placed Gen. 34 before the Joseph stories in his framework of the Pentateuch.

Although the early history of the Patriarchs is obscure, Gen. 34 may provide a glimpse of the conditions that prevailed in the early days of Aramaean settlement in Canaan. The very small role of Jacob conflicts with

20. A number of the Amarna letters record the protests of Lab'ayu, the ruler of Shechem, to his Egyptian overlord about the conduct of the marauding Habiru, whom he reported as having captured Shechem by treachery.
21. E. Nielsen, Shechem, a traditio-historical Investigation, p. 259, considers that Simeon's detention in Egypt by Joseph, the account of the Simeonite and the Midianite woman cf. Num. 25.6-15, and the element of a divine name contained in Zelophehad, which he conjectures appertained to the Simeonite sanctuary of Beersheba, as signs suggestive of the original northern locality of this tribe. The suggestions he makes, however, are tenuous and lack direct evidence.

his position as the father of Simeon and Levi. He takes no action on hearing of his daughter's seduction until the return of his sons from the fields (cf. v.5), and his almost total absence from the marriage negotiations is remarkable²². The only other mention of him relates his remonstrance at his sons' defence of their sister's honour, which he fears will arouse the animosity of the surrounding people (cf. v.30). This colourless role of Jacob, which appears incompatible with his position as 'father' of Simeon and Levi in v. 25, may imply that the event originally took place at a period before the Jacob tribes moved into Palestine, or at least before Jacob was considered as the ancestor of the Simeon and Levi tribes. This may explain how the oracle relating to Simeon and Levi in Gen. 49.5-7 achieves a better sense when interpreted as a divine pronouncement made by a man of God, rather than coming direct from the mouth of Jacob. All that can be securely ascertained from the evidence available, is that their possession of Shechem does not appear to have lasted long. The oracle of Gen. 49.5-7 taken as posterior to Gen. 34 may be interpreted ex eventu with Gen. 34 to denote some event in which these tribes experienced a sharp decline that was seen as a divine retribution for their former ferocity at Shechem. It would thus appear that there exists in these two texts

22. There is a passing reference to him in v.11.

a genuinely ancient tradition, relating to the patriarchal age, that circulated in Palestine and was ultimately included in the sacred traditions of Israel. "... es ist die einzige Erzählung im Alten Testament, deren Wurzeln für uns noch sichtbar in eine geschichtliche Situation hinabreichen, in der noch nicht alle israelitischen Stämme zur vollen Sesshaftigkeit in Palästina übergegangen waren"²³.

We now turn to Ex. 32.25-29, a most important text for the investigation of the early traditions relating to Levi and the understanding of its distinctive character. The verses in question are part of a composite chapter that will be analysed as a whole in the final section of this thesis. The passage for discussion here opens by stating that when Moses saw the dissoluteness of the people, which is attributed to Aaron, he took up his position at the gate of the camp and called for those loyal to Yahweh to declare their faith and side with him. The Levites accordingly obeyed, killing three thousand people. Finally they were bidden to consecrate themselves to Yahweh that he might bless them.

The statement in v. 25b that Aaron had permitted discord among the people, thus causing them to be ridiculed by their enemies, acts as a link with the previous verses whose tendency is to exonerate him from implication in the idolatry of the calf. Two alternative

23. cf. M. Noth, Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch, p. 95.

interpretations are possible for this verse. Either the result of the people's recalcitrance, which Moses encountered, was due to the fact that Aaron had allowed their dissoluteness and had been responsible for the erection of the calf, or the people broke loose of their own accord, and Aaron, having made an unsuccessful attempt to restrain them (which has not been recorded) abandoned them to their enemies. They, on hearing that the Israelites had deserted their God, whom they boasted had led them from captivity in Egypt, consequently derided them. As the second alternative agrees with the exculpatory tendency towards Aaron in the preceding verses, it would appear to be the more reasonable interpretation. Having seen the dissoluteness of the people, Moses asked if there were any who still remained faithful to Yahweh. His question suggests that the rebelliousness of the people might have consisted of some kind of apostasy. The context of the erection of the calf, in which these verses are found, may perhaps suggest participation in the rites of a fertility cult. The sons of Levi declared their loyalty to Yahweh, but as all the people are described as dissolute in v. 25, without any suggestion of a section remaining apart from the rest of the community, it may be a tenable postulation to consider that a number of miscellaneous individuals, rather than a designated group, separated themselves from their recalcitrant kindred and proclaimed their faith in Yahweh. It would seem reasonable to infer from this consideration that

the use of the term 'sons of Levi' in v.26 is a prophetic one, since it was the act of attachment which gained for these people this name. Moses, having ascertained the committed Yahwists in the community, then related the divine command which was duly obeyed, and about three thousand people perished²⁴, the final verse of the passage providing a sequel to the event described in the preceding verses²⁵.

Because of the loyalty shown by these individuals in their attachment to Yahweh and their rejection of their fellow tribesmen they are bidden to fill their hand to Yahweh. Apart from the priestly document in which the term יָדוּ אֶל־יְהוָה has the obvious meaning 'to consecrate to priestly service'²⁶, it never occurs elsewhere without a definition of the service to which the person involved is consecrated. It is stated in Ju. 17.5 that Micah filled his son's hand, and he subsequently became his priest. The waw consecutive after the phrase $\text{וַיִּדּוּ אֶת־יָדָם לַיהוָה וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁפָּט}$ denotes two separate actions that did not occur simultaneously but

24. See Note 8 in Appendix.

25. H. Gressmann, 'Moses und seine Zeit'. F.R.L.A.N.T. (1913). p. 211, n. 2, divides the passage into two sections - vv. 25-28 and v. 29.

26. The term is found in Ex. 29.9,35 and Lev. 8.33 in the context of the consecration of Aaron's sons to priestly office. The use of the term in Ezek. 43.26 in connection with the Zadokites, who already held priestly office, would appear from the context to denote consecration to the service of the altar.

the latter subsequent to the former. As a result of Micah filling the hand of his son he becomes his priest, presumably because he was consecrated for the charge of the oracle. Similarly in v.12, subsequent to the hand of the Levite being filled, he becomes a priest. The words 'and he became his priest' are essential if we are to learn of the service to which Micah's son and the Levite were consecrated²⁷. In David's speech relating to the building of the future temple, the king seeks out those who are willing to fill their hand to Yahweh, meaning the building of his house (cf. I Chr. 29.5). Here the people are asked to take up the tools for the erection of the temple, and so consecrate themselves to the service of Yahweh. Unlike Ju. 17.5 and 12, there is no suggestion of priestly service, but rather the service of Yahweh, which from the context clearly means the building of the temple. In Ex. 32.29 a miscellaneous group of people are bidden to fill their hand to Yahweh, i.e. to consecrate themselves to the service of Yahweh, because they have shown their loyalty to him, by separating themselves from their kindred. The service to which they consecrate themselves is simply designated as Yahweh's without any suggestion of priestly duty. Whether, in anticipation of future

27. The usage is similar in I Kgs. 13.33 where it is recorded that Jeroboam consecrated whoever he wished and they became priest i.e. subsequent to the filling of the hand the persons involved are further described as becoming priests. Again in II Chr. 13.9 the people whom Jeroboam has permitted to fill their hand with sacrificial offerings are subsequently recorded as becoming priests to gods that were nonentities.

settlement in Canaan, their separation from kindred was intended as a sacrifice of future inheritance among their tribesmen is difficult to determine, as it cannot be ascertained if at this stage such a notion would have been conceived (unless the verse is understood as a later addition reflecting post-settlement conditions). The absence of any suggestion of priestly status in reference to these Levites provides a sense appropriate to the passage, especially if it is understood to stem from the period of Israel's wilderness wandering, for it is hardly conceivable that, resulting from a dissension within the community, a group of priests should emerge to function at a cult of which there is no evidence, and it is difficult to imagine a group of people installed to a non-existent office. Moreover, it would be a strange phenomenon for priests to install themselves in office having just slaughtered their constituents, especially as the phrase 'to fill the hand' in reference to priestly ordination implies inauguration by an authority to priestly service by placing the instrument of that service in the ordinand's hand. The meaning here is simply a self-dedication to the service of Yahweh which is made possible by denial of tribal kinship.

Clearly therefore the narrative does not imply any priestly attribute for Levites. The fact that the Levite lived a life of devotion to Yahweh to the exclusion of all tribal relationships would suggest a spiritual quality that was gradually regarded as conducive

to priestly service. This will be seen in the next chapter of this thesis. It is basically this fundamental distinctness from the rest of Israel that typifies the Levite, not his position as priest. Up until the time of Deuteronomy, the priestly office does not appear to have been restricted to any particular section of the community. In Deuteronomy, however, the priesthood became the exclusive privilege of the Levites (cf. Dt. 18.1-8), although there is no conclusive evidence that all Levites were necessarily priests; in fact Dt. 26.12 implies the reverse²⁸. The basic characteristic of the Levite was his peculiar relationship to Yahweh and his own environment. The priestly office, which did not include all Levites, may have come as part of a later process of development following conquest and the emergence of settled Israelite life in Canaan which gave rise to the formation of cultic establishments for the worship of Yahweh.

A further text of importance for this investigation is found in the Blessing of Moses (cf. Dt. 33.8-11). The way in which the northern tribes are emphasised,

28. The mention of a priest functioning at the shrine where the first fruits were offered (cf. Dt. 26.3,4), and of a Levite as a member of the worshipper's household, and therefore part of the congregation, without any suggestion of priestly status (cf. v.12) implies the existence of lay Levites as well as priestly ones. This chapter will be discussed more fully in the section of the thesis dealing with the Levites in Deuteronomy.

especially Joseph (cf. vv. 13-17), suggests a northern provenance for the poem as a whole. If the mention of divine help for Judah in v. 7 is interpreted as reflecting the conditions of exile, then the compilation of the poem should be assigned to the exilic age or later²⁹. But were the oracle on Benjamin in v. 12 to be taken as exilic, it would fail to make sense, as the southern part of Benjamin must have gone into exile with Judah. On the other hand, if v. 7 is understood to denote the schism between the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel and Judah, this would indicate a date around 900 for the poem's compilation. This dating fits the historical background best as Reuben still finds mention, although it appears to be bordering on extinction at this time (cf. v. 6). The absence of Simeon may be due either to its eventual absorption in Judah, or to its extreme southerly position obscuring it from the purview of the northern author. Gad (cf. vv. 20 f) does not appear to have suffered yet from the trouble that the expansion of Moab was to inflict upon it³⁰. The interest in Levi is not altogether surprising as Levites were present in the northern regions of Palestine from the period of Judges (cf. Ju. 18.30; 19.1). Although Levi appears among the other tribal eponyms as in Gen. 49, here it is referred to in the distinctive capacity of adherence to Yahweh found in Ex. 32.25-29.

29. cf. G. Hölscher, Geschichteschreibung in Israel, pp. 334 ff, who assigns an exilic date to the poem.
30. cf. the Moabite Stone, lines 9 ff.

The poem begins with a statement of Moses relating Yahweh's love for his people. The passage concerning Levi which opens with the words לֵוִי הַקֹּדֶשׁ , suggests that these verses should be understood as the prayer of Moses for Levi, which is addressed to Yahweh. It states that the sacred lot is assigned to the holy one who was tested at Massah, striven with at the waters of Meribah and forfeited all ties of tribal kinship. A plural of address is then used, and it is recorded that the Levites observed the covenant. They are to teach Jacob judgements and Israel the law, to burn incense and offer up burnt offering. The final verse reverts to the singular number. Yahweh is to bless Levi's potential, accept the work of his hands and destroy his enemies.

The opening verse presents some difficulties in interpretation. Should the words לֵוִי הַקֹּדֶשׁ be understood to denote Levi, this interpretation would find no support in the other traditions relating to Massa and Meribah where this verse maintains the holy one was tested. If, on the other hand, these words are interpreted to mean Moses, although there is evidence of his presence at Massa and Meribah, no account has survived of his successfully undergoing a trial of faith there³¹. It is recorded in Ex. 17.1-7 that the people

31. E. Meyer, op. cit., p. 54, takes לֵוִי הַקֹּדֶשׁ as a collective noun, and interprets the phrase לֵוִי הַקֹּדֶשׁ to mean the descendants of the holy one of Yahweh, i.e. the Levites who derived their special significance from their eponymous ancestor Moses.

murmured against Moses for leading them from bondage to a place where there was no water. Moses complained of the people's discontent to Yahweh and was ordered to strike water from a rock with his rod. The dissension was between the people and Yahweh, Moses acting as intermediary (cf. v.2) and for this reason the place was called Massa and Meribah (cf. v.7). The priestly writer relates a similar incident taking place at Kadesh (cf. Num. 20.1-13). The place where Moses' rod occasioned the water at Yahweh's command is here called Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with Yahweh (cf. v.13). Again there is no mention of a conflict between Yahweh and Moses, although it is recorded in v. 12 that on account of the unfaithfulness of Moses and Aaron, Yahweh would not permit them to lead the children of Israel into the promised land. The exact nature of Moses' and Aaron's disloyalty is not disclosed, but the prohibition of entry into the promised land is again mentioned in connection with the death of Aaron later in the chapter (cf. v. 24)³². Dt. 32.51 reiterates the tradition of Num. 20.12 in denying Moses access to the promised land as a punishment for his

32. S. Lehming, ' Massa und Meribah ' Z.A.W. 1961, pp. 71-77, interprets the account of Moses striking the rock twice in Num. 20.11 as an act of deficient faith, because he is not actually requested by Yahweh to strike the rock with the rod as in Ex. 17.6. He considers the mention of Massa in Ex. 17 as a Deuteronomic addition to the original text, and deduces that the priestly writer of Num. 20 used Ex. 17 in forming his account before the insertion of the Massah tradition in Ex. 17.

lack of faith at Meribah-Kadesh, Meribah again being identified with Kadesh as in Num. 20. Dt. 6.16 and 9.22 speak of Massa as a place where Yahweh was provoked by the people; Ps. 81.7 mentions Meribah as the site of the people's trial by Yahweh while in Num. 27.14 Meribah is named as the place where the people rebelled against Yahweh and is located at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin. Hence it appears that we have different traditions associated with Massa and Meribah that may originally have been independent of each other. In none of the texts mentioned is there any suggestion of divine commendation for a display of faith either by Levi, Moses or the people. However the use of the definite article before the present participle in v.9a appears to refer to the individual in v.8 (וְיִשְׂרָאֵל) for whom the Thummim and Urim are requested i.e. Levi. This individual is described as appertaining to 'thy holy one' (הַקֹּדֶשׁ) who was proved at Massa and striven with at Meribah. In view of the traditions relating to Massa and Meribah that have just been considered, the term 'thy holy one' would seem to denote Israel as the people bound to Yahweh by covenant love, who despite their special relationship with Yahweh that singles them out as a holy people, were guilty of rebelling against their God. But to this individual who is selected from the recalcitrant race is assigned the sacred oracle, and he is further described in v.9 as denouncing his tribal allegiance. This denunciation

of tribal kinship agrees with the view already advanced in connection with the characteristic tribelessness of the Levite in Ex. 32.25-29.

The change in number from the singular in vv. 8, 9a to the plural in vv. 9b, 10 and back into the singular again in v. 11 indicates the composite nature of the text and suggests a development in the levitical office. The manipulation of the Thummim and Urim was a basic function characteristic of the priesthood³³, but the development of the cult involved the priesthood in a wider sphere of cultic activities. Although v. 10 records that the teaching of the law was one of the chief concerns of the priest, which according to the earlier prophets obtained from relatively early times³⁴, the mention of incense along with burnt offering suggests that vv. 9b, 10 may belong to the later pre-exilic period. The word סֶמֶךְ can simply denote the smoke of burning sacrifice (cf. Is. 1.13; Ps. 66.15), and the intensive form of the predicate has the meaning 'to

33. The Thummim and Urim were the sacred lot used to determine Yahweh's will in a particular issue. Elsewhere the usage is Urim and Thummim cf. Ex. 28.30; Lev. 8.8; Ezra. 2.63. The Urim is named alone in Num. 27.21 and I Sam. 28.6, and the Thummim occurs by itself in I Sam. 14.41.

34. cf. Jer. 18.18; Ezek. 7.26; 22.26; Hos. 4.6; Mic. 3.11. The priest gave oracular direction in two ways. Through the sacred lot Urim and Thummim, and by reference to a legal code including both the revealed will of Yahweh and the accumulated experience of the past. From his knowledge of this code the priest could lay down וְהָיָה rules of action, and give וְהָיָה instruction in the revealed will of Yahweh.

cause to smoke' i.e. upon the altar³⁵. But as the final clause in the verse referring to whole burnt offering upon Yahweh's altar would include the smoke of the sacrificial victim, the reference to incense in this context must denote the smoke of aromatics (cf. Ex. 30.8 f.), and of material burned in the offering (cf. Lev. 10:1; Ezek. 8.11)³⁶. All pentateuchal references to the offering of incense, apart from the verse under consideration, occur in the priestly document, and it is noteworthy that the eighth century prophets make no allusion to such a feature in the cult. Moreover, the functions attributed to the priest here, did not become the exclusive right of the Levites until the Deuteronomic period. The concluding verse reverts to the singular, and like vv. 8 and 9a strikes a much more archaic tone than vv. 9b and 10³⁷. The request for divine blessing of his substance, and acceptance of his work, together with the hostile attitude to his

35. cf. I Sam. 2.15 f.; Jer. 19.13; 44.21,23; Hos. 4.13; 11.2; Hab. 1.16.

36. Incense compounded according to a specified formula (cf. Ex. 30.34-38), was extensively used in the ritual of the temple cf. Ex. 25.6; 35.8, 28; 37.29. Pure incense which could not be made or used for secular purposes (cf. Ex. 30.37f; Lev. 10.1-11) was burnt on the altar of incense (cf. Ex. 30.1 ff; Lev. 4.7) which was in the temple before the veil of the holy of holiest.

37. F.M. Cross and D.N. Freedman, 'The Blessing of Moses' J.B.L. (1948) pp. 191-210, eliminate vv. 8-10 from the original oracle due to the prosaic style of these verses which is indicated by the use of the relative pronoun and the definite accusative. This judgement would appear to be too arbitrary when other considerations are taken into account.

enemies, suggests a period in which the Levites were undergoing serious opposition, and may indicate something of the circumstances they experienced in their activities in northern Palestine.

In Dt. 33.8 the possession of the Thummim and Urim implies the priestly status of the Levite which does not obtain in Ex. 32.25-29. On the other hand, the relationship between Moses and the Levites is explained in Ex. 32.25 ff. while Dt. 33.8 ff. makes no mention of it. The Levite is attached to Yahweh at the price of renouncing his tribal allegiance in Ex. 32.25 ff. without any suggestion of priestly office, and similarly in Dt. 33.8 ff. the Levite is Levite due to his denial of tribal affinity, but in this instance his manipulation of the sacred lot implies his priestly status. This may suggest that the basic tradition underlying Ex. 32.25 ff. is older than Dt. 33.8 ff., but the evidence is too inadequate to draw any firm conclusions concerning the age of either tradition or whether one is dependent on the other. What is common to both is the fundamental distinctness of the Levites from the rest of Israel. It is quite possible that we are dealing with two traditions which, although they have the basic tenet of what they are describing in common, could have circulated among different sections of the community and in this way developed their own variations. A problem common to both passages is to ascertain whether they had their roots in Palestine, or in the period prior to settlement. It is possible that the

tradition common to both texts under review i.e. levi-
tical tribelessness, had its roots in the post-settle-
ment period, and in later times aetiological accretions
developed around it which projected it back into the
wilderness period. On the other hand, the association
of Moses with the Levites would suggest a period prior
to conquest. As there are no adequate grounds for
questioning the authenticity of the tradition contained
in Ex. 32.25 ff, it is quite possible that it records
a genuine memory of an incident in which a number of
Israelites joined Moses to demonstrate their loyalty
to the God that Moses represented, when the divine
authority vested in him was challenged by the people.
It is also a reasonable postulation to consider a simi-
lar memory to lie at the root of Dt. 33.8 ff in which
a group of Israelites withdrew themselves from their
dissident kindred at Massa and Meribah³⁸. The tradi-
tions relating to Massa and Meribah which record their
location, situate them in the vicinity of Kadesh³⁹,
where the children of Israel are recorded to have spent
thirty-eight years (cf. Dt. 2.14). The figure of Moses
is closely connected with the steppe south of Palestine,
and especially with Kadesh, the oasis in the middle of
Arabia Petraea. In the vicinity of Kadesh, known in

38. The word יִשְׂרָאֵל in v. 8 may be interpreted as a
collective noun, e.g. יְהוָה יִשְׂרָאֵל often occurs
meaning 'men of Israel'.

39. cf. Num. 20.1; 27.14. Massah and Meribah are
located in Ex. 17.1 near the wilderness of Sin,
which the Lxx and Syriac versions spell Zin.
According to Num. 20.1, the wilderness of Zin is
in the vicinity of Kadesh. The exact location of
Rephidim in Ex. 17.1 has not been ascertained.

later times as 'ain kedēs, is a much older well named 'ain el kdērāt⁴⁰, and a third oasis called 'ain kusēme. The feature common to all the Massa-Meribah traditions is a dissatisfaction amongst the people over the lack of water, traditions that are likely to have originally circulated in the Kadesh area. Although the evidence is insufficient to work out any assured hypothesis, the fact that the tradition in Dt. 33.8 is tied up with Massa and Meribah may indicate that it originally belonged to the Kadesh area. This location would be appropriate to the narrative of Ex. 32.25 ff. in which Moses, who is elsewhere identified with this area, plays a leading role as Yahweh's representative amongst his recalcitrant people.

Other traditions relating to the institution of the Levites occur in the priestly writing. In Num. 3.5-10 the Levites are described as being installed as ministers to Aaron, and in this capacity responsible for the running of the tabernacle. As Aaron does not become accredited with the dignity of high priest until the later traditions of the Old Testament, this passage may represent a late tradition having its basis in the post-exilic organization of the temple⁴¹. Another tradition relating to the Levites follows in vv. 11-13

40. H. Gressmann, op. cit., p. 151, compares this oasis with the magnificent Jordan source of Baniyas.
41. cf. Ex. 38.21; Num. 1.47-54; 4.46 ff.; 31.30; I Chr. 6.33 (E.V. v.48); 23.27-32.

which has little, if anything, in common with that recorded in the preceding verses. Here the Levites are taken by Yahweh as substitutes for the firstborn claimed by him⁴². The sanctity of the firstborn and their need for redemption are recognized alike by early and later Hebrew laws (cf. Ex. 13.2P; 34.19 JE). It is subsequently provided in P that every male at a month old is redeemable at five shekels (cf. Num. 3.44 ff; 18.16). The Levites are substitutes only for those above a month old at the time. Very ancient roots may lie at the heart of this tradition. According to Rabbinic theory, before the time when the tabernacle was erected, priestly functions were discharged by the firstborn⁴³. A similar theory might be considered to lie at the bottom of this passage which would imply that the firstborn in early Israel was, as a matter of course, dedicated to priestly duties⁴⁴. The dedication of Samuel at Shiloh may be an example of this occurring

42. . cf. also vv. 40-51 in which not only the Levites act as substitutes for the firstborn of humans, but their cattle are substituted for the firstlings of cattle owned by the rest of Israel. Num. 8.5-26 describe the dedication of the Levites as substitutes for human firstborn as an initiation into cultic service.

43. cf. Rashi Zebahim 4.14, and Targum Jonathan on Ex. 24.5.

44. cf. G. v. Bandissin, Geschichte des Priestertums, pp. 55-57.

in ancient Israel (cf. I Sam. I.24-28), but although Samuel was Hannah's firstborn he was not the firstborn of his house, and therefore may not be accepted as a typical example of this happening. Moreover, Samuel was given in fulfilment of a pledge as a special devotee, which would have been unnecessary if the practice of dedicating the firstborn to cultic service had been widely observed in Israel. Ju. 17.5 and I Sam. 7.1 do not imply any prerogative for the firstborn assuming priestly office. Furthermore, the evidences of priestly functions in early times being discharged by the leader of the community or father of the household (e.g. the ritual of the Passover in Ex. 12; 13.8 ff.) do not favour the existence of a priesthood of the firstborn. The fact, however, that the firstborn was claimed by Yahweh (the Levite later being acceptable as a substitute for him as the firstfruits of life) could perhaps hint at a tradition in which the firstborn was considered attached to Yahweh, and in some special way vested with spiritual qualities. Unfortunately the paucity of information allows no more than a tentative suggestion⁴⁵.

Levi encountered in a secular capacity alongside Simeon in Gen. 34 and 49.5-7 without any suggestion of the distinctive Yahweh service associated with the name Levi in the other biblical traditions considered, gives

45. See Note 9 in Appendix.

rise to the question of a possible connection between the two distinct phenomena which the word Levi represents. It has been speculated that the Levites were originally mantics who, in accordance with the traditions of ancient tribal societies, were held in greater esteem by tribes other than their own. It was a universal belief among the ancients that the occult powers of strangers were greater than those of familiar people, and in some regions whole tribes were regarded as powerful wizards and their services sought by neighbouring tribes. Thus the Levites, following some catastrophe, such as that assumed in Gen. 49.5 ff, could have been driven southwards and dispersed among the Judaeans where they developed their distinctive non-tribal character⁴⁶. Again it may be possible that after the expulsion of Simeon and Levi from Shechem, both tribes were reduced in numbers⁴⁷, and subsequently driven to the borders of Egypt where they enjoyed amicable relations with the neighbouring tribes of Kenites, Jerahmeelites and the other miscellaneous groups that later constituted Judah⁴⁸. Subsequently drought and famine could have forced some of them into Egypt, as often

46. T.J. Meek, *op.cit.*, p. 116, compares the defeat of Levi with that of the Magi, who, failing to achieve political power, succeeded in the religious sphere.

47. This is borne out by the fact that in later times the tribe of Simeon appears very limited and the cities assigned to it fall within the territory of Judah (cf. Jos. 19.1-8), which indicates that Simeon eventually became little more than an element within the tribe Judah.

48. See Note 10 in Appendix.

happened in ancient times, and there they may have come in contact with the Joseph tribes. This hypothesis would explain the presence of Levites in both northern and southern Palestine as due to a migration of Levites in both the Joseph and Judah movements into Canaan. Moreover, the adoption of this theory would explain the levitical background to Moses in Ex. 2. However, it is strange that if Levi survived to return to Canaan in a new non-tribal role of Yahweh service, Simeon should have retained its secular character and have been almost swallowed up in Judah (cf. Jos. 19.1-8). A slight variation to these considerations may be briefly noted. The tribes Simeon and Levi, along with Judah may have infiltrated from the south into Canaan, but Simeon and Levi advanced further north than Judah and gained possession of Shechem. However their occupation of Shechem lasted but a short time, and they were ejected and driven back to the south where some of them were absorbed in Judah and others sought refuge in Egypt and linked up with the Joseph tribes there⁴⁹. There is no evidence to support any of these views, and although they need not be rejected out of hand, they cannot be accepted as more than mere speculations. The coincidence of the usage of the name might indicate that the two different connotations it embraces were connected, but as the tribe Levi, found in a secular capacity belongs to the early days of Aramaean settlement in Palestine, and the special role of Yahweh service

49. cf. H.H. Rowley, From Joseph to Joshua, pp. 112 ff.

attributed to Levi may derive from the wilderness period, it is possible that the name 'Levi' in the interval of time came to have two distinct connotations, one representing a secular tribe that had ceased to exist, the other denoting a professional status. The record of both could exist side by side in the sacred traditions of Israel without confusion. Admittedly, Levi is included among the tribal eponyms in the Blessing of Moses, but its partner, Simeon, is absent and it itself placed after Judah. Its inclusion here may be due to the fact that although landless it did represent an important and genuinely characteristic element of Israel. The series in Dt. 27.12 numbers Simeon and Levi among the twelve tribes placed, as in Gen. 49, before Judah and after Reuben. However it is quite clear from v. 14 that there was no confusion in the mind of the writer between the two different capacities - secular and liturgical - that the word Levi describes here.

In Ex. 2.1 it is stated that a man of the house of Levi took to wife a daughter of Levi, and from this union came Moses. This implies the existence of a secular tribe Levi which, although alien in the land of Egypt, is in no way assumed distinct from the rest of Israel held in bondage there⁵⁰. If however, the use of the term 'sons of Levi' in Ex. 32 is understood to be a proleptic one anticipating the faithful's act of attachment from which they subsequently took their

50. See Note 11 in Appendix.

name, this would imply that either Moses represented one of the last members of the secular tribe which subsequently disappeared, or did not originally belong to a secular tribe Levi. The evidence relating to the existence of Moses' two sons (cf. Ex. 18.1-6) assumes the continuation of the secular tribe Levi to which Moses belonged, and is therefore contrary to the former supposition. On the other hand, it is possible that the tradition relating to Moses' levitical parentage developed at a later date when there was a tendency to leviticalize Moses by including him in the levitical genealogies⁵¹. This would favour the alternative solution. The close association since the wilderness period between Moses and the Levites of which Ex. 32. 25-29 bears witness doubtless gave rise to this tendency.

The word 'Levi' has been given a variety of interpretations. The etymology of the Yahwist found in Gen. 29.34 states that at the birth of Levi, Leah said "My husband has joined me now I have given him three sons", and for this reason the child was called Levi. This is a play on the words, in which 'Levi' is combined with לֵוִי² which in the Niphal means 'to join'⁵². The

51. cf. Ex. 6.20; Num. 26.59; I Chr. 5.29 (E.V.6.3); 23.13 ff; 26.24.

52. J. Wellhausen, Prolegomena to the history of Israel, p. 145, has proposed a derivation of the name Levi from Leah, and considers that Leah originally meant either wild cow or serpent.

same play on words is found in a priestly tradition in which the distinction between Aaron and the Levites is described as the attachment of the latter to the former (cf. Num. 18.1-7). In Jubilees. 31.16 Jacob explains the name of his son as one attached to Yahweh and a disciple to all the sons of Jacob, and the Jewish Midrash understands the name as 'that which joins the sons to their father in heaven'⁵³. It has been suggested that the root לִיָּהּ may be the basis of the word 'leviathan' meaning dragon, and hence associated with the Arabic word 'lawā' to coil. From this hypothesis it is deduced that the Levites were a priesthood that especially took charge of the cult of serpents. The evidences cited in support of this view are found in Num. 21.4 ff in which Moses is recorded as setting a serpent on a pole, the serpent occasioning a cure for all bitten by poisonous snakes, and in the record of the brazen serpent in II Kgs. 18.4 which was worshipped at Jerusalem until Hezekiah's time⁵⁴. However, these

53. cf. Bereshith rabba LXXI. 15.

54. G.H. Skipworth, 'Hebrew tribal names and the primitive traditions of Israel' J.Q.R. (1899), pp. 239-265, takes this view by comparing the series לִיָּהּ לִיָּהּ לִיָּהּ לִיָּהּ with לִיָּהּ לִיָּהּ לִיָּהּ לִיָּהּ and notes that in the first series, the final term represents the mythical serpent of the ancient world, and the corresponding term in the latter series the brazen serpent set up by Moses. He then deduces that the root לִיָּהּ describes the coils of the serpent and לִיָּהּ the metallic gleam of its scales, and considers that the reason for Moses' selection of such an emblem to represent the God of Israel was due to the origin of the name of the tribe Levi, which he held to mean serpent.

traditions do not provide adequate support for the adoption of this view as neither of them appear to have any direct connection with Levi⁵⁵. In fact there is no evidence anywhere in the Old Testament to suggest a connection between the wilderness serpents and the Levites. The basic idea in the other views suggested for the derivation of the word 'Levi' implies the notion of attachment which is an idea appropriate to the word 'Levi' in both its connotations. The derivation given by the Yahwist in Gen. 29.34 may have as its original basis the idea of the attachment of a Levi group with a Jacob one in patriarchal times. In its later sense, denoting professional status, the word 'Levi' would appear to signify the idea of the ones attached in a peculiar and exclusive relationship to Yahweh.⁵⁶

55. A number of Canaanite serpent goddesses have been unearthed in Palestine. They are usually in the form of a female figure with a snake coiled round it, representing the fecundizing vis naturae. However, there does not appear to be any connection between these figures and the Levites.
56. K. Budde, Altisraelitische Religion, pp. 45 f and 137.n6, considers that the Levites were given their name in Ex. 32.25-29 because they attached themselves to Yahweh in rejection of calf worship.

LEVITES DURING THE PERIOD
OF ISRAELITE SETTLEMENT IN CANAAN

The early traditions relating to the Levites in their distinctive role of attachment to Yahweh appear, as suggested in the previous chapter, to have been associated with Kadesh. This possibility, together with the fact that Levites from the earliest period of Israelite settlement in Canaan enjoyed a characteristically prestigious position in Israel, suggests that those who preserved these ancient levitical traditions of the wilderness, and who may probably be identified with the individuals who adhered to the principles they contained, must have found their way into the promised land as part of the Israelite conquest. Two traditions referring to an Israelite movement from the region of Kadesh are found in Num. 13,14 and Num. 21.1-3. The original narrative of Num. 13, 14 recounting the reconnoitre of the promised land by scouts sent out by Moses is fragmentary in its composition¹ due to the curtailment of the original account of the Yahwist in favour of the priestly version². The kernel of the narrative formed a Calebite tradition concerning the occupation of the important city of Hebron, favoured

1. See Note 12 in Appendix.

2. M. Noth, Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch, pp. 114 f, considers that the detailed description of the Caleb-Hebron story contained in Dt. 1.22-46 derives from the original form of the material fragmentarily preserved in Num. 13, 14.

by its position among the Judaeen mountains, which in the area around Hebron have always been noted for their fruitfulness. It is recorded that scouts were sent out from Kadesh³ to ascertain the conditions prevailing in the region lying to the north of the Negeb. The scouts, with the exception of Caleb, who was eager to advance into the area, brought back a terrifying report concerning the land and disheartened the people (cf. 13.28 ff). On the other hand, Caleb (and Joshua, according to the priestly editor) tried to prevail upon the people to obey Yahweh's command and enter the land, rather than allow themselves to be discouraged by the strength of its inhabitants and so display their lack of faith in Yahweh (cf. 14.6-10). However, their persistent faithlessness provoked Yahweh's anger, and thus necessitated the intercession of Moses⁴. As a result of Moses' plea, the severity of the punishment was alleviated, and only the generation that escaped from Egypt were to perish in the wilderness while their children, although surviving to see the promised land,


3. 13.3 states that the spies set out from the wilderness of Paran, and in v. 26 they return to the same place but the exact locality is specified as being Kadesh from where it may be assumed they started out.
4. In his intercession to Yahweh, Moses explains that if he destroys all the people then in the sight of the nations he will be seen to have been frustrated in his purpose to bring Israel into the land he has promised. This remarkable plea in which Moses appears to advise Yahweh finds a parallel in Ex. 32.11-14. A similar phenomenon is found in Jer. 14.21 where the prophet, interceding for Israel, reminds Yahweh of his covenant promises.

were condemned to wander in the wilderness for forty years before the promise given to them should be fulfilled (cf. 14.26-39). In consequence, as an act of repentance for their faithlessness, the people then decided to advance into the southern hill country, but due to their previous disobedience they were not given victory, but suffered defeat at Hormah. In Num. 21.1-3 it is stated that during the period of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness, the king of Arad on hearing of the activities of the Hebrew spies, fought against Israel and took some of the people captive. As a result of this humiliation, the Israelites vowed to Yahweh that if he would deliver the Canaanites into their hands, they would lay the enemy's cities under a sacred ban, and destroy their inhabitants. On the successful outcome of the ensuing engagement the vow was performed and the place was subsequently known as Hormah⁵.

This latter narrative, which opens up the possibility of a northward advance of Israel into the Negeb and may be taken to imply the actuality of it, is at variance with the preceding narrative in Num. 20.14-21, which describes the whole of Israel turning south from Kadesh in order to avoid the land of Edom, whose king

5. It is possible that the phrase 'king of Arad' in v. 1 is an interpolation since the personal name is unusual after the royal title. Moreover, with its omission a clause corresponding to 14.25, 45 results. The reference to 'the king of Hormah' and the 'king of Arad' in Jos. 12.14 implies that they were two distinct places, although probably both in the same vicinity.

had refused them passage through his territory. It is difficult to understand why, when the people as a whole had gained this victory in the Negeb, they should not have followed up the victory but turned south to encircle Edom. As no harmonizing motive is evident in Num. 21.1-3 it is possible that a tradition has survived here that originally related the advance of Caleb, along with Judah and other attachments including levitical elements, into the southern regions of the Judaeen mountains. The problem however is complicated by the account of the conquest of Arad and the destruction of Hormah in Ju. 1.16 ff. Here the tribes Judah and Simeon, along with the Kenites, effect a conquest moving southwards from the city of palm trees i.e. Jericho. As in Num. 21.1-3, the name of Hormah is explained by the fact that the Canaanites inhabiting the city, previously called Zephath, were smitten, and the city placed under the ban and utterly destroyed⁶. It would appear from the irreconcilable elements in the narratives of Num. 21.1-3 and Ju. 1.16 ff that they reflect parallel traditions relating to the same historical event. Yet this does not explain the different starting points in the two traditions i.e. Kadesh and Jericho. The historicity of an advance of Judah and

6. The word  means 'to devote' or 'put under a ban', and thus to make taboo all that the enemy possessed. Anything thus devoted had to be destroyed, and in this way whatever resisted Yahweh's will was entirely done away with, cf. Lev. 27.28f; Dt. 3.6; 7.2 ff; Jos. 8.26; 10.28,37; Is. 34.2; 37.11.

Simeon from Jericho southwards is open to question. Subsequent to the crossing of the Jordan and the capture of Jericho the Israelites as a whole headed for Gilgal, which they appear to have made the basis for their ensuing activities⁷. There is no evidence of a splintering following the capture of Jericho. Moreover, the formidable nature of the country lying between Jericho and Hormah which includes the wildernesses of Tekoa and Jeruel would scarcely encourage the movement of Judah and Simeon, as described in Ju. 1.16 ff, from the main corpus to seek their fortune in this direction⁸. As the tribes that originally inhabited the southern regions of the Negeb are subsequently found occupying the hill country to the north of this area and forming part of a southern group of tribes, it would seem more probable that this change in their locality came about through a victorious northward movement as Num. 21.1-3 suggests⁹. It is reasonable to infer from these considerations that Ju. 1.16, 17 is a duplicate of Num. 21.1-3,

7. cf. Dt. 11.30; Jos. 4.19; 10.43.
8. vv. 18, 19 are difficult side by side. The former, recording the conquest of Gaza, Ashkelon and Ekron by Judah may reflect a later situation. The latter verse with 3.3 and Jos. 13.2, 3 undoubtedly depicts a more genuine outline of the course of events.
9. Caleb is first encountered in Kadesh cf. Num 13, 14, and subsequently represented as inhabiting the locality of Hebron cf. Jos. 14.13 ff; 21.12; Ju. 1.20. Kenizzites are associated with Edom in Gen. 36.11, 15, 42; I Chr. 1.36, 53, but in I Chr. 4.15 Kenaz is enumerated among the sons of Caleb. Jos. 15.17 ff refers to Othniel as the son of Kenaz and nephew of Caleb, and records him as occupying an area in the Negeb region cf. also Ju. 1.13 ff.

reinterpreted under influence of the predominating view that the conquest of Canaan took place in a single campaign led by Joshua across the Jordan¹⁰. Hence it appears that the original narrative in Num. 13, 14 which, in the process of editing has become truncated, preserved a tradition that recorded the northward movement from Kadesh of various Hebrew elements that were sojourning in the region along with other groups who had joined themselves to the Israelites subsequent to their flight from Egypt. The positive attitude of the original tradition towards Caleb indicates that the initiative was taken by this group. In the J. E. account it is Caleb who is specifically said to have maintained, against the opinion of the other scouts, that the conquest was a feasible undertaking; and it was the area which he reconnoitred that was later assigned to him and his descendants (cf. Jos. 15.14-19)¹¹. It appears from the tradition recounted in Num. 13, 14 that the decision to advance was not unanimous, but Caleb in doing so fulfilled the divine command, while those who disputed Yahweh's will and ultimately entered Canaan from across the Jordan, took forty years to reach their destination. In view of these considerations it is conceivable that amongst those who followed Caleb in this advance into Canaan

10. The Calebite tradition in Num. 21.1-3 is embodied in the J tradition, but the E tradition, in which the advance of Joshua is found, only knows of the defeat of Israel in the Negeb and nothing of a subsequent victory.

11. cf. also Ju. 1.10b - 15, 20.

from the south, there would have existed levitical elements anxious to obey the divine decree related to them by Moses with whom they had previously identified themselves in displaying their loyalty to Yahweh¹².

An examination of the early post-settlement traditions relating to the Levites must be made in an attempt to support this hypothesis associating levitical elements with a movement from the south into the southern regions of Canaan by Caleb, and the other connected groups that ultimately settled there. A levitical genealogy occurs in Num. 26.58 that completely differs in content and style from the whole genealogy in which it is contained, and all levitical genealogies in general. In place of the usual enumeration of Gershom, Kohath and Merari as the sons of Levi, here the offspring of Levi is stated to be the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites and the family of the Korahites. Instead of the use of personal names as in the other genealogies, a gentilic form is employed here. The previous verse

12. The death of Moses is recorded to have taken place on the plains of Moab by the priestly writer in Num. 27.12-14, and by the Deuteronomist in Dt. 32. 48-52. The absence of any mention of Moses in the older traditions subsequent to the detour round Edom, together with the predominating notion of the conquest having taken place solely from across the Jordan under the leadership of Joshua, may have given the impression that Moses died east of the Jordan within sight of the promised land i.e. on the east bank of the Jordan, in Moab. The two great themes with which Moses is undisputedly connected are Exodus and Sinai. It is therefore quite possible that he may have died in the Kadesh region after the covenant making on Sinai and before the advance from the south into Canaan.

enumerates the three customary levitical families which in the normal way should be followed by the details of their descendants, but, instead, the immediate offspring of Levi are related again, but in this instance different in style and content. However, the gentilic form peculiar to v. 58 is dropped at the end of the verse and the style of the previous verse is resumed with the words 'and Kohath begat Amram'. These words do not assume any knowledge of the previous part of the verse, but when taken with v. 57 provide a perfect continuity that continues into the following verses. Thus it is clear that v. 58 ab α is an intrusion which contains a tradition that is different from the general run of levitical genealogies. Though making a fresh start, v. 58 in respect of its content is entirely parallel to v. 57, both give a list of levitical families. It is clear however, that two so different classifications of levitical families in Israel could not have existed at the same time. Genealogical schemata at the time of their formulation reflect the current arrangement of families and their relation to one another; but it is only to be expected in the many vicissitudes a nation inevitably experiences in the process of its history (the colourful nature of Israel's past proving her to be no exception) that arrangements such as these would not have remained static¹³. The fact that they change reveals the living nature of the historical circumstances

13. See Note 13 in Appendix.

that lie at their roots, even though it may not always be possible to ascertain the significance of such changes. To find the correct chronological application for the origin of the Gershom, Kohath, Merari system is difficult, because there is no foundation to work on. It is clear that in these names there exists an authentic memory of persons, not references to places or names of families. The fact, however, that these three eponymous ancestors of levitical families remain constant, although changing their respective positions from time to time, indicates that the divergent tradition represented in v. 58 may be the sole surviving memory of some ancient levitical communities which in later times lost their early significance.

In order for this list to have had any significance (which it must have had to warrant its very existence), its formation must have been contemporaneous with the arrangement it represents. The names Mushi and Mahli afford little assistance in the search for a date or origin, but the mention of Korah may indicate a pre-exilic date if the disgrace of Korah related in Num. 16 is attributed to a post-exilic struggle within the cult community at Jerusalem¹⁴, and considered responsible for the subservient position of Korah found recorded by the Chronicler¹⁵. This supposition is supported by the

14. See Note 14 in Appendix.

15. The Korahites were gate keepers cf. I Chr. 9.19; 26.1, 19, bakers of sacrificial meals cf. I Chr. 9.31, and singers cf. II Chr. 20.19, positions hardly appropriate for a group powerful enough to contend for the priesthood of Aaron, and may therefore denote their demotion from high office following their dissension with the Aaronites.

fact that Libnah and Hebron both achieved the height of their importance in the pre-exilic period. It is from the record of these two settlements that the most secure basis for the investigation of this levitical arrangement is to be sought. The earliest date must be subsequent to the conquest and allow sufficient time for a levitical family to develop in each of these places, important enough to merit the survival of their record for posterity. Libnah reached the pinnacle of its fortune in the later monarchic period, when it was strong enough to revolt against Judah (cf. II Kgs. 8.22). Its noble families were regarded as sufficiently prestigious to intermarry with some of the later kings of Judah¹⁶. If, however, this period is accepted as an appropriate dating of the list, although it would suit the foremost position of Libnah, it seems unlikely that Hebron, by ~~this time~~ an unimportant garrison town in a system of fortresses, and therefore of little significance, should have contained an important levitical community, the record of whose existence has survived. Hebron experienced the climax of its historic career during the reign of David. Subsequent to the reigns of David and Solomon it became part of the system of fortresses built by Rehoboam without any undue celebrity (cf. II Chr. 11.10), and ultimately fell to the Edomites during the exile. If the date of the list's

16. cf. II Kgs. 23.31; 24.18; Jer. 52.1.

formulation is placed in the Davidic period when Hebron as royal capital of Judah was enjoying the zenith of its long and illustrious career which had begun in patriarchal times¹⁷, it is most probable that the Levites of Hebron would have insisted on their ascendancy over the Libnite group. Thus the era of Judges would appear to be the period most appropriate for the formulation of these levitical groups, when Libnah may have enjoyed sufficient prominence to claim a predominant position over the Hebron group, still on the steady ascent to fame, and other levitical groups in the vicinity¹⁸.

A closer examination of the names contained in the verse in question may shed some further light. A locally connected element stands beside a personally connected one. Both are represented by two and three members respectively, each member having its own independent and individual pre-history. Libnah was originally an important Canaanite city, with a king of its own, which succumbed to the Israelite invasion of Joshua (cf. Jos. 10.29 f). As already stated, its leading families were connected through marriage with

17. cf. K. Möhlenbrink, 'Die levitischen Überlieferungen des Alten Testaments' Z.A.W. 1934, pp. 184-231.

18. So L. Waterman, 'Some determining factors in the northward progress of Levi', J.A.O.S. 1931, pp. 375-380, who takes into consideration that sufficient time must be allowed for the Mushi group, which he identifies with Moses, to be relegated from its original position of prominence to its present position in the list of levitical families recorded in Num. 26.58.

the Judaeen royal house as late as the days of Zedekiah¹⁹. Hebron, according to Num. 13.22 was built seven years before Zoan and would thus be older than Memphis. This statement may be rooted in the context of connecting the establishment of the city with the military movement of the Hyksos. Following the Israelite conquest it became a Calebite town and was eventually absorbed in Judah. The identity of the next two groups is difficult to trace. Mahli and Mushi are always named together and may represent two levitical families that originally had very close associations²⁰. The word Mushi, having the same consonants as Moses, has often been regarded as designating the family of Levites directly descending from Moses. It is possible that the group may have had some peculiar affinity with Moses, perhaps as preservers of the Mosaic tradition. The last name enumerated, Korah, shifts widely in the genealogies and is entirely absent from some of them²¹.

19. G. Hölscher in his article Levi in Pauly-Wissowa Real-Encyclopädie ..., XII 2, Cols 2155-2208, suggests that the word 'Libni' means 'the white ones' from the root לָבַן

20. K. Möhlenbrink, op. cit., thinks that due to the fact of Mahli and Mushi always occurring together, a transcriber of the text accidentally inserted Mahli here, as it is absent from the LXX version of the list, and considers the LXX's placing of Korah in third place as original, its present position at the end of the list in the M.T. being subsequent to the incident in Num. 16 following which the Korahites were doubtless repressed.

21. See Note 15 in Appendix.

The southern origin of the name is supported by the fact that Korah was one of the sons of Esau born to him in Canaan (cf. Gen. 36.5, 14), and even more strongly supported by I Chr. 2.43 where he is recorded as the son of Hebron i.e. Calebite in origin and therefore located in the neighbourhood of Hebron. It appears from the five levitical settlements mentioned in this early list that the three for which some locality may be ascertained belong to the southern regions of Judah. The fact that these very early levitical groups existed in and around Hebron, the city of Caleb, and the probability that the traditions relating to the characteristic distinctiveness of the Levites originated in Kadesh, would seem to support the hypothesis already advanced that levitical elements moved into the southern regions of Canaan with the northward thrust led by Caleb from the Negeb.

The position of the levitical settlements cannot be without significance, and again the mention of Libnah and Hebron is of importance in this respect. Libnah was originally a Canaanite town of some significance, and the settlement of Israelites in it would have presumably incorporated its inhabitants into the Yahweh community. As the Levites were the followers of Moses par excellence and preservers of the pure Mosaic tradition of Yahwism which made them distinct from their fellow tribesmen in their dedication to Yahweh, they would have been regarded as an important

element in the integration of a Canaanite city into Israel. Their role at Hebron may have borne a double significance when it is remembered that the Calebites were not in fact part of the group that came out from Egypt, but represented one of the elements that became subsequently attached to Israel in the wilderness. It is doubtful if they were Yahweh worshippers before joining up with Israel in the wilderness, and on account of the recentness of their conversion to Israel's God (which may have been only nominal) it is very likely that on their settlement in the Canaanite city of Hebron they would either be influenced by the religion indigenous to the place or revert to their original faith. The Levites had to maintain the Yahweh influence amongst the Calebites, and at the same time propagate their religion among the native population. The association of the Levites with Judah rather than with Caleb indicates acknowledgement of the alien nature of Caleb, and implies that Judah was the strongest of the Israelite elements that had entered the promised land as part of the Calebite advance from the south. The concurrence of the traditions propagated by these Levites, and those which circulated among the southern tribes, but especially in Judah the strongest of them, must have been an important factor in the subsequent emergence of Judah into a position of pre-eminence over all the tribes of Israel. It could be possible, although

no definite conclusion may be reached, that the Levites in these settlements functioned at an amphictyonic shrine sited at Hebron where besides Judah and Caleb, Simeon, Othniel, Jerahmeel and the Kenizzites gathered to worship. However we have insufficient information to ascertain whether the Levites in these settlements claimed priestly status, although it is not improbable they did. It is evident from the meagre information available that Levites existed as a distinct group in Judaeen and Calebite towns, and being an entity distinct from the tribes in whose midst they lived, do not appear to have shared in the tribal allotment of land.

Ju. 17 and 18 contain a genuinely ancient tradition referring to the origin of the sanctuary and priesthood of Dan. The chapters recount how a rich Ephraimite Micah confessed to having some silver that belonged to his mother which he had taken without her knowledge, but which he subsequently restored. The silver was made into images and placed in a house specially designated for the purpose (cf. 17.5). One of Micah's sons whom he consecrated as priest was placed in charge of this shrine. Then a Judaeen Levite came on the scene and stayed with Micah as his guest (cf. 17.7 ff). Micah now installed the Levite as priest, presumably in place of his son, and promised to pay him ten shekels of silver a year and to provide him with food and clothes. Micah was pleased to have a Levite

as his priest and the terms of engagement appear to have been mutually satisfactory (cf. 17.13). Chapter 18 opens by relating the plight of the Danites, who had hitherto been unable to acquire a permanent possession in Canaan, and sent from their territory in the south-west scouts to reconnoitre the land²². The scouts on passing through the highlands of Ephraim stopped at Micah's house and consulted his oracle. Having received a favourable response they continued northwards and found Laish at the sources of the Jordan inviting attack by its isolated situation and the unguarded security of the people. On their return to their kindred they recounted all they had seen, and on the strength of their report six hundred fighting men of Dan migrated northwards stopping at the house of Micah en route (cf. 18.14 ff). There they removed the images of Micah by a display of force, and also carried off the Levite, who willingly succumbed (cf. 18.20).

22. The narrative does not imply that all the Danites joined in the expedition to Laish completely abandoning their original home around Eshtaol adjacent to Judah. There is no intimation, either in the story of Samson, or in this chapter, of Philistine pressure which might have forced the Danites from their settlements. The failure of the Danites to establish themselves is better attributed to the stubborn resistance of the native population of lowland Amorites cf. 1.34. The removal of a considerable part of the tribe may have left room for those who remained behind. The Song of Deborah shows that already by that time i.e. 1100 B.C. the tribe was in its northern territory cf. 5.17. The migration related in Chapter 18 may therefore, with considerable probability, be assigned to a time not very long after the Israelite settlement in Canaan.

Micah and his neighbours pursued the Danites but when they realized the deficiency of their numbers, they were forced to retreat, and the Danites continued northwards to the city of Laish where they ultimately settled and gave it their name. The image of Micah was installed and the Levite appointed priest at its shrine. From him a line of priests descended who functioned at Dan until the captivity of the land by Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria (cf. II Kgs. 15.29), but a variant tradition in the final verse of the chapter associates the duration of the Danite priesthood with the destruction of Shiloh.

The narrative is composite. The inventory of Micah's idols, ephod, teraphim, pesel and massekhah in various permutations is confusing. The origin of the first two is apparently dependent on 17.5 and the derivation of the other two is related in 17.2-4. Consequently it is argued that the use of the terms ephod and teraphim belongs to one source, and pesel and massekhah to another. In the verses that describe the robbery of Micah's sanctuary i.e. 18.14-21 conflicting representations occur, and the confusion resulting from the attempt to combine them has been increased by various glosses. v. 17 states that the spies removed the images while the priest stood at the entrance with six hundred Danites, which suggests that they entered the house specially designated for the idols (cf. 17.5); but the following verse records that they went into

Micah's house and removed the images from there. v.20 on the other hand attributes the removal of the idols to the priest himself. Finally, the two statements concerning the duration of the cult at Dan (cf. 18.30,31) cannot derive from the same hand. In almost all the passages where there are redundancies and the text is confused, it is possible to trace two strands of narrative, but to which of the two existing sources they should be attributed there is no satisfactory criteria to determine²³.

In 17.5 it is stated that Micah had a shrine, literally a house of gods, which sheltered the idol or object of worship in the same way as the house of God contained the ark at Shiloh (cf. 18.31). A house was only necessary where there was an image or an oracle. The commoner representatives of the deity, i.e. the asherah (sacred post) or stone pillar (massebhah) stood in the open air on the high place, or beneath the sacred tree. Micah was the self-styled patron of this ecclesiastical establishment similar to Gideon who was

23. Any attempt at a reconstruction in detail must at best be one of several possibilities. C.F. Burney, Book of Judges, p. 416, considers that the narrative presents a combination of two ancient traditions from J and E which were in all essentials strikingly similar. A. Murtonen, 'Some thoughts on Ju. 17 and 18', V.T.1951, pp. 223,4, singles out three strands relating to three different personages - the son of Micah (cf. 17.5), a very aged man (cf. 17.10), a youth from Bethlehem (cf. 17.11), and considers that the primitive narrative has been leviticalized to legitimate the priesthood of Dan.

proprietor of the cultic set-up at Ophrah (cf. 8.27). The ephod made by Gideon from seventeen hundred shekels of gold and installed in the sanctuary at Ophrah as an object of worship was clearly an idol of some kind. Micah's ephod and the teraphim, with which it is constantly associated in this narrative, also appear to be idols²⁴, for when the Danites carry off the ephod and teraphim, Micah accuses them of taking his gods which he has made (cf. Ju. 18.24). As the previous verse relates to a molten and graven image it appears that Micah was engaged in a Yahweh cult of rather spurious nature, possibly containing Canaanite elements, but as he was a zealous worshipper of Yahweh there is no intention in the narrative to brand his shrine and the sanctuary at Dan as idolatrous foundations²⁵. Having erected his idols in his shrine, Micah now required a priest to take charge of his shrine and consult the oracle. This is a departure from ancient custom in which the head of the family or tribe assumed the role of priest. From the evidence available it does not appear that a priest was necessary prior to this period

24. See Note 16 in Appendix.

25. Although Micah's image was made of silver which he had stolen from his mother, the greater part having been kept back by fraud, it is by no means clear that the author intended to cast reproach on either Micah's shrine or that established at Dan. If such had been his prime motive he would surely have begun by telling of the theft, but this is not so nor is there any trace of contempt or even condemnation in the following narrative.

to perform sacrifice or consult the oracle. The Patriarchs performed sacrifice without the slightest hint of a priest being present²⁶, and Gideon was commanded by Yahweh to offer burnt offering without any suggestion of his having priestly status (cf. 6.25 ff). Moreover, there is no evidence of the service of a priest at Gideon's ephod. Hence it is surprising to find that Micah refrains from assuming priestly status at his own sanctuary, and may indicate in the consecration of his own son an early tendency towards the allocation of priestly functions to an individual who is specifically designated to discharge them. No special qualification is assumed for the investiture of Micah's son, his office is obviously not hereditary nor is it a lifelong profession, for on the arrival of the Levite, the priest is set aside. The consecration of Micah's son as priest might be compared with the consecration of Eleazar, son of Abinadab (cf. I. Sam. 7.1). Neither appears to have any special training for his office nor do they come of priestly families. When someone better suited to the office appears, no more is heard of Micah's priest; and when the ark is removed from Kiriath-Jearim, Eleazar sinks into oblivion. It is evident in both accounts that some person

26. Yahweh's command to Abraham in Gen. 22 to sacrifice Isaac does not assume the presence of a priest, nor does the sacrifice offered by Jacob cf. Gen. 31.54. In later times Elijah performed sacrifice on Mt. Carmel without any mention of his having priestly office or of a priest being present cf. I Kgs. 18.23 ff.

specifically consecrated to the office of priest was regarded as necessary to take charge of the object which represented the deity or in which its spirit was considered to reside. Furthermore, it is clear that priests of the Yahweh cult were not necessarily Levites. Non-levitical priesthoods were probably quite numerous and no doubt some of them enjoyed considerable acclaim. In this way Jeroboam could appoint priests from outside levitical circles without effecting a complete innovation and break with ancient practice (cf. I.Kgs. 12.31).

The Levite is introduced in v. 7 as a young man from Bethlehem in Judah of the family of Judah, who was a Levite and sojourned in Bethlehem. The statement appears prima facie contradictory, for the Levite is stated to be Judaeen by birth, but the expression חֵטְלִי בְּבֵית־לֶחֶם implies that he was enjoying the rights of protection extended to an alien or sojourner by the tribe in whose midst he dwelt - a seemingly impossible situation since it was his own tribe that was treating him as an alien. LXX^B attempts a solution by omitting 'Judah' after Bethlehem, but this does not alleviate the difficulty, for, although the sense would be that of a young man of Judaeen birth who was a Levite and sojourned in Bethlehem, Bethlehem is clearly a Judaeen town (cf. v.8). An alternative solution is to omit the words 'from the family of Judah', but this emendation receives no support from the versions. The last thing that would occur to a scribe would be to represent a Levite as a member of another tribe. Moreover the

textual value of codex Vaticanus is inferior to Alexandrinus which agrees with the M.T. as it stands. If the text were reduced in either of the ways indicated the information about the Levite would also be reduced, and we would learn only of his foreignness but have no information about the real sense lying behind the word 'Levite'. Only in the full text as it stands the Levite is clearly not meant as an adherent of a secular tribe Levi. Taken at its face value the verse means that there existed a Levite (what this word denoted was evidently well known), who lived in Bethlehem Judah but as an alien did not belong to the tribe in whose midst he dwelt. As one who sojourned as an alien rather than lived as a member of the community, he did not possess full tribal rights entitling him to a possession of land amongst the members of the tribe where he sojourned. This landless, tribally-alien Levite is further attributed to one of the families of Judah which does not deny his alien nature or refute his connection with Judah. But since a לֵוִי has a legal status of tribelessness and landlessness which are practically identical in archaic agrarian society, it must obviously be assumed that a person connected by blood and therefore derived from the tribe lived as a Levite and a foreigner or in a position analogous to these. Therefore, the designation of the Levite in this context cannot denote adherence to a secular tribe in the sense of kinship but designates a distinctive character. This

distinctiveness is in line with the tradition of levitical sacrifice in the service of Yahweh. The Levite as an Israelite must have belonged to one of the tribes of Israel but in his rejection of kindred he loses his inheritance of tribal land and becomes an alien.

The following verse recounts the departure of the Levite from his city in search of a place where he could sojourn, and in the course of his wandering he came to the house of Micah at Mt. Ephraim. Micah inquires for the Levite's identity and the Levite explains who he is and what his purpose is. On receipt of this information, Micah invites the Levite to stay with him and to be a father and priest to him. The connecting notion is probably that of a revered adviser and counsellor. The use of the word 'father' here does not necessarily imply that this Levite was a man of mature years in contrast to the youth of verse 7²⁷. The Levite sojourned in Micah's house and received ten shekels of silver a year, food and clothes, which was considered an advantageous offer for the Levite. Micah now installs him in the office of priest. The appointment of the Levite as priest of Micah's shrine does not provide any further information about the manner and character of this Levite or Levites generally, since it would appear that

27. ²⁸ is a title of respect given to prophets (cf. II Kgs. 6.21) and priests, as also the king's chief minister cf. Gen. 45.8.

any person who seemed suitable could function as priest. Thus the Levite was as eligible as Micah's son or anyone else for that matter. However, the satisfaction expressed by Micah in v. 13 at having installed a Levite to function as priest of his shrine is accountable from the fact that by doing so he has procured the special blessing of Yahweh. It is evident from this verse that the Levite not only stood in a special relationship to his kindred and environment generally, but he also had a unique relationship with Yahweh. This distinctive feature of the Levite is valued so positively that his appointment as priest seems to insure the special blessing of Yahweh. To conclude that this special relationship with Yahweh simply exists in that the Levite as such is a professional priest would be an incorrect assessment of the basic meaning of the word 'Levite'. Such a preconceived notion is not once suggested by the context of this passage; in fact, the detailed notice relating to the origin and past of the Levite in v. 7 does not give the least indication of his having any previous priestly office. The Levite had merely to state to Micah the fact that he was a Levite in v. 9, to be admitted to his house and later consecrated to discharge priestly functions at his shrine. This was sufficient credential in itself. It is quite clear from this chapter that the designations 'Levite' and 'priest' are two distinct terms which described two different phenomena

in no way identical. The Levite here is fundamentally one devoted to Yahweh at the cost of forfeiting the privileges and benefits of a member of one of the Israelite tribes, and in virtue of this distinctive vocation an alien even amongst his own people. Accordingly he presents himself to Micah as a Levite, not as a professional priest, and consequently he is consecrated for priestly service in exactly the same way as the non-levitical son of Micah, and Micah is pleased that instead of his own son he now has a Levite as his priest. In view of these considerations it seems that the Levite, although perhaps infrequently met with, was nevertheless a well known phenomenon in Canaan²⁸.

In the following chapter the Levite plays a passive role. He repays Micah's kindness to him with gross ingratitude, and willingly accepts the offer of the Danites to become priest to a tribe rather than to an individual (cf. 18.19). The Levite accordingly makes off with the Danites and becomes priest at their shrine which they set up with Micah's images. 18.30 records that Jonathan ben Gershom ben Moses and his descendants functioned as priests to the tribe of Dan until the captivity of the land, while the following verse dates the termination of the Danite shrine back to the fall

28. The old view advanced by Wellhausen in his Prolegomena to the history of Israel, pp. 140 ff, that the distinction between priests and Levites was only made in post-Josianic times cannot be upheld on the evidence of this chapter.

of Shiloh²⁹. It would appear that these are variant traditions. The question arises whether these verses contain a genuinely historical remembrance relating to the origin of the Danite priesthood, or if the emphasis is on some later tradition. As the name Jonathan is nowhere else represented as the ancestor of the Danite priesthood or even as the head of a family of Levites in the levitical genealogies, a genuine memory could well be preserved here that derived the Danite priesthood from Micah's Levite named Jonathan. It is remarkable however, that the author should have concealed the Levite's illustrious pedigree when he introduced him to the narrative in 17.7, and that there is no mention of it in the Levite's reply to Micah's question regarding his identity (cf. 17.9). The Levite is recorded there to be of Judaeen family, not Mosaic. It is possible that the name Gershom was derived from the phrase $\text{גֶרְשֹׁם בֶּן־נִחֵם}$ in v.7, and was subsequently identified with the son of Moses (cf. Ex. 2.22). Hence the tradition of a Danite priesthood which claimed descent from a Judaeen Levite named Jonathan was later, perhaps after the Assyrian invasion of the region in 733, connected up on the basis of 17.7 with Gershom who was Moses' firstborn son, and also figures predominantly in levitical genealogies as the eldest son of Levi. On

29. J. Bewer, 'The Composition of Ju. 17 and 18'. A.J.S.L., 1913, pp. 261 - 283, reads נִחֵם בֶּן־נִחֵם for $\text{גֶרְשֹׁם בֶּן־נִחֵם}$ in v. 30 according with the date in v. 31. The emendation has no support from the versions.

all accounts this additional information about Jonathan's ancestry may have been deliberately inserted to neutralise the infamy of the Danites' behaviour by legitimising the levitical priesthood of Jonathan. A later writer took offence at this whole combination which, in view of the entire character of the story, is not surprising and changed Moses to Manasseh. On the other hand, the close association that existed between Moses and the Levites may on the basis of 17.7, or otherwise, have developed into a genealogy which advanced the prestige of this priesthood in the succeeding generations without any thought of obviating the heinous origin of the cultic establishment at Dan.

It is important to note that at the outset Jonathan sojourned as an alien, or in a position analogous to this among his own people, with no possession of land and therefore no means of livelihood. He received the charitable hospitality of Micah, but still retained his distinctive character in accordance with the basic levitical feature of attachment to Yahweh. His allegiance to Yahweh to the exclusion of all ties of kindred made him especially eligible for priestly office and thereby procured divine blessing for the patron of the shrine at which he functioned. This was not something fundamental to his basic vocation but what Micah bestowed upon him. He ended up by finally becoming priest to the tribe of Dan and established a dynasty of priests. Doubtless this was not an isolated incident,

but a process that must have gone on throughout Israel's pre-exilic history. As a result, different categories of Levites eventually emerged; those who remained faithful to their status of Yahweh service and lived as families, who, although an integral part of Israel, did not enjoy the privileges of full tribal membership and were thus dependent on public alms, those who assumed priestly office, and finally those who belonged to levitical priestly families and claimed their priestly office from heredity but who at the same time may have derived their status from a progenitor who originally belonged to a community which, in virtue of its loyalty to Yahweh, was distinct from the rest of Israel; this progenitor, subsequently becoming a priest at a shrine, founded a dynasty of levitical priests. 'Ainsi soit en Juda où residait d'abord Jonathan, soit en Ephraïm où il sejourna ensuite, soit dans la tribu où il fixe son domicile définitif, on apprécie le rôle, l'importance et le bienfait du lévritisme'³⁰.

The second of the supplementary narratives to the book of Judges records the tribal conflict with Benjamin, its cause and consequences. The concubine of a Levite sojourning in the highlands of Ephraim deserts him, and returns to her father's home in Bethlehem Judah but is retrieved by the Levite. On their return journey they have to seek overnight accommodation at Gibeah in Benjamin where they are entertained by an old man who is

30. cf. C. Hauret, 'Aux origines du sacerdoce Danite à propos de Ju. 18.30, 31', Mélanges Bibliques Rédigés en l'honneur de André Robert (1957).

not a native of the place (cf. 19.16 ff). The men of the town set upon them and the Levite surrenders his concubine but finds her dead the following morning (cf. 19.26-28). He then proceeds home (we are not told where this is) and cuts the woman's body into twelve pieces which he sends to the twelve tribes in Israel calling upon them to avenge the outrage. The Israelite assembly meet and resolve to punish the guilty, but the Benjaminites refuse to surrender the culprits and war ensues in which the Benjaminites are eventually crushed, only six hundred surviving the conflict. The historical character of chapters 20 and 21.1-21 is difficult to maintain. In the description of the war there is hardly any semblance of reality. The numbers are exaggerated to absurdity, the levy of Israelites is 400,000 men, the Benjaminites muster 26,000 (cf. 20.15,17). In the first two days fighting, the Israelites lose 40,000 men while the Benjaminites sustain no losses, however on the third day the Benjaminites are almost annihilated (cf. 20.30 ff). The spontaneous and united action of all Israel is even more surprising than the prodigious numbers. It is evident from the traditions of the period that there was little unity among the Israelite tribes, in fact the success of one tribe could motivate the jealousy of others (cf. 8.1 ff; 12.1 ff). Even in the struggle against the Canaanites under Sisera when the whole of the land that Israel had acquired was in danger of invasion, Deborah was unable to unite all the tribes in the common interest. In chapters 20 and 21, all twelve tribes are gathered together as one man

'from Dan to Beersheba and the land of Gilead' and consult in solemn assembly. This unity does not appear to be a political one but a religious bond in which Israel acts, not as a nation, but as a congregation, the only leaders who are named being the elders of the congregation. This concept of Israel as a congregation instead of a people or a nation is characteristic of the priestly writer and the Chronicler. The evidences of a very late date however, are mainly confined to chapters 20 and 21.1-14. Chapters 19 and 21.15-25, on the other hand, reflect similar characteristics to the other early narratives of Judges, chapter 19 having an obvious affinity with chapters 17 and 18, bears a note of antiquity. The original narrative must have related how the crime at Gibeah aroused indignation amongst the Israelites and how, when Benjamin refused to surrender the guilty parties, they not only swore to interdict the connubium with that tribe but visited it with savage retribution which threatened its very existence. The fact that Benjamin was almost exterminated only a few generations before the time of Saul indicates the basic antiquity of the narrative.

With regard to the Levite, the death of whose concubine in such unfortunate circumstances motivated the whole of the ensuing events, it is noteworthy that he, like Micah's Levite in Bethlehem, is described as sojourning in Mt. Ephraim (cf. 19.1). This could be a

coincidence, but since the narrative is entirely unconnected with the preceding chapter it seems justifiable to assume that this non-tribal status was characteristic of the Levites. As in chapter 17, there is no suggestion of this Levite having any priestly attribute. The nature of the crime and the violation of the legal rights of an alien were doubtless regarded with great disgust and animosity among the Israelites, yet grave as the crime was in which a tribeless alien whose concubine had been assaulted and his right of hospitality in another alien's house infringed, the fact that the party offended was a Levite accentuated the gravity of the offence and demanded immediate redress. Moreover, the statement that the Levite himself intimates the crime he has suffered to all the tribes (cf. 19.29), and the immediate response his message receives, shows the respect that this individual in his capacity as Levite could claim from the whole nation. As one who stood in a special relationship to Yahweh the God of Israel, and had in his unique position a legal right to hospitality wherever he should care to seek it amongst the Israelite tribes, appear to have been well known features of the Levite in virtue of which he could claim national attention for his cause and occasion the severe humiliation of the tribe to which the guilty belonged. As in the previous narrative the unique status of the Levite is acknowledged. Although this Levite sojourns in Ephraim, through his concubine he was connected with Judah (cf. 19.2). Micah's Levite

came from Judah, and the early levitical settlements were located in Judah and the Negeb area. It would appear from the evidence cited that the hypothesis of an infiltration from the south northwards of levitical elements is borne out. It was in southern Palestine that the original domicile of the Levites existed, which they used as a basis from which they infiltrated the whole of Canaan and propagated the Yahweh faith. In the centuries following settlement the esteem of the Levites became increasingly enhanced and ultimately reached its climax in the program of Deuteronomy.

ELI, ABIATHAR AND ZADOK

According to the traditions relating to the childhood of Samuel, contained in the early chapters of I Samuel, towards the end of the period of Judges, the ark was located at Shiloh where Eli and his sons were priests (cf. I Sam. 1.9). Here the young Samuel was brought in fulfilment of a vow made by his mother (cf. I Sam. 1.11). The picture of Eli in this narrative, sitting at the door of the sanctuary as Hannah approached, gives the impression of a simple priest attached to a modest cultic establishment, despite its importance in the national consciousness as the shrine of Israel's tribal palladium. The family appear well entrenched in the right to function at the sanctuary, and to have depended to a considerable extent for their livelihood on portions of the sacrificial offerings (cf. I Sam. 2.12-17). However their right to continue in priestly office was called in question by the conduct of Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, the correction of which was considered the responsibility of Eli as head of the family. The culpable conduct of Eli's sons, with regard to the allotted portions of the sacrifice, which gave rise to great public scandal, and his own omission to rectify this situation, were understood by the historian as the causes of the calamity that befell the family. In the course of the wars with the Philistines both of Eli's sons were slain in the defeat inflicted on the

Israelites at Ebenezer, and during the same engagement the ark fell into enemy hands (cf. I Sam. 4.1-11). The news of this disastrous event occasioned Eli's death and brought on the travail of Phinehas' widow who expired, having given birth to a son. On the point of death the mother named the child Ichabod to signify that with the capture of the ark and the untimely death of her husband and his family, the glory of Yahweh had departed from Israel.

The threatening prophecy of a man of God, recorded in I Sam. 2.27-36, is often taken to contain later additions to the basic narrative. The separation of the essential kernel from the work of later editors is a difficult exercise to perform with any measure of assured accuracy. Yet something of this later revision may be detected in the last two verses of the prophecy. From the context of the opening chapters in I Samuel, Samuel is depicted as the person chosen to fulfil Yahweh's purpose, and contrasted as such with Eli, who has failed in the divine charge entrusted to him and his family. It would therefore agree with the context if these verses had referred to Yahweh's choice of Samuel in place of Eli and his sons. Instead of this, the content of vv. 35, 36 deflects the focus of attention away from Samuel to the trustworthy priest (Zadok) for whom Yahweh wishes to establish a house for ever. However, it is reasonable to conjecture that in their original form vv. 35, 36 may in fact have referred to Samuel whom Yahweh wished to appoint in place of the family of Eli. Linguistic usages, commonly employed

by the Deuteronomist and found in this narrative are suggestive of Deuteronomic influence¹, which is especially evident in these two final verses alluding to the dismissal from office of the priests, here envisaged as the descendants of Eli, who as a result are forced to beg a living at the shrine of this faithful priest. These circumstances reflect the plight of rural priests following the Josianic reform.

The anonymous prophet, relating the message of Yahweh, declares the divine choice of the family of Eli in Egypt to serve Yahweh as priests, to offer upon the altar, burn incense and to bear the ephod. The duties of priestly office mentioned here include serving in the outer court where the altar stood, serving in the inner court in which the altar of incense was situated, and the giving of oracles, in short, the cult in its entirety. The writer thus casually associates three priestly functions that were probably never contemporary. Incense can simply mean the smoke of a burnt offering but as such sacrifice is covered by the first clause 'to offer upon mine altar' that cannot be what is meant here, but rather the burning of aromatic substances. The main function of the priest in early times, as the rest of I Samuel makes clear, was to bear the ephod and interpret the instruction of the oracle.

1. The term אֵלֹהִים cf. v. 28b appears in Dt. 18.1 and elsewhere only in P, never in earlier writings. The words אֵלֹהִים in v. 29 are distinctly Deuteronomic in style, while the term אֵלֹהִים in v. 30 is frequently found in the writings of the Deuteronomist.

Even as late as the time of Jeremiah the chief concern of the priest was still the law (cf. Jer. 18.18).

Incense (קֶטֶר) is not found in early literature at all, its first mention being found in Jer. 6.20², where it is regarded as an exotic and unnecessary innovation in worship. The concept of a priesthood functioning at the elaborate type of cult envisaged here since the period of bondage bears no relation to the older traditions relating to that period in which sacrifice did not require the service of a priest, but was performed by the head of the family or tribal group³.

vv. 27, 28 appear rather to indicate the thought of the Deuteronomist who understood all priests to be members of the levitical tribe chosen from all the tribes of Israel for the purpose of ministering before Yahweh (cf. Dt. 18.5)⁴.

The indictment now follows which accuses Eli's sons of malappropriating the offerings, and charges Eli himself of honouring his sons more than Yahweh, thereby laying special stress on his share in the family's guilt. A formal threat is now pronounced. As

2. The word is mentioned along with burnt sacrifice in Dt. 33.9 which is discussed in the opening chapter of this thesis.
3. It has already been pointed out that the Patriarchs, Gideon, Manoah and Elijah all performed sacrifice without any indication of their having priestly status or of a priest being present. Moreover, Gideon was proprietor of a shrine with an ephod but no mention is made of a priest in the narrative relating to it.
4. See Note 17 in Appendix.

the earlier part of the arraignment recalled the former divine promise to the house of Eli, that it should remain in permanent possession of priestly office, the following verses must signify the revoking of this promise. That is the meaning of the clause 'far be it from me' - only those who honour Yahweh can in turn be honoured by him i.e. be entrusted with high and responsible office. The following verse would be expected to record the deprivation of Eli's family and the appointment of his successor, but instead a second declaration states that in the days to come his strength will be weakened and there will no longer be an old man in his house⁵. In view of the almost identical phrasing at the end of the following verse, and the fact that the LXX omits the last part of this verse, it may be justifiable to eliminate it from the text. v. 32 states that Eli will witness distress in Yahweh's habitation⁶, which presumably means Shiloh, and prosperity in Israel⁷. It may be possible to interpret the first part of this sentence as denoting the victory of the Philistines and their capture of the ark, and the second part the period of national prosperity that was achieved following the establishment of the monarchy under

5. The LXX vocalizes הַיָּמִים as הַיָּמִי but this by no means agrees so well with the predicate יָדַל .
 יָדַל is used of strength in Ps. 10.15; 83.9 (E.V.v.8); Job. 22.8.
6. If the word מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם which usually occurs in poetry and more elevated prose is correct e.g. מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם of heaven (Dt. 26.15), מִן־הַמִּקְדָּשׁ of the temple (Ps. 26.8), we must either read מִן־הַמִּקְדָּשׁ or מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם .
7. The subject of the predicate יָדַל is desiderated. Either מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם has fallen out after it, or read מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם .

David. Eli learns the ominous portents of the first prophecy from the tidings of the national calamity at Ebenezer before his sudden death (cf. I Sam. 4.12-18), but the second did not occur until long after his death. Hence interpreted in this way, the two events are not contemporaneous with each other, and therefore not in sequence with the preceding verse. A better sequence with v. 31 is achieved if the verse in question is understood to mean that Eli will experience the affliction of Yahweh's habitation at Shiloh as a result of the death of his two sons and the loss of the ark, the significance of which will appear so catastrophic that the rest of Israel, although suffering from Philistine invasion, will seem to prosper in comparison with the fate of Shiloh and its priesthood. The verse concludes by stating that the family of Eli shall be eternally cursed with the premature death of its members. Thus the house of Eli as a punishment for its behaviour loses its priestly status, and is subject to the curse of an eternal weakening that cuts short the life of its members and leaves them without a single individual to enjoy the wisdom and respect attributed to old age. A limitation to this punishment now follows. One member of the family will not be removed from his priestly office, but the retention of his office will only bring him sorrow. This limitation of the severity of the punishment is followed by a reiteration of the previous

pronouncement that no member of the family will survive to enjoy the honour ascribed to old age⁸.

The death of Phinehas and Hophni is connected with the sign recorded in v. 34. This is doubtless intended as a portent of events to come and a guarantee to Eli of the fulfilment of the prophecy. The declaration of such an assurance has its natural place at the beginning or end of the whole narrative, but not in the middle separating the prophecy already described from the concluding two verses. The impression is given in v. 34 that the prophecy is concluded and what follows is a later postscript. Furthermore, the content of these two final verses does not provide a natural conclusion to the fall of Eli's house and the capture of the ark, but appears much more concerned with a priestly family lasting from generation to generation. As already indicated, the verses in question seem to suggest Samuel as the faithful priest, and the statement that he shall walk before mine i.e. Yahweh's anointed, recalls Samuel's special relationship with Israel's first two kings. But the mention of a 'faithful house' and 'all the days' shows that the author already knows of a line of priests functioning over a long period of time. Moreover when v. 36 states, as a consequence of the replacement of Eli's family by the house of this faithful priest, the necessity for the deposed priests to beg

8. See Note 18 in Appendix.

some employment from the family that superseded them thereby earning sufficient means to sustain themselves, it is assumed that they find no employment as priests outside the one sanctuary where this favoured priesthood operates ad infinitum, which implies that this is the only sanctuary where Yahweh worship could legitimately take place. Hence these two verses bring us right up into the period following the Josianic reform. On the other hand, when the author speaks of the Jerusalem priesthood walking before the anointed for ever, he evidently does not know of the exile and must therefore have written before it, i.e. before 587.

The identity of the priest left to the house of Eli is difficult to ascertain. Ichabod may be conjectured, being the last surviving representative of the priestly family at Shiloh. If, however, he did survive to function in the office of priest, it is remarkable that no further evidence concerning him has survived. Hence it seems improbable that so obscure a figure should be one of the focal points of the narrative. Ahiah the priest of Saul who functioned at Gibeah, and who is recorded in I Sam. 14.3 as the great grandson of Eli could be considered as a possible identity. However the genealogy attributed to him, which is the sole evidence associating him with the Shiloh priesthood, comes under suspicion for a number of reasons. It is not the practice of the author to introduce a lengthy pedigree into a narrative except in the case of a principal character like Saul. Ahiah briefly

makes his sole appearance on the stage of Israel's history in this chapter in which he is bidden to consult the oracle (cf. v.19)⁹. The mention of a brother's name is unusual in a genealogy, and furthermore, it is unlikely that Ahitub whose grandson, Abiathar, was priest to David, should have been Ichabod's brother, since between the capture of the ark at Ebenezer and its removal from Kiriath-Jearim a period of a mere twenty years elapsed (cf. I Sam. 6.1; 7.2) before the end of which Abiathar was acting priest to David. The whole clause is devoid of syntax, and appears to have been the work of a scribe anxious to derive both Ahiah and the priests of Nob, with whom Abiathar was connected, from the house of Eli so that all priests, other than that mentioned in the closing verses of the prophecy, could be included in the condemnation of Eli¹⁰. The removal of Abiathar from priestly office and his banishment to Anathoth for the part he played in the court intrigue to set Adonijah on the throne were interpreted by the historian who recorded these events as the fulfilment of the prophecy against Eli (cf. I Kgs. 2.26 f).

9. In v.18 Saul commands Ahiah to bring forth the ark, but the LXX reads 'ephod' agreeing with v.3. The ephod and not the ark was the organ of divination, the predicate אֱלֹהִים frequently occurring with the noun אֱלֹהִים cf. I Sam. 23.9; 30.7.
10. M.Noth 'Samuel und Shilo' V.T.1963, pp. 390-400, interprets I Sam. 2.27-36 as a Zadokite polemic against the Shiloh priesthood and dates it not long after the disappearance of the ark from Shiloh and the fate of its priesthood. Although the editor may possibly have revised the passage for the purpose of authenticating the Zadokite priesthood, it is doubtful if the writer of the original kernel of the narrative had this object in mind.

Passages of this kind often occur in texts edited by the Deuteronomic school. They represent the theological explanation of the events which have been described. History was never conceived of by the Hebrews as a mere sequence of events, but what happened under the guidance of Yahweh. Men go their way in guilt or good favour, but Yahweh is omnipresent. Such prophetic insertions frequently offer a cross-section of history. They give an event its place in the context of the divine design extending throughout all time. However, the historian in his anxiety to interpret history in terms of Yahweh acting out his purpose among his chosen people, and so fitting it into a divine pattern, was in danger of distorting the historical facts to fit the scheme. The straightforward sense of I Kgs. 2.26, 27 relates to a period in David's life when Abiathar attended him as priest, carrying the ark of Yahweh, and when they had together suffered extraordinary and prolonged hardship. In fact such an association is never recorded in the traditions relating to David's life subsequent to his possession of the ark when he moved it from Kiriath-Jearim. Although David suffered great hardship and humiliation when he fled Jerusalem on the occasion of Absalom's rebellion, it is explicitly stated in II Sam. 15.29 that the ark did not accompany him on that occasion and that Abiathar was left with Zadok in Jerusalem where they were to act as spies in the court of Absalom¹¹.

11. The text of II Sam. 15.24-30 will be discussed later in this chapter.

There was only one period in the life of David when he endured protracted hardship in the company of Abiathar, and that was before he came to the throne, when for many months he led the life of an outlaw on the southern border in such constant fear of death that he finally sought refuge in the service of the hostile Philistine king of Gath (cf. I Sam. 22-30). Throughout that period Abiathar was likewise a fugitive from Saul's wrath and was ever at David's side ministering to him in moments of danger with the sacred oracle (cf. I Sam. 22.20 ff). The association of Abiathar with the ark would therefore appear to have arisen from the author's concept of him as the successor of the ark priesthood at Shiloh. But this is historically inaccurate as the misfortune experienced by the survivor of the house of Eli is not the result of his removal from priestly office, which he in fact retains (cf. I Sam. 2.33). Therefore it seems reasonable to identify the sole survivor of the Shiloh priesthood to remain functioning at the altar with Eli himself, who ends his days sorrowing over the fate of his family and the loss of the ark.

Of the three priesthods referred to above, the most illustrious due to its custody of the ark, was that which served at Shiloh. This priesthood was completely wiped out, its cult object captured by the enemy, and its shrine destroyed¹². The sole survivor an infant, after the record of his birth is never heard

12. See Note 19 in Appendix.

of again which, in view of the fate of his family, is not surprising. The second priesthood to come under consideration is that found at Gibeah and represented by Ahiah. He is recorded as the son of Ahitub, brother of Ichabod (cf. I Sam. 14.3), a pedigree already shown to be of doubtful authenticity. Ahiah is described as bearing the ephod, and in the corrected text of v.18¹³ Saul commanded that the ephod be consulted. Gibeah was the home of Saul (cf. I Sam. 10.26) and doubtless the transient celebrity of its famous son brought passing lustre to its local priest. The third priesthood mentioned - the family of Abiathar - resided at Nob and is recorded as descending from Ahitub and so connected with Ahiah of Gibeah and the Shiloh priesthood. However, if Shiloh was destroyed following the defeat of the Israelites at Ebenezer and the capture of the ark, its priesthood subsequently taking over the priestly establishment at Nob, one would expect to find Samuel in the principal position. Furthermore it was when Saul was in Gibeah, the city of Ahiah, that he heard of David being in Benjamin (cf. I Sam. 22.6 ff), and from the context of the ensuing narrative Nob is presumably implied¹⁴ which weakens the possibility of a

13. cf. note 9.

14. J. Blenkinsopp, 'Kiriath-Jearim and the Ark', J.B.L. 1969, pp. 143-157, considers that one aspect of the legitimization of the Davidic dynasty involved the association and eventual amalgamation of the southern Levites with the ark priesthood of the northern tribes. However, the genealogies associating Ahiah, Abiathar and Zadok with the family of Eli would appear to be later than the time of David. Furthermore there is no evidence that the priesthoods at Gibeah or Nob were levitical.

connection between Ahiah and Abiathar¹⁵. The narrative of I Sam. 21 makes evident that Nob was a sanctuary of some prominence. It was situated between Anathoth and Jerusalem (cf. Is. 10.32) in Benjamin (cf. Nh. 11.32), and must have lain within a few miles of Gibeah, but its precise location is unknown. Ahimelech was the chief priest of the shrine and as such presided over the large corpus of subordinate priests that served it. The hospitality afforded by Ahimelech to David, who deceived the priest into thinking he was on the king's business (cf. I Sam. 21.2), involved the community in the rivalry between Saul and David. When Saul heard that Ahimelech had aided David, he summoned the whole community to Gibeah for questioning in the course of which Ahimelech admitted the act but denied any treasonable intent. Nevertheless, Saul was not satisfied and at his command the whole priestly house, eighty-five in number, was hewn down. Only one, Ahimelech's son, escaped perhaps because he had been left at home when the rest of the community made the fateful journey to Gibeah. He fled to David with the ephod, the sacred cult object of the Nob sanctuary, and was received with promises of protection (cf. I Sam. 22.23).

15. It is noteworthy that neither Eli nor Ahiah figures in the Chronicler's genealogies. The line of Abiathar is associated with the Aaronite Ithamar, cf. I Chr. 24.3, 6, 31 where Ahimelech is recorded as Zadok's contemporary, and in v.6 to be the son rather than the father of Abiathar. In I Chr. 18.16 Ahimelech is presented as Abimelech, but twelve versions read Ahimelech.

Hence, in the light of these considerations it seems clear that Eli, Ahiah and Abiathar represent three different priesthoods.

Yet another priest comes into prominence in the traditions associated with the establishment of the monarchy in Israel. The question of Zadok's origin has always aroused interest, but no assured solution to this problem has yet been achieved. He first appears on record beside Abiathar as a priest officiating at the Jerusalem cult during the reign of David (cf. II Sam. 8.17). In this verse Zadok is stated to be the son of Ahitub, and as already pointed out an Ahitub is recorded as the father of Saul's priest Ahiah (cf. I Sam. 14.3), and the grandfather of Abiathar (cf. I Sam. 22.20). The same Ahitub however, cannot refer here to Zadok's father since it is clear from I Sam. 2.35 that the line of Zadok superseded the family of Eli, and there is not the slightest indication that Zadok was connected with the priests of Gibeah or Nob¹⁶. The verse is corrupt; the reference to Ahimelech as the son of Abiathar is incorrect and may be read Abiathar ben Ahimelech with the Syriac version. Abiathar appears beside Zadok as his contemporary and colleague (cf. II Sam. 20.25) and according to I Kgs. 4.4 he was still priest with Zadok in Jerusalem at the beginning of Solomon's reign. The corruption, however, appears to be

16. Ahitub is also recorded in I Chr. 18.16 as the father of Zadok, a mistake which may be attributed to the corruption of this verse.

deeper, for in consideration of I Sam. 22.20 it becomes evident that instead of Abiathar ben Ahimelech and Zadok ben Ahitub, Zadok and Abiathar ben Ahimelech ben Ahitub should be read¹⁷. Thus it appears that Zadok was originally a parvenu without pedigree. Yet if this were so his promotion from relative obscurity to such an important position is remarkable. The fact that Abiathar had shared the deprivations of David after narrowly escaping the fate suffered by his house for sheltering him, makes it seem improbable that the king should have raised a mere upstart to equal status with Abiathar without some compelling reason.

I Chr. 12.24-41 (E.V.vv. 23-40) contains a census of Israelite troops that mustered at Hebron with the intention of making David king over the whole of Israel in place of Saul. Among the troops enumerated was a certain Zadok with twenty-two captains of his father's house (cf. v.29, E.V.v.28). The prodigious numbers attributed to the contingents and the lack of evidence associating this Zadok with David's priest of the same name, do not inspire confidence in the use of the text as a secure basis from which to determine the derivation of Zadok. Moreover, the mention of an Aaronite contingent under the leadership of Jehoiada in the previous

17. This emendation is adopted by J. Wellhausen, cf. Prolegomena to the history of Israel, p. 143. The Chronicler represents Zadok descending from Eleazar the eldest surviving son of Aaron, which he contrasts with the house of Ithamar to which the line of Abiathar is attributed cf. I Chr. 24.1-5.

verse does not appear to assume priestly status for the Zadok in question here¹⁸. Elsewhere the Chronicler regards Zadok as the chief representative of the Aaronite priesthood. Another solution attempted in determination of Zadok's identity, associates him with one of the bearers of the ark on its journey from Kiriath-Jearim to Jerusalem (cf. II Sam.6). As Abiathar was priest of the ephod, it was necessary to have a priest knowledgeable in the custody of the ark, therefore a priest who had functioned at a place where the ark had been formerly located. Hence the sole survivor of the ark's two custodians at its former abode in Kiriath-Jearim would seem to have been the most suitable candidate for this position. This person is called Ahio in II Sam. 6.3, 4, a name unusual in Hebrew giving rise to difficulty as the LXX shows by translating it with $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \omicron\iota\ \alpha\delta\epsilon\lambda\phi\omicron\iota$ which implies an unspecified number of brothers as custodians of the ark with only one in particular being named i.e. Uzzah. As the word אֶחָיו is unusual as a Hebrew proper name, it may have originally been pointed to read אֶחָיו i.e. his brother, an attempt being subsequently made to change it to a proper name to suit

18. C.E. Hauer, 'Who was Zadok?', J.B.L., 1963, pp. 89-94, defends the authenticity of this verse, and attributes Zadok's promotion to his alignment with David previous to the capture of Jerusalem, where Hauer considers he was the priest of the pre-Israelite shrine of the Jebusites. Josephus Antiquities VII.ii. p. 256 also identifies this Zadok with Zadok the priest of David's shrine at Jerusalem.

the context. In this way the original Gibeonite origin of Zadok, who appeared at David's court for the first time after this episode, and whose ancestry is never disclosed, was deliberately concealed by the narrator. Chronological difficulties however militate against the acceptance of this view. The ark was taken to Kiriath-Jearim on its return from the Philistines some years before Saul became king, and remained there for twenty years (cf. I Sam. 7.1,2). On its removal from Kiriath-Jearim to Jerusalem it was delayed three months following the death of Uzzah, and was kept in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite (cf. II Sam. 6.10 ff). Apart from the incident recorded in II Sam. 15.24-29, the ark subsequently remained in Jerusalem during the thirty-three years of David's reign (cf. II Sam. 5.5)¹⁹. Thus from the time the ark was first located in Kiriath-Jearim to the court intrigue concerning the succession to the throne which resulted in Abiathar's disgrace, a period of approximately fifty-five years elapsed, perhaps even longer. If Uzzah is identified with Eleazar in I Sam. 7.1²⁰, unless there existed some considerable

19. David reigned forty years in all. However, he ruled Judah from Hebron for the first seven of them only, before capturing Jerusalem and subsequently extending his authority throughout Palestine cf. I Kgs. 2.11; I Chr. 3.4; 29.27.

20. See Note 20 in Appendix.

difference in age between him and his brother, Zadok must have been nearly eighty years of age when he anointed Solomon king at Gihon (cf. I Kgs. 1.45) and there is no evidence to suggest that he did not continue in office for some time after. Moreover, although Uzzah's brother is recorded as accompanying the ark in the first attempt to bring it to Jerusalem, there is no account of his installation as custodian of the ark in Obed-edom's house, and he is entirely unmentioned in the second attempt. Following the fate of Uzzah, anxiety arose in David's mind with regard to the divine will, and the ark was deposited in a neighbouring house occupied by a Philistine of Gittite birth, until a more favourable omen could be obtained. Since the residence of the ark in Obed-edom's house brought him blessing (cf. v.11) it may be reasonable to assume that he himself took charge of the ark. Although these considerations do not prove fatal to this theory, the solution rests on the argumentum e silentio which can only be tested by the probable interpretation of that silence.

A popular alternative to these solutions is to recognize in Zadok the pre-Davidic priest-king of the Jebusite shrine in Jerusalem. It has been suggested that this hypothesis accords with the struggle following David's death which involved a Jerusalemite i.e. Jebusite and a Judaeon faction, in which the Jebusite party was represented by Zadok along with Nathan the prophet

and Benaiah ben Jehoiada. The theory assumes that Zadok, the priest-king of Jerusalem before David's capture of the city was allowed to retain his priestly office but forfeited his royal status²¹. Yet it seems gratuitous to question that Nathan was a prophet of Yahweh and a genuine Israelite²², while the name of Benaiah's father is in no way suggestive of Jebusite derivation. Furthermore it is doubtful if David would have permitted the defeated Jebusite king to have continued in the influential position of priest in his own city, now David's capital. Had Zadok been the former king of Jerusalem and headed the Jebusite faction that overthrew the Judaeen one, thereupon seizing power, one would expect him to have resumed his former position rather than to install Solomon in the honoured station he had once occupied. A slightly different presentation of this view which, although it does not claim regal status for Zadok, holds him to have been the former Jebusite priest functioning at Jerusalem before David's capture of the city²³. Gen. 14 and Ps. 110 are cited in support of this solution to the problem of Zadok's

21. cf. A. Bentzen 'Zur Geschichte der Sadokiden', Z.A.W. 1933, pp. 173-176.

22. Although Nathan did support Solomon's claim to the throne, a certain hostility had existed between the prophet and David arising from the Bathsheba affair (cf. II Sam. 12) which must have made Nathan sceptical of the monarchy as a valid institution in Israel.

23. See Note 21 in Appendix.

origin²⁴. Gen. 14 records that while Abram was at Hebron he learned that four kings from the north of Canaan had raided the five kings of the cities of the Dead Sea plain and had taken much spoil including captives, amongst which was Abram's nephew Lot who had settled in Sodom (cf. vv. 1-12). Abram with a handful of slaves pursued the victorious allies to Dan, routed them in a night attack, and rescued the captives including Lot (cf. vv. 13-16). On his homeward journey he was met by Melchizedek, king of Salem, who blessed him in the name of El Elyon to whom Abram payed tithes (cf. vv. 18-20)²⁵. The king of Sodom also saluted Abram but his offer of spoil was rejected by the hero of the narrative with disdainful magnanimity (cf. vv. 17, 21-24). It is evident that the first half of the chapter is merely introductory and that the purpose of the whole is to illustrate the singular dignity of Abram's position among the potentates of the earth. The occurrence of prehistoric names of places and peoples, some of which no doubt had ceased to be intelligible to later readers, and the general verisimilitude of the background of the narrative are points in favour of its great antiquity²⁶. On the other hand, the route, if not absolutely impracticable for a regular army, is at

c/ 24. Bentzen, op. cit., in citing the hypothesis of Mowinkel's work Ezra den skriftlaerde, also uses these texts in support of his thesis.

25. Salem is used in Ps. 76.2 to denote Jerusalem.

26. See Note 22 in Appendix.

least quite irreconcilable with the object of the campaign, the raid on the pentapolis. That the four kings should have passed the Dead Sea valley leaving their principal enemies in the rear, and postponing a decisive engagement till the end of a circuitous and exhausting march would be inconceivable to a writer in touch with the actualities of the situation, and the rout of Chedorlaomer's formidable army by 318 untrained men is generally admitted to be incredible. The whole tendency of the chapter is to set the figure of the Patriarch in an ideal light, corresponding, not to the realities of history, but to the imagination of some later age. So although the chapter has historical foundations, the grandiose and lifeless description of military operations, which are quite beyond the author's range of conception, indicates later editing. The Melchizedek passage in vv. 18-20 may be attributed to this re-editing as it rather awkwardly disrupts the connection between v.17 and v.21. It could possibly be understood as an aetiological legend intended to explain the origin of the institution of tithes, and to provide the Jerusalem priesthood with a celebrated ancestor (which it otherwise lacked), who received tribute from the progenitor of the Israelite nation already two generations earlier than Jacob's vision at Bethel which designated it as a holy place (cf. Gen. 28.10-22). The hypothesis may then follow that perhaps underlying this aetiology lay a permanent historical remembrance of the service performed in primitive times by the priest-kings of

Jerusalem to El Elyon which Israel came to acknowledge as a title for Yahweh. However, there is no evidence to verify this argument. Jos. 10 records Adonizedek, the Jebusite king of Jerusalem leading a league of kings in southern Canaan against the Israelites under Joshua, and there is no suggestion of his being a progenitor of an illustrious race of Yahweh priests functioning until the exile and after. Moreover, his fate related in Ju. 1.4-7 does not indicate any connection with the celebrated priest-king at Jerusalem. Similarly Abdi-hepa stated in the Amarna letters to be king of Jerusalem is in no way indicated as a priest of high rank. It is clearly stated in Gen. 14.18 that Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of the most high God, two offices which it is highly improbable the Zadokites ever held simultaneously until the Maccabaeon period. The fact, however, that the passage is found in the Samaritan Pentateuch does not favour a Maccabaeon date for it, as it is scarcely conceivable that subsequent to the controversy between the Jews and Samaritans a narrative claiming to derive from patriarchal times, which legitimated the position of the Jewish priesthood at Jerusalem, would have been tolerated by the Samaritans²⁷. Besides, if the purpose of the Melchizedek passage was to legitimate Zadok's regal

27. K. Budde, *op. cit.*, contends that as the Chronicler makes no mention of Melchizedek as the ancestor of the Zadokite priesthood, Gen. 14. 18-20 must be later than Chronicles, and may therefore belong to the Maccabaeon period.

as well as sacerdotal status, this would not only have been contrary to the evidence which attributes only priestly office to him but would, as already pointed out in reference to the thesis conjecturing Zadok to have been the pre-Davidic priest-king of Jerusalem, have carried serious implications for the security of the Davidic monarchy. In respect of these considerations it appears that Gen. 14, although containing fragments of ancient tradition, may be attributed to the Yahwist, who writing at the time of David when he was consolidating his position as the religio-political leader of the nation at Jerusalem, took the opportunity to authenticate David's position in a former Canaanite sanctuary by understanding him to be the successor of Melchizedek the priest-king at Abram's shrine.

This mode of legitimizing the sacral and royal attributes of David is also employed in Ps. 110. The psalm opens with an oracle of Yahweh, presumably delivered by a priest or cultic prophet, guaranteeing the sovereign exalted office and humiliation of his enemies. A promise that Yahweh will extend his authority and that henceforth the people will render willing loyalty to his rule introduces the second oracle which confirms the king by divine oath in the office of priest as successor of the ancient Jerusalemite line traced from Melchizedek. The psalm concludes with a description of the triumph Yahweh will give the king over his enemies (cf. vv. 5-7). The position occupied by the royal house

is expressed as standing in the line of Melchizedek and is therefore not merely an appropriation of the pre-Davidic Canaanite tradition of Jerusalem, but the continuation of a succession of royal priests²⁸ whose ancestor was reputed to have ministered to the Patriarch of Israel. Possibly the immediate occasion for this psalm was the enthronement of a new sovereign as the latest successor in this celebrated series²⁹. Therefore the house of David which claimed religious as well as political authority appears to have derived its right to this twofold ascendancy from the traditions relating to Melchizedek, which may possibly have had a historical kernel that was later adapted to suit current circumstances.

According to the tradition recorded by the Chronicler, the wilderness tent of Yahweh since Mosaic times had been sited at Gibeon (cf. II Chr. 1.3). The fact that Solomon brought his great offering to Gibeon inspires confidence in this tradition and indicates the importance of the shrine there (cf. I Kgs. 3.4). It is

28. The sacral attribute of David is indicated by his initiative in bringing the ark to Jerusalem and his wearing of the priestly ephod when he danced before the ark cf. II Sam. 6.6-19. Ahaz exercised his religious authority in a similar way when he initiated certain innovations in the Jerusalem worship cf. II Kgs. 16.10 ff. This aspect of kingship will be discussed more fully in the final chapter of this thesis.
29. R.H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 630, attributes the psalm to the Maccabaeon period, written in honour of Simon Maccabaeus.

related in Jos. 9.1-27 that the Israelites were deceived into making a treaty with the Gibeonites who in consequence became vassals of Israel. Quite a number of vassal treaties promise military aid from the sovereign to his vassal in the event of attack by a common enemy. The treaty of Jos. 9 probably had this idea behind it as well as the aspect of pledge to preserve the Gibeonites from devotion to the sacred ban³⁰.

Joshua was compelled by the treaty to aid the Gibeonite confederation when it was attacked by a common enemy. The emphasis laid on the divine assistance given the federation of Israelites and Gibeonites enabling them to conquer their enemies (cf. Jos. 10.6-11) is noteworthy, and shows the legal nature of the oath, which, taken in Yahweh's name, made him protector of the treaty. The fact that such a pact existed is attested by II Sam. 21.2 ff, the context of which clearly reflects a treaty violation by Saul. The importance of Gibeon is evident from the effect its defection to Israel had on the rest

30. cf. F. Charles Fensham, 'The treaty between Israel and the Gibeonites', B.A. vol. 3, 1964. pp. 96-100. The priestly writer uses the story to explain how Gibeonites became temple servants in post-exilic times. The character of the treaty is clear from v.8 where the Gibeonites state that they are willing to be servants of the Israelites. In spite of the fact that the word 'servant' had various shades of meaning in the ancient Near East, the strong probability exists here that the term refers to vassalage. A similar type of agreement is found in the suzerainty tablets of the Hittite Empire in which the vassal is protected by his lord in return for which he is bound to supply his lord with arms when required.

of the Canaanite kings, and although it had no king itself, it is described in Jos. 10.1 f as one of the royal cities, and its men warriors of repute. A water system and wine jars belonging to this period have been found in the course of archaeological excavations on the site of Gibeon, thus providing evidence of the organized and civilized community that inhabited it³¹. The Chronicler's tradition relating to the presence of the Mosaic tent in Gibeon implies that the Yahweh faith was adopted by the vassal group³². Furthermore the presence of this ancient cultic palladium at Gibeon may explain the necessity for David to legitimate the site of a new sanctuary in Jerusalem by a special theophany at the threshing floor of Araunah (cf. II Sam. 24.16,17). Further support for the tradition relating to the presence of the tabernacle in Gibeon is found in I Chr. 16.39 where it is stated that Zadok the priest and his brethren the priests served the tabernacle of Yahweh in Gibeon³³. The fact that Zadok does not appear until after the ark had arrived in Jerusalem, and the lack of any evidence contradictory to his having formerly ministered at Gibeon supports the tradition contained in this verse. The first mention of

31. cf. J.B. Pritchard, B.A. Feb. vol XIX 1956, pp. 66-75, and vol. XXIII 1960 pp. 19-24.

32. Gibeon was the chief city of a group of Canaanite settlements that included Chephirah, Beeroth and Kiriath-Jearim cf. Jos. 9.17; 10.2.

33. From the association of the tabernacle with the Zadokites at Gibeon, some light may be shed on the prominent role which the tabernacle plays in the priestly writing.

Zadok at David's court is subsequent to the ark's removal to Jerusalem (cf. II Sam. 8.17), and the first time he is recorded as playing an active role was during the rebellion of Absalom which did not occur until the closing years of David's reign. It has already been mentioned that there must have been a motive for bringing Zadok to Jerusalem. This may possibly lie in a policy aimed at unifying this powerful enclave of former Canaanite cities under the authority of the Hebrew monarchy, which, due to Saul's violation of their treaty with Israel, had probably become estranged and were seen by David as a potentially dangerous threat to the security of his dominion.

As Gibeon appears to have been converted from its Canaanite religion to Yahwism, it is reasonable to postulate that dedicated and skilful Yahweh missionaries were actively engaged in the city subsequent to its pact with Joshua. Their success is witnessed by the fact that this former Canaanite city became the site of the leading Yahweh shrine in Israel prior to the erection of the temple in Jerusalem. Moreover it was in Gibeon that Solomon, having offered his great sacrifice, received the vision in which Yahweh granted him not only what he requested, wisdom to rule his people, but also riches and honour. The close association of the tribe of Judah, to which the line of David belonged, with the Levites, and their desirability as priests of Yahweh may suggest the levitical derivation of Zadok and his colleagues, and thus explain the presence of

so important a Yahweh shrine in a Canaanite city. If Zadok was not a Levite then David would have been guilty of the sin which the author of I Kgs. 12.31 regards as one of Jeroboam's faults, the appointment of non-levitical priests. The fact that there is no hint of Abiathar or of David's own sons, who were appointed priests, being Levites need not necessarily militate against this view when it is remembered that although there is no sound reason why David should not have made his sons priests, they are never mentioned performing priestly functions, in fact they are only referred to on one occasion (cf. II Sam. 8.18). The parallel passage in II Sam. 20.26 does not mention David's sons, but instead speaks of Ira the Jairite being one of David's priests. With regard to Abiathar, he was appointed to his position because of what his family had suffered as a result of harbouring David, and of his own loyalty, but Abiathar's support of Solomon's rival on the death of David cancelled the debt of gratitude the Davidic house owed him, and he was accordingly removed from office³⁴. If Zadok is assumed to be a levitical priest, his ascendancy over Abiathar and all his other priestly contemporaries

34. E. Auerbach, 'Die Herkunft den Sadokiden', Z.A.W. 1931, pp. 327,8, who associates Zadok with Gibeon on the basis of I Chr. 16.39, considers that Abiathar was senior to Zadok, and Solomon to show his gratefulness to Zadok for supporting his claim to the throne promoted him and banished Abiathar. However, it seems more likely that Abiathar's allegiance to Adonijah in the struggle for the crown (cf. I Kgs. 1.7) was an attempt to gain favour with the contestant who appeared most likely to be successful, and so retain his office at Jerusalem.

at Jerusalem may be explained by the parallel incident in Ju. 17 where preference is shown for a Levite to discharge priestly functions over the non-levitical priest already established at Micah's shrine. Moreover the Deuteronomist presupposes that the Jerusalem priesthood is levitical (cf. Dt. 18.1) while Ezekiel expressly designates the Zadokites as Levites (cf. Ezek. 40.46; 43.19; 44.15). It is significant that although Abiathar was at David's side from early in his career, long before Zadok came on the scene, in every instance that they occur together, with the exception of one passage which will be discussed in the next paragraph, Zadok is always named first³⁵, while in later times the Chronicler associates Zadok with the senior line of the Aaronite priesthood i.e. Eleazar, and Abiathar with the cadet branch Ithamar³⁶.

II Sam. 15.24-29 is the first passage in which Zadok is represented as a dramatis persona during the reign of David. The passage relates the removal of the ark from Jerusalem by Zadok and Abiathar when David fled the city in anticipation of Absalom's advance. In v.27 however, the king orders the return of the ark and its retinue to Jerusalem. An examination of the text, which is in a poor state of preservation, may

35. cf. II Sam. 8.17, the corrupt nature of this verse has already been discussed; 15.35; 20.25; I Kgs. 4.4.

36. cf. note 17.

shed some light on the relationship between the two priests and the ark. With regard to syntax, the words שְׁנֵי בָנָיו אֲחִימָאז in v.27 in their position at the end of the verse occupy an unusual position and are generally awkward. The verse begins by the king addressing Zadok with the singular personal pronoun and emphatic imperative and continues to have reference to Zadok alone until the final three words, the last two having plural suffixes. This may be accounted for by the notion that, although Zadok alone is addressed, Abiathar is standing by. Alternatively, the plural suffixes could be attributed to a confusion arising from the mention of Abiathar's son, the last three words of the verse having been carelessly inserted by way of interpretation. However, the following verse in using the imperative plural of the predicate i.e. הֵלֵךְ clearly refers to the two young men who are to act as runners, and hence the rather clumsy שְׁנֵי בָנָיו אֲחִימָאז would appear to be a careless explanatory gloss disrupting the continuity of the passage and may thus be omitted. The word וַיֵּדָע in v.27 is difficult and could perhaps be rendered in the sense of 'to perceive' or 'understand'³⁷. The meaning of vv. 27, 28 would appear to be 'and the king said to Zadok the priest - "Do you understand? Return to the city in peace and Ahimaaz thy son and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. Behold, I am tarrying in the plain of the desert until word comes from you to inform me".' v.24 introduces

37. See Note 23 in Appendix.

Abiathar in a very awkward phrase i.e. וְיָצֵא וְיָצֵא,
 but if this phrase is omitted a smoother reading results
 in which Zadok and the Levites bring the ark to the
 brook, lay it down, allow the people to cross and then
 follow on behind. A similar incident involving the ark
 is found in the account relating to the crossing of the
 Jordan (cf. Jos. 3.17; 4.11). The text emended in this
 way is supported by Lucian and accords with v.25 in
 which the king addresses Zadok exclusively with no hint
 of Abiathar's presence. The text of v.29 also presents
 difficulty. The singular predicate with which the
 verse opens does not agree with its plural subject
 'Zadok and Abiathar'. On account of the subject being
 two proper names, it is doubtful if syntactically a
 singular predicate may be allowed. As Abiathar does
 not appear to have figured in the original form of the
 verses under consideration, the mention of his name
 here would appear to be an interpolation which, due to
 the fact that none of the versions read the plural of
 the predicate nor omit the וְיָצֵא must be early. The
וְיָצֵא in its present form may refer to Zadok, Ahimaaz
 and Jonathan or can be read in the singular with the
 Alexandrinus and Vaticanus versions referring to Zadok
 alone as the subject. It is thus possible that a later
 reviser knowing that two priests were functioning at
 Jerusalem during David's reign, could not understand
 the absence of Abiathar at this critical time, espe-
 cially in view of his loyalty to David in earlier days,
 and accordingly rectified what he thought was an acci-
 dental omission. The mention of 'all the Levites' in

v.24 presents no textual difficulty, but may be taken as further evidence of the levitical association of Zadok. The analysis also shows the close association of Zadok and the other Levites, who may have been his former Gibeonite colleagues, with the ark. This association may perhaps be attributed to David's appointment of Zadok to minister before the ark in Jerusalem, and consequently have given rise to the tradition associating the Levites with the ark³⁸. Zadok would in this way have been seen as the successor of the ancient ark priesthood of Shiloh as described in I Sam. 2.35, 36.

38. cf. Dt. 10.8; 31.25; I Sam. 6.15; I Chr. 15.2.

LEVITICAL ORGANIZATION
DURING THE PERIOD OF THE MONARCHY

The priestly writer records in Jos. 21 how the chief Levites approached Eleazar the priest, Joshua, and the tribal chiefs, and asked them for cities to dwell in and land for their cattle round about these cities. In response to this request, founded upon the divine command made through Moses (cf. Jos. 21.2), forty-eight cities including six cities of refuge were assigned to the Levites in all the territory conquered by the Israelites on both sides of the Jordan. In addition to this allotment of cities the Levites also received, in response to their request, pasture lands around each city's perimeter¹. These pastures were to be the exclusive property of the Levites in which they were to raise their livestock (cf. Num. 35.3). They could not sell them as they were their eternal possession among the children of Israel (cf. Lev. 25.33 f). However, the fact that in the case of Hebron the villages and arable land remained the property of Caleb (cf. Jos. 21.11 f), shows that no land fit for agriculture was assigned to the Levites, and in this way the

1. Num. 35.4 states that the pasturage area was to extend 1000 cubits from the city wall, but the following verse defines the area as 2000 cubits without the city thus reducing the city itself to a mere point. Perhaps something of an idealistic nature may be seen in this provision.

principle was upheld which denied the Levites of an inheritance of land among the tribes of Israel. In a similar way the phrase $\text{בְּשָׂרָא וּבְחַיִּים}$ used in reference to levitical settlement does not imply ownership of, but merely residence in a city. The cities of refuge that are included among the levitical cities, being equally distributed throughout Palestine, provided areas of asylum where refuge could be sought in the event of unpremeditated homicide (cf. Dt. 4.41-43; 19.1-13). The right of asylum is a common institution in all times and places. The custom is found among barbarous and civilized people alike, and obtained in Greek and Roman times right into the Middle Ages. The selection of these cities of refuge must have originally been occasioned by their reputation as sites of important shrines which had become popular as asylums for the fugitive, and were accordingly selected as places suitable for levitical settlements.

A list of cities inhabited by Levites similar to that in Jos. 21 is also found in I Chr. 6. It differs in some details from Jos. 21, but on comparing both the lists with the corresponding Greek versions most of these divergencies may be eliminated². The arrangement of the cities according to the levitical families Kohath, Gershon and Merari, with Aaron occupying the principal position, belongs to a genealogical system only witnessed in the later traditions of the Old Testament, and therefore points to an exilic or post-exilic

2. See Note 24 in Appendix.

date for the lists³. However, the area covered by the cities is much more extensive' than that occupied by the Jews in post-exilic times, except in the short period of Judas Maccabaeus and the reign of Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.). By this time however, the list in Jos. 21 and the other references to levitical cities in the Pentateuch had become securely established in the Canon of Holy Scripture⁴. Since many of the places listed did not become Israelite until long after Joshua's time, it has been widely held that the lists were a retrojection of the post-exilic imagination into earlier times⁵. This seems little probable, for such a retrojection into the early days of settlement would have had no historical foundation or real motive, and its place in Holy Scripture as a meaningless fantasy of the mind is hardly conceivable. Another theory relates the lists to Josiah's removal of provincial Levites to Jerusalem (cf. II Kgs. 23.8)⁶. However, the area covered by the lists, which includes places in the Trans-jordan region, such as Golan and Ashtaroth that were

3. See Note 25 in Appendix.

4. The date of the canonization of the first five books of Moses is dependent on the date of the Samaritan schism, for it is well known that that community adopted for its own use a text of the Torah which in content is practically identical to the Massoretic text of the Pentateuch. If the schism is considered as having taken place during the mid fourth century, it is likely that the canon of the Torah was fixed at a considerably earlier date.

5. J. Wellhausen, Prolegomena to the History of Israel, pp. 162 ff was one of the pioneers of this hypothesis.

6. See Note 26 in Appendix.

lost to Damascus after 900 B.C. and only temporarily recovered by Jeroboam II, militates against this view. Moreover Heshbon and Jazer had passed from Israelite rule by 830 B.C. (cf. Is. 15.4), and Gezer could not have been included in a list of bona fide character after its destruction in the late tenth century, probably by Shishak (c. 918)⁷. Ashtaroth was occupied by the Aramaeans probably following the invasion of Ben Hadad I c. 875⁸, and subsequently disappeared from the stage of history after its destruction by the Assyrians in 733⁹. Thereafter its place was taken by the neighbouring town of Karnaim¹⁰. The places mentioned in Reuben, to the south-east of Israel, suffered a similar fate. Bezer and Jahaz were taken from Israel by Mesha king of Moab c. 830, Bezer already having fallen into ruin¹¹. Kedemoth and Mephaath presumably fell into Ammonite hands about this time also (cf. Jer. 49.1 ff). Moreover, all the towns of Galilee were lost to Israel in 733, most of them being destroyed, never to be re-occupied. In the light of this information the most

7. cf. B.A.S.O.R., No. 92. pp. 17 ff.

8. cf. B.A.S.O.R., No. 87. pp. 27 ff.

9. The annals of Tiglath-Pileser III state that he destroyed 591 towns belonging to the southern provinces of Damascus making them like heaps of ruins left by the deluge. Among them was Metuna, modern Imtan, on the edge of the desert south-east of Ashtaroth, cf. B.A.S.O.R., No. 19, pp. 15 f.

10. Karnaim is now Sheikh Sa'd only three miles to the north of Ashtaroth. Archaeological finds there prove occupation during this period.

11. cf. Moabite Stone.

probable date for these lists would appear to lie in the reigns of David and Solomon. This was the only period in Israel's history in which the area covered by the lists was completely under Hebrew sovereignty. It is recorded in I Kgs. 9.15 ff that Gezer was captured by Pharaoh from the Canaanites and presented as a dowry for his daughter whom Solomon married. Unless the mention of Gezer is taken as a later addition to the list of towns - which may be possible, although there is no conclusive evidence that this is the case - this record may provide a possible terminus ad quem in the dating of the lists¹². At any rate the mention of Gibbethon as a levitical settlement must date the lists at least before the two-year reign of Nadab, the son of Jeroboam I, when it belonged to the Philistines (cf. I Kgs. 15.27).

Having traced the lists to the one period in Israel's history when Hebrew rule encompassed all the places contained in them, inquiry must be made into the historical significance and purpose that lies behind them. The information to answer this question is found in the book of Chronicles. Increasing importance has been laid on the authenticity of the Chronicler's history and the traditions he preserves, which must in many instances have secure historical foundations. In I Chr. 26.30-32, it is recorded that the important levitical family of Hebron was charged with religious

12. cf. J. Gray, New Century Bible - Joshua, Judges and Ruth, p. 26.

and secular responsibilities in the state. Hashabiah and his brothers, esteemed as men of ability, were appointed to attend to the affairs of Yahweh in the area west of the Jordan and to administer the royal authority there. Jerijah, which was evidently the foremost branch of the Hebronites, was sought out in Jazer of Gilead and found to include men suitable for the discharge of state business. They were set in authority over Gad and Reuben and the half tribe Manasseh. v.31 further informs us that this organization of the Levites into cities on both sides of the Jordan, began in the fortieth year i.e. the last year of David's reign. The passage has caused difficulty to the commentators as it is irrelevant to post-exilic conditions¹³, when Jewry had no jurisdiction over the areas lying to the east of the Jordan, nor in the region around Hebron which passed into Edomite hands during the exile (cf. Ob. 1.11-14,20)¹⁴. However, Jazer and Hebron both appear in the levitical lists, and the areas east of the Jordan, and in the Negeb were under Israelite control during Solomon's reign when these lists would appear to have originated. Therefore it seems that this is one of the genuinely old traditions that the Chronicler has preserved. The record of the levitical family at Jazer is in accordance with its inclusion in the group of levitical cities of Gad beside the other administrative centres there i.e. Ramoth in Gilead, Mahanaim and Heshbon. Jazer was a provincial

13. W. Rudolph in his Chronikbücher, p. 179, says 'Wie können Leviten im Ostjordanland amtieren? Dieses lag für den nachexilischen Judenstaat jahrhundertelange ausserhalb seines Gesichtskreises.'

14. See Note 27 in Appendix.

capital even before the Israelite conquest of southern Gilead (cf. Num. 21.32) and its importance at the time of David is witnessed by the mention of its name in the account of David's census (cf. II Sam. 24.5). Hebron had been an important levitical settlement since the period of Judges. It is stated in the verse preceding this passage that Chenaniah and his sons, who belonged to the family of Izhar, received a royal commission to exercise responsibility for the nation's external affairs, and to perform judicial and official functions up and down the country. In the levitical genealogies, Izhar is incorporated into the family of Levi as the brother of Hebron¹⁵, but in this passage no relationship is implied, and unlike the royal charge given to the Hebronites, the Izharites' commission does not include any spiritual function. It is possible that this is a tradition anterior to those which connect Izhar to Hebron through a common father Kohath. However, the functions with which the family of Chenaniah is entrusted may be similar to the secular part of the Hebronite's commission in the following verses.

It is improbable that an organization of Levites, as the lists envisage, could have been brought into effect in a short space of time. The Chronicler records what would appear to be the beginning of such a scheme which he dates in the last year of David's reign. Before the scheme could have been fully developed into

15. cf. Ex. 6.18; Num. 3.19; I Chr. 5.28 (E.V. 6.2); 6.3 (E.V. 6.18); 23.12.

the type of organization reflected in the lists of levitical cities, a period of time must have elapsed, which would bring the date of the plan's completion forward into the reign of Solomon. In view of the close association of the Levites with the tribe of Judah, there must have existed a great bond of loyalty among the Levites to the reigning Judæan house, and it is therefore natural that, as an influential element steeped in the Mosaic tradition which they shared in particular with Judah, David and his son should have found it expedient to extend the influence of the Levites by advancing their position in the state. The levitical families connected with Hebron may have been the first to be singled out for promotion; it was probably not only due to the elders whose friendship David had cultivated (cf. I Sam. 30.26-31) but also to levitical co-operation that he was able to set up his residence in Hebron as king of the whole of Judah, and to use it as a jumping-off ground for his future ambitious designs. They must have witnessed and perhaps even officiated at his coronation, and would doubtless have watched his career with keen interest, as the progress of their missionary activities in the name of his God, Yahweh, would in no small measure have been dependent on the ultimate success of his plans.

It may with reasonable confidence be asserted that numerous towns already included levitical elements from the period of Judges. Apart from Hebron, it has already been shown that Libnah from an early date had a levitical

population¹⁶. Jokmeam, included in the Ephraimite group of levitical cities, is connected with the family of Jekameam, a descendant of the levitical family of Hebron (cf. I Chr. 23.19; 24.23), which may indicate the antiquity of this settlement. The same town Jokmeam is mentioned in I Kgs. 4.12 situated in the extreme south of Solomon's fifth administrative district. The name appears in Jos. 21.22 as Kibzaim which is most probably a corruption of קִיבְזַיִם the original form being קִיבְזַיִם similar to the form קִיבְזַיִם which is abbreviated from קִיבְזַיִם ¹⁷. The presence of levitical establishments scattered throughout Palestine was possibly an important contributory element in the acknowledgement of a Judahite as king over all Israel. Perhaps something of this may be found in the story relating to Sheba's rebellion (II Sam. 20). The narrative records how the dissident elements among the Israelite tribes seized their opportunity to rebel by joining the cry of revolt raised by Sheba, a Benjaminite. Amasa was ordered by the king to raise a Judaeen army against Sheba, but due to his delay Abishai and Joab were sent in his place with the royal mercenaries to suppress the revolt¹⁸. Sheba, pursued by Abishai and Joab, sought refuge in the town of Abel-beth-maacah situated in the most northerly region of Palestine.

16. cf. second chapter of this thesis.

17. See Note 28 in Appendix.

18. vv. 4-13 recount the slaying of Amasa by Joab. Amasa had been appointed Commander in chief in place of Joab by Absalom cf. II Sam. 17.25.

The encounter between a wise woman from the walls of the city and Joab at the head of the besieging army is interesting. The wise woman affirmed the faithful and peace-loving nature of the city and its reputation for wisdom. She continued by asking Joab if he 'will destroy a city and mother in Israel and devour the Lord's inheritance?' Joab replied that this was far from his intention; he only wished the traitor surrendered. The woman responded by consulting with the people, who decapitated Sheba and threw his head over the wall to Joab outside. The fact that Abel was an ancient city where wisdom was sought implies that it possessed an oracle. No other evidence has survived to suggest its importance apart from the woman's description of it as a mother in Israel, which suggests that it was looked up to with the respect that a mother should receive, and implies that the city was surrounded by dependent villages which were called its daughters (cf. Num. 21.25). The Hebrew text is unintelligible at the end of v. 18 and beginning of v. 19:
וְשָׂאֵל בְּאֵל וְכִן הִתְאַוּ וְשָׂאֵל בְּדָן, but the LXX provides a perfectly satisfactory rendering,
וְכִן הִתְאַוּ וְשָׂאֵל בְּאֵל וְכִן הִתְאַוּ, which means 'let them ask in Abel and in Dan whether anything has come to an end which the faithful in Israel ordained' i.e. Abel was one of the two strongholds of conservatism where the best traditions of Israel were preserved. This gives the sense required for the woman's argument. Such a display of loyalty is surprising in a region so

far north, especially when it is recorded in v.2 that only Judah remained loyal to David. The name Abel still survives in the modern Abil which is four miles from Dan where a levitical priesthood had been operating since the period of Judges, and claimed descent from a Judaeen Levite (cf. Ju. 18.30). The claim of the woman for her own city and Dan as centres where the best traditions were preserved, and the show of loyalty in the face of dissident elements in the land lying between this region and Judah must be accountable in some way. With these facts taken into consideration, it seems a possible hypothesis that a levitical movement, having its centre at Dan and which had its basic roots in Judah, was actively propagating Judaeen traditions in this area.

From the mode of arrangement of the levitical cities it seems that the value of the missionary activity that the Levites had carried on since the period of Judges was fully appreciated by David and Solomon, and skilfully utilized by them in the spiritual and secular affairs of the kingdom in areas where the loyalty of the people could not be depended upon. The lists are composed of groups of towns, each group separate from the next. There is no geographical continuity between them and yet they all lie within the bounds of Israelite territory. Hence a parallel may be drawn between the area in which the levitical cities are found and the territory of the kingdom of Israel as defined in the description of Israel's borders in

David's census (cf. II Sam. 24). An interesting group of cities lies in the south Judaeen hills which includes Hebron, Debir, Eshtemoa, Holon, Ashan and Juttah. Two of these, Eshtemoa and Hebron, are enumerated among the settlements previously mentioned in connection with the towns which David came in contact with during his stay at Ziklag (cf. I Sam. 30.26 ff). All these cities are situated in the district of the Calebites and Kenizzites and thus represented a very mixed population. It seems a possible assumption that Judaeen propaganda of the type practised by the Levites would have had an important part to play in consolidating the region. Only two other cities are mentioned in Judah - Libnah and Bethshemesh. The antiquity of the levitical settlement in Libnah has already been noted. It was an important city from which the mother of two Judaeen kings came i.e. Jehoahaz (cf. II Kgs. 23.31) and Zedekiah (cf. Jer. 52.1). At various periods Libnah appears to have exercised a certain amount of independence from Judah and carried on its own foreign policy (cf. II Kgs. 8.22; II Chr. 21.10). Bethshemesh was formerly a Canaanite city (cf. Ju. 1.33), but as it is found recorded in I Kgs. 4.9 as the second district of the Israelite kingdom, it may have been added to Judah and fortified in the reign of Solomon¹⁹. Both these towns

19. It is quite possible that there was already a levitical settlement at Bethshemesh cf. I Sam. 6.15.

occupied strategic positions in the border area between Israel and Philistia²⁰. Force would have estranged the region from Israel and encouraged it to accept Philistine sovereignty. Therefore levitical activity had an important part to play here in maintaining the loyalty of the area. Working from this hypothesis, a similar interpretation may be advanced in explanation of the levitical settlements further north which included Gath-rimmon, Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Gezer, Aijalon and Beth-horon. Due to the tenacious survival of Canaanite elements in the region, it must have been an area in which the spread of Judaeen influence was considered of prime importance, especially when Shishak became king of Egypt and exercised sovereignty over Philistia²¹. The preponderance of levitical cities in the north may be accounted for in a similar way. The area represented an enclave of Canaanite cities which the Israelites had never held securely, and were regarded accordingly as a threat to the security of the nation. These cities are still described as 'the cities of the Hivites and Canaanites' in the summary of David's census. It is probable that they functioned as provincial administrative centres in which the Levites discharged 'all the

20. Excavations of the levitical cities of Debir and Bethshemesh show them to contain royal store rooms, from which it may be concluded that they served as provincial headquarters of the central government cf. F.M. Cross and G.E. Wright, 'The Boundary and province lists of the kingdom of Judah', J.B.L., 1956, p.116.

21. If Gath-rimmon can be identified with Tell-el-Jerishe, excavations there show that this town was destroyed at the same time as Shishak's campaign and never reoccupied.

work of Yahweh and the service of the king'²². The purpose of these cities would seem to be different from that of such places as Megiddo and Hazor - fortified strongholds with military units stationed in them and, in the case of Megiddo, chariots (cf. I Kgs. 9.15). The settlement of Levites in the cities lying to the immediate north of Jerusalem probably had a function protective to the Davidic house against a possible rising of the family of Saul in Benjamin, or of the tribes in the north of Israel which, in view of Sheba's revolt and the cursing of Shimei (cf. II Sam. 16.5-14) was more than a mere possibility²³. The four cities fall within Benjamin and are in close proximity to the capital. Anathoth was the place to which Abiathar retired after his disgrace (cf. I Kgs. 2.26 f), but as Abiathar came from Nob, Anathoth may not originally have been a priestly settlement, although it survived as such from this time down to the exile (cf. Jer. 1.1). Gibeon, as has already been suggested, was probably the city of Zadok and thus may have been a levitical settlement before the inauguration of the scheme. The absence of Jerusalem from the lists could be accounted for by the fact that it was the religious and political centre

22. A great number of these towns such as Ibleam, Joknean and Nahalal were merely former Canaanite centres which later became part of Solomon's fifth administrative district.
23. Mazar, op. cit., thinks there may possibly be a hint of the security which these cities provided Jerusalem in the passage relating to Benjamin in the Blessing of Moses (Dt. 33.12) - 'Of Benjamin he said - the beloved of Yahweh he dwells in safety by him, he encompasses him all the day long and makes his dwelling place between his shoulders.'

of the nation and the seat of government. There is accordingly no mention of priestly land in connection with Jerusalem, but it is possible that the pasturage around the levitical settlements in Benjamin was used for the maintenance of the Jerusalem priesthood throughout the year. Moreover, it would appear reasonable to assume that these towns provided a residence for the overspill of the Jerusalem clergy, and, as the royal cult developed, priests, who had discharged their course of priestly office at Jerusalem, may have retired to one of these cities until their next turn of duty came up. Thus these settlements would have come directly under the control of the Jerusalem priesthood, and may have stood in the same relationship to Jerusalem as medieval parishes to their cathedral. As late as the return from exile, fortified camps of Levites are found mentioned in the region of Geba and Azmaveth (cf. Nh. 12.29). With regard to the country east of the Jordan, the territory in which the levitical cities are scattered is identical with the Israelite settlement there at the time of the united monarchy. The settlements enumerated in Reuben, viz. Mephaath, Jazer, Heshbon, Bezer, Kedemoth and Jahazah, occupy the Israelite frontier with Ammon and Moab. Two of the districts east of the Jordan, in Solomon's administrative reorganization are called by the names of settlements appearing in our list as levitical cities, namely Ramoth in Gilead and Mahanaim. Other levitical settlements are recorded in

Golan, the city of refuge, and Ashtaroth the capital of Bashan. The list as such testifies to the character of these settlements of Levites as administrative centres, the maintenance of whose loyalty was vitally important for the consolidation of the kingdom under the house of David²⁴.

In Judah itself there remains an area between Jerusalem and Hebron for which there is no record of any levitical settlement. This phenomenon may find its explanation in the royal policy towards Judah, the tribe of the ruling house upon which the dynasty depended so much and to which it owed so much. The survival of the royal house of Judah was naturally in the best interests of the Judaeans, and therefore the mutual interest between king and people for the preservation of the royal authority made the pro-Judaeen propaganda of the Levites to advance the prestige of Davidic rule in Judah unnecessary. Another region where there is an absence of levitical cities occurs in the central area of the country. The only exception to this observation exists in the city of Shechem which was a city of refuge. Similar to Judah there was an absence of Canaanite elements in this region except in Shechem, where the presence of Levites may have been a safeguard to Davidic interests at this old amphictyonic shrine which had in earlier times close associations with the Joseph tribes. It may be possible to attribute the absence of levitical settlements over such a large area

24. See Note 29 in Appendix.

to a strong sense of tribal tradition that existed in Joseph and was focused on the tribal palladium, the ark. The removal of the ark to Jerusalem by David was a skilful attempt to unify the country. During the period of Judges the ark had been the palladium of the amphictyonic sanctuary, and by its removal to Jerusalem that city became the successor to Shiloh, the last in the series of amphictyonic shrines. The new residence of the ark lay on neutral ground between the two halves of the kingdom, and accordingly became the cultic centre for all the Israelite tribes without any suggestion of the deep-rooted differences that lay between north and south. With the development of the state, the institution of the Amphictyony lost its ancient tribal significance, and what emerged was the peculiar position of the sanctuary of Jerusalem, embellished with the old amphictyonic cult object. In this way the dual monarchy of David was united by a religious bond with the capital city Jerusalem and the ark it contained. This achieved the loyalty of both Judah and Joseph during the reigns of David and Solomon to the Jerusalem administration in a way that made the organization of Levites as hitherto described unnecessary in these areas. Yet it must not be overlooked that in the course of David's reign two rebellions took place in Israel. The first, led by Absalom, gained some support from the family of Saul who probably thought their hour of vengeance had come (cf. II Sam. 16.1-8). He also gained some support from certain Judahite elements in David's household, which may account for his proclamation as king in Hebron (cf. II Sam. 15.10). Absalom's counsellor,

Ahithophel, was a Judahite (cf II Sam. 15.12), and his general Amasa was a close kinsman both of Joab and David (cf. II Sam. 17.25; I Chr. 2.15-17). Nevertheless, it is unlikely that the majority of Israelites supported this venture. Most of David's court, the religious leaders and his personal troops remained loyal. Moreover, it is significant that many outside Jerusalem openly showed their support for David. Hushai the Archite (cf. II Sam. 15.32 ff) confounded the counsel of Ahithophel and so occasioned the ultimate downfall of Absalom (cf. II Sam. 16.20 - 17.14). Others who rallied to David included Abishai ben Zeruiah (cf. II Sam. 16.9-12), Ittai the Gittite (cf. II Sam. 15.19-22), Shobi the Ammonite, and Barzillai the Gileadite (cf. II Sam. 17.27). The revolt of Sheba, which closely followed Absalom's rebellion, was an attempt to withdraw northern Israel from its union with Judah under David. Apart from some dissident elements the revolt gained little support and was soon crushed, Sheba, as has been mentioned already, being finally run to ground in the north of Palestine where he met his end. These regions may have been administered from large provincial centres such as Shechem, Mahanaim, and Ramoth Gilead, or even directly from Jerusalem. The absence of levitical cities in these two areas shows the authenticity of the list, for if its author, from pure theory without recourse to concrete facts, had wished to trace an ideal picture of the appropriate distribution of levitical cities throughout the whole of Israel and Judah, then he would have drawn up a more systematic plan which would have adequately served the whole area,

and not allowed the most central parts of Israelite and Judaeen life to remain unprovided for.

This machinery of government was an ephemeral one that gradually became impaired as the enemies of Israel encroached upon her borders. As hitherto pointed out, this process began soon after Solomon's death. The system was one equipped to high power propaganda and not to force of arms, and when it came to a conflict between the skill of oratory and the skill of arms, the science of warfare won the day. During the later years of Solomon's reign it was found necessary to impose severe taxation to alleviate the national debt incurred by the ambitious nature of the royal building programme (cf. I Kgs. 5.13-18). This imposition upon the nation met with resentment especially among the northern tribes, who must in many instances have come to regard Solomon as an alien tyrant. On the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam travelled north to be proclaimed king at Shechem, the chief city of northern Israel in which there was a levitical settlement. Here he was met with the threat of the ten northern tribes to withdraw their allegiance from him if the odious rule of his father was not relaxed²⁵. It would seem that the levitical element, which must have been present at the time in Shechem, either disapproved of Solomon's oppressive rule, for which he might have found other means of administering and therefore eclipsed their importance,

25. The hostility with which Adoram was slain when relaying Rehoboam's message to the people shows their angry resentment to Solomon's oppressive policies cf. I Kgs. 12.18.

or their influence amongst the people had been weakened as public opinion became increasingly disenchanted with the royal authority they represented. The attitude of the levitical author of Deuteronomy to the institution of monarchy (cf. Dt. 17.14 ff) would seem to indicate the former possibility as the more probable. As a result of Rehoboam's accepting the foolish advice given him, even harsher government was promised. Consequently he was not acclaimed king, and the northern part of his dual monarchy withdrew from the union. The allegiance David had achieved in removing the ark to Jerusalem was unable to withstand the strain of the authoritarian administration imposed by his successors, Solomon and Rehoboam. In place of the Davidic king, Jeroboam was set up as ruler of the ten northern tribes. He had been outlawed during Solomon's reign and sought refuge in Egypt (cf. I Kgs. 11.26 ff), but returned to Palestine to be hailed ruler of Israel (cf. I Kgs. 12.20) giving, we may assume, the required pledges.

The changes made by the new administration are found recorded in I Kgs. 12.25-33. It is stated that Jeroboam fortified Shechem, from which he governed the country, but later moved to Penuel. It is difficult to ascertain the motive behind this move to Penuel, as Shechem was the historic capital of the Joseph tribes, and the fact that Rehoboam went to be proclaimed king there indicates that it had retained its importance throughout the period of the United Monarchy. It was here that Jacob set up an altar (cf. Gen. 33.18-20),

where Israel had renewed the covenant with Yahweh on entering the promised land (cf. Jos. 24), and where Abimelech set up his kingdom (cf. Ju. 9). The strategic significance of Shechem in the narrow neck of the pass from west to east by the Wadi Fara', commanding the road through the hills of Manasseh to Bethshan, is illustrated by the fact that although the capital of Israel was shifted first to Tirzah and then to Samaria, both these places were within seven miles radius of the old capital. In view of the absence of any evidence relating to the motive for Jeroboam's move from Shechem, it may be reasonable to suppose that the levitical influence in the city made it impossible for Jeroboam to carry on his administration there. The Levites were in charge of the local cult and were also responsible for the discharge of local government in the region, and although they may have been regarded with increasing suspicion by the local population as representatives of an odious regime, they were first and foremost representatives of the nation's God. For Jeroboam to have had them put to death²⁶ or removed from their office would have been a serious error of judgement, and hence it appears that he took the most politic course of action and removed the centre of his administration to Peniel. The levitical establishment therefore

26. The reluctance to slay the priests of Yahweh is illustrated by the refusal of Saul's servants to kill the priests of Nob, cf. I Sam. 22.17.

found itself isolated in a climate politically hostile to it in which it no longer had any administrative function. Penuel, east of the Jordan, had no levitical connections. It did however have associations with Israel's past, for here Jacob was reputed to have wrestled with the angel (cf. Gen. 32.24 ff). In the story of Gideon it is mentioned as a place with a strong tower (cf. Ju. 8.8f, 17). Probably Jeroboam's fortification of the town was designed to secure Gilead which had remained loyal to David during Absalom's revolt (cf. II Sam. 17.27 ff).

Having achieved political separation from Judah, Jeroboam now turned to the religious position. The impact of David's action in transferring the ark to Jerusalem can be clearly seen from Jeroboam's reaction to the significance of this move. All Israel was obliged to worship at Jerusalem, since it had become the successor of the amphictyonic sanctuary, where all the tribes had gathered for worship during the period of Judges. The Jerusalem temple, situated beside the royal palace (cf. Ezek. 43.7 ff), was the chapel royal of the state religion, and the sacral role of the nation's leader played an important part in the ritual performed there. This was an impossible situation if the northern kingdom was to survive, for the participation of its people at the Jerusalem cult meant their acceptance of the unique position occupied by the house of David in relation to Yahweh. David and his successors were reaffirmed in the cult as Yahweh's chosen

line of rulers ad infinitum, a position that they held exclusively. Such an affirmation by the people of the northern kingdom would have put Jeroboam's regime in serious jeopardy. On the other hand, a complete change in the national religion, which was the usual procedure in the ancient east in such circumstances, would have been an equally dangerous course of action to follow. Seeing these difficulties Jeroboam took counsel, it is not stated with whom (cf. I Kgs. 12.28), and a course of action was found in the erection of the golden calves at Bethel and Dan. These symbols have often been regarded as the revival of an ancient form of worship that had once been practised by Israelites at Bethel and Dan²⁷. However, the fact that the Elohist in Gen. 28.10-22; 35.1-7 considers the cult of Bethel as legitimate, while Hosea and Amos condemn it, is only intelligible if the cult at Bethel experienced a change from that which was anciently practised there. The calves that Jeroboam erected were not idols but rather symbols

27. R. Dussaud in Les origines cananéennes du sacrifice israelite, pp. 243 ff, says "l'institution du Royaume d'Israël par Jerobeam I n'amena contrairement au récit tendancieux de l'A.T., aucune révolution religieuse. Il est très probable que le nouveau roi ne fit que sanctionner la coutume locale notamment quand il adopta, pour les sanctuaires de Bethel et de Dan, l'image d'une jeune taureau comme représentation de Yahvé", and accordingly he maintains the bull image of Dan to be older than Jeroboam I's regime and traces it back to the Ephraimite Micah (Ju. 17 and 18). But since the bull in a special sense is the beast of the God Hadad, Dussaud further concludes that the god at Bethel, just as the god at Dan, was nothing further than a local form of the great Amorite God Hadad.

which represented the presence of Yahweh in a similar way to the ark symbolizing Yahweh's presence at the Jerusalem temple. Yet Jeroboam's choice of calves as his symbols to represent Yahweh must have had some basis to have gained popular acceptance. The calf represented the cult animal of the Canaanite Baal and its use by Jeroboam shows the degree of syncretism between the worship of Yahweh and the Canaanite nature cult that existed at the time in the northern kingdom. The change from a nomadic state to a settled agricultural one had important religious consequences for the Israelites. The cultivation of the soil implied the worship of the fertility deities. In a similar way, dependence on the cycle of seed time and harvest gave increasing prominence to the sun as conditioning the food supply with the result that sun worship gained ground. The importance in which domestic animals such as sheep and goats were held began to include large cattle resulting in the symbolizing of the heavenly deity by the might of the bull. Under these circumstances it became inevitable that the aniconic God of Israel should come to be represented by the form of the calf²⁸. The idea of the Baalim as the gods of agriculture is found in Hos. 2.5 which, when taken with Hos. 2.16, shows how completely Baalism had been naturalised and incorporated into Yahwism by this time. No

28. It is possible that the calves at Bethel and Dan represented pedestals or thrones upon which the invisible Yahweh was understood to be enthroned. Hence these calves would have had a purpose similar to the ark of the covenant, conceived of as Yahweh's throne.

explanation of the calves is given for they were already a well-known phenomena both to the Canaanite population and to those Israelites who had lapsed into a syncretistic worship that oscillated between Yahwism and Baalism.

One of the calves was set up at Bethel, the other at Dan. The setting up of a calf at Dan must have either resulted in the overthrow of the levitical priesthood there, or its acceptance of the calf. As Ju. 18.30 records that a levitical priesthood existed at Dan until the fall of the northern kingdom, the latter view would seem the more probable. The priesthood may have found it more expedient to refrain from immediate protest against Jeroboam's calf than endanger its ancient priestly office²⁹. Moreover, Jeroboam probably encouraged the Levites to accept the new form of worship, although it is doubtful if his efforts met with much success. The emphasis appears to lie on Bethel, which is only to be expected, as it lay in the nearest proximity to Judah, only twelve miles from Jerusalem itself. It had been venerated from time immemorial as a holy place where Abraham had built an

29. E. Nielsen, Shechem, a traditio-historical investigation, op. cit., p. 196, considers that the reference to the installation of one of the calves at Dan is due to a misinterpretation of v.30b which he takes to mean that a ritual procession took place from Bethel to the northernmost point of Israel with the calf. The first ritual procession of the calf through the kingdom may have been intended as its presentation to the entire population. However v.29 clearly states that a calf was set up in both places.

altar (cf. Gen. 12.8), and Jacob had received a vision (cf. Gen. 28). Jeroboam now established at this famous oracular shrine rituals corresponding to those enacted at Jerusalem, doubtless one of his purposes being to entice pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem to turn aside and worship at Bethel. It was this shrine that subsequently became the royal sanctuary (cf. Am. 7.13).

Apart from the two national shrines, Jeroboam is also said to have established 'houses of high places', i.e. local sanctuaries at which fertility rites were practised, and appointed priests from the general populace³⁰. There is no mention of the Levites being driven out, which is a little surprising in an account coming from the Deuteronomist's hand. It is merely stated that non-levitical priests were appointed. A possible conclusion from this information may be that the Levites could not be dislodged from their influential positions either by force or legislation, so the policy was adopted of setting up new sanctuaries with non-levitical priests, in this way rendering the Levites completely redundant. The secession had deprived the Levites of their civil power, but their authority in religious affairs continued to pose a dangerous threat to the security of the new regime. The only way to avoid this danger was to break the levitical monopoly in the religious affairs of the state by the appointment of priests outside their ranks to new sanctuaries.

30. מִן הָעָם מִלְּבָיִת; the evidence of Gen. 47.2; Ezek. 33.2, and particularly Num. 22.41 in which Balaam looks upon the whole camp of Israel, suggests that the correct meaning of מִן הָעָם is 'the mass' or 'the whole range' of the people rather than 'from the lowest of the people' as the A.V. renders it.

The feast appointed by Jeroboam in I Kgs. 12.32 f. corresponded to the similar festival that took place in Jerusalem on the seventh month in which the temple was dedicated. The establishment of the festival at Bethel in the eighth month could scarcely suggest a later harvest there than in the south, as the distance between Jerusalem and Bethel, being only twelve miles, is insufficient to make a difference of one month in harvest. In fact the rain comes earlier to Bethel, which is at a higher elevation than Jerusalem, occasioning a somewhat earlier harvest. Probably Rehoboam arrived at Shechem to be proclaimed king over the northern kingdom a few days after the New Year festival in Jerusalem at which he is most likely to have been crowned³¹. No doubt Jeroboam established in the following month a counterpart of the Jerusalem festival which would have commemorated the gift of the covenant, the essential element in the ancient amphictyonic cult at Shechem, and the sacral ideology of the Canaanite New Year festival which was vital to his prestige as king.

31. The precise dating 'on the fifteenth day' of the eighth month possibly reflects the later fixing of the feast of tabernacles in Lev. 23.39a, 41b, though the New Year festival probably always coincided with the full moon in the middle of the seventh or eighth month cf. Ps. 81.4 (E.V.v.3). J. Morgenstern, 'Festival of Jeroboam I'; J.B.L. pp. 109-128, 1964, thinks that the old agricultural pentecontad calendar was abandoned in Solomon's reign in favour of an international calendar based on the solar system to facilitate trade. Jeroboam, he contends, restored the old pentecontad calendar by which he reckoned the New Year festival and thereby gained popularity amongst the large agrarian section of the population.

The secession of the ten tribes with its religious and political consequences disrupted the whole scheme of levitical settlements in the northern kingdom. By forcing the Levites into a position of redundancy in their religious and political spheres of activity, Jeroboam eliminated them as a potential threat to the national security. However, it is quite possible that a number remained in their cities and continued to function as priests of the Mosaic faith. The levitical liturgy of curses relating to the twelve tribes, six situated on Mt. Gerizim and six on Mt. Ebal (cf. Dt. 27.11-26) might suggest the survival of a levitical priesthood in Shechem. Moreover, the continuing adherence of some of the population to Jerusalem up until the time of the exile and after, may testify to the survival of levitical influence in the northern kingdom³². It goes without saying that the Levites who did retain their priestly function must have encountered bitter opposition from their non-levitical rivals, who functioned as priests of the syncretised Yahweh cults, and who would have regarded them in their attempts to impregnate the Israelite population with the pure Yahwistic tradition as a serious embarrassment. The Levites in their turn would have regarded the advance

32. cf. Jer. 41.5, also the attempt of the Samaritans to help rebuild the temple in Ezr. 4 might be attributed to a sense of loyalty to Jerusalem which they could have inherited from levitical activity in past centuries.

of Canaanite influence, the suppression of which they had in many places originally been responsible for, with keen hostility. Many, however, would have been forced into complete redundancy and due to current circumstances found themselves compelled to revert to their basic vocation of non-cultic Yahweh service. Hence the Levites must have found themselves in a position similar to that of the religious guilds of the sons of the prophets, the Rechabites, and doubtless the Nazarites (cf. Am. 2.11). Moreover, it is natural that the Levites should have shared with these prophetic elements a bitter antagonism to the monarchy in northern Israel. Priests are primarily represented as omen observers, and prophets as ecstasies, but the differentiation cannot be made without consideration of priestly participation in ecstatic rites. The priest, seer, and other categories took part in the same rituals as the prophets, and therefore it is probable that the priest or other non-prophetic classes could also give ecstatic oracles. In Chronicles there is evidence for this. II Chr. 20.14 speaks of Jehazeel a Levite, one of the sons of Asaph, upon whom the spirit of Yahweh descended in the midst of the assembly and an oracle followed. In II Chr. 24.20 the same type of phenomenon is recorded in connection with a priest. Another example is found in Ezek. 1.3 where the prophet, entitled as 'the priest', is said to be seized by the hand of Yahweh. It may be objected that these passages are late and prove nothing about the earlier period. But it seems likely that even in this earlier period, especially in the circumstances experienced by the

Levites in the northern kingdom, that they would have taken part in ecstatic rites along with the prophetic guilds and have become identified with the prophetic movement in general³³.

Some information may be found relating to the fate of the northern Levites in II Chr. 11.13,14,17. Here it is stated that the Levites throughout Israel resorted to Rehoboam in Judah as Jeroboam had denied them their priestly office. They were followed by all the faithful who sought Yahweh at his sanctuary in Jerusalem, and made Rehoboam secure for three years. Faithful servants of Yahweh from the Chronicler's point of view would necessarily side with Rehoboam. The Levites therefore appear to have made of their own volition a genuine sacrifice in leaving their land round their cities which could never be sold (cf. Lev. 25.34), and their houses which also were their inalienable property (cf. Lev. 25.32,33). The reason for the limitation of three years is due to the invasion of Shishak in the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign (cf. I Kgs. 14.25; II Chr. 12.2). This invasion from the Chronicler's point of view must have been caused by some religious delinquency on the part of Rehoboam and his people (cf. 12.1) which brought about a weakening of the kingdom. This naturally falls in the fourth year of the reign immediately preceding the invasion, and hence only three

33. cf. O. Plöger, 'Priester und Prophet', Z.A.W. (1951), points out the remarkable similarity between the Levites and the northern prophetic guilds.

years are left for obedience and increase in strength. The verb used to denote the rejection of the Levites from their priestly function is נִסְּאָ which has the basic meaning 'to be foul' or 'rancid'. It can in most instances be understood to mean something that is abhorrent i.e. foul or stinking. It is found in Hos. 8.5 'thy calf is abhorrent'³⁴. It is often used of Yahweh rejecting his people, but when rendered as loathsome or abhorrent a much more poignant meaning is achieved, e.g. Ps. 43.2 'Thou are the God of my strength, why hast thou loathed me?'³⁵ The word carries the same tone of meaning in the hiphil form cf. I Chr. 28.9 - if Solomon is disobedient to Yahweh's law, Yahweh will make him abhorrent. In v.14 of the passage under consideration here, this predicate again occurs in the hiphil form to express Jeroboam's and his son's rejection of the Levites from the priesthood. The correct interpretation would appear to be that Jeroboam in making the Levites abhorrent, injured their reputation as priests among the people, and the fact that his sons are mentioned may suggest that the process of stirring up public opinion against the Levites continued for

34. i.e. נִסְּאָ

35. cf. also Lam. 2.7; Ps. 44.10 (E.V.v.9), 24 (E.V.v.23); 60.3 (E.V.v.1); 12(E.V.v.10); 74.1; 77.8 (E.V.v.7); 89.39 (E.V.v.38). In Is. 19.6 the form נִסְּאָ occurs with נִסְּאָ which means 'the rivers stink' i.e. from lack of water. The form shows the Aramaic influence and seems to be made up of two readings - נִסְּאָ and נִסְּאָ the latter which imitates the Chaldee, cf. Gesenius' Hebrew lexicon pp 249 f.

some time³⁶. This would agree with the record of I Kgs. 12.31 where there is no evidence of a direct attempt to drive out the Levites, but rather to break their monopoly over the state's religious affairs. It is probable that the Chronicler has preserved a genuine tradition that told of a stream of levitical refugees from the northern kingdom back to Judah which doubtless continued for many years. In later years we find Levites engaged in civil administration and in the cultic and legal life of the cities of Judah in the reign of Jehoshaphat (cf. II Chr. 19.11). The stability of the southern kingdom was consolidated by institutions based upon the permanent order of things and supported by the permanent government. Naturally the monarchy itself benefited most by this stability. The royal cult, which in the kingdom of Samaria was in no position to supersede popular and independent worship, easily obtained a perceptible preponderance throughout Judah, being buttressed by royal officers who could only add prestige to the king's priesthood which gained in strength alongside the house of David. Thus at an early period the way was paved for the act of uniformity by which Josiah made the king's cult the official one.

36. See Note 30 in Appendix.

DEUTERONOMY AND THE PRIESTHOOD

The Deuteronomic programme is of prime importance as a turning point in the history of Israel's priesthood, and provides an insight into its organization and character during the later monarchic period. In order to appreciate the information relating to the hierarchy contained in Deuteronomy something must be said of its derivation and background. The question of Deuteronomy's origin is a vexed one as upon its answer the whole of the documentary hypothesis hinges. The internal criteria of the book are of such a complex nature that it is difficult to draw any definite conclusions from them. Ancient traditional material lies at its roots, e.g. the section dealing with the procedure in the case of a murder committed by an unidentified assailant (cf. Dt. 21.1-9). The rite prescribed is of an archaic character and would appear to be much older than the law of Deuteronomy into which it is here incorporated.

The zeal for Yahweh, which expresses itself in the destruction of those who offend against that which is holy, or has been set apart for destruction as unclean, is one of the most pervasive elements in the book of Deuteronomy, and traditions relating to the holy war are numerous¹. The era of the holy war was that of the Israelite occupation of Canaan i.e. the period of the Judges. Israel was at this period in her history a

1. cf. Dt. 12.29 ff; 19.1 f; 20.1-20; 21.10-14; 24.5; 25.17-19.

theocratic community united in covenant, which at appointed times, usually annually in the Autumn, assembled in council and celebrated the covenant festival at the communal shrine². However, the formation of the state transformed this system, which was based upon a sense of mutual responsibility amongst the tribes involved in it³. Jerusalem succeeded the old amphictyonic shrine, and at the same time assumed royal status⁴. In none of the traditions of Deuteronomy is the king accorded the authoritative role that he in fact played. This gives the impression that in all the ordinances of Deuteronomy a strong tendency hostile to the institution of monarchy is at work, which aimed at the resuscitation of traditional practices that had obtained in Israel in the period before the inauguration of the kingdom. Between the termination of the age of Judges and the discovery of the law book in the time of Josiah, which is identified with Deuteronomy, there was a lengthy period in which these traditions survived on the periphery of Israel's sacred history, either recorded in

2. See Note 31 in Appendix.

3. If one of the tribes was threatened by attack from outside, the others in the confederacy were expected to rally to its defence cf. Ju. 5.

4. Something of the tension between the old traditions derived from the wilderness period and the new institutions may be indicated in Nathan's oracle warning David against building the temple cf. II Sam. 7.4-17.

writing or orally transmitted. In Deuteronomy these traditions reappear after almost four centuries of obscurity. Their survival must have been due to a circle of transmitters who cherished and preserved these traditions as a divine code from generation to generation.

One of the great forces in Israel was the prophetic one. It acted as a stronghold against syncretism of the Yahweh faith with the religions of the surrounding peoples that had impinged upon Israel. The northern kingdom was the scene of their most vigorous activity probably because here the Yahweh faith was more severely challenged than in the south. The tenacious survival in the north of the Canaanite fertility worship associated with Baal, and the geographical location of the country which left it open to foreign influences, particularly from Phoenicia and Syria, were factors with which those loyal to Yahweh had to reckon. It was in the north that the monarchy encountered bitter resentment, and even after secession from the Judaeans the institution failed to achieve the stability that it enjoyed in Judah⁵. The prophetic guilds first made their appearance in Samuel's time at

5. A monarchy and tribal community were incompatible. The monarchy had been accepted in Judah, but was rejected in Israel as a cause of perversion against true Yahwism. As a result of this tenacious survival of the old tribal concept, the northern kingdom had no continuing dynasty of rulers and the position of some of its kings on the throne was highly precarious.

the height of the Philistine threat. They seem to have been most active in times of military crisis, especially in the northern kingdom when the nation was in peril and had to be defended against the enemies of Yahweh. They often appeared on the battle field beside the armies of Israel advising the king, and demanding that the war should be carried out according to the sacral principles of the holy war (cf. I Kgs. 20.13 ff; II Kgs. 3.11 ff; 13.14 ff). Their concern for the observance of covenant law, their adherence to the concept of the holy war and the critical view they held of some of their rulers are all points in favour of accepting these prophetic circles as the transmitters of the traditions contained in Deuteronomy. Although a northern provenance is likely for many of Deuteronomy's traditions, difficulties however arise in attributing their preservation to prophetic circles. In ascribing their transmission to the northern prophetic movement it is difficult to explain how they found their way to Judah, why Deuteronomy appears so interested in the centralization of the cult, or the motives behind Deuteronomy's concern for the organization of cult personnel and the Levites. These interests do not appear to have a parallel in the records that have come down to us of the prophetic message.

In view of these difficulties we must turn to another source where these traditions may have circulated. The homiletic character of the entire corpus seems to reflect a didactic style as can be seen for

example in Dt. 15.2 ff. A series of dicta are given on the manner of release. Then in vv. 5 f the instructor exhorts his hearers to observe all the preceding laws and Yahweh will bless them. They are to lend to many nations but never to borrow. The teacher continues in v.7 by pronouncing the law of charity and warns his listeners against exercising their right in the year of release. The sermon is concluded in vv. 9, 10 by the preacher commending the poor to the charity of those more fortunate than they, by holding out the promise of blessing from Yahweh for acts of kindness to them. Consider another example, the law dealing with a rebellious son (Dt. 21.18-21). The instructor declares in vv. 18 f, that, if a boy is beyond parental control, he is to be brought to the civil authorities who are to stone him. The reason given for this drastic treatment is the elimination of evil from Israel and the provision of a warning for others, i.e. the maintenance of a healthy and stable society which depends upon an ordered home life. Deuteronomy is an immense amplification of case law. This is not a literary mode wholly peculiar to Deuteronomy, but is also found in other parts of the Old Testament such as the judgments in Ex. 20.22 - 23.19 or the decalogue, especially the second, fourth and fifth commandments⁶. To whom then can this didactic hortatory genre of literature be attributed that permeates Deuteronomy? It obviously must have been a community that held public instruction

6. See Note 32 in Appendix.

which points to the shrines rather than the law courts that sat at the city gates. It was here that the priests functioned and would have access to a wide range of cultic material which they alone as its transmitters and preservers had the authority to expound and make relevant to current reality. The prophets came in contact with reality while the priests applied the information drawn from this prophetic contact with the human situation to the law they preserved, and so pronounced their directives which touched many aspects of everyday life. The homiletic style points to a preaching activity which is evidenced in post-exilic times as characteristic of the Levites (cf. Nh. 8.9 ff; II Chr. 35.3). Not only would Levites have access to the ancient traditions of Israel, but they would have been greatly interested in cultic matters, especially centralization of worship which was of direct relevance to them. Moreover, as Yahweh's chosen priests (cf. Dt. 10.8), the Levites were strong adherents of his faith and committed to its propagation⁷. The fact that centralization of worship in one place meant the closure of the country sanctuaries and unemployment to the Levites functioning at them, may be raised as an

7. H.W. Wolff, 'Hoseas geistige Heimat', Gesammelte Studien - considers that although Hosea stands within the traditions of the prophetic party of northern Israel, his concern for the true and ideal function of cultic worship and his familiarity with the old sacral traditions of early Israel point to a contact between Hosea and the Levites, who like the prophets were in active opposition to the current state religious policy.

objection to attributing Deuteronomy to Levites, but it should be remembered that there were a great number of Levites who had become redundant in the course of the religio-political troubles of the northern kingdom (cf. I Kgs. 12.31), and completely suppressed following the disaster of 721, who finding themselves refugees in Judah would have welcomed an opportunity to participate at the national shrine⁸. Moreover, II Kgs. 18.22 implies that the Judaeans Levites also were dispossessed of their sanctuaries subsequent to Hezekiah's reform, and may have taken a similar line to their northern colleagues.

The Deuteronomist places no great significance on the ark but merely describes it as a box containing the tablets of the law (cf. Dt. 10.1-5; 31.9). As Yahweh's dwelling is acknowledged as being in heaven by the Deuteronomist, the ark therefore does not represent his presence, and an attempt is made to reinterpret the ark's significance and free it from the accretions that had developed around it in Jerusalem, where it was conceived of as Yahweh's throne (cf. Is.6). The Deuteronomist regarded the ark as the symbol of Yahweh's presence in the place he chose for this purpose. Dt. 12.1-5, which introduces the code, represents a development from the

8. E.W. Nicholson, Deuteronomy and Tradition, pp. 54 ff, 94 attributes Deuteronomy to northern prophetic circles who after 721 fled south and formulated their traditions into a programme for the reform of the Jerusalem cult. In rejecting levitical authorship he overlooks the possibility that subsequent to Jeroboam's rejection of the Levites they may have been driven into opposition against state policy, and probably took their stand alongside the prophetic movement.

law of sanctuary in Ex. 20.24. Here the uniqueness of the sanctuary is pronounced with the assertion that Yahweh will select it from out of all the tribes. Deuteronomy thereby attributes to Jerusalem more than had ever previously been claimed for it⁹. It was not only the chosen place of Yahweh and the shrine of his anointed, it was now the sole place where he could be worshipped, and thereby was accredited with complete supremacy to rule politically and religiously over the whole land and people, a position unparalleled in Israel's history. Hitherto, although Jerusalem was Yahweh's chosen dwelling place, he could still be worshipped at other shrines. In the period of the Judges there is no evidence that the central sanctuary was the only one. Thus Deuteronomy in the law of sanctuary gives Jerusalem complete monopoly over the Israelite cult, but instead of Mt. Zion being Yahweh's chosen dwelling place he is, according to Deuteronomy, 'to cause his name to dwell there' (יְהוָה יֵשְׁבֶה שְׁמֵךְ) in a similar way to Ex. 20.24. A new assumption is present here in the constant and almost material presence of the name at the shrine. Earlier references to the relationship of the name with the human world are difficult to define (cf. Ex. 20.24; 23.21; Is. 30.27). Deuteronomy establishes it in a definite place within fixed limits. It is not Yahweh himself who is present at the shrine but only his name as a guarantee of his salvation. The old notion of Yahweh's presence

9. See Note 33 in Appendix.

and dwelling at the national sanctuary, substantially a political idea, is replaced in Deuteronomy by a theologically superior concept.

It could perhaps be suggested that Deuteronomy applied the idea of Yahweh's actions to Israel as his choosing it from among the nations¹⁰. Although this was not a new concept, it came to be expressed explicitly for the first time as a balance to the excessive claims of the Davidic covenant. It replaced the sacral foundation of the Israelite state that found its expression in Yahweh's eternal covenant with David, with a divine pronouncement that the people as a whole had been selected as Yahweh's special possession. Hence Deuteronomy appears to have been familiar with the theological ethos prevailing at Jerusalem. The problem arises of reconciling this awareness and sensitivity to the Jerusalem scene, with Deuteronomy's background of northern traditions in a work, as we have shown, strongly homiletical in style which represents a miscellany of traditions but yet has a consistency of thought. The levitical circles, as has already been mentioned, are the most likely to have had access to old northern traditions and at the same time to have been interested in cultic organization. Dispossessed of their shrines in

10. This was not a new concept. Hosea speaks of Israel being Yahweh's son whom he called for Egypt, cf. 11.1 ff, which is an amplification of the husband wife symbolism used to express the relationship between Yahweh and his people - a theme running through the entire book. Similarly Amos relates Yahweh's exclusive affection for Israel over all the nations of the world, cf. 3.2.

the northern kingdom, it is not improbable that they may have sought refuge in Judah and become acquainted with the Jerusalem situation¹¹. They may, as has been previously suggested, have been joined by those in the south who suffered a similar fate as a result of Hezekiah's reform. The interest in the Jerusalem cult is sustained with reserve, which implies that the reform was advanced with elements of care and almost timidity indicative of a group who did not have the authority to speak with boldness ex cathedra¹². In the light of these considerations, the ideas embodied in Deuteronomy would basically appear to belong to levitical groups from the northern kingdom who formulated their traditions, perhaps with the help of southern levitical groups, and adapted them to their new situation.

Having pointed to the circles that lie behind Deuteronomy, something must now be said about its legislation in reference to the priests. The interest in the Levite is a marked characteristic of Deuteronomy. It is stated in 18.1 that 'the priests the Levites, all

11. A. Alt 'Die Heimat des Deuteronomiums' Kleine Schriften II, 1953, pp. 273 ff, considers that Deuteronomy was the reformation programme of a revival movement in northern Israel following the fall of Samaria in 721, which may have included the whole of the northern kingdom or a part of it. However, in view of the historical situation it seems more likely, that although Deuteronomy embodied many northern traditions, the Deuteronomist's interest was focused on the national cult of the southern kingdom.

12. See Note 34 in Appendix.

the tribe of Levi, have no part nor inheritance in Israel; they are to eat the offerings made to Yahweh by fire and his inheritance'. The term 'the priests the Levites, all the tribe of Levi' is difficult. The English translations give an assortment of renderings. The R.S.V. translates 'the levitical priests, that is, all the tribe of Levi', and the A.V. renders 'the priests and all the tribe of Levi'. The term 'all the tribe of Levi' appears in apposition to 'the priests the Levites', and as such may be an apposition of equivalence or a comprehensive summation. Another partly analogous use of phrases in apposition may be found in Dt. 20.14 where, preceding the final comprehensive phrase 'all the spoil,' the constituents of the spoil are enumerated. In the instance of appositional usage here (Dt. 18.1), the term 'the tribe of Levi' being in apposition to 'the priests the Levites', while explicitly including levitical priests, assumes, as we shall contend in vv.6-8, the existence of rural Levites not functioning in a priestly capacity but of priestly status. Interpreted in this way, the phrase 'all the tribe of Levi' does not appear to be an apposition of equivalence but rather a comprehensive summation in which one constituent is explicitly named i.e. the levitical priests functioning at the place of Yahweh's choice. Denied an inheritance, the levitical priests are allotted the offerings made with fire, i.e. the burnt offering. This included the meal offering (cf. Lev. 2.3), the thank offering (cf. Lev. 3.3) and the guilt offering (cf. Lev. 7.5), in all of which specified parts were the perquisites of the priests (cf. Lev. 2.3;

7.6-10; Num. 18.9 ff). From this information it would seem that the interpretation advanced above in reference to the term 'the priests the Levites, the whole tribe of Levi' is feasible, for it is difficult to imagine the offerings which could be eaten only at the place ordained by Yahweh for his worship, being sent from Jerusalem to the non-functioning Levites of priestly status who dwelt in the country. Furthermore, it is clear from the context, which deals exclusively with the question of the priesthood functioning or otherwise, that the phrase 'all the tribe of Levi' embraces only Levites who enjoyed priestly status, although in some instances not functioning as such. Besides the fire offering the levitical priests are to eat each 'his inheritance.' There are two possible interpretations for this. It may mean the other sacred dues not included in the fire offering e.g. the first fruits. It is stated in Num. 18.21 ff. that the Levites were to inherit the tithe offered to Yahweh. From this tithe a tenth part was to be given to the officiating priests and the remainder of the tithe was retained by the Levites themselves (cf. Num. 18.26-29; Nh. 10.38). Num. 18.24b states that the Levites have no inheritance among the children of Israel, but yet in v.21 they are assigned the tithe which is designated as their inheritance in vv.21, 24a, 26. This appears contradictory unless we accept the word $\pi\zeta\pi\lambda$ as having a relatively wide interpretation. It most frequently denotes landed property. Canaan is time and again referred to as Yahweh's gift or portion to Israel e.g. Dt. 4.38;

Ps. 105.11; I Chr. 16.18. It can also have other meanings, e.g. the people of Israel are often referred to as Yahweh's possession (cf. Dt. 4.20; 9.26,29; I Kgs. 8.51,53; Is. 19.25); the portion allotted to the wicked is denoted by the word $\pi\zeta\pi\eta$ in Job 20.29; 27.13, and it is also found used of the sin offering which is considered the property of the priest in Ezek. 44.28. In the New Testament the corresponding Greek term $\kappa\lambda\eta\rho\omicron\nu\sigma\mu\alpha$ denotes the inheritance by which the people of God shall live, i.e. their spiritual patrimony or the possession in store for them (cf. Acts. 20.32; Eph. 1.14,18)¹³. In its widest sense therefore, the word $\pi\zeta\pi\eta$ may be taken to mean possession of some sort. As the Levites are denied an inheritance with Israel in Num. 18.23, 24b, the word $\pi\zeta\pi\eta$ could be interpreted in these instances to mean an inheritance of land, the lack of which distinguished Levites from other tribes. On the other hand, in Num. 18.21, 24a, 26 the correct interpretation of the word $\pi\zeta\pi\eta$ is obviously the tithe, regarded as the lawful possession of the Levite. In Dt. 18.1 a similar conflict is encountered in the use of the term $\pi\zeta\pi\eta$. The Levites are denied any inheritance in Israel, yet they are permitted to eat Yahweh's inheritance, which in the light of Num. 18.21 ff may perhaps be interpreted to mean the tithe. If, however, $\pi\zeta\pi\eta$ is taken to denote Yahweh's tithe, it is strange that the text does not explicitly say so when it designates the preceding offerings as those made by fire. After mention of the fire offering

13. cf. also Gal. 3.18; Eph. 5.5; Col. 3.24; Hebr. 9.15.

some mention of the offering of first fruits or tithe would be expected instead of the rather obscure term 'his inheritance'. We may, therefore, perhaps conjecture a second possible meaning for this term which falls within its wider interpretation as possession. The cities that were allotted to the Levites included their suburbs in which they could graze their cattle (cf. Num. 35.3; Jos. 21.2), but they were not assigned to them as an inheritance in the sense that lands were distributed to the other tribes; they were given to the Levites from each tribe's inheritance. Jos. 21.12 records that agricultural land was not assigned to the Levites but to the Israelites. In this instance Caleb receives the fields around Hebron, the Levites the suburbs or non-arable land suitable for grazing, possibly hillside pasturage. It may be possible then to interpret 'his inheritance' as the produce of these levitical pastures which were Yahweh's inheritance and to be exclusively utilized by those in his service. It is probable that they would have been a source of revenue for all Levites of priestly status, whether functioning at Jerusalem or living in the country. It is noteworthy that although Jerusalem is never mentioned in the lists of levitical cities, the Aaronites are allotted a number of cities (cf. Jos. 21.13-19; I Chr. 6.42-45, E.V.vv. 57-60). As the lists of levitical cities occur within the priestly corpus of literature, it is not unlikely that the name Aaron has been superimposed on a previous designation for this group, for

instance, Zadok. The fact that Gibeon was one of the cities assigned to the Aaronites in Jos. 21.13-19 favours this view¹⁴. These cities may have constituted an arrangement analogous to a modern diocese containing parishes responsible for the maintenance of the mother shrine, Jerusalem. The revenue from the shrines and pasture lands of these cities would have provided an important source of income for the Jerusalem priesthood. v.2 repeats the principle of v.1 more emphatically. The tribe Levi is forbidden to have any inheritance in Israel, meaning in this instance tribal territory. This seems to refer to the priestly tribe as a whole which throughout the Old Testament is repeatedly denied a tribal inheritance.

Our attention is focused in vv. 3 ff. on the dues assigned to the functioning priest. He is to receive the shoulder, cheeks and stomach of the sacrificial victim¹⁵ along with the first fruits of corn, wine, oil and fleece. The offering of firstfruits was an ancient and widespread custom. It is found prescribed in Ex. 23.19; 34.26 J.E. Like the tithe, it was a mode of acknowledging Yahweh's bounty in blessing the increase of the earth, and until it had been offered it was not

14. The possible association of Zadok with Gibeon based on I Chr. 16.39 has been dealt with in a previous chapter of this thesis.

15. The passage is in direct contradiction with Lev. 7.32-34(P), which prescribes the breast and right thigh as the priest's due of the peace offering. Perhaps the passage here may be interpreted as being parallel to Lev. 7.32-34 and consequently as fixing the priest's dues at a time when the regulation laid down in Leviticus was not in force.

considered proper to eat of the new fruit of the year (cf. Lev. 23.17). Because the levitical priest is Yahweh's specially chosen minister and representative, he is to receive these dues. The closing words of v.5 may be significant since the expression 'him and his sons' could imply a hereditary priesthood, the singular suggesting one family in particular. As the next two verses assume one central sanctuary perhaps the reference to 'him and his sons' may denote the priesthood of this sanctuary. On the other hand, it is possible that the verse has a more general meaning, denoting Yahweh's choice of the Levites for his service, and in this way may provide the vinculum of the second paragraph (vv. 3-5) with the first (vv. 1,2).

The focus of interest is now centred on another group contained in the levitical tribe. Here the Levite coming from the country to officiate at the central sanctuary is dealt with. He is to be permitted to take his place alongside the priests already officiating at the place Yahweh shall choose, and to be at no disadvantage relative to such priests. Thereby the assumption in v.1 of the existence of Levites who enjoyed priestly status but did not function as such is here made explicit. The closing words of v.8 are obscure and interesting. Over and above having an equal portion with the officiating priesthood the country Levite is to have the proceeds of the sale of his patrimony. The word translated by patrimony is נִיְלֻחָם which implies something that has passed from

father to son. However, v.2 categorically states that the Levite shall have no inheritance with Israel, which, in accordance with Old Testament tradition, would seem to refer to the whole priestly tribe whether officiating at the central sanctuary or sojourning in the country. The country Levite is not required to forfeit his patrimony except he goes up to perform at the place of Yahweh's choice. He may still retain it and continue living in the country, having levitical status, and therefore contravening the law of v.2. Even if he chooses to join the priesthood established at the central sanctuary he will in fact enjoy its emoluments, and in addition possess the capital raised from his property¹⁶. Perhaps the clue to understanding the meaning here may be found by interpreting the word

נִיבֹתָיִם to denote the pasture lands around the levitical cities, which was conjectured above as a possible meaning for נִיבֹתָיִם in v.1b¹⁷. Thus it would appear that the levitical pastures were a source of revenue for all priestly Levites. Those who had always officiated at the central sanctuary are entitled to the produce from their priestly estates, those who go up to the central

16. This could well have been a bone of contention between the Jerusalem priesthood, and their nouveau riche colleagues from the country.

17. The law of redemption recorded in Lev. 25.32-34 stipulates that if the Levite leased a house in one of the levitical cities he could recover it at any time, but the pastures of the levitical cities could never be rented or sold. Perhaps the idea behind this law may be that the pastures around the cities assigned to the Levites were in a special way a levitical inheritance handed down in levitical families. This view is favoured by the use of the word נִיבֹתָיִם in v.8.

shrine have the capital from the sale of theirs. The Levite who remains at home however, although retaining his patrimony cannot partake of the sacrificial offerings and therefore forfeits this part of his income and forgoes the privilege of acting in a priestly capacity before Yahweh. It is possible that here Deuteronomy holds out an incentive for the Levites to leave their rural domiciles and support the ideal of centralization of worship. Not only would Yahweh's cult be discharged in one place, but his chosen priests would also be gathered at this place. Another motive behind Dt. 18.6-8 would appear to be aimed at breaking the exclusiveness of the Jerusalem hierarchy by giving it an injection of fresh blood in an attempt to purify the national cult and rekindle in it traditions that had long since lost their significance.

In 17.9 Deuteronomy legislates that if a controversy arises which is beyond the competence of the local authorities, the levitical priests and the judge are to act as arbitrators at the place which Yahweh elects. From their experience they may be able to bring some precedent to bear on the case and determine what should be done. The mention of the sanctuary as the place where the court of appeal sat, and the insistence on the priests' authority seem to show that the final decision, should all else fail, lay with them. The regulation shows a community that relied on priests to maintain a stable order in the community. This confidence in the priestly pronouncement was due to the fact

that the priests were regarded as possessing a special knowledge of the divine will. This knowledge was based on the torah which provided the priests with the means of giving authoritative direction and guidance to the community. The torah was the divine word entrusted to the priest, and as characteristic for him as the vision was for the prophet (cf. Jer. 18.18). In his application of this law, each case was laid before Yahweh and a precedent established - an ancient legal process witnessed from earliest times (cf. Ex. 22.7-11). It was the priest's business to amplify and expound the law, and to apply it relevantly to the particular circumstances, social, political and economic, that would confront him. The Blessing of Moses states that the priests 'should teach Jacob thy judgements and Israel thy law' (Dt. 33.10). This important priestly profession of preserving Yahweh's law and expounding it survived into post-exilic times. Haggai is recorded as seeking a torah from the priests on the matter of uncleanness (cf. Hag. 2.11 ff), and the Chronicler describes the situation during the period of Judges with the words; 'Many days Israel hath been without the true God and without a teaching priest and without a law' (II Chr. 15.3). Nh. 8.5 ff. relates how Ezra the priest and the Levites read the law and expounded it to the people, showing that even in post-exilic times when the priests were separated from among the Levites, all Levites, priestly or otherwise, had an important function to perform in transmitting, reciting and explaining the

law¹⁸. It was for neglecting this function and misinterpreting the law that Hosea criticised the priests (cf. Hos. 4.6). Similar charges are found against the priest in Jer. 2.8; Mal. 2.8. In Mal. 2.7 the priest is described in his capacity as preserver and transmitter of the law as 'the messenger of the Lord of hosts' which is perhaps a true reflection of the priest's legal role. Thus by attributing an important legal role to the priest, the Deuteronomist moves in a similar line of tradition. It is found recorded in Dt. 17.18 that after the king has ascended the throne, he is to transcribe for himself a copy of the law which he is to study daily in order that its principles may become his rule of life, and that he may govern his subjects in the just and equitable spirit it everywhere commends. This law is in the custody of the levitical priests. Whether they are merely in charge of it or have a function to interpret it, is not clear. But what is clear, is that here also in a matter that involved the welfare of Israel's life and religion, the levitical priests had to make known the divine will contained in the law¹⁹. Again in Dt. 24.8 we find the levitical priests

18. M. Gertner, 'The Massorah and the Levites', V.T. 1960, pp. 245 ff, considers that the Levites in singing the psalms and reciting holy scripture provided the accepted interpretation of these texts acting as expositors and exegetes. In this way, according to Gertner, they eventually developed into the later Massoretes.

19. See Note 35 in Appendix.

giving divine direction in the case of leprosy²⁰. Their pronouncement is that of Yahweh's, for it is based upon his law, and therefore is final. Whoever despises or offends the divine law or its judgement comes under reprimand from its masters (cf. Dt. 17.12).

The details are recorded in Dt. 26.1-9 of how the worshipper must bring the offering of his firstfruits to the sanctuary and present them to the priest functioning there, who is to supply him with the correct liturgical form to be repeated over the offering. The priest knew the correct ritual that was to be followed to make the offering acceptable. Since an emphasis on the holy as distinct from the profane or unclean was fundamental in cultic procedures, it can be understood that the priest had to pay painstaking regard to every detail in connection with the cult and its performance. The priestly law is dominated by the concepts 'holy' and 'profane', 'pure' and 'impure' (cf. Lev. 10.10; 14.27 ff; Ezek. 44.23). Thus the necessity to distinguish exactly the types of offering, their practicability and their efficacy, to know the particular festivals and rites applicable to them, to oversee the preparation of the offerings, the correct times to offer them, and the liturgy that was to accompany them, all devolved upon the priest and the divine law revealed to him. As the contact of clean with unclean was the greatest sacrilege, the priest had to know where uncleanness occurred and how it was distinguished. Uncleanness

20. See Note 36 in Appendix.

in contact with cleanness had an immediate effect on the person involved, and grades of contamination were distinguished. Where contamination was most serious it had to be removed by special ceremonies, but in other cases it subsided after a period of time. A priest, therefore, had to be instructed in the handling of holy things, the seriousness of contamination in each particular case, and the procedures necessary for its removal. A similar knowledge of holiness was also necessary for the acceptable performance of the cult that takes place in the service of Yahweh who is described as 'of purer eyes than to behold evil and unable to look upon iniquity' (Hab. 1.13). On the other hand, uncleanness and profaneness stand in strong opposition to him and are rejected. For this reason the priest had to exercise the most scrupulous care if the efficacy of the cult was to be maintained. If he failed in his vocation, Yahweh's law became a dead letter and lost its influence in society. The law was a living thing, and the priest, nurtured in it, was to cast its pearls in such a way that they were appreciated by the people as Yahweh's possession and were meaningful and relevant to their own circumstances. The laity must know the types of offering for different occasions and their purposes. They must know where uncleanness occurs, what its effects were, how long it lasted, and how to guard against it or to be free from it. As freedom from uncleanness was only attained by special rituals, they must be instructed in this also. They must further know how the holy is to be respected in

order to protect themselves from the dangerous effects of it. It was at the shrines up and down the country that information of this sort was sought and found, for there it had its roots. At these shrines, where levitical priests functioned, we may perhaps see the original kernel of Deuteronomy, a law that is presumably directed at the laity rather than the priesthood, in the instruction and preaching that played so great a part at the sanctuaries throughout ancient Israel.

A remarkable occurrence appears at the end of this provision dealing with the presentation of the firstfruits. The priest takes charge of the firstfruits, and before him the worshipper makes his confession. Having finished the recital of his ancient faith, it is reported in v.11 that the Israelite shall rejoice in every good thing which Yahweh has given him, and his family along with the Levite and the stranger that are in his midst. Here a sharp distinction occurs between the priest and the Levite²¹. The Levite does not officiate at the shrine and he is not even mentioned as a person who participates with the Israelite in his act of worship. He appears to be nothing more than a companion to the Israelite citizen allowed to participate in the pilgrimage to the central shrine. The

21. A.C. Welch, The Code of Deuteronomy, p. 97, states, on the basis of the priest referred to in Dt. 17.12 being the same as the levitical priests in Dt. 17.9, that the priest mentioned here is a levitical priest. This view is supported by the fact that the worshipper in Dt. 26.1-11 must bring his firstfruits to a specifically Yahweh altar at which the tribe of Levi is called to function cf. Dt. 10.8; 33.10.

Levite is frequently found in similar circumstances in Deuteronomy, but in these instances he is never described as being a priest; in fact, he only receives passing mention (cf. Dt. 12.12,18,19; 14.27,29; 16.11,14; 26.11 ff). As distinct from the Levite in Dt. 18.6-8 who at will may function as priest at the place of Yahweh's choice, or if he prefers remain at home and retain his pasturage, the Levite here appears poverty stricken and utterly dependent on those more fortunate than he²². The Levite described in Dt. 18.6-8, although like his non-priestly namesake is found within the gates of Israel, has no need of protection or charity, and therefore cannot be identified with the Levite catalogued with the other personae miserae of Israel. The poverty stricken Levite is in many respects similar to the Levite of Ju. 17. Both the Levite here under discussion and Micah's Levite are portrayed as having no possession of any sort. Micah's Levite is a לֵוִי, the Levite here is enumerated amongst the poor of the community which includes the לֵוִי. That such a Levite could become a priest is recorded in Ju.17, but although he founded a line of priests (cf. Ju. 18.30), it is not implied that he came from a line of priests nor that he belonged to an ethnic tribe Levi. It is simply stated that he was of the family of Judah and sojourned in Bethlehem (cf. Ju. 17.7). Hence we have

22. cf. especially 12.19; 14.27.

two traditions concerning Levites in Deuteronomy relating to those who had the right to function as priests and had sufficient means to be useful members of society, and those who lived in poverty, were dependent on charity and do not appear to have enjoyed the status of priest. It is possible in view of the miscellany of traditions of varying age preserved by Deuteronomy that we have an earlier tradition relating to non-priestly Levites alongside a later one when the entire tribe had assumed priestly status. Yet although the story of Micah's Levite may reflect a tendency of Levites during the period of Judges to find a living in taking up the priestly profession, it would seem improbable that all Levites would have automatically found employment at Israel's shrines or even wished for such employment. Some would therefore have remained as individuals or groups, or perhaps even families who zealously adhered to Yahweh, keeping alive the Mosaic tradition with which they were particularly associated²³. Hence it would seem more probable that we have two traditions which existed contemporaneously. One relating to the levitical priesthoods that had been attached for generations to Israel's shrines at which they either still functioned or had become redundant in the course of current events but still retained their priestly status, the

23. No account has survived relating the fate of these non-priestly Levites following the disaster of 587. It is possible they either joined those Levites who had formerly been priests and formed the non-priestly cleri minores of the post-exilic temple, or lost their identity and became absorbed in the general populace.

other referring to Levites, who, in accordance with the tradition contained in Ex. 32.25-29, set themselves apart from the rest of Israel for the service of Yahweh without any suggestion of priestly office, and who because of their great piety were considered worthy of public alms²⁴.

The effect of Deuteronomy on the organization of Israel's priesthood may be best appreciated if some idea of the motives surrounding its formulation can be ascertained, and the most likely period of its promulgation found. If Deuteronomy is dated in the post-exilic period, it is difficult to explain why the Deuteronomist records nothing in Israel's history following Jehoiachin's release from prison (cf. II Kgs. 25.27-30)²⁵. This consideration allows a terminus ad quem to be defined for the Deuteronomic history prior to the date of return. On the other hand, if we were to take the promulgation of Deuteronomy as being before 721, it would be difficult to explain how many of the northern traditions it contains reached Judah, or its interest in the reform of the Jerusalem cult. This allows a period of nearly two centuries to be considered for its formulation, a period of great internal change, and change on the international scene in which Judah was caught up. It was at this time that the people of

24. See Note 37 in Appendix.

25. H.H. Rowley, 'The prophet Jeremiah and the Book of Deuteronomy', in From Moses to Qumran, pp. 191 f, suggests that this short record of the release of Jehoiachin is an appendix added to II Kings after it had been completed for some time.

Judah went through much soul searching in an attempt to interpret the events that were going on around them. As the period following Josiah's reign was a strongly reactionary one in which there is no evidence of any revival of the Yahweh faith or even of circumstances conducive to this, the terminus ad quem for Deuteronomy itself may be posed as 621²⁶. The fact that many of the changes that took place in the reform recorded in II Kgs. 23 accord with the regulations of Deuteronomy's programme indicate the accuracy of identifying Josiah's law book with Deuteronomy²⁷. II Kgs. 22.3 ff states that the reform commenced in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign as a result of the law book found in the temple, but II Chr. 34.3 records that Josiah had already begun his reformation programme in the twelfth year of his reign, and that the discovery of the law book came more or less as a culmination of the reform that was followed by the celebration of the Passover. It seems strange that the king, as the Chronicler records, should have been embarrassed at the contents

26. G. Hölscher, Komposition und Ursprung des Deuteronomiums, Z.A.W. 1922, pp. 161-255, considers that although the code of Deuteronomy may be early, it has been revised and added to by later hands, especially those whose prime interest was the centralization of the cult. These editors he identified with the exilic priesthood. However, it is difficult to conceive of a priesthood in exile legislating for circumstances that had no relevance to their current situation.
27. e.g. the abolition of sacred prostitution v.7, cf. Dt. 23.18; the cult of Molech involving human sacrifice v.10, cf. Dt. 12.31; 18.10; the prohibition of necromancy v.24, cf. Dt. 18.11.

of the law book, having already anticipated its programme of renewal, and took no further steps to augment his reform programme on the basis of it. Yet behind the Chronicler's account may lie a glimmer of truth, for the mood of spiritual rejuvenation appears to have been abroad at the time²⁸. This tendency is perhaps illustrated by the assassination of Amon (cf. II Kgs. 21.19-26) who had continued the pro-Assyrian policy of his father Manasseh, and made himself odious to those loyal to Yahweh and anxious to rid the nation of its reactionary and syncretistic policies at a time when the Assyrian Empire was disintegrating, and the opportunity for freedom from its bonds ripe. From the fate of the northern kingdom it became clear to the religious leaders in Judah that if they wished to escape the destiny of their sister kingdom, they must turn away from their syncretistic worship. The reverence of Yahweh had never been surrendered in the northern kingdom but he had not been revered in the right way. Against the basic command of the covenant, other gods had been served alongside him at the old cult places where the pre-conquest Canaanite population of the land had worshipped their own gods. Moses in consequence of the covenant command had directed that Yahweh was not to be worshipped beside other gods²⁹. In the fall of

28. H.H. Rowley, op.cit., p.196, points out that the fact that repairs were being carried out in the temple before the law book was discovered may be an indication that the Jerusalem authorities had already been removing Assyrian cult emblems from it.

29. See Note 38 in Appendix.

northern Israel to Assyria, Yahweh was seen to have pronounced a judgement on the syncretistic worship exercised at these places. Yahweh could no more be worshipped at the high places in heathen cults but at the place of Yahweh's choice. This was the lesson held up to Judah which must have had its impact in the years immediately following 721, for it was during this time that Judah experienced a cultic and religious revival. A great flowering of literature took place during this period, and wisdom, that had flourished in the days of Solomon, experienced a revival (cf. Prb. 25.1). Something of this is perhaps reflected in the work of the Deuteronomist. The law in Dt. 4.6 ff is referred to as Israel's 'wisdom', in regard to wisdom teaching that was cultivated by all culturally developed people of the east³⁰. Israel has now, says the Deuteronomist, in Yahweh's law an instruction about the correct action, which is superior to every wisdom as v.8 expresses. The higher value of Israelite law in reference to the wisdom teaching or the laws of other peoples is not theoretically established here, but derived from the religious and historical experience of the people Israel, which provokes the question in v.7.

30. Wisdom endeavoured to show to man the correct mode of conduct in every situation of life, especially the way to good fortune and success in life. Upright action attains for the human being the favour of fellow creatures, and the protection and blessing of God. Thus Israel experiences in every situation the protection and blessing of Yahweh if she lives according to his law which far excels the wisdom of other nations, and is the way to true fortune.

A great literary epoch is often motivated by significant political and military achievements, bringing stability to a people³¹. Hezekiah succeeded Ahaz and witnessed in the fourth year of his reign the fall of Samaria (cf. II Kgs. 18.9). He was a nationalist and dedicated himself to restoring the national religion. II Kgs. 18.4 records that he abolished the high places and their paraphernalia and destroyed the brass serpent attributed to Moses. This must have given great encouragement to those anxious to advance the ideals of Deuteronomy, and the Deuteronomist records that Hezekiah 'trusted in the Lord God of Israel so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah nor any that were before him. For he clave to the Lord and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments which the Lord commanded Moses' (II Kgs. 18.5,6). Hezekiah's foreign policy was, if ultimately unsuccessful, courageous. He rejected Egyptian suzerainty of Judah and moved against the Philistines to the west (cf. II Kgs. 18.8)³². Most remarkable was his encounter with the Assyrians, whose commander of forces, the Rab-shakeh, tried in vain to cause the people of Jerusalem to defect from their king (cf. II Kgs. 18.17-37). The assault on Jerusalem that followed was unsuccessful.

31. The Elizabethan epoch of literature reached its climax after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. In a similar way the political scene in Judah, following the outcome of Sennacherib's campaign against Jerusalem, was conducive to the writing of Deuteronomy.

32. II Chr. 30.1 ff records an attempt made by Hezekiah to win the allegiance of the northern tribes.

The Assyrians were forced to withdraw for no explicitly stated reason, but from II Kgs. 19.35 it would appear that they were smitten by a plague which was interpreted as a divine judgement upon them³³. Jerusalem had defied the assault of the greatest power of the day which no other city or its deity had hitherto been able to withstand (cf. II Kgs. 18.33 ff). Its prestige was unparalleled, its esteem supreme. From the time of Moses the ark of the covenant was the external sign of Yahweh's presence amid the nation. Thus the traditional Mosaic custom of reverencing Yahweh at his own sanctuary received a strong impetus and vindication in these events.

Two alternatives lie open in pinpointing the promulgation of Deuteronomy in this period so highly conducive for its formulation. If it is taken as anterior to Hezekiah's reform, then it would naturally have provided the stimulus for it. However, as the reform of Hezekiah took place at the beginning of his reign and the deliverance of Yahweh's chosen place had yet to come, when Jerusalem was to experience its miraculous deliverance, the second alternative would seem more probable i.e. to identify Deuteronomy with the law book found in the temple in 621, and therefore anterior to the reform that followed its discovery. In support of this solution it may be noted that Hezekiah's reform makes no reference to any previous law, but Josiah's

33. Herodotus II. 141, records a tradition relating to a plague of mice that overran Sennacherib's army near the Egyptian frontier.

reformation appears to have legal foundations. Hence it seems that the religious, literary and political ethos of the later years of Hezekiah's reign or perhaps even the beginning of Manasseh's reign³⁴ would have given rise to the most probable circumstances for the formulation of Deuteronomy, which we may associate with Josiah's law book found in the temple in 621.

One difficulty however arises in identifying Deuteronomy with Josiah's law book. In II Kgs. 23.8 f, it is recorded how Josiah attempted to bring all the priests out of the cities of Judah to Jerusalem, but Dt. 18.6-8 merely states that the country Levite may go to Yahweh's chosen place and function there, without any notion of compulsion. Josiah appears to have gone beyond the law of Deuteronomy, and having made an attempt to bring all the priests to Jerusalem by force, they apparently were denied, contrary to the law of Dt. 18.6-8, their right to perform at the national shrine for it is recorded in v.9 that they did not come up to Yahweh's altar in Jerusalem, 'but ate unleavened bread among their brethren'. However this incompatibility need not imply that it is incorrect to identify the law book of Josiah with Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy was a programme drawn up under

34. On the basis of Is. 8.16 where the prophet speaks of sealing the torah among his disciples, some have attributed the book of Deuteronomy to the prophetic party when suffering persecution during Manasseh's reign. Although a date in the former years of Manasseh's reign would allow sufficient time for the law book to be deposited in the temple and subsequently forgotten about, the interest in the organization of the priesthood, and the Levites in particular, indicates levitical rather than prophetic origin.

different circumstances from those under which its laws were implemented. As indicated, it was probably formulated towards the end of Hezekiah's reign when some attempt had been made to centralize the cult at Jerusalem (cf. II Kgs. 18.22), and would therefore presuppose a large number of redundant levitical priests up and down the country. II Kgs. 23.8,9 are an historical account of the result of the programme discharged some fifty or sixty years later. In the interval a vigorous cultic activity had resumed at the local shrines during Manasseh's reign as Josiah's move to abolish them illustrates³⁵. These doubtless gave employment to some of those Levites who had been dispossessed as a result of Hezekiah's reform. Thus the Deuteronomist's programme was applied to a situation for which it was not originally written. The account that all the priests were brought up to Jerusalem is in line with the centralizing tendency of Deuteronomy, but the fact that many stayed away shows the impracticable reality of the programme applied to circumstances for which it was not formulated.

35. The cultic activity resumed at the country sanctuaries during Manasseh's reign was of a very syncretistic type and doubtless included elements of Assyrian religion due to the current Assyrian domination of Judah, cf. II Kgs. 21.1-9. The mention of לְבָדִי in II Kgs. 23.5 gives the impression that the high places of most idolatrous character were not attended by levitical priests. The priests brought to Jerusalem (cf. vv. 8,9) are not explicitly charged with officiating at heathen worship as in the case of the לְבָדִי in v.5.

As far as the priesthood was concerned, the legislation of Deuteronomy became a dead letter and instead of a great theological centre being established at Jerusalem with resident priests acting as full time cultic staff, and external part time staff coming and going intermittently, but being on an equal plane with the full time residents, the seeds of a clerus minor were sown in the admittance of those Levites, who, coming from the country, did obtain a permanent place at the central sanctuary. Subsequently they were to lose completely their priestly status, and instead provide the temple's ancillary services. The removal of the rural shrines and their priesthoods must not only be seen as a move to eliminate the local sanctuaries in an attempt to revitalise the spiritual fibre of the nation by the restriction of its worship to the place of Yahweh's choice, but also as a political manoeuvre in which royal supremacy for the first time extended over the entire functioning priesthood and worship of the nation. Although most of the priests from the country stayed away, the nation's worship was henceforth confined to one place. The fact however, that some priests did go to Jerusalem from the country and found a place there as Ezek. 40.44 ff would indicate³⁶, shows an attempt to carry out the law of Dt. 18.6-8. The

36. cf. next chapter of this thesis for a fuller discussion of this topic.

enhanced prestige of Jerusalem in its miraculous deliverance from the Assyrians, which was further raised by the implementing of Deuteronomy, not only extended the power of royal authority, but also elevated the influence and prestige of the Zadokite clergy who, although we have no information, must have come into conflict with their new rural colleagues, but yet retained the supreme rite at the altar (cf. Ezek. 44.15 ff), and in consequence of the abolition of all the rural sanctuaries were now the only priests with the right to offer up sacrifice to Yahweh.

THE PRIESTHOOD AND EXILE

Following the Deuteronomic reform, a reorganization of the Jerusalem priesthood was an inevitable process resulting from the assimilation of the rural priests who had made good their claim to a place at the national shrine on the basis of Dt. 18.1-8. The aftermath of the reform is reflected in the closing chapters of the book of Ezekiel, which represent a composite structure indicative of its development.

In Ezek. 40.45,46 we have recognition of two priesthoods¹. The first has responsibility for the care of the temple buildings as a whole, the second is responsible for the charge of the altar². This second group is specifically designated as 'the sons of Zadok amongst the sons of Levi' indicating their closer definition within the wider group Levi, and at the same time implying that the first group although priests do not belong to the sons of Zadok³. Since the law of Deuteronomy assumes that all priests are Levites (cf. Dt. 10.8; 21.5), it would seem that the use here of the

1. The R.S.V. emendation of v.44 with the LXX is generally accepted by scholars (reading, ^{לְכַהֲנָן} וְלְכַהֲנָן אֵלֶּיךָ, ^{וְלְכַהֲנָן} וְלְכַהֲנָן אֵלֶּיךָ), the M.T. being obviously inconsistent in the context since the chambers were to be used by priests, not singers. The word ^{הַדָּרֹם} 'south' with the LXX for ^{הַמִּזְרֵחַ} east is an obvious correction of an easy corruption. This verse does not appear to contain any information relevant to the subject under consideration here.
2. See Note 39 in Appendix.
3. See Note 40 in Appendix.

term 'sons of Levi' is a general one inclusive of the two groups mentioned in particular i.e. the priests in charge of the house and the Zadokites. As the two groups have already been qualified by their respective functions, the final clause in v.46 would seem superfluous as a further description of the Zadokites. It may therefore perhaps have a general meaning applicable to the functions of the two categories of priests just described. It is important to note however, that the most coveted office in the priesthood is reserved for the Zadokites i.e. the performance at the altar.

Following the description of the chambers of the priests in Ezek. 42.1-12, we are then informed about their function and occupants (cf. vv. 13,14). No distinction is found here between the priests beyond the fact that they live in different sets of chambers. All the priests may eat the most holy things and deposit the offerings in the chambers, and as they all live within the temple precinct there is no distinction in their holiness. The question must now be posed whether we have here a development from the organization of the priesthood recorded in 40.45,46 or, conversely, whether the scheme described in 40.45,46 is a later development of the organization planned here. With regard to the first possibility, a move from a priesthood which was separated by function and designation to a unified organization, although in accord with the spirit of Deuteronomy, is contrary to the evidence of history. Admittedly, there would have been no need to maintain

the organization of the pre-exilic cult at Jerusalem during the exile of its priesthood in Babylon, yet the exiled priests must have looked forward to a time when they could return to their homeland and restore their nation and the traditions associated with its national worship. Therefore the traditions of the past would have been preserved for the future. Moreover, following the return from exile there was a sharp distinction between priest and Levite which was contrary to the law of Deuteronomy. The second suggestion would indicate a demotion of a certain part of the priesthood which might possibly be interpreted as marking a stage in the degradation of the Levites. If this line of argument is taken to be correct, then it must be assumed that as a direct consequence of the law of Dt. 18.1-8, all Levites, whether resident at, or coming of their own volition from the country to the place appointed by Yahweh for his worship, performed exactly the same functions and enjoyed the same privileges at Jerusalem. This of course would have been a chaotic arrangement and quite impracticable. A clue to the problem may however be found in Ezek. 42.13 where the priests are described as approaching Yahweh without any further detail being given. In the following verse it is stated that the priests before entering the outer court must change their garments in which they minister and deposit them in the chambers. We may therefore assume that the priests approach Yahweh to minister. A similar expression is used in 40.46 which has been suggested to denote a comprehensive term for all the functions

undertaken by the two groups of priests specified. Hence it would appear that 42.13,14 are chiefly interested in describing what the priestly chambers were used for rather than giving a detailed account of their occupants, and therefore speaks of the priests only in general terms. Although the arrangement described in 40.45,46 would be much more in line with what one would imagine took place in Jerusalem after the Josianic reform, 42.13,14 render no assistance in the attempt to find the correct historical context for this arrangement.

Important information regarding the priesthood is found in 44.6-16. The prophet inveighs against the uncircumcised in spirit as well as in flesh, and relates how foreigners have been allowed into the temple by a rebellious people who have delegated to aliens the ancillary services of Yahweh's house. This practice must be terminated, and no stranger is henceforth to enter Yahweh's sanctuary. The polemic continues in vv. 10 ff by turning to the Levites guilty of idolatry with the intimation and justification of the measures taken against them⁴. Although the prophet considered the worship on the high places as idolatry⁵, he assumes that the Levites who served at these sanctuaries were priests. As a punishment for their connivance with the rest of the nation in its idolatry, they will not again approach Yahweh in the exercise of their priestly

4. See Note 41 in Appendix.

5. cf. 6.3-6; 14.3-11; 36.17,18.

function, but in their degraded state shall forfeit their sacerdotal status⁶. Having castigated the Levites, the tone changes when it is the turn of the sons of Zadok to be dealt with. They too are to eat the fruit of their labours, but as their labour is described as remaining steadfastly loyal to Yahweh when Israel went astray in contrast to the idolatrous conduct of the rest of the levitical tribe, they receive commendation and reward, the prize for their faithfulness being their appointment to the exclusive office of standing before Yahweh and offering up sacrifice to him.

In the reformed cult traced out for us on a mysterious and imposing scale, the distribution of sacred functions has a moral significance. The memory of the infidelity of a great number of priests was still present. The high places had doubtless witnessed members of the levitical tribe offer sacrifice to idols during the reactionary reigns that followed the reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah⁷. It is possible that some Levites

6. A. van Hoonacker, 'Les prêtres et les lévites dans le livre d'Ezechiël', R.B.I. (1899), pp. 175-205, esp. pp. 183 ff, considers two types of Levites in this passage, those who were demoted by the loss of their priestly status cf. vv.10-12, and those who were restored to their former positions such as doorkeepers, a function entrusted to priests in pre-exilic times cf. v.14.
7. It is recorded in II Kgs. 21.1-9 how Manasseh restored the high places Hezekiah had destroyed (cf. II Kgs. 18.4), and Ezekiel writing towards the end of the kingdom of Judah prophesied the destruction of the high places which were revived during Jehoiakim's reign cf. Ezek. 6.3 ff.

may have tried to have the best of both worlds, functioning at their country shrines and exercising their right to function at Jerusalem. Recourse to these defections contributed an important feature to the polemic which laid more or less repeated insistence on the idealized ritual. The priests called to approach the altar were those who had remained tenaciously faithful in the midst of widespread apostasy. The ministers of an inferior order were those priests who, by their assistance at the idolatrous cult places of the erring Israelites, had profaned the sanctity of their sacred office⁸. It is noteworthy however, that the charge of the house which 44.14 states to be the responsibility of the Levites deprived of their priestly status is the same function attributed to the priests described in 40.45. As two groups of Levites, one priestly and the other lay could not discharge the same function, it would appear that the group referred to in 44.14 is the same as that in 40.45, but stripped of its priestly status. This would seem to be the non-Zadokite element of the Levites, accepted as priests in 40.45, but denied their priesthood in 44.9-14. If, on the other hand, it should

8. J. Wellhausen, Prolegomena to the history of Israel, p. 124, considers that Ezekiel covers the logic of the facts with a 'mantle of morality' in an effort to explain why the Levites were denied their right to priestly office contrary to the law of Deuteronomy. It is quite true that a 'mantle of morality' is employed here to explain a breach of the Mosaic law, but as will be indicated, this does not fully explain the polemic of 44.6-16.

be argued that the identification of the priests in 40.45 with the degraded levitical priests of 44.9-14 is incorrect, we would expect then to find some mention of the priests alluded to in 40.45 alongside the Zadokites in 44.15,16. The fact that the non-Zadokite priests are unaccounted for in the second passage is peculiar in a polemic that is wholly concerned with cult officials, and does not favour this approach but rather supports the hypothesis advanced associating the levitical priests in 40.45 with the Levites deprived of priestly status in 44.9-14⁹.

The assumption of a central sanctuary in Ezek. 40-48 shows these chapters to be posterior to Deuteronomy. It is not unlikely that in his youth Ezekiel was old enough to have witnessed the reform of Josiah. According to the spirit of the reform he acknowledged the priesthood of the Levites even if they had adhered to other sanctuaries of idolatrous character. As the temple should be the sanctuary for all Israel (cf. 43.7; 45.6) Ezekiel naturally wished the levitical tribe, chosen from among the tribes of Israel as Yahweh's priests¹⁰, to function at it. The detailed description of the future temple is hardly conceivable as an ex tempore plan of Ezekiel, its roots must lie in the

9. 44.6 ff would seem to accord with 45.4,5 which show the priests to be distinct from the Levites although both occupy the holy portion of land. It would certainly appear that 44.6 ff is in line with 48.10 ff where the Levites are stated as occupying an area outside the sacred יהוה אלהינו

10. cf. Dt. 10.8; 21.5.

temple before the exile. Ezekiel therefore, although condemning the nation's past sin, also found inspiration in the past to look to the future amid the grim realities of exile. In view of the fact that following the polemic of 44.6-16 it would be surprising to find the arrangement of 40.45,46, the former verses being out of harmony with the Deuteronomic legislation concerning the levitical priesthood and the latter contradictory to the reality of post-exilic times, we may refer the polemic of 44.6-16 to a period later than 40.45,46 which, as already indicated, may be a reflection of the post-Deuteronomic arrangement of the Jerusalem priesthood. An inevitable question must now be asked in connection with 44.6-16. How could Ezekiel reconcile his polemic with his earlier references to the priests, and with the dictates of Deuteronomy? Furthermore, how could he castigate the Levites for having participated in idolatrous worship and reward the Zadokites for their loyalty to Yahweh, when he himself had witnessed the abomination of pagan worship in the temple (cf. Ezek. 8)? The Zadokites, even if they themselves were not idol worshippers, were at least accountable for what took place in the temple¹¹. In consideration of these questions, it would appear that a later hand was at work here with a definite polemical aim in view. It seems improbable that this passage should belong to

11. If Ezek. 8 refers to a secret cult taking place within the temple, then the Zadokite clergy must have been guilty of failing in their duty to insure that all areas within the temple precincts were free from the contamination of heathen worship.

the period following the return, as then it would be difficult to account for the reluctance of the Levites to return from exile (cf. Ezra. 8.15 ff). Why should they have remained in exile if they had the hope of being restored to the favoured position they held before the exile described in 40.45? This therefore suggests that Ezek. 44.6-16 must have been promulgated at a period prior to the return from exile¹².

The reason must now be sought for this change in attitude towards the priesthood which contravenes the law of Dt. 18.1-8. Although the nobility of the nation was in Babylon its attention was focused on the homeland. Josiah's reform had made Jerusalem the only place where worship could be offered, so no cult could be established in exile. The question in Ps. 137.4, 'how shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?' gives us some idea of the nostalgia for the homeland which was felt by some of the exiles, especially the older ones. At the same time, however, Ezekiel taught that Yahweh could be worshipped in exile and exhorted the study of the law and prayer. As a result, a generation grew up in exile that had never known the land of their ancestors, and were unanxious to return to it.

12. The emphasis on circumcision (cf. 44.7,8) is noteworthy, as a new importance attached itself to the rite during the exile, for like the observance of the Sabbath (cf. 20.12), it marked the difference between Israelites and their heathen neighbours which was essential if the Jews were to retain their identity in exile. This also would perhaps indicate an exilic date for this passage, probably not long before the return.

However, the priesthood in exile, being out of office and therefore deprived of all the privileges they had derived from the exercise of their profession, must have represented a forceful element among those who still were hopeful of returning at some future date to their native land. It would therefore appear that as no sacrificial worship took place among the Jews in exile, an investigation into what was happening in Judah during these years might provide some clue to the motive that lies behind Ezek. 44.6-16.

Although the most prominent members of the nation had been removed in 597, a remnant of the nobility survived this first purge. They were described by Jeremiah as rotten figs in comparison with those who had gone into captivity (cf. Jer. 24). However, these also suffered a similar fate, being either executed or exiled following the disaster of 587, and in this second visitation the priesthood also fell victim (cf. Jer. 52.24 ff). Yet although the ruling stratum of Judah's society had been carried away to Babylon, there must have been a considerable number of inhabitants left to have made it necessary to appoint Gedaliah as governor. Even when allowance is made for those who were murdered at Mizpah and the survivors who subsequently took refuge in Egypt, it is evident that there still remained in Judah a by no means inconsiderable corpus of inhabitants despite the attempt of the Babylonians to reduce it to an agricultural province¹³. Although

13. It is recorded in Jer. 52.16 that the Babylonian officer Nebuzaradan left the poor of the land as vinedressers.

ruined, and destitute of their leaders, the Jewish people still remained a self-conscious community, regarding themselves as Yahweh's people. What inferences may be drawn then about the religious condition of these people? When the invading armies had withdrawn, some would come to the conclusion that Yahweh had 'no power to deliver' (Is. 50.2). For them, since men must worship some god, the most natural thing would be to accept the deities of the invaders or the old divinities of the land (cf. Jer. 7.18; 44.17 ff). Others however, would interpret the destruction of Jerusalem and its consequences as the fulfilment of Yahweh's judgement on his people. The fact that Yahweh continued to be generally acknowledged as the God of Israel is indicated by the absence after the return of any hint to set up the worship of a deity other than Yahweh. Yet there must have been a mood of despondency amongst those that remained true to the Yahweh faith. This is reflected in the practice that developed among the worshippers of Yahweh to come and mourn over the ruined temple and its altar (cf. Zech. 7.3 ff; 8.18 ff; Lam. 1.4).

Soon after the untimely end of Gedaliah's administration the same Ishmael, who was connected with the royal house of Judah and had slain Gedaliah and his colleagues at Mizpah (cf. Jer. 41.1-4), also slew eighty men on their way to Jerusalem bringing offerings to be presented in what was called the house of the Lord (cf. Jer. 41.5 ff). These worshippers were drawn from Shechem, Shiloh and Samaria, and the fact that

they were on their way to Jerusalem implies that despite its ruin and downfall, it still had retained its unique position as the centre of Israel's worship. Clearly these Israelites did not come with the intention of resuming the practice of sacrifice at the sacred spot, but rather they came expecting to find an altar and officiants in Jerusalem, qualified to offer their sacrifice there. The population had been exhorted to perform its official worship i.e. sacrifice at the national shrine of Jerusalem, and apparently that law had survived the extreme circumstances following 587, and its influence extended even into Samaria. Deprived then of their priesthood that had been essential to this worship, and with the Jerusalem temple, the only sanctuary which the reform of Josiah had authorized, in ruins, they suffered deprivation in respect of Yahweh's worship in a different way to those in exile. The exiles had a priesthood but no sanctuary so that they could not perform any sacrificial worship; those that were left had the sacred site although ruined, but its official priesthood in captivity. Yet as already mentioned, the pilgrimage of the eighty men from the cities of the north implies that some cult did take place at Jerusalem during these years, and anticipates officiants of some sort. The problem is to find the identity of these substitutes for the exiled priesthood of Jerusalem.

There is no assured evidence of any priesthood existing during the exile that was in a position to take over the Jerusalem cult. If the hypothesis that a priesthood from Bethel functioned at Jerusalem is accepted, then the existence of a priesthood in Bethel at some point in time during the exile is assumed whether it continued at Bethel at the same time as some of its members functioned at Jerusalem, or completely vacated Bethel and took up residence in the ruins of Jerusalem¹⁴. Bethel had been revered since patriarchal times as a hallowed place. Abraham had built an altar there (cf. Gen. 12.8), and Jacob had a vision following which he pronounced the place holy (cf. Gen. 28.16,17). It was in Bethel and Dan that Jeroboam is stated to have set up his golden calves (cf. I Kgs. 12.26 ff). Special emphasis seems to have been laid on Bethel at this time possibly due to its proximity to Judah, being within twelve miles of Jerusalem itself. It became the royal sanctuary of the northern kingdom in much the same way as Jerusalem had done in Judah (cf. Am. 7.13), and its position may have been further enhanced by Jezebel's persecution of the prophets (cf. I Kgs. 18.4,13). But due to the unstable nature of the monarchy in northern Israel we cannot be sure if a continuous line of priests existed there. The account of the coup d'etat of Jehu (cf. II Kgs. 10.18-28) which records how the Baal

14. See Note 42 in Appendix.

priests were lured to their death, might indicate that such a continuity of the northern priesthood did not exist. As the priest was a prominent royal official, it would be difficult for him to serve his master's triumphant rival. It is presupposed in II Kgs. 17.24 ff, that the priesthood of the northern kingdom had been carried away by the Assyrians. The land, having been ravaged by invaders, had to a large extent returned to an uncultivated state and an increase in wild animals ensued as a result. The new inhabitants of Samaria who were molested by lions, thinking this was a visitation on them by the local deity, requested a priest to be sent back from amongst those exiled from the country to instruct them in the cultic requirements of the deity of the land of their adoption, presumably to find favour with this God. The request was granted, and a priest was sent back and took up residence in Bethel, but he does not appear to have had much impact as we are informed that the Samaritans continued with their idol worship and appointed priests of their own choosing. However, v.32 records that although they made idols yet they 'feared Yahweh', indicating that Yahwism was not extinct in Samaria although it had doubtless become to a large extent syncretized with the religion of the settlers. Whether the priest at Bethel was caught up in this syncretistic worship or remained an isolated beacon of pure Yahwism we are not told. All that may be concluded from the information contained in II Kgs. 17.24 ff is that Yahweh worship of a type

was re-established at Bethel, the old royal sanctuary of the northern kingdom which, as it had been permitted by the Assyrian authorities, must have had the approval of the Assyrian governor. Whether the priest was a member of the original guild of priests before 721 is impossible to determine with certainty, but the fact that he took up residence in Bethel may signify that he regarded himself as their successor. From the account of Josiah's activities in Bethel (cf. II Kgs. 23.15-20) we learn that it was destroyed and its cultic paraphernalia pulverised and burnt¹⁵. Thus if a Bethel priesthood did take over the Jerusalem worship during the exile, it must have been derived from a priesthood that operated subsequent to, and in defiance of, Josiah's reform.

The only piece of evidence that may be found in support of this theory lies in the question asked in Zech. 7.1-3 during the rebuilding of the temple, relating to the observance of the fast commemorating its destruction. The answer is contained in Zech. 8.18-23 where it is declared that the fast hitherto commemorative of the temple's destruction should henceforth become a feast day. The words שְׂמֵחִים תִּהְיוּ in 7.2 are noteworthy as they indicate that a group of men were sent to Bethel to find out this information, and therefore assume the revival of a cultic settlement there¹⁶. It is possible that, as the government of Gedaliah had its headquarters at Mizpah, a priesthood

15. See Note 43 in Appendix.

16. See Note 44 in Appendix.

could have been resuscitated at Bethel and continued to exist in the period following the termination of the Mizpah administration (cf. II Kgs. 25.25,26). However, it is difficult to understand how two years after the commencement of the rebuilding of the temple when the exiles, including the high priest Joshua, had returned¹⁷, a group of men should go to Bethel seeking information about the Jerusalem worship. If Bethel was able to supply information regarding the Jerusalem temple, then it would appear to have eclipsed the importance of Jerusalem. But if this was so, how can the mission to Jerusalem of the men of Shechem, Shiloh and Samaria be explained, especially as they must have passed quite close to Bethel? In consideration of these difficulties, and the speculative nature of the basis on which the existence of a priesthood in Bethel at this time lies, perhaps a different interpretation of the Zechariah texts may offer a solution. A clue may be found in the answer in 8.15 ff where in vv.21 f it is predicted that in the future men will come to Jerusalem to worship Yahweh by cities and by nations. This signifies that those addressed were representatives of a place, thereby indicating that the name Bethel in 7.2 is genuine, and may be taken to mean 'the men of Bethel sent' hence providing a subject for the predicate

π Σ Δ , 18.

17. Zech. 7.1 records that this inquiry was made in the fourth year of King Darius, and in Hag. 1.1 ff it is reported that in the second year of King Darius the prophet received word from Yahweh to inform Zerubbabel and Joshua to restore the temple.
18. See Note 45 in Appendix.

As it is probable that cultic worship took place at Jerusalem during this period, it must be asked where its officiants came from and who they were. It was largely the proletariat of the land that remained in it, amongst whom there were evidently some capable of providing the worship of Yahweh at the place chosen by him. It is hardly conceivable that lay people should have undertaken this function. That would have meant accepting the policy of centralization dictated by Deuteronomy but flagrantly disobeying the same law in connection with the rights it held out to the levitical priests. Among this proletariat there would have existed some priestly Levites, who, subsequent to the Deuteronomic reform, had found it impossible to find a place in Jerusalem and to participate in the offering of the nation's worship. As a result, they either became redundant or took part in the idolatrous worship that took place on the high places revived during the last years of Judah's existence¹⁹, and which were doubtless suppressed following the Babylonian invasion. However, the removal of the Jerusalem priesthood in 587 would have provided the opportunity for these rural levitical priests to come and claim their right which the law had permitted them but the reality of circumstances denied. If those who carried on the Jerusalem cult during the exile are not to be identified with these levitical priests, some other priestly group must be sought who

19. cf. Jer. 7.16-18; 11.9-13.

had a better claim to discharge Yahweh's worship than those who claimed it as their right pronounced from the mouth of Moses, and were supported in this claim by a law which, as has been shown, survived as a living rule and was adhered to. As no evidence however has survived of any other group having a better claim than these rural levitical priests, it seems a reasonable hypothesis to identify them, or at least some of them, with the officiants of the Jerusalem cult during the absence of its priests in Babylon.

Returning now to the polemic of Ezekiel, may it not be a feasible line of argument to attribute the change in attitude towards the non-Zadokite levitical priests to some such levitical activity in Jerusalem during the exile? The promulgation of the polemic has been indicated as occurring towards the end of the exile, a time when great changes were taking place on the international scene. The overthrow of Babylon by the Persians was seen by the exiles as the hand of Yahweh working his purpose out. The victories of Cyrus were interpreted as Yahweh's judgement against his people's enemies, and Cyrus himself as the divine instrument used to fulfil the redemption of the chosen race (cf. Is. 44.28; 45.1). The exiles viewed the events of the day as part of the great divine plan which they hoped would culminate in a divine pardon for the nation's past guilt, and their restoration to their native land. This is the theme underlying Deutero-Isaiah. But on return what was to happen those who

had functioned in the place of the exiled priesthood? Would they return to their humble stations among the people (cf. II Kgs. 23.9), or would they, having at last exercised their rights, wish to maintain them and perhaps even come to a settlement with their non-Zadokite brethren (cf. Ezek. 40,45) who had obtained the priesthood of a second rank and subsequently went into exile. These must have been considerations that weighed heavily on the Zadokites' minds. In view of these questions, which were of vital importance to the Zadokites, dispossessed of their sanctuary and placed their very existence as a priesthood in jeopardy, we may perhaps have the clue to the motive behind the polemic of Ezek. 44,6-16. Although the polemic was contrary to the law of Dt. 18.1-8, this law had never been in the interests of the Zadokites who were now faced with the desperate situation of losing their supremacy in the future temple or sinking into oblivion in exile. In this situation the only solution was to proclaim the Zadokites as alone the priests of Yahweh and deny the rest of the tribe of Levi its priestly status on the grounds of its past idolatry at the country sanctuaries. The polemic thus achieved three things at once. The demotion of the levitical priests in exile who had gone into exile as such, the suppression of the Levites functioning in place of the Zadokites at Jerusalem during the exile, and the preparation for the return of the Zadokites to their position of pre-eminence at Jerusalem.

Although the visions of Zechariah may receive differing interpretations, they are of importance for the study of this period. A highly significant oracle relating to the high priesthood is found in the third chapter. It depicts a scene of divine judgement in which the prophet sees Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of God²⁰. On Joshua's right hand stands Satan to accuse him. In v.2 the Adversary is indignantly rebuked and Joshua is referred to as a brand plucked from the fire, indicating that the high priest has survived some disaster, which may be interpreted as the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile following²¹. The phrase 'and the Lord said unto Satan, the Lord rebuke thee' does not convey good sense and should preferably be read 'and the angel of the Lord said, the Lord rebuke thee.....' The angel of God is clearly depicted as the protector of the high priest which seems to indicate that the Adversary is the accuser, insisting upon the unworthiness of Joshua, the defendant. Joshua is further described as attired in filthy garments. He is high priest and clothed in soiled raiment, a remarkable pair of descriptives, the former denoting an office that demanded absolute purity and ritual cleanness. Hence impurity or taint of the

20. Similar scenes depicting heavenly assemblies are found in Ps. 82.1; Job 1.6-12; 2.1-6.

21. A similar phrase is found used in Amos. 4.11 of the remnant of Israel left, following one of Yahweh's destructive visitations.

high priestly office appears to be signified, especially as in v.4 members of the heavenly court are commanded to remove the filthy garments from Joshua. Joshua is then pardoned of his guilt, which is not described, and given a change of clothing²². The high priest having been cleansed and pardoned, is thereupon promised the authority of Yahweh's house and courts on condition of his loyalty to Yahweh, the God of his fathers, and his obedience to all divine precepts. Joshua, along with his companions, is now addressed in v.8 which contains an extraordinary phrase i.e. 'for behold I will bring forth my servant the Branch'. If the 'Branch' were understood to mean Joshua, it would be difficult then to explain why he should be summoned to take note that Yahweh is going to bring him forth when it is assumed that he has already returned from exile. Moreover the term יְהוֹשֻׁעַ is never found used of the high priest but rather of the messianic Davidide of the future age (cf. Is. 4.2; Jer. 23.5; 33.15)²³. On the other hand, if it were interpreted to denote Zerubbabel it would be strange to speak of him as if he were yet to come, for according to Hag. 1.12 ff he had already been in Jerusalem for two months actively engaged in the restoration

22. A.C. Welch, Post-Exilic Judaism, p. 182, states that Joshua was clothed in garments which accorded with his position as high priest. There is nothing to indicate this interpretation; it is only stated that Joshua received a change of raiment and a divine pardon. The emphasis lies on the fact that the new clothes were clean denoting a divine cleansing of the high priest from some previous pollution.

23. It is also used in reference to Zerubbabel in Zech. 6.12.

of the temple (cf. Zech. 1.1 ff). The words $\pi\tau\epsilon\iota\tau\epsilon\iota\tau\epsilon\iota\tau\epsilon\iota\tau$ '3 repeated at the beginning of the next sentence would indicate that we have an intrusion here, and as the omission of the sentence in question restores the continuity of the chapter, it therefore seems probable that a later reader, not fully understanding the context, inserted this sentence. The exact sense of the closing promise is very obscure and irrelevant to the problem under discussion²⁴.

The identity of Joshua must now be sought. We know that he was the high priest, but does he represent those who officiated at Jerusalem during the exile²⁵, or those returning from exile? The expression, used to describe Joshua, i.e. 'a brand plucked out of the fire', implies someone recently escaped from a disaster rather than a person who is about to continue in the same position as he had previously occupied. This would suggest that Joshua is best identified with the returned exiles rather than those who did not experience exile. Moreover, if the line of the first alternative were favoured, it would be difficult to explain the significance of the filthy garments with which a priest that had never had any reason to suffer pollution was attired with. If the filthy garments were to denote the inferiority of the resident Jerusalem priesthood, this inferiority is turned into a superiority that would scarcely encourage the exiled priests to return in

24. See Note 46 in Appendix.

25. See Note 47 in Appendix.

great number, which in fact they did (as Ezra 2.36 ff; 8.15 record), to be subservient to those who had acted for them in their absence. The second suggestion, identifying Joshua with the priesthood returned from exile would therefore seem more probable. The filthy garments would then represent the uncleanness contracted during exile in a heathen land and on the restoration of this 'brand plucked from the fire', all pollution must be cleansed and the iniquity of the past removed. It is difficult to determine whether Joshua as high priest represents the exiled priests or the exiled community as a whole. All that may be said is that Joshua and his colleagues having been cleansed and installed in their office, the rituals necessary for the cleansing of the rest of the people returned from exile could now be performed.

The identification of the Adversary is more difficult. As he appears as Joshua's prosecutor his role must be to express the attitude of a party which opposed Joshua's return and his reinstatement to priestly office at Jerusalem. Two factions would appear to have had reason to litigate against Joshua. The first of these for consideration is the Samaritans. They had tried to help in the building of the temple, but their assistance had been discourteously rejected by Zerubbabel, Joshua and the elders (cf. Ezra. 4.1-5). This rejection offended the Samaritans and in retaliation, they spitefully reported to the Persian king that the Jews were preparing to rebel. This complaint

aroused the suspicion of the Persian authorities and the work at Jerusalem was stopped²⁶. Although the Samaritans were deeply offended and aggravated in a way that was to have important repercussions in the future, it is doubtful if their grievance would have been focused solely on Joshua²⁷. The decision to reject their help was communicated by the most representative body of men that constituted the nation, state church, and people, implying that the matter was more a national and political one than one solely concerning the priesthood. Furthermore, the emphasis in Zech.3 is on the matter of uncleanness which makes Joshua unfit to discharge his function as high priest. This is hardly an accusation that could have been brought against Joshua by a people who themselves were considered unclean being of mixed race and religion (cf. II Kgs. 17.24 ff). The second possible faction would be more likely to have a direct grievance against Joshua. They were the levitical priests who had functioned at Jerusalem during the exile. These priests would have been in a position to assert themselves as ritually clean and their position legally authentic. They could also accuse the Zadokites of ritual impurity arising from their exile in a heathen land. The position of Joshua was of prime importance to them, and the question of his inauguration was of direct significance to their own future. The Adversary's protestations did not

26. cf. Ezra. 4.17-24.

27. See Note 48 in Appendix.

succeed however, and Joshua and his colleagues, the Zadokite priesthood were reinstated, the polemic of Ezek. 44.6-16 becoming law for the future.

The exile and its aftermath was bound to bring changes and upheavals in the history of the Jewish people, and although an effort was made to re-establish the old order, Providence had other plans. The fact that the Jews retained their identity even as a congregation rather than a nation, is a tribute to the tenacity of their faith. One of the survivors from the old order however, was the Zadokite priesthood which, re-established at its ancient shrine, flourished once again and developed into greater importance than ever before in the centuries that followed the exile.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
SIGNIFICANCE AND OFFICE OF AARON

An attempt is made in this chapter to ascertain the high-priestly status attributed to Aaron in the priestly writing and later traditions of the Old Testament. This priestly significance ascribed to Aaron by the later documents of the Old Testament is absent in the early pentateuchal narratives and the traditions of the pre-monarchic, and monarchic periods. In the older traditions in which Aaron is mentioned, he is only faintly sketched, and we are given no idea of a personality. However, Ex. 32 and Num. 12 are exceptions in which Aaron, instead of appearing as Moses' protégé, acts independently and in opposition to Moses. He is found in Ex. 17.10 ff, where it is recorded how, along with Hur, he rendered support to Moses' arms, thereby sustaining the uplifted rod that insured the Israelites of victory over the Amalekites. He is mentioned in Ex. 18.12 as partaking of Jethro's sacrificial meal along with the elders of Israel, and is referred to incidentally in Ex. 19.24. This latter reference to Aaron appears to be completely isolated and without sequel, as there is no record of him in the previous narrative in which Moses alone ascends Mt. Sinai and is addressed by Yahweh (cf. vv. 20 ff). Furthermore, it is noteworthy that no connection is assumed between Aaron and the priests who are also mentioned in this verse. Aaron is found in Ex. 24.1,9 being bidden by Moses to worship

Yahweh afar off on the holy mount along with Nadab, Abihu and the seventy elders, and v.14 of this chapter informs us that Moses and Joshua went up the holy mount to receive the tables of law, while Aaron and Hur were left in charge of the people¹. In each of the instances cited there is no hint of Aaron functioning in a priestly capacity, but rather as an elder or seer in a tribal community of desert nomads. Although these traditions associate Aaron with the southern wilderness area², there are certain indications that the circles in which they were preserved were those that ultimately settled in the north. The fact that a preponderance of these early traditions that mention Aaron are attributed to the Elohist would seem to suggest this. Moreover, the grave tradition contained in Jos. 24.29-33, which provides valuable information with regard to the area of activity of the persons it mentions, records in v.33 that Eleazar ben Aaron was buried in the hill of Phinehas in Mt. Ephraim. From this information it appears that an Eleazar tradition circulated in Ephraim which stated that he was the son of Aaron, and therefore provides further support for the theory associating the Aaron tradition with a northern locality³.

1. W. Rudolph, 'Der Elohist von Exodus bis Joshua,' B.Z.A.W., 1938, p.48, considers Ex. 24.12-15a as an introduction to the narrative of Ex. 32.
2. M.Noeth, Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch, p. 198, claims that these occurrences of Aaron during the wilderness period are the oldest, and may indicate a southern origin for the traditions relating to him. cf. also A. Kuschke 'Die Lagervorstellung der priesterlichen Erzählung', Z.A.W. 1951, pp. 74-105, esp. p.95.
3. See Note 50 in Appendix.

Num. 12 appears to contain two narratives in each of which Aaron and Miriam are represented in opposition to Moses. The first dissension recorded in v.1 is occasioned by Moses' marriage to an Cushite woman. It does not appear to have a sequel and introduces Miriam before Aaron, but despite the plural subject, the predicate is in the feminine singular form, indicating that originally Miriam alone was involved⁴. The second dissension related in vv. 2 ff is ascribed to the privileged position Moses held as prophet of Yahweh, whereby Yahweh appears to have spoken only through him, and not Aaron and Miriam. In v.4 all three are called into the tabernacle, but in the following verse only Aaron and Miriam are addressed. Moses seems to appear as a witness while Yahweh arbitrates in the dispute by explaining that although he communicates with all prophets through visions or dreams, Moses receives the divine communication directly from his mouth. A difference between the modes of divine communication used for Moses i.e. mouth to mouth, and that used for Aaron and Miriam is thereby expressed, which distinguishes Moses from all other prophets⁵. The account continues

4. It may be possible that 'Miriam' governs the predicate as it stands next to it. If, however, the original narrative intended to involve both Miriam and Aaron one would expect this to be expressed in the verb.
5. J. Pedersen, Israel III - IV, its life and culture, p. 192, takes a similar view, and interprets this chapter as showing Moses as a person quite apart and distinct from the priests and prophets of Israel.

in vv. 9 ff by recording that, although Yahweh's wrath was inflamed against both the culprits, only Miriam received a punishment. That both were guilty is evident from the fact that Yahweh's wrath was kindled against both of them (cf. v.9), and that Aaron interceded for both Miriam and himself (cf. v.11). As however, Aaron's intercession for Miriam was successful (cf. v.14), and unnecessary for himself as he remained unpunished, we may perhaps have a tradition that was originally favourable to Aaron and which subsequently, with a polemical purpose in mind, was associated with that relating to Miriam's guilt, as would appear to have happened in v.1. Again, it may be possible that an originally independent tradition relating to Miriam's affliction was at a later time associated with a tradition referring to a dispute with Moses, in which both Aaron and Miriam were involved, and in this way a reason for Miriam's leprosy would have been provided. As Miriam and not Aaron contracted leprosy, there would naturally be no mention of a punishment for him. On the other hand it cannot be ruled out that a later hand, anxious to exculpate Aaron from his guilt, removed the record of his punishment. It is difficult to decide which of these possibilities is the correct one, but in view of the later importance and significance of Aaron the last suggestion appears to be the most probable.

Following the narrative that recounts the crossing of the Reed Sea, Miriam is found described in the ancient poem of Ex. 15.20 as the sister of Aaron without any mention of Moses, indicating that for the

author of this passage Aaron and Miriam had no relationship with Moses. Although the narrative of Num. 12 does not actually state this relationship between Aaron and Miriam, the fact that they represent a united opposition against Moses would imply some connection between them based on their common resentment against Moses in his unique position as prophet of Yahweh. At the same time this opposition to Moses shows that the relationship between Moses and Aaron referred to in Ex. 4.14 was unknown in some circles of tradition. So far Aaron has been encountered as a desert sheikh in the tribal community of the wilderness period, both accompanying Moses, and also hostile to Moses, but in no place is conclusive evidence found of Aaron's later priestly role. In fact in Ex. 33.7-11, where the sanctuary is described, there is no mention at all of Aaron, but Moses acts as priest with Joshua, his sole assistant, in an apprentice-like capacity⁶.

Ex. 32 is of paramount importance for the examination of the figure of Aaron. It must be interpreted in the context of Ex. 32-34 which is introduced by Ex. 24.12-15a, and which deals with the topic of the tables broken in Ex. 32 and renewed in Ex. 34. The chapter is composite and represents a number of fragmentary developments rather than two narratives running side by side. vv.1-4a record that during Moses' prolonged absence the people feared him lost, and accordingly they themselves leaderless. They therefore requested

6. See Note 51 in Appendix..

Aaron to make them (images of) gods that would direct them on their way through the wilderness. Aaron received gold from them and made a calf, fashioning it in a mould. This is not an improbable event to have taken place in the wilderness period. At this juncture, as a natural reaction to the irreparable loss of Moses, Yahweh worship may well have fallen into disrepute and disuse. The people would presumably attribute the delay in his return to his loss or possible death on the mount, and as a result lost faith in the covenanting God. Hence a state of aporia probably existed amongst the people for which the most obvious solution was to revert back to an old mode of worship that was still familiar to them. It is striking that although (images of) gods were requested in v.1, v.4a records that Aaron produced only one calf. A different mode of presentation occurs in v.4b. The phrase אלהינו אלהים denotes that not one but two or more idols are referred to as in v.1, but if these words are in sequence to v.1 we would expect to read 'these be our gods, O Israel, which brought us up out of the land of Egypt'. It might be supposed from the והיה at the beginning of v.5 that Aaron, now standing back from his own handywork, is able to admire it for the first time. On the other hand, the implication that Aaron is now seeing the image for the first time can be interpreted to mean that not Aaron but the people made the image. This interpretation however, would contradict v.4a. He proclaims a feast and builds an altar, the word אלה denoting a singular image. v.6 describes the type of

orgy that is generally associated with calf worship. The emphasis in this section, i.e. vv.4b-6 seems to lie on idol worship rather than on Israel's total disregard for Yahweh recorded in vv.1-4a⁷. This theme however is taken up again in vv.7 ff. In v.8 a contradiction of terms is again found when Yahweh relates to Moses how the people have transgressed by making a molten calf which they address with the words 'these be thy gods O Israel which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt'. The second address of Yahweh to Moses in v.9 might indicate the introduction of another tradition, or at least a break in the narrative⁸. However, as Dt. 9.12, which is parallel to vv.7,8, is followed by a section which is parallel to vv.9,10, this shows that at least by the time the Deuteronomist was writing v.8 was followed by v.9. vv.11-14 constitute a remarkable plea in which Moses argues with Yahweh that should he destroy Israel, the Egyptians will doubt his sincerity in bringing Israel out of Egypt. Moses appears to be giving a warning to Yahweh, a peculiar relationship between God and man⁹. It may be possible to take

7. G.W. Coats, Rebellion in the Wilderness, p.184, conjectures that behind the present form of Ex.32 a positive account of the golden calf may originally have lain, which, if still discernible, would in all probability appear in vv.1-6.
8. cf. S. Lehming, 'Versuch zu Ex. XXXII', V.T. (1960) pp. 16-45.
9. Ezek.20 may reflect a similar line of thought especially in vv.9,14 where it is related how, in spite of the nation's wickedness, Yahweh redeemed Israel from bondage and led her into the promised land to prevent his name from being polluted before the heathen.

vv.7-14 as a unit in which it is told how the people sinned and were guilty, but yet due to the covenant with the Patriarchs Yahweh was bound to forgive them. On the other hand, the divine reprieve in v.14 does not agree with the rest of the chapter where punitive action is recorded as being discharged by Moses in v.20, the Levites in v.28, and Yahweh in v.35. This would therefore imply that the section relating to Moses' plea i.e. vv.11-14 may be considered as a later addition¹⁰. vv. 15-20 describe the descent of Moses from the mount following the divine command he had received there (cf.v.7). The mention of Joshua in v.17 provides a connecting link with the introductory passage in Ex. 24.12-15 where Joshua accompanies Moses up the mount, and the breaking of the tablets in v.19, symbolising the breaking of the covenant, forms a connection with v.8. The speculation of Joshua in v.17 and the answer of Moses in the following verse provide a good example of dramatic suspense leading up to Moses' encounter with the calf in vv.19, 20. These two verses, which seem to describe a cleansing ritual rather than a punitive action, appear to be out of sequence with the following passage since it would seem more logical for Moses to have questioned Aaron before taking action. The explanation of Aaron that now follows in vv.21-24 is contradictory to his deliberate manufacturing of the calf (cf. v.4a), and his

10. M. Noth, Exodus, p.244, considers these verses as a Deuteronomic addition.

participation in the idolatrous cult associated with it (cf. v.5). A nexus is provided by v.25 between the previous section and vv.26-29, which records a tradition that was originally not associated with the calf episode, and whose prime interest lay in the institution and vindication of the Levites. The slaughter executed by the Levites in v.28 is superfluous in view of the visitation promised in v.34 and discharged in v.35. Moreover, there is no mention elsewhere in this chapter of a group of people described as Levites who remained aloof from those participating in the worship of the calf. There may, however, be a connection between this section and v.10b in which Yahweh's promise to make Moses into a great nation is stated. This could mean that those who showed their allegiance to Yahweh by siding with Moses, would, as a result, become members of the spiritual family of Moses. Nevertheless, this possibility is weakened by the fact that the idea of Yahweh making a great nation of an individual usually refers to the issue of the person concerned (cf. Gen. 15.5; 17.5 ff; 26.3 ff)¹¹. This section is followed by vv.30-34 which are at variance with v.35 and probably represent a later period of the polemic against the calf. Moses' intercession, which is successful in obtaining a postponement of the punishment, is perhaps a concession to the fact that the calf continued to exist, and the narrative not to anticipate the future divine handling from its own time could only

11. For a fuller analysis of vv.25-29 see the first chapter of this thesis. The implication in v.33 that amongst the guilty there were faithful ones, might indicate an element common to vv.25-29.

go so far as to announce a more assured divine punitive action. v.35 however is the culmination of the punishment discharged by Moses in v.20.

The mention in v.4a of a calf being made by Aaron which is subsequently described in v.4b by a plural pronoun is a contradiction in number. A similar contradiction occurs in v.8 where the same object is described with a singular noun in reference to a calf and followed by a plural of address relative to it. Something similar occurs in v.1 where (images of) gods are requested of Aaron and he is recorded in v.4a as producing a calf, and again in vv. 23 f in which Aaron relays to Moses how (images of) gods were requested by the people and a calf emerged from the fire. The calf may either represent a symbol of strength or fertility, or it could be considered as a totem in which the spirit of the deity inhered. Yet the request for (images of) gods and the production of one calf in response to this request is peculiar, and indicates a variety of tradition. A plurality of gods cannot be represented by one calf in this way. However, the use of the term 'gods' in connection with calf worship may find its explanation in I Kgs. 12.28 f. Here it is recorded that Jeroboam set up two calves and placed one at Bethel and the other at Dan. Moreover; he referred to them with the same words as are found used in v.4 and v.8 of the molten calf. The historic circumstances of the wilderness may have had relevance for

a later situation which was validated by the use of the plural instead of the singular in this wilderness tradition. Furthermore, it is possible when the people of the northern kingdom turned away from Judah, after Solomon's death, that they reverted to old traditional ways that may originally have been interpreted in a positive light¹² but, subsequently falling into abuse, stood condemned. The purpose must now be sought for inserting vv.26-29 which appear to be unrelated to the rest of the chapter. According to I Kgs. 12.31 ff, Jeroboam suppressed the Levites and set others in their place. Thus the insertion of a tradition vindicating the Levites for their dedication to the service of Yahweh was most appropriate for the condemnation of the calf worship associated with Jeroboam's religious policy. Moreover, an antithesis may have been aimed at by the inclusion of these verses with the purpose of illustrating the loyalty of the Levites and the apostasy of Aaron. The motive of the chapter appears therefore to condemn Jeroboam's cultic measures as idolatrous and a breach of covenant, by using the wilderness scenes of the surrounding narratives as a basis from which the polemic is worked.¹³

The role of Aaron in this chapter appears at different levels. vv.1-4a records how he deliberately formed a calf in response to the people's desire, but in the

12. cf. n.7.

13. See Note 52 in Appendix.

following verse Aaron sees it only when it has been already made, and accepts it as a fait accompli. He is not considered directly responsible for the image, but acts as priest to it by building an altar before it and proclaiming a feast to Yahweh¹⁴. vv.21-24

appear to be an attempt to exculpate Aaron from his involvement in the apostate cult. The people are guilty and Aaron has connived with them by showing approval of their action. Moses' question, phrased to imply that the people coerced Aaron into his action (i.e. 'what did the people do to you?') anticipates the answer it receives. Aaron took the gold from the people and threw it into the fire from which opus operatum, the calf emerged (cf.v.24). This is at variance with the account in v.4a which records how he deliberately formed it. Of the first two passages i.e. vv. 1-4a, 4b-6 it is difficult to decide which is the older. The second in relating that Aaron saw the calf only after its completion, although he is still recorded as directing the calf worship, may be an effort at whitewashing his guilt. We may, on the other hand, have two separate traditions, the first (vv. 1-4a) from an original wilderness narrative which, without any polemical intent, has attributed to Aaron the manufacture

14. H. Gressmann, Moses und seine Zeit, F.R.L.A.N.T. p.199, n.4, points out the divergence between vv. 1-4a and vv. 4b-6. 'Zunächst stehen 1-4a und 4b-6 im Widerspruch. Dort wird das goldene Kalb von Aaron, hier vom Volke gemacht; Aaron baut hier nur den Altar, und selbst die Opfer werden vom Volke dargebracht. Dort handelt es sich um den Gott, der vor Israel einherziehen soll, hier dagegen um den Gott, der Israel aus Ägypten geführt hat.'

of the calf; the second (vv. 4b-6), by associating Aaron with the organization of calf worship, may represent a polemical tendency against both Aaron and the image. The third Aaron section (vv. 21-24) with its definite tendency to exculpate Aaron, would appear to be later and to have the purpose of exonerating Aaron from his sin in manufacturing the image (as in vv.1-4a), and if vv. 4b-6 are taken to have a polemical tendency, from his association with the worship of the calf.

Who was this Aaron and why should there have been any reason for exonerating him from his guilt? Should this Aaron be associated with that referred to in the other narratives dealt with? It seems most probable that the Aaron of Ex. 32 and the Aaron of the other pentateuchal narratives are one and the same person. He is associated with Hur both in Ex. 17.10-12 and in the introduction to this chapter (Ex. 24.12-15), although Hur is not actually mentioned in Ex. 32, the interest being focused on Aaron. As Aaron, according to Ex. 32.5, was the priest of this calf worship, and this in all probability refers to the idolatrous cult of Jeroboam, it leaves open the possibility that Aaron or priests claiming him as eponym may have operated at Bethel in Jeroboam's time and later. We know from Ju. 18.30 that a Mosaic priesthood functioned at Dan from pre-monarchic days. Although there is no direct evidence that an Aaronite priesthood operated at Bethel or indeed that any continuous line of priests functioned there in pre-exilic times, yet from the evidence advanced

it would seem reasonable to conjecture the existence of a priesthood which associated itself with Aaron and functioned at Bethel¹⁵. The occasion for Aaron's exculpation is difficult to pinpoint. It could have taken place after Aaron had risen to high priestly status, when the record of an Aaron punished for participating in an idolatrous cult would have been offensive. Alternatively, it may have been the result of a northern influence after the fall of Samaria when different northern and southern streams of tradition were merged together. A reappraisal of the figure venerated as the eponym of the northern priesthood would have been essential if the prophetic dream of the reunification of Israel and Judah was to find acceptable expression in their fused traditions¹⁶. Aaron therefore stands as priest and, although implicated in the calf worship, escapes unpunished from participation in the idolatry attributed to him.

Having encountered Aaron as protégé of Moses, opponent of Moses, and priest, we encounter him again in yet a different capacity in Ex.4. We are informed in vv.10-12 that Moses, having received his commission and hence the means of proving himself, declined Yahweh's command with the excuse of inexperience in speech. In his magnificent reply Yahweh states that he is supreme creator, and as such ruler over man's faculties with the power to give him whatever is necessary to discharge

15. See Note 53 in Appendix.

16. cf. Jer. 3.18; 33.7; Ezek. 37.20 ff.

any divine task committed to him. Yahweh's anger in vv. 14~~20~~ is a natural reaction to Moses' second refusal of his command. The words 'is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know he can speak well ... and he shall be thy spokesman unto the people ...' come as a complete surprise after v.11 where Yahweh poses the question, 'who hath made man's mouth or who maketh the dumb or deaf or the seeing or the blind? have not I the Lord?' The question assumes that not Aaron, but Yahweh himself wishes to remedy the difficulty alleged by Moses. Moreover, one would expect, following Yahweh's tolerance of Moses' faithlessness (cf. v.11), and Moses' second refusal of the divine command (cf. v.13), that Yahweh's wrath recounted in v.14 would culminate in the punishment of Moses instead of in the toleration of his recalcitrance by supplying Aaron as a substitute. Aaron is now to discharge what Yahweh himself claims to be able to do (cf. v.11). This intrusive reference to Aaron has its sequel in vv.27-31¹⁷. Here Aaron is bidden to meet Moses in the wilderness. v.27 implies that both men knew each other, although we are given no introduction to Aaron apart from v.14. In v.30 it is related that Aaron not only acted as spokesman for Moses to the people but that he also performed signs, thus going beyond the mandate given him in vv. 13-16 to act as a mouth to Moses. Although accounted to JE,

17. vv. 18-26 are a separate section dealing with Moses' return to Egypt and Zipporah's circumcision of her son. vv. 27 ff bring the reader back to the wilderness scene of the earlier part of the chapter.

this passage in attributing signs to Aaron has an element in common with P. This point is developed further in the plague narratives of P in which the rod, that Moses authenticated himself with as Yahweh's messenger by changing it into a serpent (cf. Ex. 4.1 ff), is transferred to Aaron. According to the P account of the plagues, it was with this rod that Aaron performed wonders before Pharaoh¹⁸.

The impotence of Moses in Ex. 4.14 ff. is contradictory to his subsequent role in the plague narratives. Here Aaron is given a sudden access of importance and Moses is characterized as a cringing inarticulate person, incapable of leadership. In the plague narratives the reverse is seen, the indisputable authority of Moses setting Aaron's role to the side. Aaron appears inconsistently and never in a leading capacity in the JE narratives. Although both men appear before Pharaoh in a fruitless attempt to bring about the release of the Hebrews from bondage (cf. 5.1) Aaron in no way takes a leading part, Moses always being named before him (cf. vv. 4,20). Moses occasions the first plague (cf. 7.14 ff) without any mention of Aaron. In the plague of frogs, Aaron is mentioned twice without taking any active role (cf. 8.4,8. - E.V.8.8,12)¹⁹. The account

18. cf. Ex. 7.8-13,19; 8.1-3 (E.V.vv.5-7), 12-15 (E.V.vv.16-19).

19. vv.1-3 (E.V.vv.5-7) in which Aaron plays a decisive role performing a wonder with the rod, are attributed to P. Aaron also takes an active part in the third plague, i.e. lice cf. 8.12-15 (E.V. vv.16-19), which is likewise attributed to P.

of the fourth plague states that Moses and Aaron were summoned by Pharaoh (cf. v.21 - E.V.v.25), but Moses alone conducted the ensuing negotiation, and in v.26 - E.V.v.30 it is recorded that Moses went out from Pharaoh without mention of Aaron, indicating that he either remained with Pharaoh or, as is more probable, the redactor omitted to remove him. Aaron is not mentioned at all in the fifth plague (cf. 9.1-7)²⁰, but in the seventh plague (cf. 9.13-35) Moses and Aaron are again summoned before Pharaoh (cf. v.27), Moses promises that the hail will cease (cf. vv. 29 ff), and departs alone, the redactor again omitting to remove Aaron with him from Pharaoh's presence. A similar occurrence appears in the eighth plague (cf. 10.1-20) in which Moses and Aaron enter Pharaoh's presence (cf. v.3), but only Moses is reported as leaving it (cf. v.6b). However in v.8 Moses and Aaron are both recalled by Pharaoh and both are finally driven from his presence in v.11. Apart from a passing reference Aaron plays no part in the plague of locusts. He appears alongside Moses as witness to Pharaoh's confession (cf. v.16), but no further mention is made of him and Moses departs alone (cf. v.18). Aaron is not mentioned at all in the two final plagues i.e. darkness (cf. 10.21-29) and the smiting of the firstborn (cf. 11.1-9).

20. The sixth plague cf. 9.8-11 in which Aaron takes a more active part, is attributed to P.

From this examination of the plague narratives it can be seen that Aaron has only a superficial presence in them, and that his removal from the narrative would do no violence to the text, perhaps even improve it. Moses is the spokesman and leader of the enslaved Hebrews. It would appear that a redactor has made an unsuccessful attempt to harmonize the Aaron intrusion in Ex.4 with the plague narratives, by inconsistently inserting him beside Moses. The reference to Aaron in 4.14 as a Levite is striking and important. As he is also described as the brother of Moses the reference 'Levite' cannot denote tribal kinship, but rather professional status. The fact however that Aaron has levitical status, and is also referred to as the brother of Moses may perhaps be seen as the seed from which the Moses-Aaron relationship of P germinated²¹. The question arises whether we have here a snatch of some tradition that recognized Aaron as a Levite in pre-exilic times, but of which we have no further information, or the possibility that the word Levite in some traditions denotes the idea of a spokesman, or as the priestly writer describes Aaron in Ex.7.1, a prophet - one who acts as a medium between God and man - and so perhaps reflects something of the prophetic quality that Num.12 presupposes for Aaron. The description of Aaron as the brother of Moses in 4.14 is unrecorded elsewhere in the pre-priestly pentateuchal sources, where he is found both as follower and opponent of Moses,

21. The fact that P states that Aaron is the elder brother of Moses emphasises the firstborn position of the high priest cf. Ex.7.7.

but never as brother, which may again indicate a fragment of a tradition, the rest of which has failed to come down to us.

We have seen Aaron now in a number of different capacities in the pre-priestly literature - as sheikh, priest of the calf worship, Levite, and both brother and opponent of Moses. Why should he have risen from this obscure variety of stations to the exalted position which the priestly writer attributes to him? After the return from exile Israel ceased to be a monarchy, and a new order emerged based on a theocracy. Yet nostalgic reflection on the nation's past history and achievements must have given courage and hope for the future, despite the disappointment Zerubbabel's brief appearance as the representative of the Davidic house must have been. The interest in a future Messianic Davidide, who would rule as Yahweh's charismatic vice-regent as envisaged in Is. 9.2-7; 11.1-9, was still very much alive. Haggai speaks of Zerubbabel as Yahweh's signet and chosen one reigning supreme (cf. 2.20-23), while Zechariah tells of Zerubbabel building the temple (cf. 4.6-10). It was in this atmosphere of expectancy that the priestly document came to fruition. Like Deuteronomy it is a miscellany of material incorporating many ancient traditions. Although the priestly writer sets his material into the wilderness period yet he reflects the circumstances of the age of the monarchy.

This becomes clear from the elaborate description of the temple (cf. Ex. 25-31; 35-39) which accords much more closely with Solomon's edifice than that of the wandering nomadic community of the wilderness period²². The correspondence is apparent in the very articles of furniture that appear in P's tabernacle and Solomon's temple respectively. In both of them we find that all the inner articles of furniture are made of gold, the outer of bronze²³. In both descriptions the ark has poles attached to it not only at the time of removal, but also when resting at the inner sanctum (cf. Ex. 25.13-16; I Kgs. 8.8)²⁴. Like the boards of the tabernacle and its inner pillars (cf. Ex. 26.29,32), all the inner surfaces of Solomon's temple, walls, floors and even doors of the inner and outer sanctums, are overlaid with gold (cf. I Kgs. 6.20-22,30,32,35), but gold does not figure in the court. Carvings of the cherubim appear on the walls and doors of the inner and outer sanctum of Solomon's temple in a similar way to the cherubims worked on the inner curtains and veil of the tabernacle²⁵. The priestly dependence on the account of Solomon's temple is particularly evident in the form of their respective altars. The altar of burnt offerings

22. See Note 54 in Appendix.

23. With respect to the temple cf. I Kgs. 6.28; 7.23-39, 48-50.

24. When the Israelites became settled in the land, the ark also became settled in the national shrine and was only occasionally moved when carried in the festal processions.

25. cf. I Kgs. 6.29,32,35 and Ex. 26.1,31; 36.35.

in the court of Solomon's temple was of bronze (cf. I Kgs. 8.64; Ezek.9.2) similar to the altar of burnt offering in the court of the tabernacle (cf. Ex. 27.1-8; 38.1-7). This bronze altar of Solomon's temple was the first bronze altar that the Israelites were familiar with, as the use of bronze as a building and engraving material only began in Israel during Solomon's reign²⁶. The horns of P's altar (cf. Ex. 27.2; 38.2) also appear to have originally come into fashion in Israel at the beginning of the monarchic period as there is no evidence of them prior to this time. Similar to the altar of burnt offering, the gold altar of incense described in P is certainly a projection of the parallel altar made in Solomon's temple²⁷. It seems scarcely conceivable that the priestly writer genuinely believed that this elaborate construction was a true description of the wilderness tabernacle. The description is rather an attempt to vindicate the temple of the monarchy by projecting it back into the source period. This source period is used to authenticate the glory of the pre-exilic Jerusalem cult which is seen as the culmination of the development of the tabernacle tradition.

The presentation of the temple's prototype in the wilderness authenticated its historical existence in Solomon's time. The priestly writer in his elaborate

26. Tyrian artisans had to be imported to execute the bronze work of the temple court cf. I Kgs. 7.13,14.

27. cf. I Kgs. 6.20,22; 7.48 and Ex. 30.1-10.

description of all the furnishings of the wilderness tabernacle clearly has his objective in authenticating the Jerusalem temple in this way. Two questions now arise. The one, whether Moses, the tribal leader and high priest functioning in both priestly and secular capacity in the source period, may have been interpreted by P as the prototype of the sacral king who acted as spiritual and secular leader in the settled Israelite community. The other question is whether Aaron, who is represented as priest and Levite in some of the traditions relating to the source period, is the prototype of the priesthood that served at Jerusalem. It is possible that the spiritual and secular offices which Moses held and Samuel inherited were originally interpreted as being to some degree separated on the death of Samuel, which marked the passing of an era, and consequently became vested in the king and priest. As however the king performed certain cultic functions, it is difficult to determine exactly the office that the king and priest each inherited from the line of leaders that had ended with Samuel. The interpretation of these two figures as the successors of a wilderness prototype would appear rather to be a later innovation of a more retrospective nature peculiar to P. If we rule out this possibility we are confronted with the need to explain the existence of two figures instead of one, both known to have existed in the source period, being represented alongside the Solomonic temple projected back into this period. As Aaron is present only

as a minor character in comparison with Moses in the pre-priestly literature, it would appear that his prominence here has a motive behind it that can only be explained by interpreting him as representing the priesthood of the monarchy.

The relationship of priest to king was that of subordinate to superior. This is implied in the judgement on the Elides where it is stated in reference to the royal priest 'he shall walk before the face of my anointed for ever' (I Sam. 2.35). Gradually as the cult developed the priest's influence was extended and his importance grew²⁸, but the king still retained control of the state cult at the royal sanctuary. David was responsible for bringing the ark to Jerusalem and danced before it in the priestly garment (cf. II Sam. 6.6-19). It is also recorded in this passage that he blessed the people which, together with his other activities mentioned here, implies that he acted as a type of pontifex maximus. He dedicated the altar at the threshing floor of Araunah (cf. II Sam. 24.18 ff) without any mention of a priest being present. Solomon not only built the temple, but he conducted its entire inauguration (cf. I Kgs. 8). The relationship between king and priest can perhaps be best seen in II Kgs. 16.10 ff where it is stated that Ahaz gave directions

28. In the story of Athaliah, it was the priest Jehoiada that led the rebellion to restore the Davidide cf. II Kgs. 11. It is recorded in II Chr. 22.11 that Jehoiada was married to a daughter of the king, indicating the close ties between the family of the Jerusalem priesthood and the royal family at this time.

for a new altar to Urijah the priest, which he executed as subordinate and officer of the king. Ahaz acted as chief priest at what appears to be the dedication ceremonies for the altar. Urijah received his instructions from the king and accordingly carried out his orders. In the same way Hezekiah and Josiah brought about cultic reforms without any part being played by the priests who presumably must have gone along with them.

Thus the king had a dual role. With regard to Moses it is impossible to decide where he acts as a priest and where as a tribal leader. Although we still find traces of him in the older period, when the chief was considered as head of the cult, discharging cultic functions as in the making of the covenant on Sinai (cf. Ex. 24.6-8), yet later tradition has also assigned to him a power that included a priestly function, even after the function of the priesthood had become an office apart and attributed to Aaron. Moses was nearest Yahweh and was the intermediary between Yahweh and the people, and although Aaron was a priest, Moses continued to have the traits of both ruler and priest. It was therefore possible for the psalmist to refer to both Moses and Aaron as priests (cf. Ps. 99.6). Moses both appointed and directed the sanctification of the Aaronic priesthood, the account of which is contained in the whole complex of the temple erection, for which he also received orders from Yahweh and discharged them (cf. Ex. 28,29). As a priest he consecrated a priest, yet he stands apart as supreme ruler and recipient of the divine

intimation. Even in the account of Korah's rebellion, which relates to an impeachment on the Aaronic priesthood (cf. Num.16)²⁹, Moses acted as arbitrator of the dispute, representing Yahweh. On receipt of the divine command Moses entered unhindered into the innermost part of the tent, but Aaron could only enter at entirely designated times and even then only with the most careful attention to safeguard measures (Lev. 8f). This shows that Moses and Aaron are both representatives of the people, but both enter upon the holy of holies in entirely different capacities, Moses as receiver of a divine instruction and therefore communicator and intercessor before Yahweh, Aaron as a cult server - '..... allüberall amtiert Ahron durch Mose „Das sprach Jahwe zu Mose: Rede zu Deinem Bruder Ahron...." (Lev.16.2). So ist das Verhältnis zwischen Mose und Ahron. Mose weiht Ahron und seine Söhne, er veranlasst die Primiz Ahrons und jegliche weitere Kultauübung.'³⁰

It is noteworthy that on the succession of Joshua to the position of leader after Moses' death (cf. Num. 27.20 ff) that only part of the honour, i.e. לְהָלֵךְ , of Moses is assigned to him. Although Joshua is to lead the people, yet it is emphasised that he is to ask the priest Eleazar for oracles and to act in accordance with them. The order now runs 'Eleazar and Joshua' which seems to indicate an attempt to insist upon the

29. See Note 55 in Appendix.

30. cf. G. von Rad, 'Die Priesterschrift im Hexateuch' B.W.A.N.T., 4 F.H.13p.184.

superior rank of the high priest. Does this emphasis on the priest allude to a historical remembrance of such an event, or does it reflect changed circumstances of later times, the death of Moses and Aaron representing the end of an era, and the succession of Eleazar and Joshua the beginning of a new one? The question is difficult to answer, but the succession of Joshua to only part of Moses' status, and the supremacy of Eleazar must have some significance, especially as Joshua seems to have played the role of tribal as well as spiritual leader in succession to Moses in traditions other than the priestly one. There is no mention in Dt. 34.9 of his only partially succeeding Moses. It is stated here that Moses laid his hands upon him, therefore imparting his blessing wholly on him without mention of anyone else. Moreover, according to Jos. 8.30, Joshua built an altar on Mt. Ebal, and he is also on record as having blessed Caleb (cf. Jos. 14.13) and Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh (cf. Jos. 22.6). Nowhere except in the priestly document is Eleazar mentioned alongside Joshua, and even when Aaron predeceased Moses, his successor Eleazar who is installed by Moses (cf. Num. 20.22 ff) is, like his predecessor, subservient to him (cf. Num. 26.63; 31.12,41). Why then should the priestly writer deny Joshua full recognition as Moses' successor and promote Eleazar into a position of supremacy which is nowhere else recorded?³¹ As we have no evidence of this in the

31. In Num. 34.17 and Jos. 17.4 the priestly writer records how Eleazar and Joshua distributed the land.

source period, we may perhaps conclude that it rests on a readjustment from the monarchy to the circumstances of post-exilic times in which the priest ultimately survived alone and supreme. Due to the fact that Joshua from the time of Moses had a prominent place in the traditions of ancient Israel, and therefore could not be ignored, his importance was merely curtailed and the priest emerged into the prime position³².

The question must now be asked whether the Chronicler in the position he allocates to Aaron as ancestor of priests was relying on some tradition that is unknown to us, or on a mixture of traditions drawn from the early period and the priestly document. The first possibility cannot be ruled out, yet neither can it be wholly accepted, since it rests on nothing more substantial than the argumentum e silentio. If such a tradition did exist, it is surprising that it is not found recorded elsewhere. It seems that there were two groups of priests. The name Ithamar may be the name of a section of the pre-exilic priesthood at Jerusalem as we find it mentioned in the Ezra memoirs (cf. Ezra. 8.2) along with the name Phinehas³³ amongst those returning from exile. Ezekiel's statement (cf. 44.15)

32. See Note 56 in Appendix.

33. Perhaps at this point the priestly writer attached the genealogy of Aaron-Eleazar-Phinehas, which was known to exist in northern circles (cf. Jos. 24.33), to accord with his elevation of Aaron to the high priesthood.

that only Zadokites may function as priests would imply that both these groups were Zadokites. The fact that two lines of priests are recorded does not necessarily imply a Zadokite and an intruding group, in fact the absence of the name Zadok from Ezra 8.2 would seem to suggest the reverse, for we know that the Zadokites did return from exile, and therefore if one of the groups consisted of non-Zadokite priests, one would expect the Zadokite and non-Zadokite to be designated. The Jerusalem priesthood having existed in one family for over four centuries was bound to multiply and require some organization into designated groups, each group constituting part of the Zadokite priesthood. Four great priestly families of Jerusalem are mentioned in Ezra. 2.36-39, i.e. Jedaiah (namely the house of Joshua i.e. Joshua ben Josadak), Immer, Passhur and Harim. I Chr. 24.1 records all four sons of Aaron, and goes on to recall the fate of the two eldest suggesting dependence on the priestly writing (cf. Lev. 10.1-7). The surviving two, Eleazar and Ithamar, are represented by Zadok and Ahimelech. If the Ithamar line is taken as a renegade group unconnected with the Zadokites then it either continued to function at Jerusalem despite Ezekiel's dictum, and the later rejection of those who had falsified their pedigrees to obtain the priesthood in Nehemiah's time (cf. Nh. 7.63-65), or the name Ithamar describes a Zadokite group of priests in Ezra. 8.2, and a non-Zadokite in I Chr. 24.1. However, it seems improbable that the name Ithamar described one thing at one time and another at a later time; and if the

priests it did describe survived as a renegade group until the Chronicler's time, we would expect them to have been driven out from office as they occupied only eight of the twenty-four priestly courses (cf. I Chr. 24.4). It would hence appear that the Chronicler had two groups of Zadokites, the main group denoted by the name Eleazar at least subsequent to the priestly document, the other designated Ithamar, recorded from early post-exilic times. With his interest in the Davidic period he associated them with the two lines of priests functioning at Jerusalem in David's time. Thus the whole scheme comes into a full circle with the post-exilic priesthood of Jerusalem derived by the Chronicler from Nob as well as from Gibeon, and joined into one family under the ancestor Aaron.

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APPENDIX

1. Isaac appears as a dull reflection of Abraham. The attempt to deceive Pharaoh by Abram passing off Sarai as his sister (cf. Gen. 12.10-20) is similar to the account in Gen. 26.6-11 in which Isaac pretends to Abimelech that Rebekah is his sister. Moreover, the dissension over the wells between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot (cf. Gen. 13.5-13) is parallel to the strife between Isaac's servants and the herdsmen of Gerar (cf. Gen. 26.20-22). There is in fact only one incident in the life of Isaac that shows independence of the Abraham narratives, i.e. the mention of his having some success in agriculture, cf. Gen. 26.12 ff.
2. The narratives recording the sale of the birth-right in Gen. 25.29-34 and the stolen blessing in Gen. 27.1-40 are intended to describe the gradual growth of Israel compared to Edom. The latter as an organized and settled state is represented as the older, cf. Gen. 36.31; Num. 20.14-21; Dt. 2.2-8. It was subdued by David cf. II Sam. 8.14, and from that time until 586 remained in a subordinate position. Israel is represented as the younger and stronger of the two people.
3. The narrative contained in Gen. 29-31 suggests a struggle between Israel and Aram represented by Jacob and Laban respectively, which probably arose from lack of sufficient pasturage to maintain the two groups, and resulted in the expulsion of the Jacob group.
4. E. Meyer in reference to the problem of the analysis of Gen. 34 says 'es ist vielleicht das für die Kritik schwierigste Stück des ganzen Hexateuchs, für das, so deutlich die Vermischung verschiedener Erzählungen erkennbar ist, dennoch eine gesicherte Analyse noch Niemandem gelungen ist und vielleicht niemals gelingen wird'. cf. Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstämme, p. 412.

5. The word ^{יָלַף} in v. 10, has found a great number of interpretations, none of which have been accepted as wholly satisfactory. The commonest of these is to understand the word to denote 'Shiloh', the Ephraimite shrine that housed the ark before the establishment of the monarchy, and to interpret the verse as meaning that Judah looks forward to the reunification of the north with the south, which would suggest the date of the oracle to be subsequent to the secession of Israel from Judah. Another possible solution is to assume that the word is a hapaxlegomenon, the exact meaning of which has not survived.
6. E. Meyer, op. cit., pp. 423 ff, understands Gen. 34 as a reflection of Ju. 9, but considers that originally Levi and Simeon had no connection with Shechem, the theme of the plot in which they were originally involved being of a different nature. T.J. Meek in his Hebrew Origins follows Meyer and considers that an originally independent Simeon-Levi tradition was later associated with Shechem.
7. cf. Jos. 17.7. Gen. 48.22 may denote that Shechem, subsequent to the fall of Simeon and Levi reverted to Canaanite hands, and was later captured by the Jacob group migrating into Canaan. This hypothesis would accord with the kinship assumed between the Israelites and Shechemites in Jos. 24. It is quite possible that, as intermarriage was the order of the day in Abimelech's time, there were Israelite elements within Shechem and in the villages round about.
8. A. Menes, 'Die vorexilischen Gesetze Israels im Zusammenhang seiner kulturgeschichtlichen Entwicklung'. B.Z.A.W. 50-53 (1928) p.4, contends that Gen. 49.5-7 has the same basis as Ex. 32.26-29, i.e. the cruelty of the Levites. The anger with which they slay men and mutilate oxen in Gen. 49.6, he considers parallel to the slaughter executed by the Levites in Ex. 32.27 f. He deduces that Gen. 49.5-7 originated from the hand of an opponent of

8. the Levites who was an adherent of the bull cult. The association of these two texts in this way does not account for the absence of Simeon in Ex. 32.25-29.
9. It is noteworthy that the word *levi* appears on some of the inscriptions discovered at El 'Ola, in the Minaean script. The Minaeans of southern Arabia established a colony in northern Arabia in the territory south of Midian around 600 B.C. On three of these inscriptions the word *lw'* with the feminine form of *lw't* occurs in reference to persons concerned with the cult of the Arabian God Wadd. This word has sometimes been translated 'priests' or 'Levites', due to its resemblance to the Hebrew word 'Levi', and it has been concluded by some that the Israelites adopted the institution of the Levites from those early Arabs with whom they had contact in the desert. However, closer examination has shown that the words *lw'* and *lw't* do not mean 'priest' and 'priestess', but rather an object given to God i.e. a pledge. The object may be a person or a thing but it is never a person engaged in performing the cult. Perhaps here may lie some indication of the meaning of the Levite in Num. 3.11-13 as one pledged, but not necessarily involved in cultic service or a member of a priestly family. The Minaeans however, were a people from southern Arabia, and their kings did not rule the region around Dedan in northern Arabia until the fourth century B.C. The words *lw'* and *lw't* are found only in the Minaean inscriptions of northern Arabia at Dedan and never in those of the south nor in any other south Arabian dialect. It is probable thus, that they were borrowed from the population of Dedan which was neither Minaean nor even proto-Arab in the widest sense. According to Arabic authors writing in the early days of Islam, the oasis of Dedan was then occupied by the Jews who seemed to have been there for a considerable time. A recently discovered inscription of Nabonidus states that this

9. king established a military colony in northern Arabia at Dedan itself, and that soldiers were mainly recruited from the west. It is possible that there were Jews amongst them, which may suggest a borrowing of the word 'Levi' from the Hebrews by the Minaeans who modified the sense of the term giving it a feminine form which it originally did not have. However, these inscriptions being attributed to the fifth century B.C., would not appear to have any information relevant to the early Israelite traditions relating to Levi. cf. J.H. Mordtmann, 'Beiträge zur minäischen Epigraphik', nos. XVII, XXIII and XXVI.
10. E. Meyer, op. cit., p. 427, considers that the Levites were medicine men who possessed besides the secret of the Yahweh cult, legal statutes and oracles by lot, also the skill of serpent exorcism and other sacred crafts and charms. For this reason, they found a welcome among foreigners, and perhaps being forced by enemies e.g. the Amalekites, or enticed by secular gains, were dislodged from their cultic establishment at Kadesh. M. Noth, op. cit., p. 181, rejects as highly conjectural, Meyer's view of a cult at Kadesh where the Levites originally functioned.
11. The number of Egyptian names found in levitical genealogies may indicate the association of levitical elements with Moses in Egypt. The evidence however, is too meagre to draw any decisive conclusion from, and could just as well be utilized to speculate the extent of Egyptian influence in Solomon's administrative policy in which (as will be shown in a later chapter of this thesis) Levites played an important part.

12. The usual analysis of these chapters attributes 13.17b-20 the briefing of the scouts, 13.22-24 the survey of the region around Hebron, 13.26b-31,33 the good report of the region brought back by the spies, 14.10b-25 the account of Yahweh's threat and Moses' intercession, and 14.39-45 the failure of the attempted invasion, to J.E. 13.1-17a which records the names of the scouts, one from each tribe, 13.21,25,26a stating that the whole land was explored as far as the entrance to Hamath, the farthest ideal limit of the country, 13.32 an unfavourable report of the land, 14.1-10a, in which elements from J.E. appear to have been included in vv. 3,4,8 and 9, record the complaint of the people to Yahweh, their design for retreat and Caleb's encouragement, and 14.26-38 the pronouncement of Yahweh's punishment, are all attributed to the priestly writer. The chief characters in the old narrative are Moses and Caleb - Aaron and Joshua belong to the priestly redaction.
13. The three main levitical families frequently appear in the priestly document and Chronicles cf. Gen. 46.11; Ex. 6.16 ff; Num. 3.17 ff; 7.7-9; Jos. 21; I Chr. 6.1 ff; 15.4 ff; 23.6 ff. The prominence of the Kohath group, recorded in Num. 4.17 ff; 10.21 where it is assigned to the charge of the most holy things, along with I Chr. 15.5 ff and Jos. 21, differs from the more usual order that enumerates Gershom first. In Num. 4.21-28 and Jos. 21.27 ff Gershom is placed after Kohath, but in I Chr. 15.7 this group is relegated to third place. It is difficult to trace the historical significance that lies behind the advancement of Kohath and demotion of Gershom. Perhaps the changes may reflect various tensions and struggles within the post-exilic Jerusalem temple.
14. The priestly strand of the narrative in Num. 16 records the revolt of Korah against the authority of Aaron. It is a struggle between priests and Levites of which we have no clear historical record.

14. A. Kuenen in Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur Biblischen Wissenschaft, pp. 465 ff, is inclined to place the struggle of the Levites recounted in the priestly tradition of the narrative some time during the fourth century B.C. Centuries later, even when the Levites had sunk to the insignificant position they held in the first century A.D., they still succeeded in making good a minor pretension to priestly privileges by obtaining from Agrippa II the right to wear the priestly linen, cf. Jos. Anti. XX, 9.6.
15. Korah is generally found in the genealogies as the 'great grandson' of Levi and 'grandson' of Kohath cf. Num. 16.1. The remaining four in the verse under discussion always appear in the other genealogies as 'grandsons' of Levi, but Libni is sometimes referred to as the son of Gershom, cf. Num. 3.18; I Chr. 6.2, (E.V.v.17), and sometimes as the son of Merari cf I Chr. 6.14 (E.V.v.29). Mahli and Mushi always appear as the sons of Merari, and Hebron as the son of Kohath.
16. Evidence of the nature of the ephod is extremely vague, and it is even doubtful whether it was everywhere and at all times the same thing. The ephod of the priestly writer i.e. of post-exilic, though probably of earlier times, is described as a decorated vestment similar to a tunic cf. Ex.28. The pocket is mentioned in connection with the ephod which contained the Urim and Thummim cf. v.30. Probably similar to this ephod but unconnected with any special means of obtaining an oracle was the 'linen ephod' ⁷¹7198 with which the child Samuel was girded when he ministered as temple servant (cf. I Sam. 2.18), and with which David was similarly girded when he danced before the ark cf. II Sam. 6.14. The description of Abiathar fleeing to David with an ephod in his hand suggests

16. some type of small image or cultic apparatus which, according to I Sam. 23.9 ff, was used in consulting the oracle or 'inquiring of Yahweh'. It appears from I. Sam. 14 that a similar object was used in connection with Urim and Thummim. When asked to consult the oracle the priest was told to bring it near cf. 14.18 (reading וַיִּבֶן for וַיִּבֶן with the LXX); 23.9; 30.7; and when ordered to desist the command was 'to withdraw thine hand' cf. 14.19 which suggests some form of manipulation in connection with the sacred lot. Here, as in Ju. 8.22-27, it appears to have been some sort of idol. The teraphim also appear to have been idols, which is evident from Gen. 31.30, 32, where Laban accuses Jacob of having stolen his gods. This notion is supported by I Sam. 19.13 ff, which relates how Mical, placed the teraphim in David's bed to deceive Saul's messengers, and so allowed David to escape. It is possible that the association of teraphim with familiar spirits in II Kgs. 23.24 may connect them with necromancy. Hos. 3.4. mentions them along with the oracular ephod indicating their use in the giving of oracles.

17. In accordance with the view of the priestly writer, the reference to Eli's ancestor in v. 27 can only denote Aaron, but the only other possible evidence for connecting the house of Aaron with Eli is the name of his son Phinehas which was also the name of Aaron's grandson. However, it is unwise to assume that a name ever remained the private possession of a single tribe or family. The Samaritan Chronicle II, trans. by J. Macdonald, B.Z.A.W., 1969, pp. 110 ff records that Eli, a descendant of Ithamar had a difference of opinion with Uzzi, a mere youth, of the other line of Aaronites, who had recently succeeded to the office of high priest. The dissension resulted in a schism in which the Joseph tribes followed the high priest and drove out Eli and his Judahite following from Mt. Gerizim. Subsequently Eli and his adherents established a sanctuary at Shiloh where he made an ark and preserved the law. This sanctuary was reputed to contain the tent of meeting which Moses had constructed

17. in the wilderness at Yahweh's command. As this account has no biblical parallel its authenticity cannot be relied on to provide a sound basis for the solution to the problem of the genesis of Eli's family as a priestly house.
18. S.R. Driver, Notes on the Hebrew text and the topography of the Book of Samuel, p.41, considers the possibility of vv. 31b, 32b being two forms of one and the same gloss which he attributes to an incorrect application of v. 31a to the disaster of Chapter 4, and also questions the authenticity of v.32a due to the corrupt nature of the text and the fact that it records eventualities which, in Driver's view, did not occur during the lifetime of Eli. He claims that the passage records two disasters which befell Eli's family - a sudden disaster in vv. 31a, 33b from which few escape, and a permanent weakening of the family in v. 32b, the former interpretation being demanded by the limitation that follows in v.33a which cannot be a limitation on v.32b, as the sparing of a single individual does not provide a suitable antithesis to the permanent weakening of the whole family. The limitation however, does not refer to the punishment recorded in v.31 but rather to the revoking of the promise to the house of Eli of eternal service to Yahweh in the priesthood which occasions this disaster. Similarly C. Steuernagel, 'Die Weissagung über die Elides', B.Z.A.W. 1913, vol. 13, pp. 204-221, claims that there are two threats in this passage - the first, according to which Yahweh wishes to destroy the family of Eli cf. v.31 ab α , but alleviates this injunction in v.33 by permitting the survival of a sole representative to serve at the altar, and the second represented by vv. 31b β , 32b and וְעָלִיתָ at the end of v.33, in which the house of Eli survives but under the permanent curse of premature death, which he holds as incompatible with the first threat i.e. the total destruction of the family with the exception of one individual. Steuernagel like Driver discounts v.32a as secondary due to the premature

18. nature of its content in connection with Eli, and he also eliminates vv. 31b, 32b as later additions to the original narrative. This analysis is based on the assumption that $\text{לְהַרְסוֹ} \text{לְהַרְסוֹ}$ means complete destruction rather than weakening as illustrated in note 5, chapter 3.
19. The loss of the ark and the defeat at the hands of the Philistines marked the end of Shiloh as an Israelite shrine, although a description of its destruction by the Philistines has not been preserved. Jer. 26.6, 9 in reference to Shiloh seems to imply its destruction at some stage of its career. However, the city appears to have been occupied as late as the time of Gedaliah (cf. Jer. 41.5), although the report of eighty men coming from Shechem, Shiloh and Samaria may merely refer to the region rather than the city.
20. cf. K. Budde 'Die Herkunft Sadok's' Z.A.W. 1934, pp. 42-50 who considers that Eleazar (cf. I Sam. 7.1) and Uzzah (cf. II Sam. 6.3, 6-8) are one and the same person, and points out that חִיָּז in II Kgs. 21.18, 26 is a well known hypocorisma for Azariah-Uzziah. Likewise חִיָּז (חִיָּז in vv. 6, 8) can also be a shortened form of Eleazar. Here in II Sam. 6.3 ff the use of the hypocorisma Uzzah was probably motivated by the place name Peres-Uzzah in v.8.
21. cf. H.R. Hall, The People and the Book, ed. Peake p. 11, and H.H. Rowley, 'Zadok and Nehushtan' J.B.L. 1939, pp. 113-141 who consider that the serpent Nehushtan belonged to the ancient Jebusite cult at Jerusalem, and that the narrative of Num. 21.4 ff was an attempt to legitimate its presence there in later times.

22. The name Amraphel used to be confidently equated with Hammurabi of the first Amorite dynasty of Babylon, famous for his code, but this identification is no longer accepted, as there were at least three other kings of that name ruling city states during this period. Ellaser is no longer identified with the Mesopotamian city of Larsa and its king, but Arioch is connected with the Hurrian king Ariukki whose name occurs in the Nuzu tablets. The name of the leader of the raid, Chedorlaomer, is the Hebrew form of a perfectly good Elamite name, and it is quite in keeping with what is known of the history of the time that Elam should have been the head of such an alliance as the narrative depicts. The last king mentioned, Tidal, has been identified with the Hittite king, Tudhaliash, the first of a line of kings which ruled the old Hittite Empire. A possible date has been assigned to him between 1700 and 1650 B.C. The epithet 'nation' may be an honorific title.
23. The Hebrews use the predicate נִחַן not only to denote perception with the eyes but also of the other senses; e.g. to feel the fire נִחַן בְּאֵשׁ Is. 44.16, or those things understood by the mind; e.g. to understand wisdom, Eccl. 8.16, to experience death, Ps. 89.49 (E.V.v.48), and in the same sense to see the pit, i.e. meet with death Ps. 16.10; 49.10 (E.V.v.9). It is this type of mental perception which would appear to be the correct interpretation here. W.R. Arnold, Ephod and Ark, p. 93 interprets the words $\text{אֵתְּנָה לְעֵינַיִךְ}$ as a question relating to Zadok's profession which expects the answer 'no' since the offices of seer and priest are quite distinct. The implication is, that if Zadok had been a seer he could have been useful to David by employing his powers of clairvoyance to describe what was happening in Jerusalem, but as he is not it is better for him to return and find out the news in a more normal way.

24. W.F. Albright in his article 'The list of levitic Cities' in Louis Ginzberg's Jubilee volume, pp. 49-75, by comparison of both lists with the Greek versions, especially Vaticanus, is able to eliminate nearly all the differences between them. e.g. M.T. of Jos. 21.16 has Ain, but I Chr. 6.44 (E.V. v.59) reads Ashan which is proved correct by the Vaticanus recension of Joshua. In Jos. 21.25 the M.T. erroneously repeats Gath-rimmon from the preceding verse but Vaticanus reads $\tau\epsilon\beta\lambda\alpha\alpha\mu$ in both the Joshua and Chronicles texts which is only a slight corruption of the Bileam in I Chr. 6.55 (E.V.v.70). Again in Jos. 21.28 Kishon occurs where I Chr. 6.57 (E.V.v.72) has Kedesh. Vaticanus renders the Joshua text $\kappa\epsilon\iota\sigma\omega\nu$ indicating that $\kappa\epsilon\iota\sigma\omega\nu$ should be read in preference to $\kappa\epsilon\iota\sigma\omega\nu$ of the M.T. Egyptian transcriptions of the name from the fifteenth century B.C. prove the Greek text correct. The reading in Chronicles is certainly a reminiscence of the Kadesh in Naphtali. The scribal error was made here before the oldest Greek translation, as it corresponds with the Chronicler. The difference in the early square script between $\kappa\epsilon\iota\sigma\omega\nu$ and $\kappa\epsilon\iota\sigma\omega\nu$ is so slight that a scribal error of the Chronicler or his copyist is not improbable.
25. M. Noth, Das Buch Joshua, pp. 97 ff, regards the settlements of Levites as post-exilic on the grounds that the omission of certain districts in central Palestine indicates a time when there was already tension between the Jews and their neighbours in the district of Samaria. This view ignores the inclusion of Shechem in the lists, the very metropolis of the Samaritans. He considers however, that as the Samaritan Pentateuch of Num. 35.6 ff shows a knowledge of Jos. 21, that Jos. 21 though post-exilic cannot be posterior to the Samaritan schism.

26. A. Alt 'Bemerkungen zu einem Judaischen Ortslisten des Alten Testament', Kleine Schriften, 1953, pp. 289-305, considers that the list refers to an evacuation of the Levites to Jerusalem and the replacement of their cities with armed fortresses. He explains the discrepancy between the statements of II Kgs. 23 and the absence of Judaeen towns in the list by the theory that the reform came to a stop before it was accomplished.
27. The language of vv. 11-14 is so vivid that they are considered contemporaneous with the events they record. The rest of the chapter which refers to Edom is usually regarded as a prophetic prediction of a downfall that took place some time before 312 B.C. at which date the Nabataeans occupied Petra. However, inscriptions show that while at about 600 B.C. the governor of Ezion-geber was still an Edomite, by the fifth century Arab names are found there. Moreover, Mal. 1.3 written about 460 may be interpreted to mean that the Arabs had already invaded Edom by 460. Hence the dating of this oracle on Edom would seem to be previous to 460 and as soon after 586 as may be reasonable.
28. W.F. Albright, op. cit., considers that there can be no doubt about the accuracy of the Chronicles reading due to the antiquity of the name as a priestly family, cf. I Chr. 6.53 (E.V.v.68). B. Mazar, 'The Cities of the priests and the levites', suppl. to V.T. VII, 1959, pp. 193-206, explains the difference in the two names from the fact that the place name Jekameam was taken from the name of the levitical family that settled there, and points out that a change of place name generally followed a change in the population or ownership of the place. If this hypothesis is accepted then the Chronicler's list would appear to be younger than the Joshua one which, in view of Albright's analysis, is an unnecessary assumption.

31. Jos. 24 reflects something of this kind taking place at Shechem. The Deuteronomistic passages, Dt. 11.29 ff; 27; Jos. 8.30-35 which record how after the conquest the tribes built an altar near Shechem and set up stones upon which the law was inscribed, are in some way connected with a festival of this nature. It is possible that at a later period the central shrine was located at Gilgal and Bethel respectively. For most of the period however, the central sanctuary appears to have been sited at Shiloh where the tribal system was finally brought to an end by Philistine pressure cf. I Sam. 4.1; Jer. 7.14; 26.9.
32. A further good example is the law concerning a Hebrew slave cf. Dt. 15.12-18. The law states that in the seventh year i.e. the year of release, a Hebrew slave was to be allowed his freedom. In vv. 13,14 the instructor explains that the Hebrew slave must not be sent away empty in the year of release, but be furnished generously from the flock, garner and winepress of his master. In an attempt to exhort the listeners to be merciful to the slave under their care, they are reminded that they too suffered bondage in Egypt. The teacher in vv. 16,17 then turns to deal with the treatment of a servant who does not wish to leave his master in the year of release. He is to have an aul pierced through his ear as a token of perpetual service to his master. The sermon is concluded in v.18 by a rejection of any bitterness on the part of the employer if his servant chooses to leave him in the year of release. The instructor informs his listeners that in the slave's six years service he has been double his worth.
33. T. Oestreicher, Das deuteronomische Grundgesetz, pp. 103 ff, renders וְכָל־מָקוֹם־אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר־יְהוָה־בְּאַחַד־שְׁבִיטֵיכֶם Dt. 12.14 as 'but in every place which Yahweh shall choose in any of your tribes', taking the definite article in מָקוֹם as having a distributive interpretation, and the indefinite article in בְּאַחַד as

33. as a general meaning. But the sanctuary has Yahweh for its subject and therefore can only be translated 'in the place which Yahweh shall choose in one of your tribes.' Moreover, if the author had intended a number of Yahweh shrines as legitimate places of worship one would expect to find 'but in the places (יְרֵמֶה) which Yahweh shall choose in your tribes'. It is assumed here that Jerusalem is meant as the place of Yahweh's choice, for no other shrine in Israel's history enjoyed the exclusive right of providing Yahweh's worship.

34. e.g. the legislation dealing with the organization of the priesthood cf. Dt. 18.1- 8, is phrased in such a way that it cannot be applied with absolute certainty to a definite situation. Moreover the references to the place Yahweh shall choose cf. Dt. 12.5,14; 16.6, although generally taken to denote Jerusalem, it is never specifically stated as such.

35. J. Begrich 'Die priesterliche Tora' B.Z.A.W. 66, pp. 66 ff, points out how this is indirectly shown by the fact that the king of Assyria sent an Israelite priest to the settlers in the district of Samaria, who were ignorant of Yahweh, the local deity. The priest was instructed to teach them the law of the God of the land in an attempt to assuage his anger, and so procure the welfare of the province cf. II Kgs. 17.24 ff.

36. Leprosy was regarded as a sign of Yahweh's judgement and therefore came within the sphere of priestly jurisdiction. The brevity of the law here, when contrasted with the detailed directions in Lev. 13,14 shows that Leviticus was a manual for the expert, Deuteronomy a guide for the layman.

37. G.E. Wright, 'Levites in Deuteronomy', V.T. 1954, p. 325, thinks that these client Levites were teachers. Although the sharp contrast between the officiating priest and the Levite in 26.11 ff

37. implies that the Levite was amongst those who were subject to the greater knowledge and experience of the priest, this priestly superiority probably lay in the priest's knowledge of the cult and the law connected with it rather than the more general teaching of the wilderness traditions associated with Moses.
38. The Israelites' failure to bring the whole land under their control at one time did not facilitate obedience to this command. In the tribal territories, between the individual tribes, Canaanite cities and territories survived which they could not suppress, and gradually a peaceful coexistence developed between the invading Israelites and the resident Canaanite population, but at the same time the unity of the Israelite tribes was gradually relaxed by the presence of alien fragments living amongst them. Consequently, the importance of the general covenant sanctuary of the twelve tribes carried from the wilderness days receded, and the Israelites often took over the holy places of the Canaanites for their worship.
39. It is unwise to conjecture from this text that we have the priestly writer's distinction between Eleazarites and Ithamarites reflected here. According to P the distinction of class existed only in that the Eleazar line represented the high priests and not the Ithamar line. They were both equally Aaronites and thereby priests in the full sense.
40. W. Zimmerli, 'Ezechiel II', Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testaments, p. 1028, considers that v.46b is an interpretation identifying the second group of priests with the Zadokites, who among the Levites are especially chosen to draw near Yahweh for service. Although v.46b does identify the second group of priests more specifically than the first, there does not appear to be any adequate ground for describing the identification as an interpretation.

41. A.H.J. Gunneweg, Leviten und Priester, F.R.L.A.N.T. draws attention to an analogous reduction of levitical service in the later extensions of P. While Num. 1.48 ff; 3.5 ff; 4.21 ff freely speak of the Levites keeping charge of the holy things, intensified regulations are found of a more negative type in Num. 4.5-20 and 18.1-7 prohibiting the Levites from direct contact with the holy things. It is noticeable that the polemical tone of Ezekiel is absent in P - compare Num. 4.15,19; 18.3 with Ezek. 44.13 in reference to the prohibition relating to the possible contact of Levites with the most holy things.
42. T.J. Meek in his article 'Aaronites and Zadokites' A.J.S.L. (1929), pp. 149-166, takes this view, and by associating the priesthood assumed at Bethel with Aaron, accounts for the later predominance of Aaron in the priestly writing and Chronicles. To identify the priesthood at Bethel with Aaron at this point in time is a hazardous proposition in view of the chequered history of the northern kingdom. The probable association of Aaron with the calf worship of Jeroboam will be pointed out in the next chapter of this thesis, but nothing more definite may be said of the existence of an Aaronite priesthood during the later years of the northern kingdom or after its fall to the Assyrians in 722.
43. vv. 16-20 appear as a later addition, as v.16 assumes the continuing existence of the altar at Bethel which is reported in the previous verse to have been destroyed. Moreover the treatment of the priests of the local shrines recorded in v.20 is in contrast with what is stated in v.8. However there are no adequate grounds for excluding v.15 with R.G. Kennett, 'The Origin of the Aaronite priesthood', J.T.S. 1905, p.171, note, on the basis of v.8 which limits Josiah's activities to Judah, as v.4 records that the ashes of the burnt temple accoutrements were carried to Bethel, indicating that it too was within the sphere of

43. Josiah's reform cf. II Chr. 34.6. Perhaps the extended influence of Judah in the north after the withdrawal of the Assyrians is reflected here cf. II Chr. 35.22.
44. F.S. North 'Aaron's rise in Prestige', Z.A.W. (1954), pp. 191-199, understands it in this way and deduces that the cultic centre of Palestine during the exile moved away from Jerusalem to Bethel the priesthood of which he, like Meek, op. cit., labels Aaronite. He further claims that although this Bethelite priesthood did not gain supremacy at Jerusalem, it was acknowledged as the leading spiritual force in Palestine during this period, and consequently the Zadokites assumed Aaronic descent on their return. The difficulty in accepting the supremacy of Bethel is explained here in the text of the thesis, and the problem of identifying Aaron with a priesthood at this period has been alluded to in n.14., chapt. 6.
45. R. Kittel, Biblica Hebraica, has suggested reading Bethel as a name compounded with the next word, i.e. בֵּית־אֵל , but it may be said in objection to this view that places were never personified by the Hebrews except in poetry. If the word denotes the temple of Jerusalem as the destination of the mission, it is the sole occurrence of it designated in this way. It was usually known as בֵּית־יְהוָה cf. Hag. 1.2; Zech. 7.3; 8.9.
46. The stone received by Joshua has been interpreted to mean the corner stone or topstone of an edifice, the plummet mentioned in 4.10, a precious stone of the prince, or the breastplate of the high priest cf. Ex. 28.17-21; 39.10-14. According to 4.7,9 if it was Zerubbabel, not Joshua, under whose direction the temple was to be erected. Hence it would have been inconsistent for the prophet to represent the object received by Joshua as one connected with the structure's erection. Moreover,

46. in consideration of the first and second interpretations suggested, it should also be remembered that the corner stone had already been laid and the topstone was not to be put in place until a long time after the date of this vision. However, the words 'one stone shall have seven eyes' perhaps provide a clue. According to Ezek. 1.16,22 the eye of a stone is its lustre, and since a gleam can only come from a precious stone, the stone in question must have been a single stone with seven facets. The word $\Pi\text{J}\text{J}$ in the next clause is frequently used of engraving precious stones.
47. T.J. Meek, *op. cit.*, takes this line and interprets the Adversary as Zerubbabel who objected to the non-Zadokite priest, (Meek terms him Aaronite cf. n.14) who had officiated at Jerusalem during the exile, taking pre-eminence over the returning Zadokites. Following this mode of argument he interprets the covenant of peace in 6.13 as a reconciliation between Zerubbabel and the parvenu Joshua. Although a covenant of peace indicates some former lack of cohesion between the two sides involved, this need not necessarily be attributed to the situation as interpreted by Meek. The curtailment of the sacral role of the king in Ezek.45.9-46.15 to one of a mere spectator of the cult responsible for defraying its expense, would be sufficient ground to provoke tension between priest and king. J. Morgenstern, 'A Chapter in the history of the High Priesthood', A.J.S.L. 1938, pp. 138 ff, interprets Zech. 3 as the initiation of the high priest into the functions of the king after the removal of Zerubbabel, i.e. the inauguration of a theocracy. As however the group of visions in which Zech. 3 is found are reported as taking place in the eleventh month of the second year of King Darius' reign, hence only five months after the beginning of the rebuilding of the temple by Zerubbabel and Joshua cf. Hag.1.1, and according to Hag. 2.10,20 ff, Zerubbabel was still in Jerusalem in the ninth month, it would seem

47. improbable that so great a change should have taken place in so short a time. Morgenstern further interprets the two sons of oil (cf. Zech. 4.11,14) as representing the high priest and his associate, similar to the arrangement recorded in II Kgs. 25.18. On this basis it could be further surmised that Zech. 6.9-15 represent Joshua, designated as the shoot i.e. the future hope of Israel, alone assuming royal and sacral power, and his associate priest beside him representing the priesthood that had functioned in Jerusalem during the exile, and which had now become reconciled to the returning Zadokites with whom it had made a covenant of peace. However, even if the word

יָהוֹשׁוּעַ is used in reference to Joshua, which as shown is very doubtful, Joshua would then have to be attributed with the temple's erection (cf. v.12b) which would be in conflict with 4.9 where Zerubbabel is accredited with laying its foundation stone and predicted as also finishing it. The passage Zech. 6.9 ff, although obscure, seems to refer to Zerubbabel in v.12 who is invested with royal authority, and in v.13b to Joshua the priest. The covenant of peace between them, as pointed out above, could refer to the curtailment of the king's sacral functions in Ezek. 45 which had given rise to a certain tension between the two, necessitating a covenant of peace.

48. L.E. Browne, Early Judaism, pp. 109 ff, considers that Hag. 2.10-14 relates to the uncleanness of the Samaritans who had come to the holy temple to build and later on to sacrifice there. The question is raised whether the temple becomes unclean or the Samaritans clean by contact with what is holy. The answer is that the temple becomes unclean. The connection with the Samaritans is tenuous; the interpretation would seem rather to be that the sterile nature of the land provides material offerings that would pollute the temple, but the promise of better things lies ahead, cf. v.19b.

50. E. Nielsen, Shechem - a traditio-historical Investigation, p.138, considers that if the suggestion once made by Redslob is adopted i.e. that the name Aaron (אהרן) is merely a personification of the word ארון meaning 'ark', then Eleazar may have been a priest connected with the ark of God. He states further the possibility that Aaron may in fact have been the 'Urvater' of the priesthood of the ark in the same way as (Tubal) Cain was the progenitor of smiths cf. Gen. 4.22. However, the connection between Aaron and the ark is a tenuous one that finds no parallel in the Old Testament, and furthermore, there is no suggestion of either Aaron or Eleazar functioning as priests in this verse. It is simply stated that Eleazar ben Aaron was buried in the hill of Phinehas which had been assigned to him in Mt. Ephraim.
51. A.H.J. Gunneweg, Leviten und Priester, F.R.L.A.N.T. pp. 83 ff, considers Aaron as a priest from the very beginning. He interprets Ex. 17.8-16 as a cultic act, Aaron and Hur assisting in the administration of the blessing of Moses, and so ascribes a cultic function to them. He sees Aaron's presence as essential in Ex. 18.12 as Israel's cultic representative at the sacrificial meal of the priest of Midian, and considers that Aaron again acts as one of Israel's cultic representatives along with Hur, Nadab and Abihu vis à vis the elders in Ex.24. Gunneweg also attributes a cultic role to Aaron in Num. 12 in connection with the healing of Miriam's leprosy, and notes that the same word נָטָו used in vv.14,15, is also used in Lev.13,14 which deal with cultic uncleanness. It is admitted that leaders did act in a cultic capacity in the early period e.g. Gideon, cf. Ju. 6.19-27. In the same way the king as leader of the nation acted as high priest over the state cult. Hence Aaron in these narratives was not a priest of a priestly house as in the later traditions of the priestly writer and the Chronicler, but a tribal leader.

52. M. Noth, Exodus, p.246, considers that if the connection with Jeroboam in Ex. 32 is taken as the original basis of the chapter it would present difficulty in assigning J to the time of David and Solomon as is customary, for it would involve dating J as post-Solomonic or accepting Ex. 32 as a subsequent literary addition to the J narrative, inserted with the purpose of polemicising the calf cult. From the fragmentary nature of the chapter, as shown in the analysis given, it is not necessary to allocate it as a whole to a post-Solomonic period, but only those parts that deal with Jeroboam's apostasy. In his Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch, p.160, Noth says in connection with the polemical tendency of this chapter - 'Aus welchem Bereich die Geschichte vom goldenen Kalb herzuleiten ist, lässt sich nicht mehr ausmachen. Man kam ebensogut an judäische Polemik gegen die Staatskulte im Nachbarstaat Israel denken wie an eine vermutlich vorhanden gewesene innerisraelitische Opposition dagegen. Aus Ex. 32 selbst ergibt sich für die Entscheidung dieser Frage nichts Sicheres. Doch spricht die Geschichte des Pentateuchwerdens, dessen spätere Entwicklung im jüdischen Süden erfolgt ist, und vermutlich auch die Rolle Aarons in dieser Geschichte für die erstgenannte Möglichkeit.'
53. R.G. Kennett, The Origin of the Aaronite Priesthood, J.T.S. (Jan. 1905), p.168, surmising a possible association of Aaron with the calf worship inaugurated by Jeroboam at Bethel, considers that if Bethel and Dan were sister sanctuaries as may be possible, it is likely that the priests of Bethel would have been regarded as colleagues or perhaps brothers of the priests of Dan. He deduces from this theory that if the priesthood of Dan was derived from Moses, and the priesthood of Bethel from Aaron, new light may be shed on the question in Ex. 4.14 'Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother?' This however assumes that the Aaronite priesthood associated with Bethel was levitical, a conjecture for which no supporting evidence has survived.

54. It is highly probable that some tent structure was erected in the wilderness in which Yahweh met with his people and where he 'tabernacled' with them. By using this term P solves the problem of immanence and transcendence as Yahweh does not dwell (יָשָׁב) in a tabernacle - he dwells in heaven - but he settles impermanently upon it. The one cosmic God could not be confined in any shrine, but at the same time he had to be present with his people. This concept of Yahweh's presence is described by the term יָשָׁב i.e. to tabernacle.
55. Num. 16 consists of three literary strata. The stratum associated with J recounts in rather fragmentary form, owing to late editorial processes, the fate of Dathan and Abiram and their followers who had disputed with Moses the civil leadership of the people. The two other strata are attributed to P and both deal with Korah. The one tells how Korah the Levite and two hundred and fifty of his levitical brethren disputed with Moses and Aaron for the priesthood. The other, a revision in quite fragmentary form, states how Korah alone contended with Aaron for the office of chief priest and how the issue between them was settled by the deity himself through Moses.
56. Ezekiel curtailed the sacral nature of the king, referring to him as the 'prince' and only permitted him to receive certain taxes from the people in payment of the sacrifices demanded by the cult, cf. Ezek. 45.9-17. He is completely excluded from participating at the sacrifice, and is only allowed to witness the offering from a distance. It may be implied from Zech. 4.11 ff that Zerubbabel was Joshua's equal, and it is possible that he may have occupied a position in the cult similar to that prescribed by Ezekiel for the prince. Although Zerubbabel disappeared from the post-exilic scene, the high priest remained and assumed the leadership of the post-exilic theocratic community. J. Bowman, 'Samaritan Studies', J.R.L., (March 1958), p.318, notes that according to Nhh. 8.2 ff Ezra read out the law thus fulfilling the function discharged by Josiah on a similar occasion connected with the

56. discovery of the Deuteronomic law. This fact, he contends, may indicate the transition from a monarchy to a theocracy.