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COMMUNITY AND DISCIPLINE

Some early stages of community discipline in the Old Testament: the Priestly Writer's attempt to control the Israelite community in the sixth Century B.C. by means of the Aaronide manifesto

by

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A Thesis for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree

in the Faculty of Divinity

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This project began in 1977 when I was required to pursue some supervised studies for accreditation by the Baptist Union of Scotland. In order to use the time most effectively I decided to undertake a research programme in O.T. One of the original purposes has long since passed and I am now glad to bring this venture to a completion. A variety of people and groups have helped me; the Baptist Unions in Glasgow and London, Dr Williams' Trust, St. Luke's College Foundation, the congregation of Crown Terrace Baptist Church and latterly the congregation of Croxley Green Baptist Church, who granted me sabbatical leave in the autumn of 1987 which allowed me to complete the writing of this work. I am also grateful to Pam Webley for her willingness to type the manuscript.

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April, 1988

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SUMMARY

The sixth century B.C. was a momentous turning point in the history of the ancient Near East and the fall of Jerusalem and the exile were part of a wider canvas. A brief historical sketch and a description of the effects of the exile in Judah and Babylon is followed by a consideration of some of the responses to the tragedy. The priestly writer's response to the crisis of the exile is one amongst many others, although it appears to gain credence and finally establish itself as the authoritative version of events.

P seeks to lend order and coherence to a community facing collapse and disintegration, through the Aaronide manifesto. The Aaronide revolution was based not only on a quest for power but also on certain understandings of Israelite faith necessary to ensure its vitality. They seek to consolidate all effective power in their own hands and so they redact the Pentateuch with absolute power assigned to the Aaronides. The new Israelite faith is based on the strict observance of the cult and Torah as the divinely appointed means for life.

A major emphasis of P is his theological understanding of the exile in terms of holiness and through the work

of Douglas, Neusner and Levine, we see how crucial is this concept. The exile produced a breakdown in the relationship between God and the people because of their sin; P sees the exile as God distancing himself lest his holiness be infected. A theology of holiness is developed as an appropriate programme for the future to ensure the divine presence and preserve its continuance among the people of Israel. P uses holiness as a regulative principle which has application over a wide range of issues and areas relevant to Israelite life. The genius of P is in having established a clear structure he is then able to distinguish what violates against the established norms and so provides a way for the practice of discipline to become operative.

The way in which this regulative principle is applied to bring a correct ordering to life is seen in matters of diet with the rules of avoidance giving physical expression to holiness at every meal. The threat of impurity is from within as well as without, and so under health controls various unclean conditions are classified and the appropriate remedial action specified. The threat which comes to the community from the power of sex is recognised within family controls. The desire is to order sexual relationships with the community as well as stressing the sanctity of marriage and preserving the stability of family life in

an area where the threat from Canaanite forces was considerable. Social sources of pollution reveal how broad and diverse the principle of holiness is in its application.

By such controls P seeks to bring order into society and these are complemented by various penalties, which identify areas which P saw as crucial in his attempt to preserve Israelite faith from disintegration and assimilationism. The death penalty provides us with a neutral picture about which deviations deserve punishment. P is careful to use the qal form for all ritual offences, while the hophal form of the verb is used for a small group of crimes which have a disruptive impact on the Israelite community. The use made by Ezra of herem is traced back to its biblical roots and its basic purpose is perceived as ridding the community of alien forces, although there may be a certain romanticising of the past. The karet penalty is a major tool for P and it appears with the death penalty in certain transitional passages. A variety of meanings have been attached to karet and many assume the direct intervention of God to control violations; it is used as a strong deterrent and in areas where P seeks to preserve the identity of the Israelite people from the forces of disintegration.

The system of controls and penalties is matched by an understanding of cultic life which recognised the

reality of sin and provided a means of atonement. The Day of Atonement is important for P since it provides a cleansing of the community and the wayward are recognised as placing themselves beyond the community.

While the Aaronide manifesto is, by its nature, seen as ideal, it nevertheless permits us to perceive some of the early stages in the discipline of the Israelite community in the sixth century B.C.

PREFACE

A clear structure for community discipline is seen to be operative in the writings of the Qumran community and to a lesser extent in the writings of the New Testament. In the work of Ezra and Nehemiah there appears a certain shape and form to controls operative within the religious community. The concern of this work is to trace beyond these points to the creative period of the exile to discern where some of these controls began and why.

The exile experience presented a major challenge to the vitality and effectiveness of the Israelite faith. It could be argued that its continued survival was at stake during this period; that it emerged from such a catastrophic experience with new vigour provides a fascinating field of study. This period saw the production of a large amount of material by the Priestly Writer as he sought to lend order and coherence to the community of his day through a profound theological understanding of the events of the exile. It is acknowledged that P's approach is only one of several attempts to provide an interpretation of these events and the whole period is characterised by considerable literary production, however the focus of attention for this work will be on P.

The exilic period would appear as the spawning ground for community discipline in Israel. Israel, as a result of the catastrophe, was a community devoid of political power, theologically devastated and appreciating the judgement of God. The prospects for the future appeared bleak with the possibility of a total collapse and disintegration of the Israelite faith and life. The issues of identity and self-determination were critical in this period and we shall seek to show how P answers these in such a constructive way that the revolution he tries to spawn possesses sufficient vitality to be effective and gain acceptance.

It has been suggested that Israel entered exile as a state and returned a theocracy. This idea is misleading for Israel never lost its national consciousness, although it is true that in order to preserve its identity and distinctiveness, a greater emphasis was placed on those religious practices which demonstrated the spiritual cohesion of Israelite faith and distinguished it from its alien environment.

A more concrete aspect of the Priestly Writer's work is seen in Ezra's attempt to organise a strict religious community where the power existed or appeared to exist, to effect the necessary conclusions. In P's day such power was not available and the nature of his work is that of a manifesto - and therefore one expects it to

be more ideal than practical. The genius of P is that he initiates such measures which seek to preserve the Israelite faith from disintegration and the encroaching forces of assimilationism which were dominant in the surrounding environment.

CHAPTER I

The Post Exilic Period

- (a) Introduction
- (b) The historical situation in the Ancient Near East
- (c) Life in Judah
- (d) The situation in Babylon
- (e) The consequences of these events
- (f) Footnotes

(a) Introduction

The event of the exile, which had profound consequences for the faith and community of Israel, is central to this study and was played out on the broad canvas of the ancient world of the 6th Century B.C. A rich tapestry of ideas is interwoven in this period and some cognizance must be taken of them to appreciate the context of this change. Ackroyd's book 'Exile and Restoration', has been immensely helpful as it portrays the diverse and seemingly contradictory responses to this significant event of the exile.

My intention is not to present an exhaustive study of this period but, before proceeding to the major ideological and exegetical considerations of this study, to sketch out some of the major and significant factors associated with this period, to describe the historical situation of the exile in Judah and Babylon, as well as articulate some of the responses to this event.

The 6th Century B.C. was a formative period for Israel's faith and life. Cooke comments that,

"the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., the Exile and Return are naturally regarded as the great turning points in O.T. history" (1),

while Bright elaborates further,

"The distinction of Jerusalem and the subsequent exile mark the great watershed of

Israel's history. At a stroke her national existence was ended and, with it, all the institutions in which her corporate life had expressed itself; they would never be recreated in precisely the same form again. The state destroyed and the state cult perforce suspended, the old national-cultic community was broken and Israel was left for the moment an agglomeration of uprooted and beaten individuals, by no external mark any longer a people. The marvel is that her history did not end altogether.

Nevertheless, Israel both survived the calamity and, forming a new community out of the wreckage of the old, resumed her life as a people. Her faith, disciplined and strengthened, likewise survived and gradually found the direction that it would follow through all the centuries to come. In the exile and beyond it, Judaism was born" (2).

Such views are in opposition to the inferences and assumptions of a popular work on the O.T. by Heaton (3) who portrays the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar as the closing scene of the O.T. times. It could be argued that details of everyday life of the earlier period of the O.T. are much more available, while those of the later period more scarce and fraught with difficulties. However it conveys an assumption that sees the O.T. stopping at the Exile. This assumption is reinforced and our understanding distorted by the comment,

"From a strictly chronological point of view, O.T. times stretch from Genesis to the book of Daniel, beginning with the call of Abraham

and ending with the Maccabean revolt. They cover, that is to say, no less than eighteen centuries, from about 1950 B.C. to 165 B.C. Our information about the details of everyday life is more adequate for the middle of this long period than for the first and last centuries and it is a fortunate circumstance that the best documented phase of Israel's life is also the most representative and intrinsically important. This middle period begins with the Exodus from Egypt, which was the prelude to the conquest of the Promised Land, and ends with the fall of Jerusalem, which marked the collapse of the Hebrew monarchy and the loss of political independence. It was during these years that Israel came into being as a distinctive people, marked off from her neighbours and cousins by her religious foundation and calling and developed the social, political and religious institutions, which are characteristic of the overwhelming bulk of the O.T. writings.

After the fall of Jerusalem, most of the new developments in the customs, manners, art, architecture, religion and thought of the Jews were borrowed from the great empires of which they successively became a part - first the Persian and then the Greek. This post exilic period was a time of great cultural expansion and reformation in Judaism and, despite the dictates of strict chronology, the study of it belongs less to O.T. times than to the background of the N.T. Everything after 586 B.C. falls, therefore, outside our present concern" (4).

The ramifications of such a comment are immense, although outwith the remit of this study. Ackroyd helpfully points out that,

"popular assessments of the O.T., ... do not always correspond to the developments in more scholarly study" (5).

The exilic period has been the object of considerable study and scholarly opinion has altered significantly (6). I would see the exile as an important watershed in Israel's history. Cooke points out,

"it is impossible to resist the conviction that the internal developments in Palestine during the 7th to 5th Century B.C. are of fundamental importance for our conceptions of the growth of the O.T. and the course of the religion of Israel" (7).

A cautionary note about the use of 'the exilic age' is sounded by Carroll (8).

The 6th Century B.C. was a time when a great many important events took place throughout the world, never mind within the O.T. sphere. Moore observes that,

"the great religions have their beginnings in the centuries from the 8th to the 5th centuries before the Christian era. This is the age of Taoism in China; of the Upanishads, of Buddhism and of the precursors of Hinduism in India, of Zoroaster in Iran; of the Orphic-Pythagorean movement in Greece; and of the Hebrew prophets" (9).

It would appear that a whole new aspect was working in civilisation as people searched for answers to the major issues of life. Lofthouse wrote,

"From the 6th Century onward, a new leaven was working in the world; and scholars would tell us that from Egypt, Persia and Greece, to say nothing of influences coming from farther afield, the Jews received more than they ever gave" (10).

It was also a period of major political change in the Near East with the new forces of the Scythians and Medes approaching Mesopotamia. The Assyrian empire was crumbling and was brought down by the Chaldeans combining with the Medes and Scythians. Egypt had recovered from a period of weakness and developed commercial links with the Greeks. The Chaldean power only lasted half a century before the Persians took over control. Alongside and integral with the political changes, a whole atmosphere of change was abroad. Whiteley comments,

"An old age was passing away; new forces and new ideas were coming into being and were imparting freshness and vitality to an outworn and stagnant world. It was the beginning of the age of philosophy, science and theology and marked the first step in man's advance from tradition and credulity to argument and reason" (11).

Thomas says,

"This 6th Century was a century of hope renewed. Rebirth followed on ruin, new life on decay ... a creative epoch of the first order in the history of Israel. ... But this century was more than a creative epoch in Israel's history. It was a creative epoch in the history of the world" (12).

A varied adumbration of factors involved in the situation in Israel set against the larger backcloth of the ancient world reveals an interesting conclusion by Smith,

"repeated military conquest, constant military occupation, Greek settlement both in cities and in the countryside, economic and administrative penetration which reached every village, systematic exploitation of the countryside through landed estates, Palestinians' dealings with Phoenicians and Egyptians ... when all these factors are considered it is clear that the cultural history of Palestine ... is one of constant subjection to Greek influence" (13).

This influence is loosely classified as "hellenisation" and yet it cannot be simply seen as the adoption of Greek ways by the peoples of the Near East and of Oriental ways by the Greeks. Various elements of this new culture are elaborated thus:-

(1) The principal form of land tenure was the large estate of the kings; the temple or the great official.

(2) The chief political form was the absolute monarchy ruling various peoples and a vast territory.

(3) The structure of society was regulated by explicit, written laws.

(4) Patriotism found expression in the cult of the divine ruler.

(5) The result of units being so big was that private persons were generally regarded as of no importance and so the average man was less interested in politics and more in his private affairs.

(6) The administration and the army were staffed almost entirely by professionals and the internal history was therefore one of bureaucratic intrigues and palace revolutions.

(7) With this growth of professionalism and professional approach, in the humanities, arts and sciences we see the collection of previous knowledge, the reduction of the system to a handbook and a set of rules, with the consequent decline of originality and standardisation of product.

Smith stresses the

"existence of hellenistic culture as a thing in itself, different from either of its sources" (14).

While we note that coincidences occur in thought patterns and striving with similar issues in different parts of the world at approximately the same time, it is unwise to use such similarities to explain

altogether the changes which occur in O.T. thought. There would seem to be a grappling with similar concerns in a variety of different places that utilise ideas, images and legends in an attempt to resolve issues. If those concerns are of an existential nature then it may not be surprising that corresponding answers emerge. Smith again comments,

"we have a vast tissue of change, in which innumerable strands of independent, but parallel, development are interwoven with a woof of influence and reaction to produce a single new culture, the hellenistic" (15).

While he states the issue well, I would not want to make such a precise conclusion for any oversimplification needs to be avoided. It is accepted that there may be some interrelatedness but we are uncertain over so much in this period. We may observe similar traits and common elements, however the evidence does not allow swift link-ups in the way Smith suggests. I would prefer to view the situation as part of a rich ferment of change over the world.

Finally, by way of introduction, it is recognised that a major problem in dealing with the whole of this period is a lack of information (16). This has led some to describe it as "the nameless period" and being without "history" (17). The biblical record gives no

account of the period between 587 B.C. and 538 B.C., other than the brief passages of Gedaliah, (2 Kings 25 v.22-26; Jer. 40 v.1 to 43 v.7), so we possess minimal information and are dependent largely on inference in discussing the nature of the people's experience and their response to events.

(b) The historical situation in the ancient Near East (18)

At the end of Hezekiah's reign Assyria was supreme in Western Asia. Under Esar-haddon, the successor of Sennacherib, Egypt was successfully invaded in 671. Not long afterwards an Egyptian revolt was suppressed by Ashurbanipal with the capture and sacking of the ancient city of Thebes in 663 as the climax of his campaign. In such a situation Judah's subjection to Assyria could only be complete with the religious consequence being the undoing of the reforms of Hezekiah. Yet within a decade of the fall of Thebes, Assyria's power was on the wane with Egyptian independence successfully reasserted by Psammetichus I. Ashurbanipal suppressed rebellion in Babylon and overcame the Elamites and other troublemakers on his borders. However, after his death, approximately 633 B.C., the situation deteriorated rapidly. In 626 B.C. the Chaldean Nabopolassar won freedom for Babylon and became the first ruler of the neo-Babylonian empire while, in the east, the Medes made damaging attacks on Assyrian territory. Assyria was doomed and in 614 the Medes captured Ashur and in 612 Nineveh fell to a combined assault by the Babylonians and their allies and by 609 Assyria's power was completely extinguished.

Judah's brief period of political freedom during the reign of Josiah, ended in 609 B.C. when Josiah was killed by the Egyptians at Megiddo. Egypt dominated the country and exacted heavy tribute from Jehoiakim. However, Jehoiakim was soon deprived of Egyptian support for in 605 the Babylonian, Nebuchadnezzar, defeated the Egyptians at Carchemish and drove them back through Syria and Palestine. The death of Nabopolassar meant that Nebuchadnezzar had to swiftly return to Babylonia to secure succession.

Jehoiakim became a vassal of Babylonia but three years later, he was encouraged to rebel. In 598 when the Babylonians did invade Judah, Jehoiakim was dead and Jehoiachin had to capitulate in 597 B.C. The Babylonians replaced Jehoiachin by Zedekiah who was unsuited for the task of that time. In 589 he revolted and the following year his land was invaded and the capital besieged, with Jerusalem falling in 587.

Nebuchadnezzar's long reign ended in 562 and after that Babylonian power weakened considerably. His son, Amelmarduk was king for only two years and after the brief reign of two other kings, power was seized in 556 by Nabonidus, the last ruler of the neo-Babylonian empire. While he himself was not a weakling, he weakened the empire and hastened its end for he retreated to the

Arabian desert for some years, leaving his son Belshazzar in charge of affairs in Babylon.

A new great power rose in western Asia with the empire of Cyrus the Persian. Cyrus had been a vassal of the Median king Astyages, but he revolted successfully against his overlord and gained control of the Median empire. A triple alliance was formed against him by Nabonidus, Croesus king of Lydia and Amasis of Egypt. Cyrus swiftly invaded and occupied Lydia (546B.C.) and with Egypt in no position to offer effective help, Babylon was left to face the Persian assault alone, and the city surrendered in 539 to them.

(c) Life in Judah

The Kingdom of Judah, as a result of the Babylonian invasion, had ceased to exist politically and the country became a part of the neo-Babylonian empire. There is no clear record of how Judah was organised by the Babylonians. Alt suggests that it was placed under the control of Samaria (19).

It is difficult to assess the extent of the devastation in Judah because

"there is no clear information concerning the population of Judah during the period ... and it is hard to know the extent of the devastation in the towns" (20).

Torrey comments about the exile that it

"was in reality a small and relatively insignificant affair, has been made, partly through mistake, and partly by the compulsion of a theory, to play a very important part in the history of the O.T." (21).

Such a view is contradicted by the weight of archaeological evidence for destruction in Judean sites (22). Some of the biblical evidence would show that the Babylonians burned and looted the temple, systematically destroying Jerusalem, (2 Kings 25 v.9f; 2 Chron. 36 v.18f; Jer. 52 v.13f, v.17-23; Lam. 1 v.4, 5 v.18). The cities of Judah were destroyed, (Jer. 34

v.7, 44 v.2; Ezek. 33 v.24; Lam. 2 v.2-5). The deportation was total (2 Kings 25 v.11; 2 Chron. 36; Jer. 52 v.15). In Judah only "the poorest in the land", whom the Babylonian conqueror had left "to be vinedressers and husbandmen," remained (2 Kings 25 v.12; Jer. 39 v.10, 52 v.16). Such a picture fits the archaeological finds in Judah according to Albright, Kenyon and others. Albright talks of "a complete devastation of Judah" (23), while others (24) suggest that the Judaeen cities were destroyed, urban culture declined and the population that remained lived in small, poor communities.

Ackroyd uses the same material and argues for a different view of the situation in Judah,

"a discussion of the biblical evidence shows how difficult it is to be certain about the relative value of the statements which are made. On the one hand, the impression is given of large scale devastation and deliberate destruction (c.f. 2 Kings 25); the depopulation is indicated as wholesale (25 v.11), in addition to executions and the probability of numerous casualties during the campaigns and sieges of Jerusalem and the other centres. On the other hand, an attempted assessment of the probable total population of Judah at this time, together with a consideration of the more modest figures provided by the parallel text to 2 Kings 25 in Jeremiah 52, has suggested that

the depopulation cannot have been so extensive" (25).

It is not disputed that some cities in Judah were destroyed but it is suggested that they were not therefore abandoned and it was possible that some of the destroyed settlements may have been resettled by those who did not go into exile but either ran away into the hill country or the desert and then returned later (Jer. 40 v.10-12). It is accepted that the Chaldeans deported people from Judah, but it seems that it was restricted to the leaders and landed citizens. Such a removal of key personnel would inevitably produce a social revolution as those "poor of the land" were raised to positions of greater influence and given land that had belonged to those exiled and to the royal estates (26).

Meanwhile, the Temple continued as a centre of worship, as can be inferred from Jer. 41 v.5, "eighty men arrived from Shechem and Shiloh and Samaria, with their beards shaved and their clothes torn, and their bodies gashed, bringing cereal offerings (minhah) and incense (lebonah) to present at the temple of the Lord". It is difficult to conceive that these men had not heard of the disaster that had affected Jerusalem and their signs of mourning were presumably on account of it. The visit of these men to the Jerusalem temple would support the view that they had heard of its

revived or continued use as a place of worship. Welch comments that this verse is part of the evidence that

"sacrificial worship did not cease at Jerusalem during the exile, but that the altar was continued and that the exiles must have found it in use on their return" (27).

Such a view is challenged by Jones (28) who suggests that the two terms used in Jeremiah, *minhāh* and *l^ebōnāh*,

"constituted the essentials of non-bloody sacrifice. And this may well suggest the explanation of Jeremiah 41 v.5 which cannot therefore be used as evidence that the Jerusalem altar continued to be used for its ancient purposes" (29).

The offerings described in Jer. 41 v.5 are not inconsistent with pre-exilic usage, however they were developed in exilic and post-exilic times and in whatever way later writers viewed the matter of the Jerusalem temple. The impression is that the rebuilding of the temple from 538 B.C. -

"inspite of the Chronicler's emphasis on the part played by the exiles ... does not appear to have been from a totally disused site, and this would suggest an earlier revival, a clearance of the site, an improvised or temporary altar" (30).

Any clear evidence is unavailable as yet, Anderson notes,

"among the several reconstructions of the period is a common feeling, judicious enough, among historians of this time that there must have been some kind of religious life in Jerusalem during the exile" (31).

Janssen deals with the situation in Judah during the exilic period (32), and suggests that the Deuteronomic History, Lamentations and some prophetic passages were a product of this community. If this is so, then we have ample evidence for the existence in Judah of a community who were able to articulate assessments of the meaning of events and this must caution any judgement which sees all the intelligentsia as being 'exiled' (33). Too much significance must not be attached to this judgement but rather used as a caution for extreme judgements. The idea that the real life of Israel continued in exile, not in Palestine itself because it had largely been devastated is to be accepted but with reservation. Herrmann comments,

"on a number of grounds it is improbable that life in the mother country of Palestine ceased completely ... independent developments took place in Palestine itself during the exile ..., despite the difficulty of describing such developments in any detail" (34).

Noth,

"For them (the tribes left behind in the old country) the events of 587 B.C. did not in any way signify the end" (35).

Such a view would not be challenged but the question is how much material they produced about the situation and how they responded to it.

Such views must be handled with care and while clear data is not available nevertheless the importance of such conclusions must be used as a corrective to balance the common view which suggests that the centre of gravity in the events which influenced the nation's development moved from Judah to Babylon. All we can say is that

"the exact situation in the land of Judah during the period of Chaldean rule will remain a matter of debate until new, unambiguous data are discovered" (36).

(d) The situation in Babylon

The Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar, as a result of military conquests in 597, 586 and 581 B.C. deported numbers of the Judaeans to Babylon. While Biblical and archaeological sources mention such captives, there is considerable divergence in the number of exiles deported. 2 Kings 24 v.14 and 16 present two different accounts of the deportation in 597. Verse 14 records, "he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths". Verse 16 records, "the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon all the men of valour, seven thousand, and the craftsmen and the smiths, one thousand, all of them strong and fit for war". However, the record in 2 Kings gives us no account of the numbers deported in 586, apart from a mention of the officials of the temple and some "sixty men of the people of the land" who were put to death (2 Kings 25 v.18-21).

It is doubtful if the sources from which Kings was originally compiled contained accurate numbers of exiles, since a similar source seems to have been used in Jeremiah 29 v.2 where there is a reference to the deportation of Jehoiachin and his household as well as "the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen and

the smiths," without any mention of the numbers deported.

The discrepancy recorded in 2 Kings 24 is accentuated by another account of the number of Jews deported to Babylon in Jeremiah 52 v.28-30. The initial sentence seems to give the impression that an extract from official records is being quoted (37). Three stages of captivity are listed:

in the seventh year 3023 Jews
in the eighteenth year 832 persons
in the twenty-third year 745 Jews,
which totals 4,600 (38).

While the account in 2 Kings 24 seems to be ambiguous and indistinct, Jeremiah 52 appears more precise. The combined figure recorded of 4,600 does not represent the actual number of deportees, for the oriental custom accounted the population in terms of men only, with women and children not being included. The total number of deportees seems to have been no more than about 20,000 people, including wives and children (39). Information is not available about the total population in Judah before the exile and therefore it is impossible to ascertain what percentage of the population were deported. It would seem likely that a significant shift in social structure occurred as a result of the exile. It is difficult to decipher whether the writers recording the numbers deported to

Babylon wish to convey the idea of a massive relocation of population or whether the emphasis lies with the class of people deported, i.e. the landed citizens and intelligentsia or whether the desire was to convey a theological interpretation of the exile, that the judgement passed on the community was inescapable.

Although there is no accurate information about the exact number of deportees to Babylon, what is clear is that the Babylonians carried away the main political, religious, social and economic leaders, leaving behind only the "poor of the land" (40). 2 Kings 25 v.27 records that the exiled Jehoiachin "in the thirty-seventh year of his exile" (approximately 561 B.C.) was freed by Evil-merodach, king of Babylon, in the first year of his reign. Jehoiachin is mentioned by his title 'the king of Judah' in tablets unearthed in the royal palace in Babylon, while he and his five sons were allocated food rations from the royal storehouse (41). These instances would suggest that Jehoiachin had the status of a king in exile and that he was imprisoned in reasonable conditions (42). Such conditions accorded to Jehoiachin by Nebuchadnezzar may have been due to the former's surrender or because he was to be used as a tool to keep pressure on Zedekiah, ruling in Jerusalem (43).

Jehoiachin was considered the leader of the Jewish community in the exile and the years were reckoned

relative to his exile (44). Seals bearing the inscription, "To Eliakim, Steward of Joiachin" have been discovered in Judah (45). Albright has suggested that Eliakim was acting in the capacity of administrator of the property of Jehoiachin (46). The reason for striking these seals could be understood on the assumption that the Jews remaining in Palestine still considered Jehoiachin as their legitimate king and regarded Zedekiah as acting as regent.

The places where the exiles lived and something about them can be gathered from biblical references and from various inscriptions from Mesopotamia. 2 Kings 17 v.6 and 18 v.11 mention Halah, the Habor river, Gozan and the cities of the Medes. Both the Assyrians and the Babylonians were used to settling exiles in places which had been destroyed and rebuilt, in areas which were to be developed agriculturally and in administrative centres like Calah, Nineveh, Babylon, Gozan and Nippur (47). 'The rivers of Babylon' are mentioned in Ps. 137 as a place where Jewish exiles were settled and it is assumed that large groups of deportees were sited near the canals which ran from the Euphrates and its tributaries. A large Jewish centre was located in southern Babylon at Tel-abib on the river Chebar which passed through the city of Nippur (48). Ezra 2 v.59 and Nehemiah 7 v.61 mention Tel-Melah and Tel-Hasha, while the inclusion of the term

'tel' may indicate that the deportees were settled in places that were destroyed and then rebuilt (49), it may also indicate that they were involved in agriculture, which would accord with Jeremiah 29 v.5-7.

There is no clear evidence that the deportees lived under difficult conditions of suppression or even persecution (50). The impression is rather of a certain autonomy and freedom to manage their community life. Jehoiachin was helped in the conduct of affairs by the 'elders of the diaspora', 'elders of the people', 'elders of Israel' (Jer. 29 v.1; Ezekiel 8 v.1, 14 v.1, 20 v.1). The deportees were allowed to live according to their own customs as well as buy property and slaves (Jer. 29 v.5; Ezra 2 v.65). The exiles were victims of forced transplantation which did not necessarily mean deprived material circumstances. The philosophy behind this system of deportation was to deprive the rebel nation of the power to resist by removing all its best personnel. Such able people were used for the benefit of the empire and, therefore, accorded circumstances which were congenial (51). The consequence of the generous nature of the terms given to the exiles meant that they lived in close contact with each other and were free to observe their own customs and preserve their national identity (52). While they were obviously integrated into the general socio-economic life of Bablyon they were able to

preserve their ethnic and national uniqueness. Ways in which that identity were preserved will be elaborated more fully as part of this study.

It is difficult to be specific and precise in the way the religious life was expressed in the exile. The religious identity of the exiles was denied expression in worship at a sacred site, for there is no explicit information about the form that worship of God took in the exile nor is there any record of a temple in Babylon (53). There is no conclusive proof that in this period we find the beginning of synagogue worship (54). However, traditional customs such as sabbath observance and circumcision regained significance. There was also the activity of prophets like Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah. The prophets preached the idea that the tragedies which had befallen the people were not because of the triumph of Babylonian religion over Israelite but rather they were rooted in the will of Yahweh, the one and only God. Prophetic activity with their explanations and reinterpretations of the difficult issues resultant from such a massive catastrophe saved the people from total despair. Their ability to articulate the activity of God in such a crisis also helped to stem the tide of assimilationism which threatened to rob the exiles of their identity and religious uniqueness.

With the obvious loss of rites associated with temple worship, which was an inevitable part of deportation, the religious life of the exiles found expression in other aspects such as sabbath observance and circumcision. This is not to claim that these aspects were the creation of the exilic period but rather they are re-presented and reinterpreted in order to provide some form and vitality for the exiles' expression of their faith. In reference to sabbath, circumcision and the food laws, Ackroyd says,

"in each of these three cases, we can do no more than say that such developments could well belong to the exilic age. In reality, just as there is no sharp division between that age and what precedes and follows, so these customs will already have been in the process of change or reinterpretation. What the crisis of the years of exile may have done was to sharpen men's perception of their meaning and importance as they tried to understand what it really meant to be part of that community which God had made to be his own special people" (55).

These matters will receive fuller attention later.

The fact that the exiles were living among a foreign population and dealing in agriculture, commerce and administration inevitably led to considerable cultural influence. The most notable feature was the adoption of the Aramaic language by the exilic community as the spoken language and the use of the square Aramaic

script for writing the alphabet. Babylonian influence is further seen in the use of proper names like Zerubbabel and Belshazzar. While such influences are exterior, they are easy to quantify, but the infiltration of cultural aspects of Babylon into the special traditions and practices of the exiles' religion is more difficult to discern. It is too simplistic to suggest that such foreign surroundings left national traditions and practices unaffected.

(e) The consequences of these events

The events of the exile were a major catastrophe for the people of Judah. Bright comments,

"one marvels that Israel was not sucked down into the vortex of history along with the other little nations of western Asia, to lose forever her identity as a people" (56).

The fall of Jerusalem meant the last remnant of political independence had gone. While it is true that for one and a half centuries Judah had only been a vassal state under the influence of Oriental powers, it had had its own king, administrative system and political life. The small degree of independence provided a basis for hope of restoration. With the disaster of 587 B.C. that hope was now crushed and the Davidic monarchy disappeared in Jerusalem. It is true that the departed Jehoiachin lived for a time in Babylon and was recognised as 'king of Judah'. He died, as 2 Kings 25 v.27-30 states, without any of the hopes of restoration that surrounded him being realised.

The concept of monarchy which had been part of Israel's history had now ceased. It is appropriate to re-emphasise that kingship only emerged when the tribes of Israel had already been united in a confederation for over 200 years in Palestine. While the emergence of

monarchy had not represented the beginning of the history of Israel so its disappearance did not signify the end of Israel.

The experience of disaster must have been devastating. For years the people of Judah had been encouraged by the voice of false prophecy to continue in their idolatrous ways. The disillusionment which followed when the false prophets and political opportunists were proved wrong must have been acute and dealt a crushing blow to morale. Apart from the shame which the destruction of Judah occasioned, there was the psychological effect of deportation. For a community familiar with the mountains of Judah, and often used by them as a symbol of strength, to be transported into a land of enormous plains must have been a trauma.

The dogma on which state and cult were founded had been dealt a mortal blow. This was the assurance of God's eternal choice of Zion as his earthly seat and his unconditional promises to David of a dynasty that would never end. This false theology was obliterated but consequent upon this, many felt abandoned by their God and their faith shattered.

The upheaval of captivity in Babylon caused a fundamental reorientation of thought and outlook and there was a great diversity of responses. In view of the nature of the material at our disposal it is

difficult to ascertain whether the reactions documented were immediate or pondered ones. Sufficient that we recognise a variety in the responses to this event. This leads Smith to say,

"From Babylonia, ... come some of the largest and most important bodies of O.T. material: the prophecies of Ezekiel and 'Second Isaiah' (Isaiah 40-55), the 'holiness code' (Leviticus 17-26) and other elements of the 'priestly' collection of traditions and laws ... also a number of psalms" (57).

He continues,

"Even more surprising than the amount of the material produced in Babylonia is the variety of it: the differences of mentality and style between Ezekiel and Second Isaiah, between the deuteronomic and the priestly legal traditions and even within the priestly tradition between the holiness code, the laws in Ezekiel and the other P material" (58).

This variety of response should make us cautious in supposing that we possess a definitive assessment of the effects of the exile, rather we have presented sketches portrayed by parties interested in giving meaning to the events, as well as other gleanings.

With the conquering of Judah by the Babylonians, the inevitable infiltration of their culture occurred. The damaging effect of the exile either led some of the exiles to consider other cults as appropriate ways of

worship or ancient cult worship became acceptable again. It is difficult to know to what degree monotheism was an integral part of Yahwism and what force and significance ought to be attached to other cultic worship in the period prior to the exile. Ezekiel 8 which describes a visionary experience, nevertheless probably contains details about practices relevant to his day. The situation referred to concerns the period between the two falls of Jerusalem and while precise information about the cult is not available, the name Tammuz (v.14) is clearly mentioned (59). Jeremiah 44 clearly mentions a return to an older cult and attributes the tragedy to a neglect in the worship of the Queen of Heaven, rather than in a neglect of Yahweh. This highlights the syncretistic nature of Israel's religious life.

An inevitable follow on from the Babylonian victory was to accept the triumph of Babylonian gods over Yahweh. Second Isaiah seeks to proclaim the oneness and absoluteness of Yahweh by unleashing a powerful polemic against other deities. Isaiah 44 v.9 deals more with the absurdity of images, than the nature of the deities worshipped. In Isaiah 46 v.1, the Babylonian gods are also ridiculed and the force of this invective reflects the reality of the experience.

The most significant response to the events of the exile among the people of Judah was to view the

catastrophe as an act of divine judgement. This attitude to the disaster was propounded by the prophets and others and the fulfillment of the words in such a tragedy served to validate the authenticity of the prophetic message. By announcing the disaster as Yahweh's righteous judgement on the nation's sin, Jeremiah and Ezekiel especially gave the tragedy coherent explanation and allowed it to be seen not as the contradiction but rather the vindication of Israel's historic faith. While they demolished all false hopes, they nevertheless affirmed the ultimate triumph of Yahweh's purpose which gave people a hope to cling to. The exile could be seen as a merited punishment as well as a purging which prepared Israel for a new future. Ackroyd succinctly concludes,

"In differing ways and with differing emphasis, the great prophets and historians of the period see this moment as a decisive one. But they all have in common their acceptance of disaster as representing a necessary moment in the divine economy, resulting from the human failure which has so marked Israel's history" (60).

The exilic writings give evidence of a serious struggle for survival for the people of Judah, at home or in exile. They sought to preserve their identity and religion in an alien environment. The forces of assimilationism were especially strong at this point

for the Judaeans and the very survival of their ethnic life was at stake. Ackroyd again says,

"The people in exile found themselves living alongside other nations who worshipped other gods, and who engaged in different religious practices. One of the problems must have been that of preserving the identity of the people which believed itself to be the 'people of God'. One way to do this would be such a study of ancient traditions. Another way would be by the development of special customs and practices by which they would know themselves marked off from other people" (61).

A major concern was the community's continued existence amidst an alien environment. This raised questions about the nature of the catastrophe and the interpretation given to it. Questions were also emerging about the relationship between the community and its past. This theme of continuity was crucial for the survival of the identity of Israel. The contemporary community was to find its understanding as it identified itself with what had formerly existed and this inevitably led to the arranging and interpreting of older narratives and laws. Such a defining of the community in relation to the past was in the context of the constrictions of the present circumstance. In this search for factors necessary for the continuity of Israel and its maintenance, questions about organisation and structure were clearly identified.

Such issues of organisation inevitably concerned matters of membership which meant that older laws were interpreted and applied as relevant to the pattern that was developed. This issue of identity required the establishment and maintenance of themes of continuity with the past in the context of the present situation, which inevitably raised the problem of orthodoxy. The possibility of heresy leads to a consideration of the resources available and their effectiveness to control any behaviour deemed 'wayward'. The issues of identity and continuity are basic to this study. In this ferment of change one group, the Aaronides, compose their manifesto for the control of life within society for the people of Judah. In order to appreciate the context of that manifesto, I have detailed in the next section some of the major critical issues and some of the major themes in P, which are constituent elements of the manifesto composed by the Aaronides who sought to transfer power to themselves within the society of their day.

(f) Footnotes

1. Cooke, 1950, p36
2. Bright, 1972, p.343
3. Heaton, 1956, p26
4. Heaton, 1956, p28f
5. Ackroyd 1968, p5 n 12
6. Thomas, 1961, p34 states,
"the exile stands out as one of the most
extraordinary events of history"
7. Cooke, 1950, p36
8. Carroll, 1981, p22, observes
"This is the period known in the standard
textbooks as 'the exilic age'. The term may
stand as a conventional indication of a
period in biblical history, but a few
observations about it are warranted if
misconceptions are to be avoided. To talk
about the 'exilic age' is to take the
perspective of the exiles. For those
communities living in Palestine it may have
been a time of great hardship but it
certainly was not a time of exile! Behind
such a use of the term is the presupposition
that the real centre of the community, if not
the whole community itself, was in exile.
That is an understandable misconception
because it is one put forward by a number of
biblical writers (cf. Jer. 44 v.2, 14, 27; II
Chron. 36 v.20f.). Also influencing such a
view is the notion that the great writings of
the period (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Second Isaiah,
the deuteronomistic history, the priestly

writing) were all produced in Babylon, hence the exilic perspective for viewing the period.

To define the perspective as exilic is to decide the questions of where these written documents were produced in favour of a Babylonian or even an Egyptian context. As there are difficulties with such a view and as the matter is rather complex and open to various interpretations, to define these pieces of literature as exilic is probably question-begging. It is certainly open to question and the possibility that most of the writings came from a Palestinian background has at least as much in its favour as an exilic setting. The phrase 'exilic writings' may stand if it is taken to refer to the period between the fall and rebuilding of Jerusalem, but to presuppose that the writings necessarily came from exilic locations goes further than the meagre evidence warrants. Although a term of convenience, the use of 'exilic' to qualify period, writings or thought can be misleading and some other term might be less open to debate, such as 'sixth-century'. With these reservations in mind it may still be meaningful to talk about the age of exile, but from a Palestinian perspective."

9. Moore, 1914, Vol I pviii
10. Lofthouse, 1928, p61
11. Whitley, 1957, p3
12. Thomas, 1961, p33f
13. Smith, 1971, p72
14. Smith, 1971, p80

15. Smith, 1971, p76
16. Ackroyd, 1979, p320f
17. Arenhoevel, 1969
18. This seeks to be only a very brief resume of some of the important aspects of the period in order to contextualise the whole study. Reference has been made to a number of the standard works on this period.

Bright, 1972

Noth, 1972

Herrmann, 1975

Hayes, 1977

19. Alt, 1934, p5-28
20. Oded, 1977, p.477
21. Torrey, 1954, pxxvii
22. Albright, 1960, p141
Oded, 1977, p475 lists Lachish, Tell Zakarija, Eglon, Tell Beth Mirsim, Tell el-Ful, Beth Zur, Ramat Rachel, Beth-Shemesh, Bethel, Arad, Ein Gedi and others.
23. Albright, 1932, p104
Albright, 1960, p141-3
24. Kenyon, 1962, p72-89
25. Ackroyd, 1968, p21
26. Janssen, 1956, p24-56
27. Welch, 1935, p68.
Such a view is supported by Oesterley, 1932, Vol II, p92
Noth, 1972, p291
Bright, 1972, p325

28. Jones, 1963, p12f
29. Jones, 1963, p16
30. Ackroyd, 1968, p28f
31. Anderson, 1958, p1
Jones, 1963, p13 comments,
"The question of the existence of the
Jerusalem altar from 586 B.C. until Joshua
and Zerubbabel, and the attitude of Israel's
leaders to the practice of sacrifice during
these years is of considerable importance.
But there is no direct and incontrovertible
evidence."
32. Janssen, 1956
33. Ackroyd, 1968, p29f and p66 n 17, p150 n 15
where he deals with 'poor of the land'.
34. Herrmann, 1975, p289
35. Noth, 1972, p292
36. Oded, 1977, p479
37. Albright, 1963, p47,
regards the record in Jer. 52 v.28-30 as "an
extract from an official document of the
Babylonian golah giving exact figures for the
three deportations".
38. Albright, 1963, p47 says,
"the difference (between Jer. 52 and 2 Kings
24) may be partly due to the fact that the
latter was only a conjectural estimate, but
may also be partly due to the heavy mortality
of the starving and diseased captives during
the long trek to Babylonia".

Vogt, 1957, p94 n 1, suggests we read '17th year' instead of 7th year for the fall of the city and attributes the difference thus.

Malamat, 1956, p246-56 suggests the term in Jer. 52 v.28 "apparently implies that the deportees were inhabitants of the provincial cities of Judah, who might have been carried away while Jerusalem was still under seige". He admits, "the various statistics for the exile of Jehoiachin contradict one another" but he seeks to harmonise the evidence with Josephus who mentions two deportations of 3,000 and 10,000 plus (Ant. X 6. 3-7.1.).

Thompson, 1981, p782 attributes the difference between Jer. 52 and 2 Kings 24 to the fact that "the latter figure represents the whole population while the smaller figure represents the exact count of adult males". He further adds, "the exactness of the figures 3,023,832 and 745 suggests an authentic recording of the numbers of some kind.

Montgomery, 1951, p556 on v.16 says it, "supplies definite information on the other deported classes, the military and the artisan guilds, with at least modest figures". However, the difference between this and Jer. 52 is reconciled thus, "the latter figure (4,600) doubtless refers only to men, so that a much higher figure is to be assumed for the total of souls".

Carroll, 1986, p869, summarises, "such discrepancies are better not harmonised but accepted as evidence for the lack of definite information available to the editors of the biblical stories".

39. Galling, 1964, p51 estimates about 20,000 in total
Pfeiffer, 1963, p169 calculates a total exiled population of 18,000
40. See n 33
41. Freedy, 1970, p462-485
Pritchard, 1969, p308
Weidner, 1939, p923f
42. Albright, 1961, p106-112
43. Albright, 1961, p111
44. Ezekiel 1 v.2; 33 v.21; 40 v.1
45. Albright, 1932, p77-106
Mays, 1939, p146f
46. Albright, 1932
47. Weidner, 1939
Zablocka, 1972, p209-15
48. Cogan, 1974b, p6-12
49. Porten, E J VI, p1038
50. Wilkie, 1951, p34f suggests a period of persecution occurred under Nabonidus although sources here are tangled and complex.
51. Klamroth, 1912, p31f who suggests the uncongenial nature of the situation of the exile.
52. Daiches, 1910, p6f
53. Ackroyd, 1968, p33f
Torrey, 1910, p317 thought there might have been Jewish Temples in Babylonia.

- Brown, 1916, p400f thought Ezra 8 v.17 referred to such a temple.
54. Rowley, 1967, p213-245 deals with the issue of the synagogue in a full way, although he comments, p226,
- "though it can in no sense be said to be proved it can claim much probability ... This period presents the conditions under which its birth can be most naturally explained.
- cf. Weinfeld, EJX p292 and Bacher HDB IV p636
55. Ackroyd, 1970, p31
56. Bright, 1972, p347
57. Smith, 1971, p100
58. Smith, 1971, p101
59. Yamauchi, 1965, p283
- Gurney, 1962, p5
- Cooke, 1970, p96f attributes it to Babylonian influence and traces its development.
60. Ackroyd, 1968, p49 deals fully with the different messages of the prophets and historians of the exilic period.
61. Ackroyd, 1970, p29

CHAPTER II

The Priestly Writer's response to the exilic situation

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Major Critical questions concerning P
- (c) Major strands in P
- (d) The authors of P and their purpose
- (e) Footnotes

(a) Introduction

My purpose within this section is to consider some of the major critical questions as they relate to the Priestly strand of the Pentateuch. The intention is not to construct new theories but rather clarify some of the context of this study so that the theory posited later is not seen to disregard such matters. There follows an articulation of some of the dominant strands that are characteristic of P and again this does not claim to be an exhaustive study, for such a work would be in itself an enormous task. I then posit a theory about the particular purposes of P using the unique rise of significance and importance of the Aaronides. In line with current trends (Clines, Whybray) I see the creation of P as possessing a specific purpose and this is especially relevant to the issue of community discipline for it permits us to understand why some aspects are developed while others are left in abeyance. It will be shown that at specific points P is endeavouring to introduce his schema into a possibly hostile situation.

It is acknowledged that this theory is but one of many and yet seeks to subsume as much of the material as possible in a coherent and cogent way.

In an attempt to gain a broad overview of the diverse nature of the P material, this theory has been utilised

with the specific intent of providing an important key to our understanding of the major issue of this study in terms of community discipline. It could be stated that this chapter seeks to discern the sociological factor crucial in the Pentateuch, while the following chapter will consider the dominant theological motive in P.

(b) Some major critical questions concerning P

The events of the exile, as noted in Chapter I, presented a crisis of faith for the community of Israel (1). It was a challenge to its continued survival and viability. One response to that crisis is found in the Priestly Writer's edition of the Pentateuch.

The Pentateuch has played a large part in biblical scholarship over the years (2) and the interest in this area has produced diverse results. The state of pentateuchal research is increasingly varied with classical positions being challenged and new theories advanced (3).

The work of Wellhausen is seen as a major contribution to Pentateuchal studies (4) and yet it was limited to source criticism. He amassed the findings of his predecessors and ordered them cogently into the Grafian sequence of JEDP, a structure that in general has held for a century. Wellhausen's work on the Pentateuch included little more than drawing on its postulated documents for his construction of the history of Israel and its religion. Von Rad and Noth have offered significant and comprehensive works on the Pentateuch (5). Their combined view of the origins of the Pentateuch long survived as the ruling hypothesis about how it came to be. A major assumption underlying their

work was that the meaning which a given text had at its origin and during its subsequent development is relevant for our understanding of the text in its present form. They saw the Pentateuch as we have it as the final stage in a long process of development. Their primary task was to recover this history of growth. They pictured this as a living process, in which one generation receives the traditions from the past and then has the opportunity to reaffirm them, adjusting them as they find appropriate, before passing them on to the next generation. These traditions, therefore, have to do with matters of vital importance to the Israelite's faith, society and self-understanding. As a rule, the Pentateuch is based on innumerable traditions that were at first largely independent of one another, and only in the course of time did they become fused together, a process von Rad and Noth sought to unlock. Noth identified five central themes in the Pentateuch - promise to the patriarchs, guidance out of Egypt, guidance in the wilderness, revelation at Sinai and guidance into the arable land. Von Rad dealt with these five also, though linking exodus and conquest into one and stressing the independence of the Sinai tradition from the others. The major difference between the two follows from how these themes merged. Noth saw this merge in the period prior to the Yahwist, while von Rad attributed this change to the work of the Yahwist

himself. They both saw this early period as the formative stage of the faith and of the traditions and, therefore, possessing special significance.

Such views have not gone unchallenged (6). The most significant area to be criticised is the Yahwistic source. Van Seters (7) has insisted on dating this source closer to the exile, while Schmid (8) wanted to consider a much longer redactional period than the traditional dating in the 10th Century would allow. Rendtorff (9), in a very thorough criticism, accused von Rad of departing from the normal source critical model in arguing that the Yahwist was a theologian, rather than a literary document. The E material was seen by Van Seters as more of a redactional level than a separate source (10). Also critics remain unconvinced by Noth's proposal that P was a separate source document that became the framework into which J and E were incorporated to make the final Pentateuch (11). Noth identified P as an intact narrative independent of other sources. Von Rad had suggested that P was composed of two parallel narratives (12). Noth rejected this,

"viewed as a whole and in its parts, such an entity resists separation into several, originally independent narratives and presents itself rather as the work of one man with a definite plan and distinct view, who integrated the appropriated Vorlagen into the

total work and used them as materials subordinated to his purposes" (13).

He goes on to see the priestly writer as making

"the P narrative the basis of his work and enriched it by suitably inserting here and there parts of the other narrative ... But this should not detract from the fact that the P narrative was the formative basis of his work" (14).

Cross challenged the position of P as a separate source. He noted the absence of numerous important pentateuchal traditions, the presence of various framing devices and the occurrence of archaizing language,

"In Genesis, the book with the largest content of 'primary' P narrative, four narratives only are found: the creation account, the flood, the formulaic description of the covenant with Abraham, and the record of the purchase of the Cave of Machpela. As for the remaining P material, it consists of genealogical and chronological notices and connective formulae" (15).

"That a Priestly narrative once existed without an account of man's rebellion and sin is very hard to believe. The Flood account well known to P presumes the background of Adam's rebellion and subsequent corruption of the creation. It cannot stand alone as a narrative in its present form" (16).

Cross argued that P could only be a redactional stage and

"was never an independent narrative source" (17). "Priestly tradition seems never to have taken the form of an independent 'code'. It is most easily described as a commentary or rather a systematizing expansion of the normative JE tradition in the Tetrateuch. Evidently priests of the later pre-Exilic and Exilic period collected and edited ancient written (sic!) documents c... and this produced what they considered a more precise and detailed picture of the desert period ... An Exilic date for the major Priestly work seems almost certain now" (18).

Van Seters concurs,

"P merely supplemented the older tradition as he received it in the written form of J" (19).

The post exilic origin of P has long been a dominant view in biblical studies. Wellhausen (20) traced a development in Israel's religious life and practice. In the earliest days worship was simple, free and spontaneous. It gradually became more hidebound by law and custom until eventually it reached a stage of rigid ritualistic legalism. With the growing emphasis on form and ritual went an increase in the power and privileges of the priesthood. P and the books of Chronicles represent the end point of this religious evolution. The similarity between P and Chronicles proved the late

date of P. That view has received support in recent times, by Vink who assigned P to the Persian period (21), and Kapelrud adduced close links between the priestly terminology for creation and that of Deutero Isaiah as evidence for an exilic date for P (22). A tendency to periodisation has been viewed as evidence of a proto-apocalyptic style and inferring an exilic dating (23).

This traditionally accepted view has been challenged by Kaufmann and others who maintain that P is pre exilic (24). The antiquity of P has been seen in that the languages, laws and institutions do not fit with what is known of the post exilic age. Deuteronomy and Joshua quote Leviticus and other P passages but not vice versa (25). A third reason adduced is that P's notions of holiness and war, its laws on sacrifice and blood closely resemble those mentioned in the books of Judges and Samuel.

Although some weight must be given to these factors, more as evidence that P incorporated old material in his work, I am inclined toward the exilic period for the dating of P in its present form. Fohrer summarises succinctly,

"P is later than D. P presupposes as self-evident D's requirement that the cult be centralised at a single place. P's cultic regulations are later; the agricultural character of the festivals, which is still

recognisable in D., is obliterated and they are determined instead by the calendar. Josiah's terror following the discovery of the Deuteronomic law code and the report of the reforms carried out subsequently would be incomprehensible if the much stricter P had already been in effect as law. Furthermore P is later than H, which was incorporated as it was found, and than Ezekiel, who makes no mention of a high priest and predicts (Ezekiel 44) the degradation of the Levites to the status of temple servants, which P presupposes. Finally, the prophets Deutero Isaiah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi are clearly familiar with Deuteronomy but not with P. Only Chronicles, written sometime after the middle of the fourth century, shows the influence of P. All these arguments show that P came into being in the fifth century" (26).

The community envisaged by P is one devoid of political power and standing, which is searching for its identity and sense of continuity in terms of its religious life. The P source was written to preserve the memory of the structure, paraphernalia and ritual of the first temple in order to duplicate it in the revival. Thus P's retrospect was simultaneously a prospect (27). The result of P's fusion of old and new was a programme for reconstructing the people not as a political kingdom but as a religious community centred around the temple and ruled by a religious hierarchy. It was associated with the time when there was a concern with the kind of

people, obedience and religious order that was proper if a further disaster was to be avoided. The dating of P is therefore not a theoretical issue but relates to the interaction and interrelation between history and tradition. Elliger shows that P was not describing a state cultic programme but it was designed to meet the needs of the exile (28). In mentioning the issue of dating for P, it is to be remembered that P is made up of a great mass of early legal and narrative material and therefore this dating only refers to its ultimate presentation.

"The date of the final presentation can only be determined by an examination of the whole work,"

observes Ackroyd (29).

The date of the introduction of the priestly legislation into Israel remains uncertain for there is no precise information available about life there from the rebuilding of the temple to the arrival of Nehemiah and Ezra (30). I would suggest that factor may be more helpfully considered nearer the end of this study.

What appears certain is that the Pentateuch was accepted as authoritative sometime before the Samaritan schism. The dating of the schism is uncertain but the fact that only the Pentateuch was accepted by the Samaritans as scriptures gives a 'terminus ad quem' of a kind (31). A certain amount of time must have

elapsed for the introduction of P prior to the schism to enable it to become authoritative. Any very close association of Ezra with this process of legitimisation is to be deferred (32). Since it is unlikely that the Samaritans would take over for their scriptures a new work whose introduction into Israel was attributed to a person, as Ezra, for whom they felt especial hostility, an earlier date must be considered.

Another factor relative to the dating of P and integral to our understanding of the whole work, concerns the ending of P. The exact location of the end is difficult and is connected with the complex question of Hexateuch - Pentateuch - Tetracheuch (33). If it is supposed that material belonging to P is found in Joshua 13-19 then the allocation of the land prior to entry is part of the plan of the work (34). There is no clear evidence of a conquest narrative in P and therefore one has to suppose that the allocation was presented in anticipation. A similar presentation is seen in Ezekiel of a new land, divided among the tribes with a new temple and an orderly and holy people, ready for an obedient life. The ending of P has been seen to be indicative of the actual situation of the exile. Its very inconclusiveness presents the reader with uncertainty about the future, although by the very method of presentation, that is, retrojecting present

concerns into the past, it provides a ground for new hope and confidence. Ackroyd comments,

"Just as in the Deuteronomic history the outcome of the exile remains in some doubt, so, too, in P there is delicacy in the hesitant way in which the future is adumbrated. The land is allocated; there is no doubt of the divine intention. But conquest is not to be achieved merely by military means; it is God's act. It rests with him and what matters is that Israel should be a people fit for what he intends" (35).

Related to the issues of the date and nature of P is the question of the Pentateuch's purpose. Noth gave it no greater significance, tradition - historically, than merely the adding together of all the source materials (36). For Noth there was such similarity among the separate documentary sources in their narration of the course of Israel's history that their amalgamation did not affect this theological affirmation. Others have approached the issue in a radically different way and seen the formation of the Pentateuch as authoritative literature for the community (37). In the exilic period, this involved a corporate search for meaning as well as a need to regularise the people's relation to their God. The Pentateuch constituted a compelling message that helped to shape and preserve the people.

The reciprocal relationship between text and community
is basic to this work.

(c) Major strands in P

The priestly work is a carefully structured work which is marked by definite stages. P conceived of history from the creation of the world to the time of Moses as comprising four periods. A more basic chronological scheme seems to underlie that plan. There appears to be a deliberate linking of the Exodus events to the creation and that the total of years (MT 2666) is designed to show two thirds of a period of 4,000 years, at which it was presumed that some finale would be reached. It is accepted that such figures are uncertain and the speculations about a possible end of the age are more characteristic of apocalyptic, nevertheless such a later development was probably rooted in an already existing plan. A similar scheme is seen in the Deuteronomic work in which the span of 480 years which is designated from the Exodus to Solomon's Temple is also utilised to suggest an identical time lapse from Solomon's Temple to the rebuilt Temple (38).

P also structures his work by the careful use of genealogies which give a sense of order and symmetry to the work. The recurrent phrase, 'These are the generations of ...' is introduced at significant junctures in the work. The first instance is of heaven and earth (Genesis 2 v.4a), followed by those of Adam

(5 v.1), Noah (6 v.9), Shem, Ham and Japheth (10 v.1), Shem (11 v.10), Terah the father of Abraham (11 v.27), Ishmael (25 v.12), Isaac (25 v.19), Esau (36 v. 1, 9) and Jacob (37 v.2) (39). Thereafter no account is taken of generations other than Israelite. Indeed the only other occurrence of the superscription, 'These are the generations of ...' is found in Num. 3 v.1 and it relates to Aaron and Moses, although the verses that follow relate only to Aaron and his sons. While such a repeated recital of names strikes modern readers as boring, nevertheless P used them to link present concerns to past roots and give legitimacy to present persons. In the context of rootlessness and uncertainty about the future, a concern for genealogical descent is not surprising, or only an ancient phenomenon(40).

Westermann notes the theological function of the genealogies as establishing continuity between creation and history as well as asserting the broad sweep of human history as the arena in which these events occur (41). It must also be recognised that a concern of P was racial purity and through the genealogies P superimposes on the broad facts of historical geographical selectivity a theory of absolute divine selectivity, purposed from the creation of the world. Thus the reason for Esau's exclusion was not that he forfeited his birthright, but that he married outside

the family circle of Abraham (Gen. 26 v.34f, 27 v.46-28 v.9). Isaac and Jacob, on the other hand, had been scrupulously careful to preserve racial purity by marrying within the family from which Abraham had come. Jacob, therefore, when Ishmael and Esau have been excluded, is the heir in an unbroken succession of first born sons going back to the creation itself. The message implicit in that structuring would be obvious in P's day and reveals a major factor in his manifesto to preserve Israelite identity and prevent assimilationism.

Another structuring device of P is to present the period stretching from the creation of the world to the time of Moses as comprising of four stages, related to Adam, Noah, Abraham and Moses. Wellhausen counted four covenants as relative to this scheme (42), but he erred in talking of a covenant of creation with Adam. Creation was marked by the blessing, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth' (Gen. 1 v.22). That blessing was reiterated and expanded when applied to man in Gen. 1 v.28, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth'. Brueggemann (43) shows how this blessing formula is associated with each of the priestly covenants, the

Noachic (Gen. 9 v.7), the Abrahamic (Gen. 17 v.6) and the Mosaic (Lev. 26 v.9) and asserts,

"here we are at the heart of the confessional affirmation which is correctly called kerygmatic" (44)

He observes the use of five verbs in Gen. 1 v.28, 'be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue, have dominion', as being

"the central thrust of the faith of the priestly circle" (45).

These verbs are

"a statement about the radical claim of God to establish his will for well-being and prosperity. And his will cannot be frustrated by any circumstance, even those circumstances of the traditionist's historical context of exile. His claim to sovereignty is over the creation which he has just called into being out of chaos ... This proclamation is strikingly appropriate to a people of exile who are homeless and rootless, alienated from land and traditions, an affirmation that their God is still in charge and, therefore, their destiny is still well-being and dominance" (46).

Elliger is cited,

"In the Babylonian exile it originates as a comforting and warming witness of the marvellously powerful and sovereign gracious God of the promise who is Lord of world history and in particular of the history of Israel, and who remains immovably committed

to his goal, namely, a great people released
to an eternal possession of the land of
Canaan and God as the God of this people"
(47).

The traditional view of P as presenting a programme to
legitimise cultic practices to endure the landless
situation of exile is given a counterbalance, for P is
also seen as,

"future orientated, looking to the time when
the land will be received again from God, re-
entry will be made, control will again be
exercised, fertility will again be
celebrated, the promise of God will again be
activated and Israel will again experience
the blessing and well-being of their fathers"
(48).

The particular formula in Gen. 1 v.28 occupies a
significant position in the creation account of Gen. 1-
2 v.4a, for it is placed after the main acts of God in
creation, including the creation of man but before the
institution of the sabbath. Therefore, it would appear
that a link between the institution and the promise of
blessing is being established by P. The other
institutions established through the covenants with
Noah, Abraham and Moses incorporate this promise of
blessing as integral to our understanding.

The promise emerges relative to Noah in Gen. 9 v.1,
'And God blessed Noah and his Sons and said to them,
"Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth"'. The

effectiveness or fulfillment of the promised blessing is evidenced in Gen. 10 which enumerates the many offspring of Noah's three sons. Since these offspring are all the nations of the world, Gen. 10 is, therefore, a very powerful attestation to the validity of the promise.

The fertility promise in Gen. 17 undergoes a significant change of emphasis or reinterpretation from its universalistic form in Gen. 1 and 9. It is limited to Abraham who is portrayed as the father of the people Israel, 'I will make my covenant between me and you and will multiply you exceedingly'. Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, 'Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you and kings shall come forth from you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. And I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God'. (17 v.2-8). The new name given to the patriarch of Abraham, meaning father of a

multitude of nations, again stresses the promise of blessing.

This promise of blessing appears in relation to Jacob in Gen. 25 v.35, 48 and finds its climax in Ex. 1 v.7, 'the descendants of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong; so that the land was filled them them'. The promise is fulfilled in Egypt, a land where Israel had lived in a kind of exile, the correlation with the present plight of the readers is immediate. The theme is not carried into the Mosaic period and its ending provides a problem about which Bruggemann is hesitant (48). He sees Ex. 1 v.1-5, 7 as a transitional piece,

"the statement stands not simply as an introduction to the Exodus materials, ... but as a programmatic statement for all the rest of history of the people. The theme stretches from creation to liberation, from the blessing announced to its realisation and that is the perennial story in Israel and stress which P wishes to make. God does keep his promise" (49).

To return to Gen. 1-2 v.4a, it was noted the vital position occupied by this formula of blessing in 1 v.28. Its significance ought not to detract from another aspect of P, which is his high doctrine of man. In the creation account in Gen. 1 the events of the first six days of creation proceed in an orderly way until v.28, 'Then God said, "Let us make man in our

image, after our likeness;'", where God takes counsel with himself before completing the peak of his creation. God created man and woman as equals in his sight (50) and he made them both in his own image (51). It appears from v.28 that the purpose was one of control over creation. In Gen. 9 v.6 we are reminded that the image of God, 'for God made man in his own image' continues to be in force after the flood. P's message to the people of the exile is a very powerful one, that even after their disaster, they are still men and women created in the image of God. Such an affirmative approach to humanity is placed in the context of Babylonian culture with its view of man and creation described in Enuma elish (52). Perhaps P's writings contain a certain polemic against such Babylonian ideas (53).

The account of creation in Gen. 1-2 v.4a, while containing the promise of blessing and a high doctrine of man, finds its completion in the inauguration of the sabbath. The origin of the sabbath is obscure (54) and possibly it was originally a day which was considered to be inauspicious and therefore no work should be done on it. The sabbath in the O.T. carries with it a theological interpretation. Deuteronomy 5 v.12-15 interprets it as a day of rest and the needs of dependent members of the community are particularly in mind. In the priestly interpretation the emphasis is

given to creation. The observance of the sabbath in the Babylonian exile became a confessional act, for the Babylonians did not observe such a day. Lack of observance, by the Israelites in exile, would lead to a disintegration of the exilic community as an entity in itself for sabbath observance served as one of the distinguishing marks of the exilic community, according to P (55). P is careful to incorporate the sabbath into the very creation pattern of the world and recount that God himself kept a sabbath as a climax to the first week of the world's existence. The connection for the exiles and the requirement upon them to imitate God himself would be self evident.

Therefore, the first stage that P uses as a device to structure his work stretches from the creation of the world to the Flood, with the sabbath being instituted while men and animals are portrayed as vegetarian (Gen. 1 v.29f).

The second stage was that of Noah, when God made a covenant with all living creatures by means of the rainbow sign that no more should the earth be destroyed by flood, and that men were permitted to eat flesh, with the strict proviso that it was properly drained of blood (Gen. 9 v.3f).

What is most striking is that P has no account of the Fall (Gen. 2 and 3), Cain and Abel (Gen. 4), nor the

division and fall of human society (Gen. 11 v.1-9). In Gen. 6 v.13, we read, 'God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh; for the earth is filled with violence through them; behold, I will destroy them with the earth"', as an introduction to the Flood story. However, this is the first mention of sin and rebellion in creation and it leads Cross to comment,

"That a Priestly narrative once existed without an account of man's rebellion and sin is very hard to believe. The Flood account well-known to P presumes the background of Adam's rebellion and subsequent corruption of the creation. It cannot stand alone as a narrative in its present form. P's summary statement referring to violence and corruption must presume a knowledge of concrete and colourful narratives of the corruption of the creation. Otherwise, it has neither literary nor theological force. Not only the Flood story must be seen against the background of the story of human sin and its universal spread, but also the entire schemata of Priestly covenants. Yahweh's covenants were given, in the Priestly view, to provide the means of atonement and reconciliation of the sinful people with their god and to sanctify Israel through his law so that he could place his Tabernacle in their midst and bless them in their new land. The atonement for sin is the function of the elaborate Priestly cultus. As this is the case with Ezekiel, P's brooding consciousness of human uncleanness and Israel's

rebelliousness dominates his work. The Priestly source stemmed from the crisis of Exile. It was designed to provoke overwhelming remorse in Israel and sought by the reconstruction of the age of Moses, its cult and law, to project a community of Israel in which Yahweh could return to "tabernacle" in their land. The sombre, sin-obsessed consciousness of P, as opposed to the buoyant and free spirit of J, so stressed by an older generation in their partition and dating of the sources of the Pentateuch, must not be forgotten. At the same time, we must explain the apparent paradox that P neglected the origins of human sin if we persist in treating his work as a narrative and independent document" (56).

Ackroyd accepts P as a narrative work and stresses the importance of sin for that work (57), nevertheless he sees no difficulty here, preferring to suggest,

"P, by taking up into its open section the ancient Eden and Babel traditions and laying great stress on the Flood narrative, indicates that the origins of both failure and hope lie at the very beginnings of human experience" (58).

While this may be true, Cross's point carries more weight.

The account of the Flood concludes with the first of P's covenants being established. The covenant in v.9 is described as 'my covenant', that is God's. While

one might expect the technical term 'to cut a covenant', the covenant with Noah is 'given' or 'established' (v.17) by God. This unilateral covenant will last forever and be valid for 'you and your descendants after you' (v.9), 'with every living creature that is with you' (v.10), and 'for all future generations' (v.12). The covenant promises that all flesh will not be cut off again by flood waters and the world itself will never return to chaos (v.11). God guarantees the existence of natural and human history, never again will this control be undone by catastrophes (like a flood or exile) or be annulled by the mistakes, corruption or revolt of man.

In this account of P, one discerns a possible response to the events of the exile in terms that God has forgotten them and, therefore, all hope was in vain (59). In response to such a crisis P points to the rainbow as a sign, 'This is the sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I set my bow in the cloud and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh' (v.12-15). Significantly it is intended to refresh

God's memory, a mnemonic device to help him remember the covenant (60).

The third stage was that of Abraham where the covenant concept is constricted between God and Abraham.

Up until this time the deity was described by the generic term 'Elōhîm, but now he announces himself as El Shaddai (Gen. 17 v.1f.) 'I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you and will multiply you exceedingly'. A new name, Abraham, was also given and El Shaddai bound himself to an eternal covenant to give the land of Canaan to Abraham's seed and to be 'God to you and to your descendants after you' (v.17). The sign of this covenant was circumcision. It is generally accepted that circumcision was an ancient rite which is described in various narratives of different periods and was obviously subject to reinterpretation. Clements summarises it thus,

"Circumcision was undoubtedly originally a puberty rite, carried out on young males prior to marriage and there are indications that it was at one time carried out in adolescence in Israel. When it was transferred to infancy we do not know and it is arguable that this transference occurred during the period of the exile, when circumcision assumed a new importance for those Israelites who were living in Babylon ... In the exile a number of Israelites found themselves living amongst an alien

population which did not practise circumcision and it became for them a badge of their religious and cultural distinctiveness. It is this new religious significance of circumcision which was reinforced by its introduction into the tradition of the Abrahamic covenant by the Priestly document. As circumcision was the badge of every true member of the community of Israel, so also was that member an heir of the covenant made with Abraham and a beneficiary of its promises. Circumcision itself was raised to become a token of the covenant and a reminder of the grace which that covenant affirmed".

While Van Seters sees the covenant of Abraham in Gen.

17

"not primarily viewed as a message of hope, as it was in J, but was accepted as a fixed datum of the sacred tradition and was thus institutionalised by association with the custom of circumcision. Such a form of continuous covenant 'renewal' emphasized the individual responsibility of every family unit to affirm their identity with the people of God - a most crucial need in the post-exilic period" (61).

This covenant made with Abraham, which is set in the context of *primaeval* history, becomes the basis of Israel's relationship with Yahweh. Such a relationship is established on the foundation of the Noachic covenant which promised never to wipe out mankind. The

Sinai event, which is now reinterpreted (62), is not conceived of as another covenant by P but rather the disclosure of the necessary legislation which makes possible the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham (63).

Israel's existence is due to the election of Yahweh rather than to any worth of her own. She, therefore, appears as a worshipping community rather than as a political entity. North observes,

"From the strictly historical standpoint O.T. religion is the story of how the god of a small confederation of nomads came to be recognised as the God of the whole earth. How that came about is to be read in the sagas and the prophets. For P the development was in the contrary direction: his is the story of how the Creator of the universe gradually narrowed down the circle of his choice to one people" (64).

The Sinai covenant between Yahweh and Israel was dependent on Israel's obedience to the law but the priestly writer ensured that such a relationship should continue irrespective of the law. P recognised that failure was inherent in man and, therefore, through the cult and especially the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16) provided the means so that Israel might renew herself and be able to remain in communion with God. P sought to ensure the proper ordering of the cult, from which offenders were excluded and so an existing and

permanent relationship is protected from abuse. Failure is dealt with on a communal basis and the only failure to be punished is of an individual nature. The prophecies of Jer. 31 v.29f and Ezekiel 18 v.1f, that an individual would only be liable for his own acts, becomes a reality. The radical reinterpretation of faith for Israel, substituting election for the Mosaic covenant, allowed the period of the Sinai covenant to become a fertile ground for new legislation.

The covenant which God makes with Abraham is described as an 'everlasting covenant', Clements sees this as

"the most significant new feature in the Priestly account ... asserting its permanent validity and its unconditional character".

He develops the matter further,

"It is noteworthy that this phraseology does not occur in Genesis 15, and that its point of anchorage in Israelite tradition is to be found in the covenant between Yahweh and the house of David. It is very probable, therefore, that it is from the tradition of the royal covenant of the Davidic monarchy that the phrase was introduced into the account of Genesis 17. The failure of the Davidic monarchy and the removal of the last of the Davidic kings from the throne of Jerusalem, had shattered the straightforward political interpretation of the terms of the Davidic covenant as an everlasting covenant, guaranteeing that David's dynasty would provide the kings of Israel. In the future

the continuing belief in the existence of such an everlasting covenant between Yahweh and David could only be justified by the expectation of an eschatological Messiah, or by the radical reinterpretation of it in terms of the whole Jewish nation. It is reasonable to conclude that the Priestly account of the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 17 has been influenced by this tradition of the permanent validity of the Davidic covenant and that it was the intention of the Priestly authors to show that the Abrahamic covenant was the basic covenant of Israel. A further indication that they connected the kingship with the Abrahamic covenant appears in Gen. 17 v.6, where the promise that Abraham would become the father of many nations is elaborated by the assertion 'and kings shall come forth from you'. The earlier J account of the covenant made no specific reference to kings at all, although, as we have seen, it regarded Abraham as the forerunner of David. It appears that the Priestly authors were conscious of a connection between the Abrahamic and the Davidic covenants, and were concerned to root the whole of Israel's life, including its monarchy, in the promises made to Abraham" (65).

The everlasting covenant with Abraham went well beyond a promise of fertility, for Gen. 17 v.7 talks of 'to be God to you and to your seed after you' with the reference to 'seed after you' being P's way of portraying the ongoing vitality of the covenant. The

promise of God also relates to the land, 'I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God' (v.8). The descendants of Abraham are explicitly identified here as the co-recipients of the promise and yet the promised land is only the land of Abraham's sojournings. P uses the term 'sojournings' (66) to denote that the patriarchs never really occupied the land as owners. Indeed the only piece of land owned and occupied by the patriarchs was the burial cave in the field of Machpelah (Gen. 23). Was this story of the burial cave at Machpelah vital for P's structure, for it signified a prior claim on the land by the descendants of Abraham? (67). Since the original recipients of the promise were sojourners, it is reiterated that such sojourners (or exiles), can be recipients of the land promise (Gen. 28 v.1-4).

The promise of the land finds a reiteration in P's account of the call of Moses, for Exodus 6 v.8 states, 'I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob; I will give it to you for a possession'. The Exodus generation did not occupy their land and despite their repeated resistance (68) God spared the people until the incident with the spies, when he decreed, 'your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness; and all of your number, numbered from

twenty years old and upward, who have murmured against me, not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would make you dwell except Caleb, the son of Jephunneh and Joshua, the son of Nun' (Num. 14 v.29-30).

The land promise was not annulled and God pledged himself to it even in his last command to Moses to go up and see the land which he had given to the people of Israel, (Num. 27 v.12 cf. 20 v.12). The second generation in the wilderness did finally get the land and Joshua is exalted by P as the one who never faltered in his belief that God would give the land (Num. 14 v.6-7, Deut. 34 v.9). The example of Joshua as one to be followed in the days of exile is P's clear message.

The fourth stage, that of Moses, was the occasion for the revelation of the name Yahweh and in due course, of the fully developed Mosaic ritual. It is only in this fourth era that sacrifices are prescribed and the writer is quite consistent with this in that he is silent about any distinction between 'clean' and 'unclean' animals at the time of the Flood, nor does he betray himself into saying that the patriarchs built altars, much less that they offered sacrifices. The slaughtering of animals for food which was sanctioned after the flood was non sacrificial, similar to that permitted in Deut. 12 v.15f. v.20f. P was ingenious

enough to make what for the Deuteronomist was an innovation, the custom of a much earlier age.

A significant change occurs with this section, for Ackroyd observes that the

"schematic arrangement covers only the main introductory section, leading through to the Exodus events. At that point the type of material changes and it is clear that a crucial point in the work has been reached. Now the main purpose becomes plain in the setting out of what is to be the basis of the people's life in the legal material and descriptive instructions of Exodus 25 to Lev. 16 followed by a further section in Lev. 27, Num. 1-10 v.10" (69).

While P does not offer a new presentation of the Exodus covenant (70), it provides a special emphasis on the setting of the Sinai covenant by the accumulation here of the enormous mass of legislation which includes all the directions for the making of the tabernacle in Exodus, all the legislation in Leviticus and the ordering of the community in the opening chapters of Numbers. P solved the problem of broken covenant by restricting the term 'covenant' to those unilateral promises made to Noah and Abraham and by giving Sinai a different meaning for Israel's faith (71). At Sinai Yahweh prescribed the ideal cultic community in which he would dwell with his people and in which they would serve him with a proper priesthood and a proper

sacrificial system. In such a community the promises inherent in the everlasting covenants would be realised and the community's institutions would make possible a blessed and ongoing life. Cross summarises,

"The entire cultic paraphernalia and cults was designed to express and overcome the problem of the holy, transcendent God visiting his pervasively sinful people ... For the Priestly tradent the Sinaitic covenant, its cultus and its law, was the device contrived by Yahweh to make possible his 'tabernacling' in Israel's midst, which alone could make full the redemption of Israel" (72).

P commences his ordering of the cult with the tabernacle and tells that when plans for it were to be given, the glory of Yahweh settled on Mt. Sinai and the cloud covered the mountain for six days. On the seventh day (Exodus 24 v.16) God called Moses up the mountain (Ex. 24 v.15b-18) and gave him detailed prescriptions for the construction of the tabernacle and its furnishings (Ex. 25-27, 30) according to a pattern shown by God to Moses (Ex. 25 v.9, 40cf. 26 v.30). The writing down of these prescriptions now gave Israel possession of the pattern and therefore its resurrection was possible.

When the tabernacle was completed on New Year's Day (Ex. 40 v.1, 17) the cloud and glory of Yahweh covered the tent of meeting and filled the tabernacle. P

stresses the importance of the tabernacle by presenting the appearance of the glory of Yahweh at the beginning and end of its construction. The tabernacle made it possible for Israel's cult to function, it was also the means by which God's dwelling among his people took place (Ex. 25 v.8) and was called the tent of meeting. P employed the archaic term *skn* to indicate that God's presence with his people is not to be taken for granted or understood as the concrete abiding of Yahweh in his shrine (73). God's freedom and transcendence are maintained and P is careful to note that God's dwelling with his people is the fulfillment of the promise to be their God (Ex. 29 v.45) and is the goal behind the Exodus itself.

God's dwelling with Israel in the cloud is such an awesome thing that it prevents even Moses from entering the tent of meeting (Ex. 40 v.35). The presentation of the camp by P shows this sense of awe by placing the tabernacle in the centre of two concentric circles. The innermost ring is the domain of the Levites who protect and carry the sacred shrine (Num. 1 v.47-54), while Moses, Aaron and his sons (Num. 3 v.38) occupy the favoured eastern position while the other Levitical groups occupy the other positions (Num. 3 v.23, 29, 35) and the secular tribes are relegated to the second ring (Num. 2 v.3-31). God's dwelling in the midst of the holy camp was not to be defiled by unclean people (Lev.

13 v.46, Lev. 15, Lev. 21 v.1-12, Num. 5 v.2-3). P's ideal for the future worship of Israel involved a return to the cult which was inaugurated at Sinai, where God met his people in his tabernacle dwelling. His dictum appears to have been, 'as it once was, so it should be again'. Such an understanding presumes that P writes the history of these institutions from his own theological viewpoint and therefore they relate to his own day rather than being strictly 'historical' accounts, for he writes to authenticate the practices of his day or innovations which he deems appropriate.

A proper sacrificial system was essential to maintain the presence of Yahweh amongst his people, according to P (74). He was deeply aware of the sinfulness of the people and conscious that they would constantly come into contact with the unclean world. Therefore, expiation and purification receive a major emphasis in the sacrificial system. The main classes of sacrifice which P distinguishes are:-

the 'burnt offering' ('ôlāh) Lev. 1;

the 'cereal offering' (minḥāh) Lev. 11;

the 'peace offering' (š^elāmîm) Lev. 3;

the 'sin' offering' (ḥaṭṭa't) Lev. 4-5 v.13; and

the 'guilt offering' ('āšām) Lev. 5 v.14-19 (75).

In P the sin offering was the most common for there are few cultic occasions which are described or regulated, in which the sin offering does not have a special function. Lev. 4 v.27-35 and Num. 15 v.27-29 give a clue to this emphasis for the sacrifice cleanses the man who brings it from all involuntary sins. The apparent over emphasis on sin by the priestly writer, strengthened the position of the expiatory process in his whole schema of things as well as correspondingly affirming the importance of the priesthood. While most of the sacrificial system dealt with the atonement for individual sin, the possibility of dealing with the sin of the community is provided for in the Day of Atonement ritual in Lev. 16. The genius of P is conceived here as a fundamental issue, for the exilic crisis is dealt with in a creative way.

"In the great Day of Atonement according to Lev. 16 is concealed the possibility of so atoning for the sin of the community that it can never again become a danger to the community" (76).

By this annual rite of purgation, the purity of the sanctuary was insured and no unwitting sin was allowed to affect Yahweh's dwelling with his people.

"The whole purpose of the ritual ... is to be an annual celebration, a total purification of the community each year to ensure that nothing which hinders relationship with God is carried forward into the next year" (77).

Another strand in P, to which we shall return in greater detail, is the stress on Aaron and his sons as the only legitimate priests, having been invested in their office by Moses himself. Inferior to these priests were the Levites, who were assigned menial tasks, (Num. 3-4; 8; 18 v.2-7). P's account of the rebellion of Korah demonstrates the fatal consequences of any attempt to encroach upon the privileges of the sons of Aaron (Num. 16). The service for the ordination of the priests was prescribed at Sinai (Ex. 29 v.1-37) and it was first carried out, at Sinai in response to God's command (Lev. 8-9). So vital to P's whole work was this event, of the ordination of the first priests and the carrying out of the initial sacrifices, that the appearance of the glory of Yahweh and the kindling of the sacrificial fire was by no one less than Yahweh himself (Lev. 9 v.23-24).

With this era of Moses we see a further development in the use of the deity's name, where the unique and proper name Yahweh is introduced, Ex. 6 v.2-9. This revelation of the divine name is linked to the gift of the land (v.6, 8) and God's final identity is disclosed at the beginning of the events of the Exodus. The call of Moses contains the only passage in which P uses the term 'redeem' of God's action (6 v.6). Redemption is Yahweh displaying his role as Israel's kinsman in the only way adequate for a people under bondage, he

used significant and sufficient power to set them free. The name Yahweh plays a crucial role in the subsequent recognition formulas, 'You shall know that I am Yahweh', and disclose key emphases in P's theology (78).

One of the big problems for the exiles must have been to believe that the promises of God would become realities. P seeks to deal with that matter by describing Yahweh's power in superior terms. The contrast is between Yahweh's superiority and the most fearsome enemy power, the Pharaoh of the Exodus. The plagues in P describe a contest between Yahweh and Pharaoh to see who had the greatest power. The climax of P's contest account comes in Yahweh's word at the crossing of the Red Sea, 'I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host; and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord' (Ex. 14 v.4). In the end not one Egyptian was left (Ex. 14 v.28-29). The Exodus battle was a contest that determined whose was the glory. P illustrates Yahweh's superior power in several other ways for he tends to heighten the miraculous element in the plague accounts and, therefore, increase the degree of Yahweh's victory. In Ex. 7 v.9 where Aaron's rod is cast down before Pharaoh, earlier tradition had spoken of it becoming a snake, while here it became a dragon. Pharaoh's

magicians were able to match this, Ex. 7 v.11, but then Aaron's rod devoured those of the magicians which hints at Yahweh's ultimate victory. The magicians' ability to match Aaron's power reached a climax in the plague of frogs, for when they tried to bring up gnats in the third plague (Ex. 8 v.16-19), they failed and the magicians confessed, 'This is the finger of God'. A similarity to these contexts is seen in the lawsuits of second Isaiah where the question is one of the relative power of Yahweh and the Babylonian gods (79).

For P, the God who subsequently revealed himself by the name of Yahweh is the sole and omnipotent Creator of the universe. It does not appear that he created the world ex nihilo but rather he worked upon the formless chaos of Babylonian mythology and his power over it was absolute. No physical means or contact with matter is employed for creation is by fiat and the recurring formula for each successive act is 'Let there be ... and it was so'. The stress within the creation action is upon divine action and initiative.

Another dominant strand in P is that of holiness and its associated terminology, which will receive brief mention here and be considered fully later.

Simpson questions who the leaders of the community were in exile,

"In Babylonia the priests of Jerusalem were not idle. They assumed the leadership of the

exiled Jews, and giving a new significance to certain ancient institutions - the observance of the Sabbath, the practice of abstaining from certain foods and the custom of circumcision - welded their community into a self conscious unity. At the same time they brought together into a new code a number of pre exilic laws, giving it a hortatory tone throughout, and insisting that 'holiness' was the dominant element in the relationship between the Lord and his people. Holiness was demanded from Israel by the holiness of the God who had chosen them. Hence this code, preserved with some secondary material, in Lev. 17-26 has been called the Holiness Code" (80).

In 1877 Klostermann recognised a separate code of laws in P in Lev. 17-26 and gave it the same 'Holiness Code', because of its characteristic emphasis 'You are to be holy, for I Yahweh your God am holy' (81). In its present shape this work originates in the exilic situation although it comprises material of earlier origin. Indeed the work is not a unified whole but rather contains within it a series of smaller units, some of which may have existed as independent groups of laws, collections concerned with particular subjects (82). The legal sections concentrate on the purity and acceptability to God of every aspect of the community's life and in this respect correspond with the emphasis of Ezek. 40-48 (83). The people had shown themselves unacceptable by their disobedience and while P gives no

account of the period of history leading up to the disaster of the exile, the same point is made by projecting this disobedience into the wilderness period. The people are pictured as being on the threshold of the promised land and those in exile see themselves in the same position as their ancestors. The Priestly work and the Holiness Code which it incorporates, take up older laws concerning purity, the ordering of worship, regulations for clean and unclean, and set out a new pattern of life. The hope for an obedient people is seen to depend not on a single moment of divine action and human response but on a continuous provision by God for the mechanism by which the relationship, broken by failure, can be restored. A whole series of regulations cover many aspects of community life - purity in sacrifice (Lev. 17), right ordering of relationships (Lev. 18 v.20) diverse laws about social life (Lev. 19) the ordering of the priesthood (21-22) sabbaths and festivals (Lev. 23) offerings (Lev. 24 v.1-9) sabbatical observances (25). All of these are set out and expounded, with the frequent injunction to avoid defilement and the basis for obedience 'I am the Lord'. Only in 24 v.10-23 is there a narrative and this relates to the issue of blasphemy. While Lev. 26 is the climax of the section and provides a meaning to the exile as P views it.

"Some critics have suggested that part of Lev. 11-15 and Num. 5-6 originally belonged

to the Holiness Code but outside of Lev. 17-26 only Lev. 11 v.43-45 has the characteristics of thought and expression"

so Pfeiffer summarises (84). So far as this study is concerned, P has incorporated H into its structure and in so doing edited the material for his own purpose.

North's quote will act as a summary,

"The purpose of the Priestly writers was essentially practical. They were concerned with the realities of their contemporary situation. Under the Persian rule they were accorded a large measure of religious freedom, and they had to devise means whereby they could exercise this without coming into conflict with the imperial authorities. Having elected to throw their proposals into the form of commandments delivered in the time of Moses, which was, to be sure, the creative age of their religion, they found it desirable, and indeed, perhaps, even necessary, to present their legislation in a framework of history. This took the form of a summary account of how the Creator of the world had gradually narrowed down the circle of His choice from mankind as a whole to Abraham and his descendants, whom He finally brought into the land of their inheritance completely provided with all the ordinances needful for them to live there henceforth as His people" (85).

(d) The authors of P and their purpose

The work of P presents a structured presentation of part of Israel's history. We have already noted some of the major strands and perceived something of the purpose of the work. It is generally accepted that P was the work of a priestly class, and while not disputing that, I would want to take that further and suggest that P is the work of a group who sought to gain acceptance for their own manifesto for the survival of the people of Israel. They recognised that with the events of the exile, Israel faced a crisis of immense proportions, for the sense of national identity and religious uniqueness were threatened with dissolution. They sought to create a programme that would allow Yahwism to flourish and thus preserve it from decay and assimilationism. A major problem facing the exilic community was to provide a convincing explanation of the events and factors that caused the crisis as well as offering an interpretation for the future and the continued existence of the people of Israel. Such an attempt at restructuring Israelite faith necessarily required incorporating as many strands as possible from old traditions alongside the initiative of a new programme.

A dominant factor, and, in some ways a difficulty, in biblical research has been to view the textual material in a rather narrow way. The various critical methodologies have been applied to the text in order to decipher the various elements in the work itself. The Pentateuch has been the object of considerable research and yet a basic question remains unanswered for the Pentateuch, that is to explain how it became the Pentateuch. It is obvious that it is a composite and yet we are not informed about how this came to be. Rivkin proposes a different approach by the use of novel concepts,

"Religious and literary concerns have obscured the fact that the Pentateuch reveals itself to be a record of conflicting claims regarding authority and power. What can be differentiated with absolute clarity is patriarchal power, prophetic power, Levitical priestly power, royal power and Aaronide power. There may be other powers as well, but those listed are readily discernible by tutored and untutored eyes alike. And equally discernible is the fact that these powers are buttressed by claims which could not have been simultaneously implemented. Moses could not have had the Tent of Meeting for conversing with Yahweh if it was the exclusive Tabernacle of the Aaronides; the Levites and the Aaronides could not simultaneously have enjoyed a cultic monopoly; the Levites who control the cult in Deuteronomy know nothing of Aaronides, while in the Book of Numbers the Aaronides threaten

the Levites with awesome punishment if they dare approach the altar.

These diverse and conflicting powers are confirmed by the Pentateuchal texts. They are concrete and objective data. The fact that they are found side by side in the Pentateuch and the fact that they are all authorized by Yahweh and Moses and the fact that they all (aside from the patriarchal authority) are pictured as having functioned in the wilderness - beg for explanation. And the only explanation that accounts for these rival claims to exercise power is the existence of rival claimants, i.e. if the wilderness account reveals Moses as exercising absolute power as Yahweh's spokesman, then an explanation is to be found in the existence of a class of Yahwist spokesmen; if Moses shares his power by bestowing cultic rights upon the Levites, then an explanation is to be found in the existence of a Levitical class of priests; if Moses assigns a cultic monopoly to the Aaronides and excludes himself from the Tent of Meeting, then an explanation is to be found in the existence of a priestly class of Aaronides. Since the Pentateuch reveals itself to be an account of powers contending with each other for approval by Yahweh and Moses, then an explanation of how it came to be must be sought in the rise of classes who sought to make good their claims to exercise authority.

We therefore have a self sustaining hypothesis - that the Pentateuch has preserved within it four phases of authority

in Israel: (1) patriarchal absolutism; (2) prophetic absolutism; (3) collaboration among Levitical-priestly, royal and prophetic powers; (4) Aaronidism. For each of these phases we have a set of texts: patriarchal, wilderness, Deuteronomy and Aaronide. These texts are differentiated not primarily by literary criteria, but by power criteria. There are indeed literary differences and these literary differences distinguish the JE, D and P documents. This not only is to be expected but is supportive of the power hypothesis, for each class articulated its claims at a different time and consequently expressed its claims in the language current at the time. There is, however, an essential difference between approaching the Pentateuch from the point of view of literary style and from the point of view of power. Whereas the power hypothesis looks upon literature as an instrument for attaining nonliterary ends, the documentary hypothesis considers literary criteria fundamental.

The Pentateuch was thus the outcome of efforts to solve problems in a Yahwist society" (86).

Such an approach presents an intriguing picture of the make up of the Pentateuch and one that subsumes much of the data.

P is therefore a document produced by a group who seek to gain power within their community in the exilic situation (87). They utilised the traditions available and shaped or created ones to establish their own

claims to power. Their primary concern was to produce a manifesto which would provide for the continued viability of Yahwism, as they controlled it.

The groups who worked on Deuteronomy made an attempt to solve the problems confronting them by transferring the issues back into the period of the wilderness and having Yahweh solve them there. This provided an authorisation for customs that required the necessary validation. Although Deuteronomy's programme for reform failed, nevertheless, it gave a creative opportunity for future groups, with the wilderness experience viewed as an obvious ground for solving problems and Moses as a master for innovative solutions. The writers of P make full use of this wilderness period for writing their own particular claims to supremacy and providing a fertile ground for any new institutions they wish to establish or customs they wish to emphasize.

I would suggest, with Rivkin, that a key to unscrambling the code of the Pentateuch, in terms of how it came to be, is found in the unique status accorded to Aaron and the sons of Aaron. If such a hypothesis can be sustained, then we shall be able to interpret the matters of community discipline from a clearer perspective.

On a cursory glance, it might be suggested that the Bible presents two Aarons; one who is the brother and helper of Moses and the other who is a priest and founder of an exclusive priestly class, the Aaronides. It is accepted by scholars that Aaron who initiated a priestly class is only found in the P strand of the Pentateuch.

The first instance of Aaron emerges in Ex. 4 v.14 where he is portrayed as a co leader with Moses when Moses is reluctant to speak because he was 'slow of speech and of tongue'. Aaron then serves as Moses' spokesman as well as playing an active role in his own right (Ex. 4 v.27-31; 7 v.9-10, 19; 8 v.5-7, 16-17; 9 v.27-28; 10 v.3-6). With the exodus from Egypt the role of Aaron seems to diminish although he experiences along with Moses the hostility of the Israelites in the wilderness (Ex. 16 v.1-3). Moses assigns Aaron to tell the people that God will provide them with food in Ex. 16 v.9-12. Aaron along with Moses, Nadab, Abihu and the seventy elders see the God of Israel and still live (Ex. 24 v.9-11). Aaron, like Moses, angers God by striking the rock in Num. 20 v.1-13 and they are together to receive the spies report (Num. 13 v.25-29). It is God who commands Aaron to tell the people of his curse on the generation of the wilderness in Num. 14 v.26-38 while the punishment for Aaron and Moses is that they are denied the right to lead the people into the promised

land (Num. 20 v.12). Apart from such instances Aaron's role diminishes yielding to Joshua as the emergent leader. In Ex. 33 v.7-11 Joshua is Moses' understudy and looks after the tent of meeting, while in Ex. 17 v.8-16 Joshua leads the people in battle as Aaron and Hur hold up Moses' hands. Aaron ascends the mountain with Moses but must stand at a distance with Nadab and Abihu as Moses alone speaks with God (Ex. 24 v.1-2). Most destructive of Aaron's leadership was the incident of the building of the golden calf which angered God and Moses, in Ex. 32 v.1-35, as well as his joining Miriam in stirring discontent with Moses' leadership - an act of disloyalty which so provoked God that he struck them both with leprosy for seven days, according to Num. 12 v.1-16. Aaron only appears in Deuteronomy as the builder of the golden calf who so angered God that only the intercession of Moses saved him (9 v.20).

A completely different picture is also presented with regard to Aaron. Although he is still portrayed as the brother of Moses, he is also a priest and founder of a priestly family, 'the sons of Aaron'. Cody states,

"Only in P does he (Aaron) clearly appear as a priest in the Pentateuch, and for a fairly long period in the elaboration of the narrative traditions he seems to have been a polyvalent figure capable of taking on a plurality of diverse aspects" (88)

also

"The figure of Aaron the priest becomes clear only after the Exile in P, but that figure was not something which P constructed without antecedents" (89).

To this priestly Aaron we can assign much of Exodus (25-31, 35-40) all of Leviticus and most of Numbers (1-10 v.25; 15-19; 25-35), where the major focus is on Aaron, his sons, the cult and the tabernacle, and Moses pales into the background.

While Moses was to transmit none of his authority to his sons, Aaron was to transmit his authority to his sons and his sons only. Whereas God might speak to Moses from time to time, the rules mandating the hegemony of Aaron and his sons over the cult were proclaimed by God himself as eternal laws for all generations.

Aaron's authority and status are clearly authenticated for Yahweh himself commands Moses on Sinai to establish a priestly system under Aaron's exclusive control (Ex. 28 v.1-2). It is Aaron and his sons alone who offer the sacrifices (Num. 8 v.1-7) and they who bless the people (Num. 6 v.22-27). When that authority is challenged by Korah and his fellow Levites, Yahweh buries Korah and the other rebels alive and lashes out with fire and plague against Korah's sympathisers, only to be halted by the firepans of Aaron (Num. 16 v.1-50). The Levites are to function as Aaron's servants and

under penalty of death are prohibited from burning sacrifices on the altar (Num. 18 v.2-7).

Aaron and his sons are charged with distinguishing between the holy and the profane as well as teaching the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord spoke to them by the hand of Moses (Lev. 10 v.10-11), which is in contrast to Deuteronomy (17 v.8-11; 18 v.1-5; 33 v.10), where the entire tribe of Levi is charged with this task and in contrast to Ezekiel (44 v.15-24) where the 'sons of Zadok' are to do the distinguishing and the teaching.

Aaron's preeminent role is that of expiator. God commands Moses that Aaron alone is to enter the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement to make expiation for the entire people (Lev. 16 v.1-34). Such a procedure is to be followed every year by Aaron in his lifetime and by his legitimate successor as an everlasting statute (Lev. 16 v.32-34). Aaron is not only portrayed as the priest but he functions within a system which is essentially cultic and focuses on the expiatory role of the altar and the priesthood. This system has transformed the simple tent of meeting where Yahweh spoke to Moses face to face into a marvellous tabernacle which Moses is unable to enter (Ex. 40 v.34-35). The sacrificial system is developed beyond the three festivals of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles to include each day, morning and evening offerings

(Num. 28 v.1-8), as well as a shift of emphasis from thanksgiving to expiation as the major aspect of those three main festivals.

This system is unique and yet this 'new creation' was functioning when the book of Chronicles and Ezra were published and when Ecclesiasticus was written. However Cody finds no evidence of it in Ezekiel,

"neither in this passage (i.e. Ezek. 44 v.6-16) nor in any of the other texts found in Ezekiel is the figure of Aaron used at all" (90).

The author of Chronicles takes for granted that Yahweh revealed Aaronidism in the wilderness so that he does not hesitate to rewrite the history of the monarchical period in such a way that its recurrent theme is the Aaronide priesthood, ministering at the altar in Jerusalem. Ben Sira describes the Aaronide system as a functioning reality which arouses within him great joy (Ecclus 50 v.1-21). He glorifies Aaron more than Moses (Ecclus 45 v.1-22) and affirms that Aaron is to have authority over the commandments, statutes and judgements and to teach the testimonies and the Law (45 v.17). The Aaronide system was so effective that it flourished until the eve of the Hasmonean Revolt, when the legitimate high priest Onais III (around 180 B.C.) was ousted by his brother Jason, who bought the office from Antiochus.

The triumph of Aaronidism is quite remarkable and yet we have little explicit information about it. The Aaronides come to power with the finalised Pentateuch and are in fact their own creation. The Aaronide revolution is the vital factor for an understanding of the Pentateuch.

How we reconcile the two accounts about Aaron in a credible way must concern us briefly. The priestly writer had resources available which he could use in the composition of his work within the constraints of the clearly articulated goals of his whole work. The intention is not to enter a discussion about the precise nature of those resources. It would seem that all pre-patriarchal and patriarchal traditions already recorded and sacrosanct were not tampered with in any major way. Instead a framework of Aaronidism engulfed these materials so as to neutralise their distinctiveness and give credence only to Aaronidism. The effect of the framework was to provide for the reading of such traditional materials from an Aaronide viewpoint as well as surrounding all evidence that threatened the claims of Aaronidism with enormous counter claims in terms of quantity of repetition utilising the signs of Yahweh's special favour to bestow authentication.

The obviously difficult account of Aaron's involvement in the golden calf incident, which is recorded in Ex.

32 v.1-35 and Deut. 9 v.20 is evidence of traditional material in earlier accepted texts which for some reason cannot be excised and therefore the whole incident is swamped before and after by Aaronide claims (91). Ex. 26-31 gives a detailed set of instructions for Israel's worship which are introduced here by P, in particular Chapters 28, 29 and 30 concern Aaron and his sons. Ex. 35-39 report how the instructions given in Ex. 25-31 for the making and arranging of the sanctuary were carried out. The mindset reading Ex. 26-39 is predisposed to Aaronidism on sheer volume, to which is added Yahweh's initiative in singling out Aaron for the priesthood.

On this particular tradition in Ex. 32, Cody observes,

"Aaron's figure in Ex. 32 is not that of a priest ... Aaron's presence in Ex. 32 is determined rather by the setting of the scene (at least in the ordering of the Pentateuchal narrative) at the foot of Sinai ... As for Aaron (who is still not a priest), the entire episode is condemning, not his sin, but the sin of the people" (92).

While such rationalisations are helpful, the weight of material used to hem in this incident reveals that it was an obvious challenge to the Aaronide claim for power.

A similar device is used in the account of Korah's rebellion in Num. 16 v.1-50. The book of Deuteronomy

10 v.8f; 18 v.1f had clearly and precisely set out the altar rights of the Levites, and Moses' farewell address in Deut. 33 v.8f contained a final blessing on the tribe of Levi. Both these elements had to be preserved, or at least, there was no way in which they could be affected. The solution to this problem is presented in Num. 16 where the Levites led by Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On challenge the leadership of Moses and Aaron. The rival claims are portrayed in an incident of trial by ordeal which reveals Yahweh indicating his particular preference for Aaron. Such an incident is reiterated in a less striking way in Num. 17 and is then followed in Num. 18 by a detailed account of Aaronide prerogatives, with the subordinate role of the Levites clearly stated in Num. 18 v.21f. Any encroachment on the privileges of the Aaronides will be punishable by instant death (Num. 18 v.3). The preeminence of Aaron as the divine choice for the priesthood is clearly shown. Cody comments,

"This later stratum of Num. 16, depicting the struggle over priestly prerogatives as the revolt of a Kohathite against a priestly Aaron, must come from a moment before the priestly Aaronides had assured their position, a period when they were still in conflict with the Levites best in a position to challenge them: those Kohathites not admitted as Aaronides" (93).

Not only does P seek to protect Aaronide claims from any opponents, there is also a whole manifesto based on Aaronide ideology which is perceived in most of Exodus, all of Leviticus and much of Numbers. The aim of this work was to ensure the transfer of power from those who had held it to this new class of Aaronides. Rivkin again,

"To effectuate the transfer, the Aaronides had Yahweh express Aaronidism as His will. They had Yahweh command Moses to transform the Tent of Meeting into a Tabernacle. They had Yahweh exclude Moses from entry when the cloud of Yahweh descended upon it. They had Yahweh bury Levitical claims. They had Yahweh spell out with precision their monopolistic privileges. They had Yahweh single them out to expiate the sins of the people. They had Yahweh ordain cultic occasions such as the First Day of the Seventh Month, the Day of the Blowing of the Ram's Horn, for the display of priestly power. But most impressive was their setting aside the Tenth Day of the Seventh Month, the Day of Atonement, for reconsecration of Aaronide absolutism. On that day the Aaronide-in-chief was to enter the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle and there in Yahweh's presence seek expiation for Israel's sins. Each year when he emerged from the Holy of Holies, still alive after having, as it were, been exposed to the very presence of God, he bore testimony to Yahweh's recommitment to Aaronidism. The Tent of Meeting had been the site of Yahweh's revelations to Moses; it had been transformed

and turned over by Moses himself to Aaron.
Year in and year out, commemorating this, the
Aaronides celebrated with appropriate
expiatory sacrifices" (94).

The Aaronides draw skilfully on the work of Deuteronomy who had used the person of Moses as important for validating the claims of the Levites. Deut. 34 v.10 states, 'And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face' and as this is the final presentation of the Pentateuch, we have the vast corpus of legislation establishing Aaronide hegemony seen as absolutely binding. The Pentateuch can therefore be seen as the manifesto for the effective transfer of power to the Aaronides.

Some of the observable sociological factors constituent in the Aaronide revolution would appear to be the coalition of Levitical families into a privileged class known as 'the sons of Aaron' against other priestly families. De Vaux observes,

"the differing accounts of Aaron's role during the Exodus reflect a struggle between different groups of priests; unfortunately we cannot trace this development in detail, so we must fall back on hypotheses" (95).

At the same time one of those families, presumably the sons of Zadok, were elevated to high priestly status, which de Vaux suggests comprised aspects of kingship

(96), along with the special privilege of being the great expiator.

In order to gain popular support, the Aaronide manifesto promised the peasantry liberation from debt slavery and a guarantee that the land of the peasant could not be sold into perpetuity, for in the Jubilee year the land reverted to its original owner. The Aaronides themselves relinquished any rights to land ownership preferring to provide revenues through the cultic system. The scheme was one of expiating priests and prosperous peasants which would be particularly attractive to the 'poor of the land' (97) resident in Palestine who may have feared conflict on the return of the exiles who had previously owned the land, with the possibility of the seizure of their new security. It would be attractive to the imperial overlords who sought a peaceful rule in the province for it placed power in a powerless class, so far as the empire was concerned, rather than any possible aristocratic or monarchical contender. It also presented an ordered world without the disruptive impact of prophecy and ensured the continuity of the faith through a complex ritual cult.

The twin issues of guidance and forgiveness, crucial for the exiles survival, find clear expression in this final work of the Pentateuch. Yahweh had declared his will as recorded in the Pentateuch. He had revealed to

Moses on Sinai the commandments, statutes, judgements and testimonies that were necessary for the ordering of life. Yahweh had taken up residence in the tent of meeting - tabernacle, where daily and on sabbath and festival occasions sacrifices were offered up by the Aaronides. By dwelling in the Holy of Holies, Yahweh's presence assured the sinful that their sins would be shriven. Every year His presence was further confirmed when the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies and sought atonement for Israel. While all these factors - sacrifice, cult, priest, revelation - had been part of Israel's faith, never before had they been intertwined so carefully nor centred on the temple with the Aaronides in sole charge. The emphasis on sin and its expiation, corresponding with all the other relevant aspects, was the major ideological thrust of the Aaronide manifesto. It also moved the focus of attention in Israel away from the community to the individual with the inevitable consequences for the discipline of that community. Such a move was indicative of the age of Aaronidism which saw an increasing individualism.

(e) Footnotes

1. Some term needs to be used to designate the 'people of God' who were involved in the events of 587 B.C. and beyond; whether they lived in Palestine or Babylonian exile. The term is one of convenience, although it is recognised that strictly speaking the people could better be termed 'Judaean'. I prefer to continue the general usage of Israel.
2. Knight, 1985, p263, comments,
"It would be difficult to overestimate the role that the Pentateuch has played in the course of biblical scholarship. In all likelihood, these first five books have been subjected to scrutiny more than any other single block of the Bible, ... It is significant that the Pentateuch has generally served as the staging ground for many if not most of the critical questions and methods that later spread to other areas of the biblical literature."
3. Whybray, 1987, challenges the assumptions and methods of the documentary hypothesis. The form critical and tradition critical theories of Noth, Engnell, Fohrer, Rendtorff and Gunkel are criticised. Whybray very briefly, attempts to posit his own position,
"There appears to be no reason why the first edition of the Pentateuch as a comprehensive work should not also have been the final edition, a work composed by a single historian" (p232-233).

Clines, 1977, attempts to look at the whole of Pentateuch for its meaning.

4. Wellhausen, 1885
5. It is not suggested that the work of von Rad and Noth can be treated together without acknowledging radical differences between the two. I should wish to clarify any possible misunderstanding, although their results contribute to a common synthesis. Von Rad's main interest was in theological questions while Noth was concerned with historical issues. Nevertheless, the two scholars viewed their work as complementary to each other. Noth, 1972a, p2, refers favourably to von Rad's earlier study of the confessions which gave a very early order to the series of themes that were essential for the faith of the Israelite tribes. Von Rad, 1965b, pvii, wished to be read in conjunction with Noth's work.
6. Childs, 1967, p30-39;
Hyatt, 1970, p152-170, would repudiate the antiquity of the creeds.
Van Seters, 1975, disputed the use of oral transmission stage.
7. Van Seters, 1975
8. Schmid, 1976
9. Rendtorff, 1977, p2-10
10. Van Seters, 1975
11. Noth, 1972a, p7-19
12. Von Rad, 1965a, Vol. I, p233, originally cited 1943.
13. Noth, 1972a, p11

14. Noth, 1972a, p12 cf.
McEvenue, 1971.
15. Cross, 1973, p294
16. Cross, 1973, p306
17. Cross, 1973, p295
18. Cross, 1969, p53
19. Van Seters, 1975, p285, who notes that Sandmel, 1969, and Winnett, 1965, have challenged the idea of numerous redactors, apart from the main sources themselves.
20. Wellhausen, 1885
21. Vink, 1969, whose work is criticised by Smith, 1971, p272f., who concludes,
"Vink's theory is based on his faith that Ezra's law was or contained 'the priestly code', but this faith is based on no historical evidence whatever and on the rejection of the plentiful and clear evidence which contradicts it".
22. Kapelrud, 1964, argues for a date between 585 and 550 B.C. His argument depends too heavily on literary affinities.
23. Cross, 1973, p324
24. Kaufmann, 1960, p178;
Speiser, 1960, p29f, develops an early dating on the basis of the exegesis of certain difficult texts in Leviticus.
Hurvitz, 1974, notes differences in language in Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles and Ezekiel to those used in P.
25. Weinfeld, 1972a

26. Fohrer, 1970, p185
27. Fohrer, 1970, p184,
"P contains a programme for the divinely
willed reconstruction of the community after
the Exile or for a reformation of the
community in the post exilic period. This
programme is retrojected into the past in
order to legitimise it and give it
authority."
- Also Ackroyd, 1968, p102, n 96
28. Elliger, 1952, p121f., cited also by von Rad,
1965a, p79
29. Ackroyd, 1968, p85, n 6
30. I do not propose discussing the views
relating to the date of Ezra's mission, see
Rowley, 1954.
31. Macdonald, 1964;
Coggins, 1968, 1975;
Rowley, 1963, p211f., 1962;
Purvis, 1968.
32. Rowley, 1955, p190f.
33. Mowinckel, 1964 explores the problem.
34. Eissfeldt, 1965, p251
35. Ackroyd, 1968, p97-98
36. Noth, 1972a, p248-251
37. Sanders, 1972;
Blenkinsopp, 1977;
Childs, 1979.
38. Driver, 1963, p69

39. Cross, 1973, p301f., considers each instance of this genealogical device and concludes,
"we have listed ten P rubrics; all are superscriptions either to genealogies or (equally often) to JE (or in one case JP) sections ... We have asserted that these headings belong to P and form his framework to JE tradition in Genesis" p304.
40. Hailey, coupled with the tourist phenomena by Americans especially in Scotland to trace their ancestral roots!
41. Westermann, 1984, p93, 95, also Johnson, 1969, p14-36
42. Wellhausen, 1885
43. Brueggemann, 1972, p397f.
44. Brueggemann, 1972, p400
45. Brueggemann, 1972, p400
46. Brueggemann, 1972, p401
47. Elliger, 1952, p143
48. Brueggemann, 1972, p409, also Ackroyd, 1968, p93, about the theme of promise and fulfillment.
49. Brueggemann, 1972, p406,
"The P tradition does not carry the theme into the Mosaic era, perhaps because the legislative material is predominant there."
Such a 'perhaps' is an enormous assumption!
Brueggemann continues his thesis and sees a transition to a great emphasis on 'land' theology.
50. Stott, 1984, p237f.

51. On Genesis 1 v.28, see further, Westermann, 1984, p144f.; Cassuto, 1964, p56; Kidner, 1967, p50; von Rad, 1976, p57
52. Pritchard, 1969, p60-72, tells how, after Marduk had killed the goddess Ti'amat in combat and consigned her consort Kingu to the charge of the god of death, he sliced Ti'amat like a shellfish in two parts, forming the sky from the upper part of her body and the earth from the lower half. Marduk later responded to the gods' complaints about their heavy work by proposing that mankind be created from the blood of Kingu. On the people so created, the heavy work done previously by the gods would be imposed. Consequently, human beings are called to do the work the gods grew weary with and they are essentially evil as they are created from the blood of Kingu, a rebellious deity.
53. This is mentioned briefly, the pursuance of such an idea is beyond the remit of this study. The stress is to show how P regards man's status in his own context.
54. Cassuto, 1964, p60-70
De Vaux, 1961, p475-483
Kraus, 1966, p78-88, who provides a good bibliography on the sabbath issue.
55. See Chapter V, p346-352, 425f., of thesis
56. Cross, 1973, p306-307
57. Ackroyd, 1968, p99
"P plumbs the depths of human need more realistically than does the Deuteronomic work ... The possibility of sin is not ignored; its reality is soberly appreciated. P has no

illusions about an original period of purity."

58. Ackroyd, 1968, p99, n 81
59. Lam. 5 v.20; Ps. 74 v.18, 22; Is. 49 v.14-15
60. Helfmeyer, 1977, p181, who sees it as belonging to 'a special category of mnemonic signs which consists of covenant signs, of which the rainbow ..., circumcision, ... and the sabbath are named as examples in the O.T.'.
61. Clements, 1967, p73
Van Seters, 1975, p292-293
62. Ackroyd, 1968, p95f.,
"For P the only answer must be in an act of pure grace, and this is expressed in what happened at Sinai not as a new event but as a discharging of the earlier pronouncement of grace."
63. Zimmerli, 1965, p90f.
64. North, 1946, pl11
65. Clements, 1967, p71-72
66. Gen. 17 v.8; 23 v.4; 28 v.4; 36 v.7; 37 v.1; 47 v.9; Ex. 6 v.4
67. There seems no reason to challenge the unity of Gen. 23 or P's authorship of it as Vink does, 1969, p90-91. In the framework of his composition P refers back to Machpelah and makes it the burial place of the patriarchs and wives (25 v.9; 35 v.29; 49 v.30; 50 v.13). This passage has posed problems both as to its purpose and due to the scarcity of references to God in it. Von Rad, 1976, p245, sees the story as an initial

fulfillment of the divine promise of the land, they at least possessed their graves as their own. Gunkel, 1922, p273f., notes that the specific location of grave sites of ancestors and heroes in the ancient world encouraged and supported a cult of the dead. Possibly P in presenting the purchase of the patriarchal grave site in a profane manner wanted to lessen this trend. The tone of the piece is strongly contrasted with the careful treatment of everything cultic for no religious act is associated with the burial and the poignant statement, "that I may bury my dead out of my sight" (v.4).

While Westermann, 1984, p376, used the same emphasis on burial for an opposite conclusion:-

"There is a recurrent theme in Gen. 23 (vv.4, 6, 8, 11, 13, 19) which must be the starting point for the elaboration and intention of P. It understands the plot that Abraham acquired not as a small portion of the promised land but as a burial place; it is concerned with the procedure of burial, the necessary presupposition for which is the legal acquisition of a piece of land. Such procedure is very unlikely in the patriarchal period as it accords but poorly with the life-style of the small cattle nomad and is not attested elsewhere. It is, however, completely comprehensible from the period and experience of the exile when those driven from their native land were laying 'their dead' to rest and wanted to have a place they could call their own (it is here that the real meaning of the theme comes through).

Gen. 23, therefore, is to be understood in the context of Chapters 17, 23, 28, where P enters into greater detail. P makes the patriarchal story the base for what this writer regards as the three most important precultic family rites of birth, marriage, and burial. Along with circumcision (Ch. 17) and marriage within one's own people (Ch. 28), it also is a case of a procedure that acquired its specific meaning only in a later period. During the exile the family attained a significance which was determinative for the preservation of the people of Israel and its religion; what is basic to the family is for P basic to the people of God (Ch. 17 and the code of Sinai).

68. Ex. 6 v.9; 14 v.10, 15; 16 v.2-3.

69. Ackroyd, 1968, p92-93

70. Cross, 1973, p318,

"The most stunning omission from the Priestly document is a narrative of the covenant ceremony proper. The covenant at Sinai was the climax to which the entire Priestly labor had been directed. Israel's final gift of the series of covenants was the gift of the presence of Yahweh's Glory 'tabernacling' in their midst. Israel's final law, adumbrated in earlier covenants, was now revealed in full in its symmetrical complexity at Sinai and also in its simplicity in the covenant document, the ten words which formed the covenant par excellence. It is not by chance that the P tradent poured his traditions into the Sinai section until it dwarfed all his other sections and indeed his other periods. The climactic blessing of Lev. 26 v.9, v.11-

l3a stresses most clearly the supreme meaning of the covenant at Sinai, Yahweh's tabernacle in Israel's midst and thereby his covenant presence with his people."

cf. Chapter II, n 62 of thesis.

71. Zimmerli, 1965, p90, who cites his own essay, Sinaibund und Abrahambund, p268-280,

"Through the bold alteration made by the Priestly Document, the whole covenant relationship of Israel becomes anchored in the Abraham covenant. Thus it is rested in a covenant which contains no proclamation of law but is a complete gift, proclaiming an election of grace".

72. Cross, 1973, p299

73. Cross, 1947, p65f.

74. For a consideration of the sacrificial system see:

Rowley, 1950;

Gray, 1925;

Pedersen, 1959;

Levine, 1974;

Von Rad, 1965a, p250f.;

Eichrodt, 1961-67, Vol. I, p140f.;

De Vaux, 1964;

Snaith, 1957;

Davies, 1977. This is a vast subject which has been covered extensively elsewhere, I merely allude to it and acknowledge its importance for P.

75. On specific sacrifices, the literature cited below has been helpful:
Milgrom, 1976a; 1976b; 1976c;
Snaith, 1965, p73f.;
Morris, 1958, p196f.
76. Zimmerli is cited by Ackroyd, 1968, p101,
The Day of Atonement is a complex issue, see:
Kaufmann, 1960, p302f.;
Noth, 1965, p115;
Levine, 1974, p53f.;
Milgrom, 1976c, p82.
77. Ackroyd, 1970, p159
78. Zimmerli, 1953;
Stamm, 1967, p76f.;
Schmidt, 1983, p53f.;
Ringgren, 1977, p346-352.
79. Westermann, 1969;
Whybray, 1975;
Stuhlmueeller, 1959, 1970.
80. Simpson, 1951, p198
81. Klostermann, 11893, p368f
82. Snaith, 1967;
Clements, 1970;
Micklem, 1953;
Noth, 1965;
Porter, 1976;
Wenham, 1979.
83. Eissfeldt, 1965, p238;

Elliott-Binns, 1955, p26f.

84. Pfeiffer, 1948, p241

85. North, 1946, p108

86. Rivkin, 1971, p29-30

87. Carroll, 1981, p72

88. Cody, 1969, p150

89. Cody, 1969, p159

90. Cody, 1969, p165

91. Smolar, 1976, p123,

"The detailed description of the violent reaction of Moses and the Levites was calculated to counteract the establishment of the calf cult at Bethel, where the priesthood traced its descent from Aaron ... It appears, therefore, that Ex. 32 represents the attitude of the Zadokite priests of Jerusalem, who evidently did not identify with the Aaronite priesthood until after the Exile ... only in the post exilic era that the Zadokite priesthood, anxious to be recognised as the sole legitimate priesthood (Ezekiel 44, v.15-31), endowed itself with Aaronite descent ... The elevation of Aaron in so many Pentateuchal passages and the partial mitigation of his culpability evidently derives from the need to present Aaron, now considered the progenitor of the entire priesthood, in a more favourable light."

92. Cody, 1969, p148

93. Cody, 1969, p173

94. Rivkin, 1971, p34

95. De Vaux, 1961, p395
96. De Vaux, 1961, p400f.,

"The high priest and the idea of kingship. These rites of investiture (accompanied by anointing) made the high priests of post exilic times rather like the kings before the Exile. Anointing was the principal ceremony in the coronation, for it made the king the Anointed of Yahweh. The clothing worn by the high priest is equally significant: the turban (ṣaniph) which Josue receives is a royal head-dress in Is. 62, v.3; Si (Hebrew text) 11 v.5; 40 v.4; 46 v.16, and the miṣnepheth mentioned in the Priestly texts is worn by the prince in Ezekiel 21 v.31. In addition, Si 40 v.4 says that the king's saniph had on it a ṣiṣ, i.e. a flower as worn in front of the turban by the high priest. Nezer, the equivalent of ṣiṣ, is a sign of royal rank in 2 Samuel 1, v.10; 2 Kings 11 v.12; Ps 89, v.40, and the meaning we ascribed to nezer is confirmed by a royal psalm (Ps 132, v.18): 'his nezer shall blossom'. Last of all, the breast-plate covered in precious stones (Ex. 28 v.15f.) recalls the rich breast-plate worn by the Pharaohs, and by the kings of Syria in imitation of them, as the finds at Byblos show; it is quite likely that the kings of Israel also wore a similar breast-plate.

Once the monarchy had disappeared, all this royal paraphernalia was appropriated to the high priest. This does not mean merely, or mainly, that the high priest inherited the cultic privileges of the king, for we have proved that the king's rights in the exercise

of worship were far from unrestricted. What it does mean is that the high priest became the head of the nation, and its representative before God, as the king had been in days gone by. But it was only gradually that this idea of the high priest as head of the nation took shape."

97. See note 96 above

CHAPTER III

The ideology of the Aaronide manifesto

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Purity and Danger by Mary Douglas
- (c) The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism
by Jacob Neusner
- (d) In the Presence of the Lord by Baruch Levine
- (e) The ideology of the Aaronide manifesto
- (f) Footnotes

(a) Introduction

The concept of purity has been the object of renewed interest in recent years. The work of Douglas on the abominations of Leviticus (1), appears to have been a major source of stimulation in this regard, or at least a definable pointer in a development of thought. It is also allied with an increasing awareness of the need to consider various biblical themes as part of a whole rather than in piecemeal fashion. Douglas made it very clear,

"that anyone approaching rituals of pollution nowadays would seek to treat a people's ideas of purity as part of a larger whole" (2).

Neusner concurs,

"purity is an essential element in the interpretation of Israel's total religious system" (3).

Smith, in detailing the period of the Second Temple, observes that,

"differences as to the interpretation of the purity laws and especially as to the consequent question of table fellowship were among the principal causes of the separation of Christianity from the rest of Judaism and the early fragmentation of Christianity itself" (4).

This recent emphasis on the concept of purity in ancient Judaism has not received widespread approval, for Zwi Werblowsky notes rather cynically,

"notions of purity and impurity and the existence of rites and procedures of purification, seem to produce with some scholars ... a conditioned reflex associating these notions with magical and semi-magical realms of pollution" (5).

While works which cover Judaism and Christianity in the first century either ignore it (6) or fail to provide a cogent interpretation (7).

The concept of purity has been, for a long time, of interest to anthropologists, for a concern with the clean and the unclean reaches far beyond the religion of Israel (8). It was Robertson Smith who sought to combine his knowledge of ancient Judaism with notions from the emerging discipline of anthropology in the 19th Century and in many ways his views have remained accepted by many even up to today (9). His views have been challenged (10), which need not concern us here, simply to note his attitude to the concept of purity in the biblical tradition,

"The irrationality of the laws of uncleanness from the standpoint of spiritual religion or even of the higher heathenism is so manifest that they must necessarily be looked on as having survived from an earlier form of faith and society" (11).

He comments that,

"the rules about the uncleanness produced by the carcass of vermin in Lev. 11 v.32f ... Rules like this have nothing in common with the spirit of Hebrew religion; they can only be remains of a primitive superstition" (12).

Robertson Smith viewed the laws of uncleanness as survivals from a primitive past for he, with others, viewed religions from an evolutionistic viewpoint, in that a move was observed from primitive superstitions or taboos to a higher spiritual religion like Judaism with its superior values of morality. Such a distinction has confused this area of studies ever since and it is a false dichotomy.

Buchanan has shown this distinction is unnecessary since sin, defilement and impurity were indistinguishable in the biblical tradition,

"the Israelite not only used words like sin, transgression, cheating and iniquity synonymously, he also used defilement synonymously with these terms" (13).

It is Douglas who reminds us,

"that pollution has indeed much to do with morals,"

and she proceeds to show their interrelationship (14). It may be suggested that this dichotomy is the product of the analytical mind of the western world which seeks to impose preformed categories upon the material rather

than let the material shape the conclusions. The forced dichotomy articulated between purity and ethics has led to a failure to appreciate the importance of the concept of purity for an understanding of Judaism as a whole. Moore grasped the significance of the lack of distinction between uncleanness and moral wrong,

"In Jewish laws all these fall under the comprehensive name 'sin', which is at bottom a ritual, not a moral conception" (15).

His views were developed by Gavin,

"by the 2nd Century B.C. the inclusion of 'moral' and 'religious' 'ritual' and 'ethical' in one sphere was both taken for granted and effectively maintained"(16).

However despite such perceptive comments, the dichotomy and consequent misunderstanding have persisted.

My concern is to consider three works as they bear on the subject of purity, which will be seen as crucial for our understanding of the ideology of the Aaronides. Indeed it may be suggested that this emphasis was part of the genius of the Aaronides, in that it subsumed so many other different facets of Israelite faith and self understanding within the all encompassing concept of purity, which as we shall see later was another form of talk about holiness. It is not suggested that one can condense the ideology into one idea but I would suggest that several ideas interrelate and correspond within

the concepts of the holy. It is not to be forgotten that such an ideology was the creation of a particular group, the Aaronides, within the Israelite community as they endeavoured to present a convincing interpretation of the events surrounding the exile. Their purpose was also to gain control of society and appropriate all power to themselves and in that context, we should consider their ideology as particularly emanating from the priestly perspective on life.

(b) Purity and Danger by Mary Douglas

Douglas in her book, Purity and Danger, provides a stimulating approach for biblical studies into the thorny question of the abominations of Leviticus (17). She seeks to present a rationale to these prohibitions in Lev. 11 and approaches the material from the perspective of social anthropology. She considers the biblical material from anthropological structuralism which seeks to show the classificatory system of reality and develop some understanding about the symbolic meaning of such a system (18). Douglas applies Lévi-Strauss's view of reality, that it is ordered in terms of oppositions and classifications by the Hebrews, but she goes further in seeing the practical application of a classificatory system, as a social code embodying and expressing the Hebrew view of the dependence of the natural order upon the creative power of God (19).

A primary method of approach to ancient primitive religions, for some considerable time, has been to consider the aspect of fear in the hope that such an approach would provide an avenue for the greater understanding of the whole aspect of religion. Douglas begins with a basic premise,

"dirt is essentially disorder. There is no such thing as absolute dirt: it exists in the

eye of the beholder. If we shun dirt, it is not because of craven fear, still less dread or holy terror. ... dirt offends against order. Eliminating it is not a negative movement but a positive effort to organise the environment" (20).

The positive aspect of this study is developed further,

"it is a creative movement, an attempt to relate form to function, to make unity of experience. If this is so with our separating, tidying and purifying, we should interpret primitive purification and prophylaxis in the same light" (21).

From this stance, she develops the major thesis of her book thus,

"that rituals of purity and impurity create unity in experience. So far from being aberrations from the central project of religion, they are positive contributions to atonement. By their means, symbolic patterns are worked out and publicly displayed" (22).

Such notions of purity and impurity are difficult to date and some may assume they relate to primitive cultures but

"there is every reason to believe that they are sensitive to change. The same impulse to impose order which brings them into existence can be supposed to be continually modifying or enriching them" (23).

Such an approach is applied to the abominations of Leviticus which have perennially been a puzzle. The premise that

"defilement is never an isolated event. It cannot occur except in view of a systematic ordering of ideas. Hence any piecemeal interpretation of the pollution rules of another culture is bound to fail. For the only way in which pollution ideas make sense is in reference to a total structure of thought whose key-stone, boundaries, margins and internal lives are held in relation by rituals of separation" (24)

precedes a consideration of some of the piecemeal interpretations of these verses.

The view that these rules are ethical and disciplinary rather than symbolic finds expression in quotes from Maimonides (25) and Epstein (26). Stein is quoted as tracing such an ethical interpretation to the time of Hellenistic influences on Jewish culture (27). The work of Philo supports the ethical interpretation,

"The lawgiver sternly forbade all animals of land, sea or air whose flesh is the finest and fattest, like that of pigs and scaleless fish, knowing that they set a trap for the most slavish of senses, the taste, and that they produced gluttony'

and connects with a medical one,

'an evil dangerous to both soul and body, for gluttony begets indigestion, which is the

source of all illnesses and infirmities'"
(28).

Reference is made to Robertson-Smith and Frazer (29) who see the rules as irrational and unexplainable and the other scholars who have followed their lead (30). This draws the significant comment,

"such interpretations are not interpretations at all, since they deny any significance to the rules. They express bafflement in a learned way" (31).

Pfeiffer is quoted as defending a largely arbitrary understanding of the rules (32) but it is pointed out,

"arbitrariness is a decidedly unexpected quality to find in Leviticus ... For source criticism attributes Leviticus to the Priestly source, the dominant concern of whose authors was for order" (33).

The interpretation of these rules as allegories of virtues and vices finds expression in the letter of Aristeeas as well as Philo (34). This draws the comment from Douglas,

"These are not so much interpretations as pious commentaries. They fail as interpretations because they are neither consistent nor comprehensive" (35).

While another traditional approach has been to see the forbidden aspects of these rules as a device to prevent foreign influence from affecting the Israelites (36).

Even this approach is found wanting because of the inconsistencies and contradictions it produces. It would seem that Douglas has demolished successfully most of the previous attempts to deal with this knotty problem. From this position she then proceeds to lay certain foundations which provide an entry into this maze. A basic methodological one is to view as a whole the material which is available.

"Any interpretations will fail which take the Do-nots of the O.T. in piecemeal fashion. The only sound approach is to forget hygiene, aesthetics, morals and instinctive revulsion, even to forget the Canaanites and the Zoroastrian Magi, and start with the texts. Since each of the injunctions is prefaced by the command to be holy, so they must be explained by that command" (37).

Holiness is seen as an attribute of the deity with the meaning of 'separated'. The principles of power and danger within the cosmological schema of the Israelites are seen as blessing being the source of all good things with its removal being the source of all dangers. Prosperity is perceived as conforming to the order and pattern of God. Another aspect of holiness is elucidated as wholeness and completeness,

"Much of Leviticus is taken up with stating the physical perfection that is required of things presented in the Temple and of persons approaching it. The animals offered in sacrifice must be without blemish, women must be purified after childbirth, lepers should

be separated and ritually cleansed before being allowed to approach it once they are cured. All bodily discharges are defiling and disqualify from approach to the Temple. Priests may only come into contact with death when their own close kin die. But the high priest must never have contact with death" (38).

This notion is perceived as being repeated in that,

"the culture of the Israelites was brought to the pitch of greatest intensity when they prayed and when they fought. The army could not win without the blessing and to keep the blessing in the camp they had to be specially holy. So the camp was to be preserved from defilement like the Temple. Here again all bodily discharges disqualified a man from entering the camp as they would disqualify a worshipper from approaching the altar. A warrior who had had an issue of the body in the night should keep outside the camp all day and only return after sunset, having washed. Natural functions producing bodily waste were to be performed outside the camp (Deut. 23 v.10-15). In short the idea of holiness was given an external, physical expression in the wholeness of the body seen as a perfect container (39).

The concept of the holy as completeness finds expression within a social setting,

"An important enterprise, once begun, must not be left incomplete. This way of lacking wholeness also disqualifies a man from

fighting. Before a battle the captains shall proclaim:

Deut. 20 v.5 What man is there that has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it. V.6 What man is there that has planted a vineyard and has not enjoyed its fruit? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man enjoy its fruit. V.7 And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife and has not taken her? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man take her.

Admittedly there is no suggestion that this rule implies defilement. It is not said that a man with a half-finished project on his hands is defiled in the same way that a leper is defiled. The next verse in fact goes on to say that fearful and faint-hearted men should go home lest they spread their fears. But there is strong suggestion in other passages that a man should not put his hand to the plough and then turn back. Pedersen goes so far as to say that:

'in all these cases a man has started a new important undertaking without having finished it yet ... a new totality has come into existence. To make a breach in this prematurely, i.e. before it has attained maturity or has been finished, involves a serious risk of sin.'

If we follow Pedersen, then blessing and success in war required a man to be whole in

body, wholehearted and trailing no
uncompleted schemes" (40).

All of this interpretation of holiness is valuable for it lends credence to the major aspect of Douglas' work and permits us to glimpse something of the scope of possibilities within such an approach.

The essence of such an approach finds expression in seeing,

"holiness requires that individuals shall conform to the class to which they belong. And holiness requires that different classes of things shall not be confused ... Holiness means keeping distinct the categories of creation. It therefore involves correct definition, discrimination and order" (41).

From this base Douglas proceeds to consider the dietary rules of Leviticus 11, attempting to see the same metaphor of holiness applied to them. The creatures that are described as unclean

"are the obscure unclassifiable elements which do not fit the pattern of the cosmos" (42).

With respect to animals, this means that the norm is set by those which both chew the cud and are cloven-hooved, 'whatever parts the hoof and is cloven footed and chews the cud, among the animals, you may eat' (Lev. 11 v.3). The exceptions specified to this rule are the camel (v.4), the rock badger (v.5), the hare

(v.6) and the swine (v.7). After this a consideration of birds, fish and insects follows the basic premise,

"the underlying principle of cleanness in animals is that they shall conform fully to their class".

In order to grasp such a scheme a return to the Genesis creation story is made, where it is suggested that a

"threefold classification unfolds, divided between the earth, the waters and the firmament" (43).

Leviticus utilises such a scheme and allocates to each element its proper kind of life. Therefore in the air two-legged fowls fly with wings, in the water scaly fish swim with fins (v.9) and on the earth four-legged animals hop, jump or walk. She concludes,

"the dietary laws would have been like signs which at every turn inspired meditation on the oneness, purity and completeness of God. By rules of avoidance, holiness was given a physical expression in every encounter with the animal kingdom and at every meal" (44).

A corresponding approach by means of a structuralist methodology is taken by Soler (45) but with slightly different conclusions. Soler, citing Jacob (46), observes that the cloven-hooved animal is a herbivorous creature because it has no means of seizing its prey and such animals correspond correctly to Gen. 1 v.30 'to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the

air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food'. Animals or birds that prey on other creatures or eat carrion are not included in this creation account and, therefore, do not fit into the structure of the norm and are consequently unclean.

Soler, working apart from Douglas, concludes,

"The clean animals of the earth must conform to the plan of creation, that is to be vegetarian; they must also conform to their ideal models, that is, be without blemish" (47).

It is through order and classification that one should approach the whole question of purity and impurity, for

"The Hebrews conceived of the order of the world as the order underlying the creation of the world. Uncleaness then is simple disorder" (48).

Douglas, with Soler in corroboration, has provided a penetrating analysis into a very confused area of biblical studies. By a strict methodological approach she has provided fresh light on an ancient problem. The analysis of holiness as meaning completeness and its application to a variety of diverse conditions is instructive. Most helpful is the perception of holiness requiring that

"individuals should conform to the class to which they belong. And holiness requires that different classes shall not be confused" (49).

It means,

"keeping distinct the categories of creation. It, therefore, involves correct definition, discrimination and order" (50).

This conception will provide an important key for the issue of discipline within the community for it will allow us to see that holiness, in one of its aspects, is a factor in the Aaronide ideology for the control of the people of God. That holiness is seen as a regulative principle that organises life , provides an element in any study of control within the community.

Douglas' approach, though helpful, is rather confined and in some regards biblically unsecured. While she defines holiness as separatedness, it must be recognised that that is but one definition of it (51) and certainly does not account for the rich associations applied to holiness in the O.T. (52). Wilson argues that the use of anthropological data for biblical studies should be governed by six guidelines, one of which is

"the biblical text must be the controlling factor" (53).

This flaw in Douglas' presentation is developed by Carroll in his attempt to refashion the basic thesis (54). He suggests that rather than the threefold classification of animals in Genesis - 'land animals', 'water animals' and 'flying animals', there is a five-fold description:-

- "1. fish (Gen. 1 v.26, 28)
2. birds (Gen. 1 v.20, 21, 22, 26, 28)
3. cattle (Gen. 1 v.24, 25, 26)
4. beasts of the earth (Gen. 1 v.24, 25 30)
5. creeping things (Gen. 1 v.24, 25, 26, 30).

To be sure, it is possible to collapse the last three categories into a single category ('land animals'), but this would reflect the analytic preferences of the modern reader and not the logic of Genesis, which is at pains to list separately these three categories, as in the following passage:

Gen. 1 v.25 And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the cattle according to their kinds, and everything that creeps upon the ground according to its kind" (55).

Such a clarification is helpful for Leviticus states that all land animals which do not chew the cud and part the hoof are unclean and yet many of the land animals thus defined as unclean (i.e. the hare and the rock badger) would fit into the 'beasts of the earth' classification and are not anomalous. The close

connection between the classifications of creation in Genesis and what is clean or unclean in Leviticus, offered by Douglas, fails to take account of the differences in the texts and offers a too simplistic connection. The anomalous nature of unclean things described in Leviticus, whether flying creatures or swarming things, does not correspond with the classification scheme in Genesis (56), which sees them as 'good'.

Carroll boldly states,

"the general theory that Professor Douglas presents is entirely correct, although misapplied in the case of Leviticus".

He prefers to see the taboo applied to those animals which blur the categories of nature and culture. Thus he interprets the prohibited birds in Leviticus 11 v.13-19 as carnivorous, Gen. 1 v.30 is seen to specify vegetarianism as the norm, which is later adjusted in Gen. 9 v.3 to permit men only to be meat eaters. Thus meat eating is associated with men, that is culture and not with animals and nature. The same distinction between carnivores and non carnivores applies in the winged insect class, the land animals and the fish, says Carroll. They threaten the distinction between nature and culture, for Carroll sees meat eating as associated only with men. While such a reinterpretation may be helpful in that,

"Leviticus defines as unclean those things anomalous with respect to the nature/culture distinction" (57),

nevertheless, it misses a major aspect. This would be to suggest that a major factor in differentiating between the clean and unclean revolves around whether the creatures are herbivorous or not. A special significance is attached to blood by the Aaronides, a concern which we shall see later. Blood is seen as the concrete substance of the holy, synonymous with holy or expressive of the holy.

"Blood, which symbolises life and represents the covenant, may also be associated with order and the divine aspect of life" (58).

A proper handling of blood appears essential in any consideration of holiness for the Priestly writer. Such an approach would lend credence to the sacrificial system with the priests being handlers of the blood.

The Israelites, with their command to holiness, reveal a society

"where the lines of structure, cosmic or social are clearly defined" (59),

and within such a society a concern for cleanness and uncleanness will occur. Douglas has been helpful in providing an inroad for our understanding of the Priestly writer's work (60).

(c) The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism by
Jacob Neusner

Neusner in his book, *The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism*, attempts to study the different values attached to purity in Judaism between 300 B.C. and 700 A.D. by means of an historical and collative approach. He readily acknowledges that his major area of competence resides in the post Biblical period (61). The confines of such a study, are emphasized, (62), and further clarified,

"I have taken as my primary task the arranging of a repertoire of pertinent sources, without claiming greatly to contribute to the understanding of any particular one of them. While this work in some, though not entire, measure is that of collection and arrangement, not novel interpretation of all that is collected, I hope that what is arranged may add up to more than the sum of the parts. For when we see laid out before us the range of ideas historically associated with purity for nearly a millenium, we are able to perceive both continuities and development, enduring viewpoints and novel interpretations and applications, which are not apparent in a piecemeal examination of ideas about purity and impurity in a single stage of their unfolding. We are able, moreover, to perceive that the ideas associated with purity and impurity at particular stages in the history of Judaism ... are suggestive,

far beyond their specificities, of the larger conceptions held in such ages or by such groups" (63).

Neusner then proceeds to consider the biblical legacy in terms of the

"relationship between ritual and the religious imagination in ancient Judaism" (64).

He is not anxious to pursue the origins of impurity phobia but rather to know,

"how those groups in Judaism from the third century B.C. to the seventh century A.D. whose writings have been preserved understood the biblical and traditional laws on this subject" (65).

Brief mention is made of Robertson Smith and Levine who present two contradictory views on the meaning of purity in ancient Israel, a fuller discussion of both these views will be considered later.

Neusner suggests,

"The biblical corpus of ideas about purity may be divided into two distinct parts, the interpretation of purity and impurity as a metaphor of morality on the one hand and the specific laws about purity and impurity in connection with the Temple cult on the other" (66).

The passages which deal with purity as a symbol are varied and impurity is viewed as rejection of God,

idolatry, improper sexual relations as well as evil doings. While puzzlement appears to characterise these diverse usages, Neusner sees,

"The Temple supplied to purity its importance in the religious life. As the Temple signified divine favour and as the cult supplied the nexus between Israel and God, so purity, associated so closely with both, could readily serve as an image either of divine favour or of man's loyalty to God. From that fact followed the assignment of impurity to all that stood against the Temple, the cult and God" (67).

When purity and impurity are related to the cult as the priestly law code would suggest, it permits impurity to assume the meaning of being unable to participate in the cult. One notes the clear and obvious bias of the priestly writer who perceives everything in terms of its relation to the cult, for this was the centre of his world and the core of society's self-understanding, as he wished it to be, over which he sought control. Many diverse matters are reduced, by the logic of the priestly writers, to a single result, impurity.

"the leper is - 'impure'; so too, a house with a growth on its walls; so too a menstrual woman; so too one who touches a creeping thing; so too a woman in childbirth; so too a whole variety of growths - boils, swelling, raw flesh - on one's body; so too one who has a discharge from his body; so too a corpse; so too a spot on a piece of linen or wool. These may seem to bear some

slight relationship to one another. But the same word, unclean, is applied to illicit sexual relations. A Nazir is supposed to avoid becoming 'unclean'. A woman suspected of having committed adultery is regarded as having become 'unclean'. And there are no distinctions among these various applications of the word 'unclean'. Thus we have once again little more than the reduction of diverse conditions to one metaphor" (68).

By his collative work, Neusner succinctly allows us to appreciate the all embracing category of impurity. This summary position leads him to examine the priestly code of purity, which occurs mainly in Lev. 11-15. His investigation proceeds to view uncleanness appertaining to animals in Lev. 11 v.1-47, the important theological emphasis of v.44, 'For I am the Lord your God. Sanctify yourselves and be holy, for I am holy ...' receives special attention.

"What is new here is the equation of purity with holiness ... But what we are not told is why these particular animals are unclean and lead to unholiness ... All living creatures are simply divided into clean and unclean, without explanation" (69).

Three other sources of uncleanness, childbirth (Lev. 12 v.1-8), swellings (Lev. 13 v.1-14, 57) and mildew are dealt with and in each case a common factor is that atonement will be made pertinent to these conditions, although there is no explicit reference to sin.

"As we have already observed, uncleanness is discussed with reference to a single consequence, participation in the cult. But here that consequence is not explicitly indicated (as in Lev. 11 v.44), but only by the redactional context in which the law is given and by the repeated allusion to the priests' supervision of the rites" (70).

The fifth source of uncleanness is seen in bodily discharges (Lev. 15 v.1-33) with a general explanation given, v.31, 'You shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst'. Neusner claims,

"Here in a single sentence is the complete priestly ideology of purity. All matters of purity attain importance because of the cult" (71).

A similar notion is found in Lev. 16 v.16 but is seen to have been developed,

"now comes the equation of uncleanness with transgression and sin" (72)

although uncleanness is not made as a metaphor for sin. The sixth source of uncleanness concerns sexual misdeeds and this uncleanness is linked with the uncleanness of the land, especially in Lev. 18 v.24 for

"Here we come upon the last important motif of the priestly cleanness-ideology: the equation of cleanness with sanctity, along with the imputation of cleanness and sanctity

to Israel ... The cult and the land are now joined to the people: all three must be kept free of impurity. The purity of cult, land and people signifies God's favour" (73).

The last source of uncleanness is the corpse which is related specifically to the priesthood (Lev. 21 v.1-24). The conclusion is drawn from this careful catalogue of materials,

"Rules of different origin thus are put together and linked to a single outcome: the purity of the cult" (74).

Such a picture is not changed substantially by a consideration of the purity laws of Numbers, which is what one would expect since both come from the same priestly tradition.

The biblical material has provided a clear link, to Neusner, between purity and the cult,

"The priestly laws and narratives thus remain strikingly reticent about what lies behind the specific rules of cleanness. In other religions certain animals were sacred or served as totems for shrines or were associated with demons and evil powers. The separation of sex from the cult, making it defiling because of its use in other cults, is taken for granted. But why sex must be divorced from the sanctuary is not explained. Perhaps the motive here was reaction against the Canaanite cults, in which sexual acts were prominent. Making the dead unclean likewise removes the cult of the dead from

the holy place. Primitive taboos of all sorts are before us. But behind all of them the primary ideological motif is cultic purity. Almost all specific uncleannesses are to be avoided on that account, either explicitly or implicitly. The holiness of the cult may then be extended to the priesthood, the land, the people. But these represent merely further developments of what is, to begin with, a concern for cultic and priestly purity"

and again

"The sole significant difference between legal and other types of literature is concern for the details of purity and the specific things to be done, in each case, to restore purity. But this is natural, for the task of legislation is to supply specific instruction, while interpretive literature is going to use the general categories established and given material weight by the law. A contrast between cultic purity and ethical impurity will not be made explicit in the priestly code. But the priestly code takes for granted that impurity is like sin; purification frees one from sin. The implication that purity is to be contrasted with sinfulness, as with impurity, is not left without articulation. For the priestly code equates purity with holiness, and the details of holiness concern as much ethical as ritual matters (as in Lev. 19 or Is. 5 v.16). Purity concerns cult, land, food, sex, the divinity, the relations between individuals. In varying ways and degrees both legal and non-legal writings reveal a

common priestly ideology and employ a common hermeneutical corpus of symbols and metaphors based upon the holiness of the cult" (75).

The position reached by Neusner is similar to that of Douglas, although by a different methodology, which views the purity laws of Leviticus as the product of the priestly writer. Holiness is conceived of as the prime motif within the material and it finds its practical application within the categories of purity and impurity.

The various sects and parties of late Judaism developed as a result of various and differing interpretations of the purity laws, (76). Such a fragmented development in late Judaism was probably due to a breakdown in the priestly authority which had been the dominant force in matters pertaining to the purity laws. The demise of priestly power and authority witnessed by a splintering into various groups is evidence of how strong priestly power had been and how thoroughly it had permeated Israelite culture.

Neusner has been concerned at various points in his work on the biblical material, to stress that the materials we are using are biased, in that they come from the priestly writer who has adapted traditional material and utilised it for his own purposes (77). The contention being that it may not be indicative of Israelite life as a whole, but rather reflect a

minority pressure group. While such a view must be weighed carefully, it must not be overstressed for we see from Smith how far the priestly writer either reflected Israelite life in its entirety or more correctly influenced its life permanently. It may be that Smith's comment reveals the thorough and effective nature of the priestly writer's ideology on Israelite life. It also reflects the vibrancy of the revolution that the Aaronides sought to introduce into Israelite life. The question of its practical outworking in terms of the control of the community is a matter for later in this work, although it is stressed here that the ideological achievement was outstanding.

Judaic sectarianism of the period of the Second Temple is viewed by Neusner as associated with purity.

"purity is an essential element in the interpretation of Israel's total religious system over sixteen centuries. The ideas we are about to review reflect a much larger perspective upon reality than is contained within their specific explanations of purity and impurity. They give us a brief glimpse into the 'sacred canopy' beneath which ancient Judaism, from the tenth century B.C. to the destruction of the Second Temple and beyond, down to the advent of Islam, organized and interpreted existence.

In the sources before us, as in the Hebrew Scriptures, that glimpse focuses upon the Temple itself, its priesthood, cult, rites, and their larger meaning. Extant ideas,

centered on the Temple, about purity and impurity in microcosm reveal a conception far greater than themselves. They show how the day-to-day issues of community and common life were understood in terms of the cult" (78).

By reference to Douglas' thesis that,

"pollution is a type of danger which is not likely to occur except where the lines of structure, cosmic or social, are clearly defined" (79),

he posits the lines of structure in Israelite life as converging on the Temple (80),

"social values are going in some measure to depend for both vividness and moral authority upon their capacity to find a place within the Temple symbolism. Religious sins will in like manner be made to fit within, or to form an analogy to, the Temple's imagery. The Temple's centrality in the Israelite conception of the cosmos therefore will seem to account for the centralization of impurity within the cultic framework, then its generation of evocative metaphors for the secular world outside. When impurity is seen to be entirely divorced from the Temple, and purity is filled with meanings entirely without pertinence to the cult - philosophical, social, or ethical virtues, for instance - then we stand in a world to which the Temple as a physical reality and a unifying, organizing force in the perception

of the world, has ceased to impart meaning"
(81).

The sharp dichotomy drawn in the last sentence fails to appreciate the interrelatedness of cult and ethics which would be integral to the ancient Israelites. They would see no contradiction between the two and here Neusner permits a too rationalistic approach to intrude in his work. He also does not grasp the function of pollution beliefs within the whole realm of humanity (82).

The particular emphasis on the Temple could be conceivably the work of the Aaronides who wish to focus all attention within their sacral universe on the very area where they control the power. Thus the attempt to control absolute power and create a circularity within their system of thinking may be another facet of their ideological revolution.

Such a presentation is justified by Neusner because it accurately reports what

"the sources consistently allege" (83).

He has developed the issue one stage further than Douglas, in that he has linked this concern for purity with the Temple or as being based on the Temple. This he sees as the work of the priestly writers who have used purity and impurity far more than any other biblical writers. They have taken over the Temple and

all the laws and symbols associated with purity. Such laws and symbols are related to ordinary affairs and are brought within the orbit of the cult without possessing any intrinsic relationship to the cult. While such a bias reflects one facet of society, it also serves to underscore the success of Aaronidism that it was able to subsume so many diverse elements within a single system.

It is regretted that Neusner has developed this approach on purity in ancient Judaism without giving more attention to the important and embrative command of holiness, which is characteristic of P. Such an omission is all the more surprising since he has utilised Douglas in his work. It would have also obviated the difficulty he encounters as to how purity matters can relate to cultic and non cultic matters alike, for he comments,

"one cannot easily subsume ... several sorts of uncleanness within a single institution, nor, ... do they serve to define other social structures" (84).

In the conclusion, an attempt is made to correlate the findings from the historical enquiry undertaken with some of the issues raised by current anthropological thought, in the person of Douglas. The desire is not to criticise Douglas but rather to advance the

consideration on purity in ancient Judaism by such a combined approach (85).

Neusner contends that such pollution laws and ideas as discovered within the Biblical material do not control behaviour. It is rationalised,

"whatever pollutions people have incurred they may remove by a single act of purification. Having to become pure in connection with a pilgrimage is hardly going to produce changes in behaviour over the greater part of the year or in ordinary life" (86).

However, that is to miss the very essence of the matter, for the act of purification required the involvement of the priesthood who sought to control society by defining and discriminating between the holy and the impure (Lev. 10 v.10). It is not suggested how effective such methods were in social control for they appear minor, or whether they were the only ones. The point is made that a desire to influence from a particular ideological viewpoint is obvious and is unaffected by any practical consequences. The very fact that the priests were permitted to speak into a situation with some kind of recognised authority indicates the desire to control or influence behaviour.

"For ancient Judaism, therefore, we find no decisive correlation with the general theory that rituals of purity create unity in the experience of an entire community, nor

evidence to support the entirely reasonable, but rather general proposal that specifically through purity laws people try to influence behaviour," (87)

such a view is challenged by Douglas in her critique on Neusner's work, for she argues that

"A symbolic system ... consists of rules of behaviour, actions and expectations which constitute society itself. The rules which generate and sustain society allow meanings to be realised which otherwise would be undefined and ungraspable. The difference between a society and a miscellaneous collection of animate beings lies entirely in the presence of rules. This holds true of any society, but not all societies invoke the principle of purity to justify their constitutive rules. For some justice, for some honour, for some equality is the governing principle. But in the case of the bible, purity and impurity are the dominant contrastive categories leading to holiness. As in any social system, these rules are specifications which draw analogies between states. The cumulative power of the analogies enable one situation to be matched to another, related by equivalence, negation, hierarchy and inclusion. We discover their interrelatedness because of the repetitive formulas on which they are constructed, the economy and internal consistency of the patterns. The purity rules of the Bible, as I have argued in *Purity and Danger* (1966) and in *Daedalus*, Winter 1972 'Myth and Symbolism' (1971) set up the great inclusive categories

in which the whole universe is hierarchised and structured. Access to their meaning comes by mapping the same basic set of rules from one context on to another. In this exercise the classification of animals into clean and unclean, the classification of peoples as pure and common, the contrast of blemished to unblemished in the attributes of sacrificial victim, priest and woman, create in the Bible an entirely consistent set of criteria and values. The table, the marriage bed and the altar match each others' rules, as do the farmer, the husband and the priest match each others' roles in the total pattern. So far from being able to ignore the dietary laws in the Bible, they make it possible to grasp the meaning of cultic purity and sexual purity and the agricultural rules against mixtures" (88).

Neusner fails to grasp the import of Douglas' work on the rationality of the animal classification in Leviticus and makes the assumption that some creatures or states are self evidently unclean. This may say something of how he views such matters but does not deal with the issues in hand, and it would appear to import his own value judgements on the matter. It is the purity rules which set up categories in which the universe is structured and thus holiness is perceived as the underlying principle for the control of society.

Neusner highlights Douglas' main perspective on purity to concur with it that,

"the more deeply we go ... the more obvious it becomes that we are studying symbolic systems."

and adds,

"This I think constitutes the main result of our inquiry. We have found that ideas of purity and impurity were intimate to, and expressive of, the larger conceptions of the communities that held them" (89).

The conclusion is drawn,

"We know what the priestly writers in biblical times thought was pure and impure, and how they organised their opinions into a system of laws and observances. The consistent focus of purity on the Temple cult by the priestly writers in the Hebrew Scriptures and the stress on the language of purity and impurity within groups which saw themselves as similar to the Temple seem in the end to be traits made important solely by the priesthood and by people pretending to be priests because of their natural interest in the priesthood's own rites ... it was the Temple in which the cosmic and social lines were clearly defined, there and nowhere else" (90).

If this is a true representation then one understands how catastrophic the destruction of the Temple must have been and also, following that event, how it served to reinforce the Temple's role as the foundation of the priestly imagination and organisation of reality. It

may be more accurate to say that, following the first destruction of the Temple, the priestly caste utilised the opportunity afforded by the catastrophe to affirm their position in society. The Aaronides may have taken advantage of the natural feelings which surrounded the destruction of the Temple and used them to anchor their own claims to power. While the Temple has a major place in the understanding of the Aaronide ideology, it is only a part and not the whole.

The importance of the Temple's role in Israelite thought is stated by Neusner and the wider significance and symbolism is developed by Douglas in her critique,

"the place of the temple in the society of biblical times. Obviously in the thought of the Israelites it came to hold a central place. But is the thought of the historian for that reason to stop and rest content with saying that all symbols and meanings converge on the temple? The temple is a building of stone and wood, sometimes destroyed and sometimes rebuilt. If the table and the bed and the body are all figures of the temple, as I have argued, what does the temple figure? Is there any justification for making all the lines of thought converge on the temple instead of the other way round? It is equally plausible to argue that the temple stands for the pure consecrated body of the worshipper and that the rules which protect the sanctuary from defilement repeat by analogy the rules which protect the purity of the human body from wrong food and wrong

sex, and the people of Israel from false gods. Indeed, to make the meanings run the one way, from people to an object of wood and stone, is much less in the spirit of the sapiential and historical books than to trace the meanings from the Covenant to the physical object, the temple, and from it to the descendants of Abraham. But the choice of interpretation is simply not available to the anthropologist. Since it is clear that the temple rule and sex rules and food rules are a single system of analogies, they do not converge on any one point but sustain the whole moral and physical universe simultaneously in their systematic interrelatedness." (91).

Thus we see the development of this approach to purity and impurity by two different disciplines and it allows us to grasp a fuller understanding of the material under consideration.

A basic difficulty with Neusner's work is that, while it seeks to be a collative historical work, it nevertheless does not ask basic questions about the purpose of the priestly writer's work. He fails to see that the purity rules are a device for the control of society (92), whatever their effectiveness. If this particular emphasis on purity - impurity is the creation of the priestly writer, as the biblical evidence seems to suggest and which Neusner concurs with (93), then we may be justified in conjecturing

that this was a device of the Aaronides to seek to effect control within society. A detailed consideration of these controls will reveal the particular pressure points seen as important within society and also the effectiveness of such measures to control behaviour. But it is essential to view priestly propaganda as promulgated for a purpose and, while the biblical material affords little explicit evidence of the priestly control of society, the brilliance of the Aaronide revolution lies in its ability to control without being too blatant.

Neusner's work is important in showing how purity and impurity are crucial for our understanding of Israelite life in that they reveal the contrastive categories which go to make existence. These terms are seen as the respective symbols which express the concept of holiness which is perceived as the theological rationale behind the ordering of society under the control of the priestly caste. One concurs with the idea that the lines of structure in society do converge on the Temple, however we are meant to understand that concept, and the Temple's centrality was essential, for by such means the priestly caste maintained their position within, and control of, society. Such a study does not present a rationale for this creation of the priestly caste and would appear to be constricted in making the Temple the focus of society, without

articulating many of the facets associated with it in the priestly writings.

(d) In the Presence of the Lord by Baruch Levine

In his book, 'In the Presence of the Lord', Levine deals with various types of sacrifice practised in Israel in the biblical period. Structurally the work is divided into two, one dealing with šelāmîm and another covering the various sacrifices of expiation, with some additional discourses on terminology reserved to the appendixes.

Such a study of ritual expiation,

"involves basic issues in our understanding of the religious mentality of ancient Israel throughout most of the biblical period. It is also an area of study requiring the resolution of complex questions of biblical philology and textual interpretation" (94).

Levine uses a highly developed philological technique which allows him to marshal cogent reasons for disagreeing with some fairly common opinions. It is the former aspect, that of understanding the religious mentality of ancient Israel, which will concern us here and, in particular, the issues of purity and holiness. One respects the textual, philological researches in the work and seeks not to discuss them further but rather extricate the material pertinent to this study. Such an approach is not to denigrate the work but

rather to incorporate the results into a larger whole to which they relate. Levine himself comments,

"It is the general area of purity, as a ritual and religious complex, which must be understood properly if the full import of expiation is to be realised," (95)

and acknowledges his indebtedness to Neusner's 'The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism'.

Levine deals first of all with the verb *kippēr*, which conventionally has meant 'to cover up or over'

"a meaning which relates to the notion, ... that expiation consists of the covering of sins. The forgiven is the one whose offenses are covered from God's view, which is a way of indicating that the deity does not take notice of them, nor show concern with exacting punishment for them" (96).

An alternative interpretation is suggested through Akkadian with the sense of 'to wipe off, hence purify'. It is then suggested that the notion of 'covering' is in fact a later connotation, with the primary sense being one of cleansing. The evidence for the classical interpretation of *kippēr* as 'to cover' is examined and followed by a critique, which makes considerable reference to Akkadian and other cognate languages. With reference to the Hebrew Bible,

"the verb *kippēr* was never used to convey either the graphics of 'covering' sins, or

that particular notion of atonement or forgiveness" (97),

and so,

"the religio-legal implications of interpreting k-p-r as: 'to cover' for biblical concepts of atonement are that all expiatory activity constitutes an attempt to cover up or conceal offenses from God's view or notice. This is certainly not the notion underlying purification, an important dimension of the expiatory process.

Purification is more properly understood as an attempt to alienate impurity, for persons to divest themselves of it. Impurity is viewed as an external force which adheres to a person or object" (98).

This view is developed further,

"the cultic lexicon of the Bible appropriated the verb k-p-r from the general vocabulary, ... and adapted its usage to the particular conceptions of expiation and purification basic to the Israelite cultic outlook" (99).

The cultic texts understood k-p-r in a functional sense of 'to perform rites of expiation' rather than to cleanse. Such rites in reference to Lev. 16 v.18-19,

"mean that the acts performed resulted in purification, but did not automatically constitute cleansing or purification ... as a result of the performance of certain rites, God grants expiation or atonement. In such instances, expiation, forgiveness, etc., are not the direct physical effects of the rites

performed. Such acts are prerequisite but not causational. It is God who grants the desired result" (100).

Levine proceeds to consider kipp̄er and its derivatives in the biblical cultic texts with a proper understanding of the process of expiation which aimed at securing certain responses from the deity. Yahweh is portrayed to emphasize his wrath, which appears an unusual stress but it is claimed this is necessary to comprehend certain aspects of the biblical literature. The rebellion of Korah and the improper offering by Nadab and Abihu are cited,

"to imbue the reader with a sense of the reality of divine wrath as a feature of religious life" (101).

The point is being made that Yahweh's wrath will be unleashed against all who do not take proper precautions when entering his presence or standing within the sacred precincts.

"It is the cultic tradition, ... which gave a new and distinctively cultic form to divine wrath, as a consuming fire emanating from inside the sanctuary itself, ... The severity of Yahweh's responses to cultic offenses would indicate that he was extremely concerned about his purity as a resident deity. This is also indicated by the severity of the regulations against viewing, touching or approaching the sacred precincts" (102).

It is the blood libation and the incense offered to God which were used to ensure the safety of the priests and the worshippers, for it was the apotropaic properties of these substances that were aimed at the deity who was seen as the source of danger. The matter is developed further so that the incense offered by the High Priest was seen as for his own protection, while the blood libation offered outside the tent had been for the protection of the worshippers. This leads to the conclusion,

"that the blood was placed on those areas and objects so as to protect the deity and his immediate surroundings from the incursion of impurity which would penetrate the sanctuary through a route ... opened to let the priest in and into the very spot where the deity sat" (103).

The attempt to protect the deity and his dwelling is clarified more precisely,

"One becoming impure as the result of an offense against the deity introduced a kind of demonic contagion into the community. The more horrendous the offense, the greater the threat to the purity of the sanctuary and the surrounding community by the presence of the offender, who was a carrier of impurity. This person required purification if the community was to be restored to its ritual state, which, in turn, was a precondition set down by the resident deity for his continued presence among the people. The deity had made a vital concession to the Israelites by

consenting to dwell amidst the impurities endemic to the human situation (Leviticus 16 v.16). If his continued residence was to be realized, Yahweh required an extreme degree of purity (Exodus 25 v.8). In his heavenly abode, Yahweh was well guarded from impurity and this condition was to be reproduced as nearly as possible in his earthly residence" (104).

Levine has already argued,

"that concern with the presence of God and his nearness is a major theme" (105)

with the O.T. He notes that

"cultic notions are usually the particularised expressions of more widespread concepts operative in the culture at large, rather than the original creations of the cult itself. The religious establishment tends to sanction that which the culture has accepted. The notion that God's presence is necessary for securing the blessing of life was, ... intrinsic to the early traditions of Israel" (106).

Such a concept of the nearness of God's presence is assimilated into the cult as it (the cult) sought,

"to render permanent the epic relationship of God to Israel and thus to assure the regular availability of divine power. The cult was to routinize the singular" (107).

Therefore,

"implicit in all expiatory rites is the assumption that ritual offenses endanger the deity in some way, since they threaten to diminish the purity of his earthly dwelling. This is the nexus of expiation, as a ritual process and the protection of the deity as a primary objective of the cult" (108).

Impurity was perceived as an external force which entered the person or attached itself to him and the expiatory process endeavoured to rid a person of this foreign force. This expiation was necessary so that the forces of impurity, unleashed by the offenses committed, were to be kept away from God's immediate environment. The reason for God's wrath is not merely displeasure at disobedience but is based on a concern for his own protection. Thus

"the sacrificial blood is offered to the demonic forces who accept it in lieu of God's 'life', so to speak, and depart, just as they accept it in lieu of human life in other cultic contexts" (109).

Such a position on ritual expiation, Levine suggests, could be challenged that it does not square with the biblical conception,

"sin was not the embodiment of active, evil forces, demonic or destructive, as it was normally conceived in the non-monotheistic religions of the ancient Near East. Especially in the priestly literature of the Torah, promulgated by strict monotheists, it would have been blatantly contradictory, so

the argument goes, to allow for the independent, active operation of demonic forces in a world governed by one, supreme God, who held all power and who could hardly have been vitally concerned with his own protection against what were actually nonentities, after all."

Which is qualified by the comment,

"We have yet to find in the Hebrew Bible an explicit statement of Yahweh's omnipotence, in the sense that there is no other power of any sort except his. There are, of course, statements to the effect that his is the only real deity; that he is creator of the universe and all that is heaven and earth; that he was victorious over other gods, such as the gods of Egypt; that he is master of the universe and of nature, worker of great wonders and acts of deliverance, including healing and that he knows the thoughts and plans of men. Biblical literature gives evidence of great areas of development in each of the above aspects but nowhere do we find the notion clearly expressed that Yahweh's rule is entirely free from opposition or conflict" (110).

Such a view is propounded by Kaufmann who reasons that the monotheistic revolution effected in Israel's religion meant that impurity is a state of being rather than an active force (111). Levine seeks to justify his stance over Kaufmann and concludes,

"expiation as a ritual complex contained a magical component, related primarily to the

particular utilisation of sacrificial blood"
(112).

While agreeing in several ways with Levine over the importance of blood and the need for purity within the expiatory rites, Milgrom would challenge the basic understanding of impurity. He sees Levine following in the path of pre-Israelite analogies which share a common obsession with temple purification which concerned the fear that demonic intruders would drive the deity out, thus purifications are magical defense weapons.

"Impurity was feared because it was considered demonic. It was an unending threat to the gods themselves and especially to their temples, as exemplified by the images of protector gods set before temple entrances (e.g. the šêdu and lamassu in Mesopotamia and the lion-gargoyles in Egypt) and above all, by the elaborate cathartic and apotropaic rites to rid buildings of demons and prevent their return. Thus for both Israel and her neighbors impurity was a physical substance, an aerial miasma which possessed magnetic attraction for the realm of the sacred" (113).

Israel,

"has demythologised and devitalised cosmic evil. Only the physical and moral impurity of man can pollute the sanctuary; man alone can drive God out" (114).

Thus impurity still retains its dynamic and malefic power, especially with regard to the sancta, although it is divested of its demonic element. It is suggested that the

"dynamic, aerial quality of biblical impurity is best attested by its graded power.

Impurity pollutes the sanctuary in three stages:

1. The individual's inadvertent misdemeanor or severe physical impurity pollutes the courtyard altar which is purged by daubing its horns with the ḥaṭṭā'ṭ blood (Lev. IV 25, 30; IX 9ff).
2. The inadvertent misdemeanor of the high priest or the entire community pollutes the shrine which is purged by the high priest by placing the ḥaṭṭā'ṭ blood on the inner altar and before the pārōket-veil (Lev IV 5-7, 16-18).
3. The wanton, unrepented sin not only pollutes the outer altar and penetrates into the shrine but it pierces the veil to the holy ark and kappōret, the very throne of God (cf. Is. XXXVII 16). Since the wanton sinner is barred from bringing his ḥaṭṭā'ṭ (Num. XV 27-31), the pollution wrought by his offense must await the annual purgation of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement and it consists of two steps: the purging of the Tent and the purging of the outer altar (Lev. XVI 16-19). Thus the entire sacred area, or more precisely, all that is most sacred is purged on Purgation Day (Yom hakkippūrîm) with the ḥaṭṭā'ṭ blood.

Thus the graded purgations of the sanctuary lead to the conclusion that the severity of the sin/impurity varies in direct relation to the depth of its penetration into the sanctuary ... the Priestly source propounds a notion of impurity as a dynamic force, magnetic and malefic to the sphere of the sacred, attacking it not just by direct contact but from a distance. For behold, the outer altar is polluted though the non-priest may not even enter it and finally, the adytum is polluted though no man, not even the priest, may enter. Yet despite the fact that Israelites have had no access, the sancta must be purged 'of the impurities of the Israelites' (Lev. XVI 16)" (115).

Such a view disagrees with Levine's who sees the blood manipulations as apotropaic and yet the issue raised on such a view is, if this is so, then how is the sanctuary purged? The

"confinement of the ḥaṭṭā't blood to the adytum, shrine, and outer altar, would indicate that purgation and not prophylaxis is at work. Impurity will be drawn to the higher magnetic field of the most sacred and the latter will always need to be purified. Finally, the notion of apotropaism is incompatible with the priestly system; nothing, but nothing can prevent the sanctuary from being polluted by man" (116).

The purpose behind this insistency to purge the sanctuary was in order to maintain the divine presence in the midst of Israel,

"the God of Israel will not abide in a polluted sanctuary. The merciful God will tolerate a modicum of pollution. But there is a point of no return. If the pollution continues to accumulate the end is inexorable" (117).

In this respect, as previously mentioned, Israel agrees with her neighbours in an obsession to purify the temples but within the Israelite approach a significant transformation has occurred, for the demons have been removed from the world but man is crucial.

"One of the major contributions of the priestly theology: man is demonised. True, man falls short of being a demon but he is capable of the demonic. He also is the cause of the world's ills. He alone can contaminate the sanctuary and force God out" (118).

Milgrom perceives the priestly doctrine of theodicy in this way,

"sin is a miasma which wherever committed is attracted to the sanctuary. There it adheres and accumulates until God will no longer abide in it. Hence, it is forever incumbent upon Israel, through the indispensable medium of its priesthood, to purge the sanctuary regularly of its impurities lest God abandon it and the people to their doom. Thus, evil is never unheeded by God, even when the individual evildoer is not immediately punished, but accumulates in the sanctuary until the point of no return: the sum of

individual sin leads inexorably to the
destruction of the community"

and he sees the priestly writer claiming,

"sin may not leave its mark on the face of
the sinner, but it is certain to mark the
face of the sanctuary and unless it is
quickly expunged, God's presence will depart"
(119).

Undoubtedly the protection of the deity from the effects of impurity was a primary objective of the cult and fundamental to the priestly writers' understanding of reality. The major question is the source of this impurity. Levine argues against Kaufmann that impurity is a dynamic and malefic force rather than status and even suggests that it is demonic (120). This, argues Milgrom (121), is to suggest too much, although he does not diminish the dynamic aspect of impurity. It may be conjectured that to conceive of impurity as dynamic although not demonic, is to permit a vitality and reality to it but, at the same time, to suggest that it was controllable and quantifiable. While to suggest that impurity was demonic is to impute to it a sense of otherness, which may be considered unpredictable and formless in its behaviour. The priestly writer seeks to order his world and present a coherent pattern to experience. In making impurity dynamic he recognises its force but, at the same time, assumes that it can be controlled and that by the ritual process controlled by

the priesthood. Such an understanding relates to the larger crisis of the exile, for if it were the result of cosmic evil forces then it presents man as simply a puppet and exposed to such forces, over which he has no control or influence. While to suggest impurity is dynamic, is to accord a power to these forces, even if it results in the tragedy of exile, but it presents such forces as being within certain boundaries and subject to various constrictions. The Aaronide priesthood would then suggest that through the ritual process and the diverse purity laws, such forces of chaos can be dealt with in an appropriate way so man may to some degree face the future with a measure of hope and optimism.

From this follows the proposition that it is man who is perceived as the greatest source of impurity. Such a view places the onus on man for his own and the community's continued well-being. This emphasis on the individual's responsibility accords with a growing trend within the exilic/post exilic period to see a decreasing emphasis on the collective aspect to life and judgement (122). It may also be suggested, in contradiction to Milgrom, that such an emphasis succeeds the prophetic witness and builds upon it, rather than precedes it (123). It must also be remembered that while there is an increased emphasis on the individual's responsibility to live a holy life, a

system which frees people from impurity when incurred is also instituted and these two aspects must be seen together as part of the whole manifesto of the Aaronides.

Levine also suggests that it is important to understand, in relation to impurity, the wrath of Yahweh. The instances cited are those of the rebellion of Korah, (Num. 16), and the improper offering by Nadab and Abihu, (Lev. 10). Yahweh's wrath is unleashed against all those who do not take proper precautions while involved with sancta and this is argued as Yahweh's action to express concern about his purity. However, it could be questioned whether that is the dominant message in such instances, although it is accepted that such passages may contain more than one meaning. Rather than describing Yahweh's concern for his own purity, it has already been argued that these instances were used by the Aaronides to protect their own altar claims against rival claims and present Yahweh as preferring the Aaronides as well as assigning a specific role to the Levites, as stated in Num. 18 v.21f. (124). The essential meaning attached to these incidents relates to the appropriate qualifications required to perform temple service rather than taking proper precautions about the state of purity required by the deity. These instances also support the view that man is the focus of dynamic forces of impurity.

The following section will seek to summarise some of the salient points from these studies as they are relative to an understanding of the ideology of the Aaronide manifesto.

(e) The ideology of the Aaronide manifesto

The three works that have been considered all have a bearing on the subject of purity and impurity in the biblical material. The inevitable choice of material has allowed for a detailed analysis with a concentration on the particular issues. Although such a choice is inevitably selective, it has sought to reveal that various studies are producing findings which point in a similar direction. My purpose would be to collate many of those findings into a composite whole which could be utilised to present the ideological framework of the Aaronide revolution.

Douglas stressed that a study of the rituals of purity and impurity would lead to an increased understanding of the nature of Israelite society. For

"by their means, symbolic patterns are worked out and publicly displayed" (125).

The biblical material utilises the command to be holy as a preface to many of its diverse injunctions. Holiness is elucidated with a variety of meanings, in terms of wholeness and completeness which permits its use within a diversity of situations.

"Holiness requires that individuals shall conform to the class to which they belong ... it involves ... order" (126).

Within the dietary prohibitions of Leviticus 11, holiness is given a physical expression by rules of avoidance. This reveals a mirroring of the order of the creation and presents holiness as a regulative principle. Thus pollution only occurs within a clearly defined and well structured aspect of the universe.

The work of Neusner allows us to grasp the all-embrasive category of impurity. He highlights, in a study of Lev. 11-15, the equation of purity with holiness (Lev. 11 v.44), which he sees as revealing the work of P. Holiness is characterised as the prime motif in the P material with its practical application in terms of purity and impurity. A concern for purity is considered essential for it shows how existence was organised and interpreted with the lines of structure in Israelite life converging on the Temple. This has developed the concern with purity a step further than Douglas, in that it is based on the Temple and suggests that other values find their authority as they find a place within the Temple symbolism. However, Douglas argues that such a narrow approach is to be discouraged for,

"the temple rules and sex rules and food rules are a single system of analogies, they do not converge on any one point but sustain the whole moral and physical universe simultaneously in their systematic interrelatedness" (127).

Nevertheless, an importance is attached to the Temple as being one of the foci of purity as the priestly writers viewed matters.

There follows Levine's work which seeks to understand the religious mentality of ancient Israel through a study of ritual expiation. He notes the importance of the theme of the presence of God and his nearness for the O.T., which is connected with the blessings of life. The cult seeks to regularise the availability of divine power and thus it is assumed that ritual offenses endanger the deity in some way. While disagreeing with the view that impurity is demonic, nevertheless, the point that it is dynamic and malefic provides a valuable pathway for understanding the stress on the purity of the sanctuary as relevant to this study. Man is perceived as the greatest factor in initiating impurity and, by his conduct, he poses the threat to God's continued dwelling amongst his people. The graded power of impurity reveals that arrogant and defiant behaviour by a person is the greatest menace of all for it penetrates into the very Holy of Holies. This emphasis on the dynamic power of impurity resident within man is a key factor in P's ideology. It also allows for an interrelation between man and God in that the perfect or 'holy' person is allowed to meet with God, while the unholy person must take the necessary expiatory steps to transform his circumstance. The

distinction drawn is clear between God and man, without permitting the difference to be demoralising, for a way forward is provided for man to resume the relationship.

The rites of expiation which seek to remove the impurity that is active within a given situation, provide a stress on the use of blood. Blood is perceived as possessing special significance for its use is restricted. Its magical element is seen in the sacrificial realm in that it removes the impurities of the sanctuary through absorption. Levine observes,

"the underlying conception here is the role of blood as the life force" (128).

While Davies explores that further in his discussion on sacrifice,

"What is explicit is that there is life in the blood and that the sacrificial use of this blood is able to restore normal relationships between God and the people. ... blood, which symbolises life and represents the covenant, may also be associated with order and the divine aspect of life" (129).

Such a concern with blood and its proper handling is seen in the dietary controls in Lev. 11 and 17 (130). The priests are those who are to supervise the sacrificial process and, therefore, possess an important role in this respect.

The emphasis on man as the centre of possible impurity with the opportunity of freedom being offered through sacrificial ritual is only part of the genius of the Aaronides, for they take the whole issue of impurity one step further to present a tour de force. Milgrom differentiates between the ḥaṭṭā't and 'āshām sacrifices in that, while both deal with the problem of infringement on sancta, the ashām expiates for sancta desecration and the ḥaṭṭā't for sancta contamination,

"The ḥaṭṭā't and 'āshām operate in two discrete realms. For example, the desecration (desanctification) of sancta (outside the sanctuary) may be legitimate (Lev. 27 v.9ff, but the contamination of sancta is always sinful and fraught with lethal danger. This is because the profane is neutral and normative. There is nothing wrong with the profane per se, unless it comes about by trespassing upon sancta. The impure, however, is malefic and intolerable. It always poses a threat to the sanctuary and its sancta, even when not in direct contact. Presumed is that impurity is an active miasma which is attracted magnet-like to the sacred precincts.

Impurity is either physical or spiritual. The physically impure, powerful enough to contaminate the sanctuary from afar, are: the parturient (Lev. 12), the leper (Lev. 13f.), the gonorrhoeic (Lev. 15), the corpse-contaminated nazirite (Num. 6) and, according to Ezekiel, the corpse-contaminated priest (Ezek. 44 v.25-27). The spiritually impure are those who violate God's prohibitive

commandments either inadvertently (Lev. 4) or deliberately (Lev. 16 v.16, 21). The common denominator of all these bearers of impurities is that they must bring the ḥaṭṭāṭ to the sanctuary in order to purge (kṭ) it of its contamination. The priestly doctrine of the sanctuary sullied by impurity and purged by the ḥaṭṭāṭ is structured on the lines of pagan analogues, with this crucial distinction: whereas pagan sanctuaries are susceptible to demonic incursions, Israel's sanctuary can be contaminated from one source alone - man. The theological postulate underlying the ḥaṭṭāṭ is that a polluted sanctuary will force God to withdraw His holy presence from Israel" (131).

In his study on 'āshām, Milgrom concludes,

"P maintains that repentance can mitigate the force of a deliberate sin, converting it to an unintentional offense ... for the complete annulment of the sin, for the assurance of divine forgiveness, sacrificial expiation is always required ... The Priestly authors took a postulate of their own tradition, that God mitigates punishment for unintentional sins and powered it with a new doctrine, that the voluntary repentance of a deliberate crime transforms the crime itself into an involuntary act ... If ..., 'feel guilt' is the scarlet thread that courses through the texts on expiatory sacrifices, then every case of expiation by sacrifice must presuppose the repentance of the worshipper, a postulate that also informs rabbinic tradition. The result is that the root purpose underlying the expiatory sacrifices

is now seen in its true significance. Ofttimes, the priestly system of sacrificial expiation (exemplified by Lev. 4 and 5) was construed as a legalized witch hunt, hounding the conscience of man and damning him with guilt for his every accidental, presumed or unapprehended crime. Now it is clear that the reverse is true. All the cases stipulated or implied by the expiatory sacrifices present us with the existential situation of man in torment, racked by conscience over his actual or suspected sin. No man can help him, for his pain is known only to himself. Not even God can come to his aid, for he will not disclose his burden to heaven. It is to this silent sufferer that the Priestly law brings its therapeutic balm: if the prescribed restitution is inspired by his repentance, his sin can be absolved; he need suffer no more" (132).

Thus the Aaronides, simultaneously, focus on man as the chief source of impurity as well as providing a way of freedom for him if there is a genuineness of feeling and an appropriate sacrificial component.

Such an appreciation of the place of man within the schema of Aaronide ideology must be complemented by an understanding of the divine. The consistent emphasis of P, as he incorporates the Holiness Code into his overall work, is, 'Be holy, for I am holy' (Lev. 11 v.44-45; 19 v.2; 20 v.26, etc.). It may be suggested that the holy is synonymous with the divine. The holy

is essentially the divine, in that it is that which is distinctive of God and constitutes his nature (133). To declare that God is holy is not, in the first instance, to assert anything about his character but to affirm his supreme Godhead. Therefore, 'holy' as an epithet, stresses the uniqueness of Yahweh, who is not to be confused with the deities worshipped by other nations. Holiness refers to the inner essence of the divine being and thus it is not an attribute of God but it expresses what is characteristic of God and corresponds to his deity (134). It follows from this that 'holy' and 'holiness' can only be applied to persons or objects in a derivative sense. Since God alone is holy, nothing and no one can be holy in themselves, for they are only holy when placed in relation to the divine being (135). Holy and holiness in this respect do not denote a quality but a relationship, in that people and objects will only be called holy or have holiness ascribed to them in virtue of their relation to the divine.

Negatively, the word holy expresses the difference between God and man, 'I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst' (Hosea 11 v.9). So the first effect of holiness is to keep man at a distance (136). Therefore, the holy is that which is separate and also that which induces awe and dread (137). The outcome of such an emphasis on separation and terror is that the

holy is regarded as separate from ordinary living.

Pedersen comments,

"Holiness is not consistent with the claims of everyday life; normal souls are given it for a time after which they again discard it" (138).

This dividing process is Aaron's task in Lev. 10 v.10, 'You are to distinguish between the holy and the common and between the unclean and the clean'. Such a concept finds expression in Ezek. 42 v.20 where the temple area is measured out to 'make a separation between the holy and the common'.

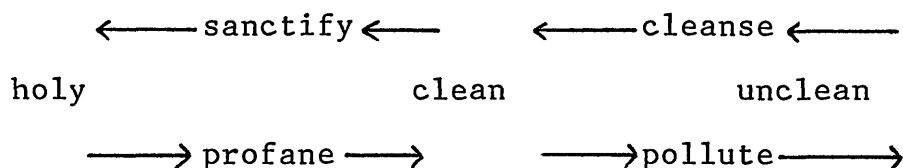
The opposite of the holy is, therefore, the unclean, in that if holiness is about relationship, then purity is the practical way of maintaining holiness by keeping the community pure or purified. We have seen from Douglas how holiness involves the idea of wholeness or completeness which may apply within a social context. Holiness is related to the idea of conformity to the class to which one belongs, therefore, incest and adultery are against holiness in the sense of right order. Holiness also contains a physical aspect, in that the sacrificial victims have to be unblemished and animals are classified as edible or inedible due to the established order in Genesis. Thus it is understandable why holiness is not associated with morality or ethics. Ethical ideas are seldom actually

combined with the word 'holy', except for Lev. 19 v.2 for it is the idea of God in general, rather than holiness in particular, that gradually becomes more ethical.

If the unclean is the opposite of the holy, not so much on ethical grounds but, as mentioned, because it is a falling short of wholeness, there is some ambiguity in identifying the common and the profane. The profane is equivalent to that which is normal and belongs to everyday life. In itself it need not be opposed to the holy. Wenham summarises by presenting the contrastive categories thus,

"'Common' is the reverse of 'holy', just as to 'profane' is the converse of to 'sanctify' ... Everything that is not holy is common. Common things divide into two groups, the clean and the unclean. Clean things become holy when they are sanctified, but unclean objects cannot be sanctified, although clean things can be made unclean, if they are polluted ... holy items may be defiled and become common, even polluted, and therefore unclean."

There follows a diagram



"From this chart it is evident that cleanness is a state intermediate between holiness and uncleanness. Cleanness is the normal condition of most things and persons. Sanctification can elevate the clean into the holy, while pollution degrades the clean into the unclean ... Cleanness is the ground state; holiness and uncleanness are variations from the norm of cleanness. The basic meaning of cleanness is purity ... but cleanness is a broader concept than purity. It approximates to our notion of normality" (139).

Such a concern for purity has been seen as a central aspect of Israel's religious experience. For the relationship of God to his people required that a high state of purity be observed, as commensurate with God's holiness or being. God had chosen to dwell with his people but if he is to continue with them and they are to enjoy all the consequent privileges thus entailed, then the community needed to keep themselves in a purified state. God required an extreme degree of purity and the provisions of the Aaronide manifesto seek to safeguard that and provide for the continued presence of God within the community.

The concept of the presence of God amongst his people finds expression within the Sinai experience not as God making a covenant but rather that Yahweh elects to be their God as an act of grace founded upon the covenant with Abraham. This emphasis on the presence of God, it

may be conjectured, was a device of P to utilise archaic aspects to provide a convincing and cogent interpretation of the events of the exile and provide a viable direction for the future (140).

The feeling that the people of Israel were estranged from God or that God was distant could conceivably be attributed as one reaction to the exilic experience, although one should not limit it only to that period. Such a trend in thinking reveals a basic concept in the Israelite mentality, that the presence of God was important for the people's well-being and continued survival. The concept of God's near presence has a considerable antiquity in the biblical material and no unified answer is available (141). While the antecedents of such a notion may be difficult to trace, nevertheless, the priestly writer incorporated the idea of God's presence into his total view of reality. We see that the complex sacrificial rituals are obviously defined to cope with the problem of God's presence within the community (142).

The antiquity of such a notion derives from the time when special sites were consecrated to God and temples were built so that the advantages of the proximity of the resident deity to the human community could be maximised. Such a desire for nearness to the resident deity could be attributed to man's religious consciousness, assuming the deity were friendly. The

early biblical literature portrays in narrative style how God descended to earth and acted on behalf of Israel and its leaders. The approach of God into the historical scene is recorded with considerable vividness. Such traditions reveal a related facet, that of the 'potent' presence. This would suggest that God's presence in the midst of the people is the very reason for their victory and success, while the converse follows. Such ideas find expression within the central cult in Jerusalem and its establishment produced certain reflexes in the religious attitudes of the people, due to a long history. One such notion suggested that God's presence in the Jerusalem temple guaranteed the security of the city and its residents, while Micah 3 v.11 and Jer. 7 v.3 attack the idea (143). Nevertheless, it conceived that from heaven God's power originates but it is from the Temple that the deity appears and gives strength to the people. The conception of the Temple as the seat of the deity, which undoubtedly bears the mark of P for his own purposes of presentation, entails the consequent anxiety of God's possible departure. Such a fear was intensified during, or was retrojected to characterise, the exilic experience. It could be suggested that the temple was interchangeable with the concept of the land or that they were opposites. Since the patriarchal narratives, which P incorporates into his whole work, provide great stress on the land, it would seem that no

clear picture emerges here and P seeks to include the ancient emphasis on the land within his stress on the temple. It may be possible that the ambiguity was deliberate for P sees land and temple closely interrelated. The dominant emphasis that would appear within P's schema of things, focuses on the temple as the dwelling of the deity. Such a stress may be due to a desire to legitimate the cult and authorise the power appropriated by the Aaronides, without due consideration for any implicit contradictions. It may also be appropriate to remember that the end of P as a final work centres around whether the issue of land allocation is part of P or not. It appears as unclear in the present form and this may relate to the fact that P utilises the land concept in an idealised way. Such ideas need to be related to the Aaronide revolution as a whole, in that they sought to re-establish the religious community in Israel and organise life not around national political considerations but largely religious. Thus they appropriate the concept of the nearness of Yahweh into their thinking and engraft their own particular theological interpretation on to it. This was to stress that God was holy and while conceding to dwell with his people on earth, amidst all the impurities of the earthly scene, nevertheless, if Yahweh was to remain with the people, they required to uphold certain standards. The standard was one of purity which, as we

have already seen, was applied in diverse circumstances. The priestly writer conceives of life in a totality, for he dwells in a sacral universe, where there is no fragmentation of existence but rather an overview. The rules concerning purity are central to P's ideology and provide a basic understanding for much of the existence of ancient Israel at the time of his composition.

The stress on purity is indicative of a fundamental concern for order and structure within the experience of P. He derives his concept of order from his theology which finds classic expression in the account of creation in Gen. 1-2 v.4a. There, out of the *primaeval* chaos, God creates an ordered world and cosmos and from that follows P's ideology which he seeks to impose upon the community of his day. While such an approach is overly simplistic, nevertheless, it provides a kind of basic skeleton onto which is grafted materials of a diverse nature and possess a long pre-history. Many of the elements included would not rationally be incorporated but they are subsumed in the overall compass of the Priestly writer's final presentation. Therefore, a concern for purity is a major aspect of Aaronide ideology. By this regulative principle P was able to structure society and unify existence for the people of Israel. It also provided a focus for identity and, by the skilful incorporation of

diverse factors, appeared to maintain the continuity of the faith. It gave a prominent place to the priesthood who were to differentiate between the clean and the unclean (Lev.10 v.10) as well as reinforcing the responsibility of man to live by God's standards.

A consistent emphasis of the Aaronides has been to stress the responsibility that man has to live an ordered life if he wishes to enjoy the blessings of God. He is required to observe detailed dietary laws as well as many other prescriptions. It was observed with regard to the gradation of impurity forces relative to the temple, that defiant or arrogant sin is the most intense and dangerous form of impurity. This serves to underline the importance of motive within P's schema of events, which is crucial for community discipline. Man, by his actions and motives, can promote or jeopardise the well-being of himself and the community. The purity laws, therefore, extend back from the temple to the homes and tables and ultimately to man himself. The all inclusive nature of the rules ensured the people were daily reminded of their faith and the control that it ought to impose upon their world, whether it did and to what degree is a matter for further discussion. The implicit assumption on motive which has been mentioned leads to a consideration that community discipline is especially invoked on those who defiantly reject this system and

choose to go their own way and they must bear the consequences of that, however that is adumbrated. The Day of Atonement ritual in Lev. 16 specifically deals with those kind of sins which have been committed in a high handed way. It cleanses the sanctuary of its accumulated impurity through a special ritual every year. The pre-history of this ritual is complex and ancient, however, the present form is what is important here. It could be seen as a device by P for controlling the community in that the person who has acted so arrogantly has until the next Day of Atonement ceremony to repent of his impurity or else be removed. That the Day of Atonement is concerned with presumptuous sins is indicated by the unique occurrence of *pesa'* (Lev. 16 v.16, 21), a term borrowed by P from political terminology denoting rebellion (2 Kings 3 v.5) (144). Therefore, due cognizance is paid to the gravity of the sins of others and a certain generosity and understanding measured out to them but a time schedule is imposed for the control of the community and the reform of the guilty person. Such a time constriction gives a sense of definiteness to attempts to encourage change and imposes a terminus on the good will that may be operative within society. Those who choose deliberately not to respond to the pressures are disciplined by the community or more correctly, they are seen to be removing themselves from the community and they must then bear their iniquity. They reveal,

by their actions, that they no longer consider themselves to be within the community of Israel. The use of various threats or devices to instil in people the reality or possibility that disobedience incurs divine displeasure, go unheeded. Thus the community formally recognise what has already transpired.

Thus the Aaronides, as they developed their manifesto to control Israelite life, utilised the ideology of purity and presence with its focus on the Temple. Man was viewed as the originator of impurity and the sacrificial processes provided a way of removing such impurity from adversely affecting the sanctuary. The cult and purity, with all their many associated ideas and facets, were viewed as the centre of Israelite life as the Aaronides sought to preserve the identity of Israelite faith and replenish it with vitality and liberation. The great threat to the Israelite community was from the forces of assimilationism and, by defining strict boundaries in every sphere of life and rigidly controlling so much behaviour, the Aaronides provided one convincing and viable interpretation to the crisis of the exile (145).

(f) Footnotes

1. Douglas, 1966
2. Douglas, 1966, pviii
3. Neusner, 1973, p28. He surveys the topic well in this work and has proceeded on a detailed study of the legal traditions concerning purity in, 'A History of the Mishnaic Law of Purities' 22 Vols.
4. Smith, 1960, p352
5. Zwi Werblowsky, 1975, p201
6. Douglas, 1966, p21 for such comments
7. Bultmann, 1956, p65f. comments on the purity laws, they "went into detail to the point of absurdity" and he cites W Bousset, 'Die Religion des Judentums im spathellenistischen Zeitalter', as his authority.
8. Tylor, 1871;
Frazer, 1922;
Robertson Smith, 1907;
Lévi-Bruhl, 1936;
Durkheim, 1915.
9. Robertson Smith 1907
10. Douglas, 1966, p7f also Steiner, 1967, p50f.
11. Robertson Smith, 1907, p449
12. Robertson Smith, 1907, p447
13. Buchanan, 1970, p159
14. Douglas, 1966, p129-139, esp. p131-133
15. Moore, 1914, Vol 2 p42f.
16. Gavin, 1928, p9

17. Douglas, 1966, p41f.
18. Leach, 1976
Wilson, 1977, 1980, has made a significant contribution to the study of anthropology and the O.T.
Rogerson, 1970, p490f.
19. In respect of its symbolic aspect, Douglas is in line with the current anthropological interest in symbols and their interpretation.
Also Douglas, 1973;
Firth, 1977;
Willis, 1975.
20. Douglas, 1966, p2
21. Douglas, 1966, p2
22. Douglas, 1966, p2-3
23. Douglas, 1966, p5;
Steiner, 1967, p67. 'I do not dispute the claim of the Semitic taboo concepts to great antiquity. Rather, I wish to point out that such antiquity does not exclude the possibility of taboos being created continuously up to recent times.'
24. Douglas, 1966, p41
25. Douglas, 1966, p44. "Maimonides said:
The Law that sacrifices should be brought is evidently of great use ... but we cannot say why one offering should be a lamb whilst another is a ram, and why a fixed number of these should be brought. Those who trouble themselves to find a cause for any of these detailed rule are in my eyes devoid of sense."

26. Epstein, 1945, p4, their aim is 'to train the Israelite in self control'.
27. Douglas, 1966, p44-45
28. Stein, 1957, p141f.
29. Steiner, 1967, p50-115;
Douglas, 1966, p10-28.
30. Micklem, 1953, is cited:

"Commentators used to give much space to a discussion of the questions why such and such creatures, and such and such states and symptoms were unclean. Have we, for instance, primitive rules of hygiene? Or were certain creatures and states unclean because they represented or typified certain sins? It may be taken as certain that neither hygiene, nor any kind of typology is the basis of uncleanness. These regulations are not by any means to be rationalised. Their origins may be diverse, and go back beyond history".

and compared with Driver, 1895:

"The principle, however, determining the line of demarcation between clean animals and unclean, is not stated: and what it is has been much debated. No single principle, embracing all the cases, seems yet to have been found, and not improbably more principles than one co-operated. Some animals may have been prohibited on account of their repulsive appearance or uncleanly habits, others upon sanitary grounds; in other cases, again, the motive of the prohibition may very probably have been a religious one, particularly animals may have

been supposed, like the serpent in Arabia, to be animated by superhuman or demoniac beings, or they may have had a sacramental significance in the heathen rites of other nations; and the prohibition may have been intended as a protest against these beliefs."

Clements, 1965, makes no mention of purity while he deals with concepts such as the divine presence and the cult, which have close connections with purity.

Clements, 1970, p34f.

Wenham, 1979, acknowledges the work of Douglas in this area.

31. Douglas, 1966, p45-46

32. Pfeiffer, 1957, p91:

"Only priests who were lawyers could have conceived of religion as a theocracy regulated by a divine law fixing exactly, and therefore arbitrarily, the sacred obligations of the people to their God. They thus sanctified the external, obliterated from religion both the ethical ideals of Amos and the tender emotions of Hosea, and reduced the Universal Creator to the stature of an inflexible despot ... From immemorial custom P derived the two fundamental notions which characterise its legislation: physical holiness and arbitrary enactment - archaic conceptions which the reforming prophets had discarded in favour of spiritual holiness and moral law."

33. Douglas, 1966, p46

34. "In the Letter of Aristeas, the high priest, Eleazar:

admits that most people find the biblical food restrictions not understandable. If God is the Creator of everything, why should His law be so severe as to exclude some animals even from touch? His first answer still links the dietary restrictions with the danger of idolatry ... The second answer attempts to refute specific charges by means of allegorical exegesis. Each law about forbidden foods has its deep reason. Moses did not enumerate the mouse or the weasel out of a special consideration for them. On the contrary, mice are particularly obnoxious because of their destructiveness, and weasels, the very symbol of malicious tale-bearing, conceive through the ear and give birth through the mouth. Rather have these holy laws been given for the sake of justice to awaken in us devout thoughts and to form our character. The birds, for instance, the Jews are allowed to eat are all tame and clean, as they live by corn only. Not so the wild and carnivorous birds who fall upon lambs and goats and even human beings. Moses, by calling the latter unclean, admonished the faithful not to do violence to the weak and not to trust their own power. Cloven-hoofed animals which part their hooves symbolise that all our actions must betray proper ethical distinction and be directed towards righteousness. ... Chewing the cud, on the other hand stands for memory.

Philo uses allegory to interpret the dietary rules:

Fish with fins and scales, admitted by the law, symbolise endurance and self-control,

whilst the forbidden ones are swept away by the current, unable to resist the force of the stream. Reptiles, wriggling along by trailing their belly, signify persons who devote themselves to their ever greedy desires and passions. Creeping things, however, which have legs above their feet, so that they can leap, are clean because they symbolise the success of moral efforts."

35. Douglas, 1966, p48
36. Douglas, 1966, p48-49
37. Douglas, 1966, p49
38. Douglas, 1966, p51
39. Douglas, 1966, p51-52
40. Douglas, 1966, p52
41. Douglas, 1966, p53
42. Douglas, 1966, p95
43. Douglas, 1966, p55
44. Douglas, 1966, p57
45. Soler, 1979
46. Jacob, 1970, p119
47. Soler, 1979, p28
48. Soler, 1970, p28 or as Douglas (1966) said,
"Dirt is matter out of place."
49. Douglas, 1966, p53
50. Douglas, 1966, p53
51. Steiner, 1967, p34, sees taboo meaning both prohibition and sacredness and cites Malinowski,

"no abstract classification of meanings can provide a clue: the meaning must be found in

the situation, in the manifold simultaneous overlapping and divergent usages of the word". Also p78f. on the holy.

52. Muilenberg, 1962, p617f.
53. Wilson, 1980, p15-16
54. Carroll, 1985, p117-126 and Douglas, 1975, p285
55. Carroll, 1985, p118f.
56. Carroll, 1985, p118f.
57. Carroll, 1985, p121-124
58. Davies, 1977, p388f.;

Douglas, 1975, p270:

"the second rule governing the common meal.

According to the second rule, meat for the table must be drained of its blood. No man eats flesh with blood in it. Blood belongs to God alone, for life is in the blood. This rule related the meal systematically to all the rules which exclude from the temple on grounds of contact with or responsibility for bloodshed. Since the animal kinds which defy the perfect classification of nature are defiling both as food and for entry to the temple, it is a structural repetition of the general analogy between body and temple to rule that the eating of blood defiles. Thus the birds and beasts which eat carrion (undrained of blood) are likely by the same reasoning to be defiling. In my analysis, the Mishnah's identifying the unclean birds as predators is convincing."

59. Douglas, 1966, p113
60. Isenberg, 1977, p2 comments on Douglas,

"To understand the system of purity rules, their logic and their function, is to understand much about a society."

- 61. Neusner, 1973, p3
- 62. Neusner, 1973, p6
- 63. Neusner, 1973, p2-3
- 64. Neusner, 1973, p7
- 65. Neusner, 1973, p7
- 66. Neusner, 1973, p11
- 67. Neusner, 1973, p15:

"The several metaphorical usages of pure and impure have in common an indifference to the actual, material details of the laws of ritual purity and impurity. Slight effort is made to refer to, or make use of, the concrete laws. The symbol of purity or impurity as used above is left without further specification. Purity simply is the given. Indeed, one may characterize as superficial and homiletical the various usages we have just reviewed. The prophetic and sapiential contrast between the ritually pure and the ethically impure requires little imagination, but only a preacher's sense of the homiletical potentialities of ambiguous words."

- 68. Neusner, 1973, p17
- 69. Neusner, 1973, p18
- 70. Neusner, 1973, p20
- 71. Neusner, 1973, p20
- 72. Neusner, 1973, p21
- 73. Neusner, 1973, p22

- 74. Neusner, 1973, p24
- 75. Neusner, 1973, p25
- 76. Smith, 1960, p352
- 77. Neusner, 1973, p7:

"What interpretations were developed to make sense of the primitive nonsense represented by the biblical purity laws? Obviously, the interpretations are secondary to, and originate much later than, the laws themselves. The laws constitute the given. The interpretations take the laws for granted and assume them to be normative, therefore to require reasons."

Neusner is vague here for it is unclear whether the editing of the texts is itself viewed as an interpretation nor are we aware of the redactor's interpretative approach from the text itself.

- 78. Neusner, 1973, p28, p29f.
- 79. Douglas, 1966, p113
- 80. How are we to understand the Temple? Neusner makes an assumption here that we are aware of what is being alluded to. Is it the Jerusalem temple, or the idealised picture of the sanctuary during the desert wanderings, which is the elaborate tabernacle of the P strand, or is it the tent of meeting of the J and E strands? We are not told.
- 81. Neusner, 1973, p29
- 82. Douglas, 1966, p129-139, sets out:
"to show that pollution has indeed much to do with morals ..." and makes the point,

"when the sense of outrage is adequately equipped with practical sanctions in the social order, pollution is not likely to arise. Where, humanly speaking, the outrage is likely to go unpunished, pollution beliefs tend to be called in to supplement the lack of other sanctions," p132.

83. Neusner, 1973, p29

84. Neusner, 1973, p30

85. Douglas in response to Neusner's work, 1973, p137, offers the caution,

"the problems of communication across separate traditions of thought are formidable," and proceeds to differentiate some of the factors constituent in such an interdisciplinary approach.

86. Neusner, 1973, p121

87. Neusner, 1973, p122

88. Neusner, 1973, p138-139

89. Neusner, 1973, p127

90. Neusner, 1973, p129

91. Neusner, 1973, p140

92. Neusner, 1973, p127

93. Neusner, 1973, p26, presents statistics on pure and impure which reveal that they are, "primarily found in the priestly literature and within that corpus, chiefly in Leviticus and Numbers".

94. Levine, 1974, p55

95. Levine, 1974, p56

96. Levine, 1974, p56

97. Levine, 1974, p60
98. Levine, 1974, p62-63
99. Levine, 1974, p63-64
100. Levine, 1974, p65-66
101. Levine, 1974, p71. Reference is made to Milgrom, 1970, who deals with 'wrath'.
102. Levine, 1974, p72
103. Levine, 1974, p74
104. Levine, 1974, p75
105. Levine, 1968, p72f.
106. Levine, 1968, p78, quotes his work, 'Comments on Some Technical Terms of the Biblical Cult' Leshonenu XXX 1965, p3-11 as justification for such a stance.
107. Levine, 1968, p76
108. Levine, 1974, p76
109. Levine, 1974, p78
110. Levine, 1974, p79
111. Kaufmann, 1960, p301f., p107f., p239f.
112. Levine, 1974, p90. Such a view is supported by Carroll, 1979, p59:

"The magical approach to life was dominated by rituals of manipulation whereby specific goals were sought. In ancient Israel many of these rituals were prohibited (cf. Lev. 20 v.27; Deut. 18 v.9-14) but other manipulative rituals, e.g. sacrifice, were accepted as legitimate means of approaching the deity. These ancient magical rituals may have been carefully controlled to fit in with a rational account of the divine will but they retained their magical status for the masses

(hence the strong prophetic protest against the popular cult of sacrifice). In a sense the later priestly authorities were able to bypass such opposition to magical activities by incorporating the complicated ritual legislation (Lev. 1-16) into the narrative of the exodus and Sinai legends. Thus a deeply magical way of achieving certain ends, e.g. expiation by blood sacrifice, was legitimated as the revealed word of Yahweh (Torah).

- 113. Milgrom, 1976d, p392
- 114. Milgrom, 1976c, p78
- 115. Milgrom, 1976d, p393-394
- 116. Milgrom, 1976d, p395
- 117. Milgrom, 1976d, p397. This assumption of dynamic real impurity is confirmed by the biblical texts. Molech worship is forbidden because it pollutes the sanctuary, Lev. 20 v.3. The gonorrhoeic and menstruant are commended to purify themselves, 'lest they die through their impurity by polluting my tabernacle which is among them', Lev. 15 v.31. The corpse contaminated person, who 'does not purify himself pollutes the Lord's tabernacle', Num. 19 v.13.
- 118. Milgrom, 1976c, p78
- 119. Milgrom, 1976d, p398
- 120. Levine, 1974, p77-91
- 121. Milgrom, 1976d, p390f.
- 122. Smith, 1971, p72f.
- 123. Milgrom, 1976a, p122, argues,
"P's doctrine of repentance is of a piece with that found in the early literature:

repentance cannot erase sin or its consequences. True, P maintains that repentance can mitigate the force of a deliberate sin, converting it to an unintentional offense. However, for the complete annulment of the sin, for the assurance of divine forgiveness, sacrificial expiation is always required."

Such a view misses the significant point that in P's consideration, it was imperative to provide work for the priesthood, in order to justify their existence and permit their continued control of society. He continues, "if the prophetic teaching that repentance can 'wipe out' sin had taken hold, as it did in exilic times, why does it only reduce the gravity of the sin in Priestly law? To the contrary, the catharsis of conscience that characterises Priestly remorse and confession should have sufficed to expunge the sin altogether. Thus the Priestly laws predicate a time when the prophetic teaching that repentance nullifies sin had not penetrated the cultic institutions. Again, P's sacrificial system of expiation must be of pre exilic provenience."

It is rather argued that, due to the failure of the prophetic teaching and in response to the need to concretise religious life, the priestly writer invokes not only repentance but also requires expiation as a way of making visible the expression of feelings. Thus it can be just as easily argued that P's system of expiation was exilic than pre exilic.

124. See pages 86-102 of thesis
125. Douglas, 1966, p3
126. Douglas, 1966, p53
127. Neusner, 1973, p140
128. Levine, 1974, p68, also cites McCarthy, 1973,
on some facets of the symbolism of blood ...
"as the symbol of life".
129. Davies, 1977, p396
130. See pages 211-237 of thesis
131. Milgrom, 1976a, p127
132. Milgrom, 1976a, p123-124
133. Eichrodt, 1961, p274f.
Steiner, 1967, p79-87, 35-67
134. Jacob, 1958, p86
135. Ringgren, 1966, p9
Steiner, 1967, p85,
"relationship is the primary implication of
qodesh."
136. 1 Sam. 6 v.20;
Gen. 18 v.27;
Gen. 28 v.16f.;
Ex. 3 v.6;
Is. 6 v.5;
Is. 8 v.13;
Ps 111 v.9.
137. Ringgren, 1966, p107;
Steiner, 1967, p81, where Snaith utilises
Baudissin's suggestion that the root meaning
is separation.

138. Pedersen, 1959, p266
139. Wenham, 1979, p19f
140. This concept of the presence of God has received a wide coverage and, therefore, reference is made to certain works as indicative of the interest in this area:
- Clements, 1965
- Kraus, 1966
- Davies, 1942
141. Terrien, 1978, is valuable in presenting a range of meanings on the concept of presence and his detailed bibliographies.
142. Terrien, 1978, pXXVII, comments,
- "The reality of the presence of God stands at the centre of biblical faith. This presence, however, is always elusive." And again, (p27),
- "Israel stood obstinately apart from her environment on at least one score. She entertained a unique theology of presence. She knew that her God was always free from the human techniques of ritual or moral manipulation. She conceived the presence of that God to be elusive and unpredictable."
143. Terrien, 1978, p206-207, deals with Jeremiah's role in transforming the concept of presence.
144. Terrien, 1978, p390, comments,
- "Deprived of sacred space, they discovered the sacrality of time ... They erased the past by observing yearly the Day of Atonement."

Thus it might be suggested that presence was not so important to the Aaronides but I think the issue was not so clear as Terrien suggests. It is not a question of one emphasis but the interaction of various factors one of which is presence and another is ritual.

145. It is accepted that P gave one view of matters in the reconstruction process. Other responses are helpfully set out in Ackroyd, 1968. The effectiveness of the Aaronide interpretation is seen in its survival through many generations and centuries.

CHAPTER IV

Implications of the Aaronide manifesto

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Dietary Controls
- (c) Health Controls
- (d) Family Life
- (e) Society
- (f) Footnotes

(a) Introduction

The Aaronide manifesto was concerned to utilise the concepts of purity and presence with their focus on the Temple in order to control Israelite life. The intention of the Aaronides was to preserve the identity of Israelite life and faith by delineating strict boundaries within every sphere. The regulative and overarching principle of holiness was employed in a diversity of circumstances to emphasize the distinctive status of Israel. The Aaronides were anxious to maintain a correct order and structure to community life and this is seen in many of the controls they endeavoured to impose upon society and individuals.

The extent of control which the Aaronides seek for their manifesto will be considered as various sections of life are dealt with. My point is that in the utilisation of the principle of holiness, as understood in a multiplicity of ways by Douglas, we have one of the major methodological tools used by the Aaronides in effecting their radical and decisive reinterpretation of Israelite faith and life. My purpose is, therefore, to consider the area of controls within society that the Aaronides used in order to make their revolution effective and permanent. While it is recognised that various penalties will also be mentioned while dealing with these matters, it is intended to leave such

matters to the following section to be dealt with separately.

(b) Dietary Controls

The priests are charged with the task in Lev. 10 v.10, 'to distinguish between the holy and the common and between the unclean and the clean'. There follows in Leviticus 11 a new section in the book of Leviticus which is concerned with various kinds of uncleanness and how men may be cleansed from them. Chapter 11 is of special concern for it differentiates between clean and unclean foods, which animals may or may not be eaten.

The structure of Leviticus 11 is easily defined thus,

1. The definition of clean and unclean animals
(v.1-23)
 - (a) v.1-8 concern land creatures
 - (b) v.9-12 concern water creatures
 - (c) v.13-23 concern flying creatures
2. The pollution by animals and its treatment
(v.24-47)
 - (a) v.24-28 concern land animals
 - (b) v.29-45 concern swarming animals
 - (c) v.46-47 are a summary.

A concern for correct ordering and classification is a characteristic of the priestly writer and here we see a preference for organising his material into units of three. Such a threefold classification of creatures

corresponds to the picture of Gen. 1 v.20f. with the general categories of land, sea and air as the domains of such creatures. Nevertheless it is observed that Gen. 1 v.25 describes three kinds of creature for the land area (1).

Milgrom comments,

"The food prohibitions are certainly older than the rationale given them in scripture. No doubt their origins were quite varied. Some creatures were disgusting in appearance or habits, while others were discovered from experience to be carriers of disease - attributed to demonic forces. Taboos against some were no doubt the remnants of long forgotten associations with tribal enemies. Recent research has pointed to the possibility that some dietary prohibitions were directed against the cultic practices of pagan neighbours.

Regardless of individual origins, however, the development within Israel of the diet laws as a total system must be attributed to the one reason offered by all four scriptural passages referring to these laws, viz. holiness (vs. 44-45; 20 v.22-26; Ex. 22 v.31; Deut. 14 v.21)" (2).

Such an emphasis on the dietary laws as a total system is important for it provides an important factor in any interpretation of these regulations. The concern of the priestly writer in framing this material, which undoubtedly contains materials from varying stages and

dates, was specific and precise and one needs to see it as according with our awareness of his desire to order and structure matters carefully.

Due cognizance of such factors has not predominated in many of the interpretations offered on these laws and, therefore, we find no consensus about them. The rules themselves are relatively straightforward in that they specify the clean and unclean animals and yet why certain categories may be eaten while others may not be eaten remains inarticulated. The reason for that may be due to the self evident nature of such classifications to those who followed them (3).

One interpretation of these laws suggests that hygienic factors predominate, in that the unclean creatures are unfit to eat because they are carriers of disease, while the clean animals are those which are relatively safe to eat. Clements sees this chapter as,

"a simple and comprehensive guidebook to food and personal hygiene. It arose in a pre-medical era, when only an elementary rule of thumb could apply. There is no reason to doubt that it was put together on the basis of early Hebrew recognition of the harmful consequences of eating certain animals and insects. It arose out of experience rather than direct medical knowledge. Without being able to specify the particular nature of the disease carried by these creatures, it listed them as 'unclean' because in past experience

they had been found to be causes of illness and even death" (4)

Such an interpretation has proved particularly attractive to many modern writers with the 20th Century obsession for medical science and 'fitness'. It is true that pork can be a source of trichinosis and coney and hare are carriers of tularemia. Fish without fins and scales tend to burrow into the mud and become sources of dangerous bacteria, as do the birds of prey which feed on carrion (5).

However, such an approach finds no confirmation in the O.T. itself. It is a characteristic feature of O.T. law to add a motive clause in seeking to justify a particular rule, and health is not the one added here in Lev. 11, it is rather holiness. Some amazing mental gymnastics could adduce a health interpretation as part of holiness but it appears a rather tortuous path. Also no consideration is given to poisonous plants as unclean which would have been assumed if hygiene and health were dominant motives. Therefore, hygienic factors do not provide a coherent and adequate interpretation.

Noth, along with others, has suggested that the unclean animals are those used in pagan worship or associated with particular non-Israelite duties (6). In order to affirm their fidelity to Yahweh, the people of Israel

must shun such animals. Such an explanation has a long history (7) as well as complying with the laws' own purpose, which was to separate Israel from all the other peoples. This approach fails to encompass sufficient of the data, for the Canaanites sacrificed generally the same range of animals as Israel and, therefore, why were they not classified as unclean? The bull was a cultic animal in Egyptian and Canaanite ritual and yet it was not prohibited in Israel. The difficulty with this argument is that the people of Israel did not consistently reject all elements of foreign religions and endeavour to create something entirely original for themselves. Culture is an interactive process and not created out of a vacuum and Israel, throughout her history, absorbs some elements from her neighbours while other elements which were incompatible with the principles of patterning within her concept of the universe are rejected. It is, therefore, inadequate to suggest that uncleanness derives solely from the use of animals in pagan religion.

Another approach, following the tradition of Robertson Smith and Frazer, is to see the rules as arbitrary because they are irrational.

"The irrationality of laws of uncleanness, from the standpoint of spiritual religion or even of the higher heathenism, is so manifest, that they must necessarily be

looked on as having survived from an earlier form of faith and of society" (8).

It would seem that when Robertson Smith applied the ideas of primitive, irrational and unexplainable to these particular rules, they have remained thus labelled to this day (9).

"Such interpretations are not interpretations at all, since they deny any significance to the rules. They expressed bafflement in a learned way" (10),

comments Douglas.

A symbolic interpretation has been offered from the earliest times as a way of explaining these dietary rules. This would see the behaviour and habits of the clean animals as living illustrations of how the righteous Israelite ought to behave, while the unclean animals represent sinful, pagan men. This view was advocated by Jewish writers, like Aristaeus, who probably wrote in 2nd Century B.C. (11). The 1st Century letter of Barnabas, which was written to convince the Jews that their law had found its fulfilment, took the clean and unclean animals to refer to various types of men, with leprosy meaning sin. Bonar argued of the clean animals,

"these would remind the Israelite of what was holy. One went forth to his flocks and there the sheep, feeding in their pastures, spoke

to him of the clean and holy ones whom the Lord watches over as their Shepherd",

... while the habits of the pig spoke of "the filth and iniquity" (12).

Such approaches are fascinating and ingenious but they fail to present a cogent and comprehensive understanding to the symbolism.

In this respect, the work of Douglas proved significant in that she approached the age old problem of the abominations of Leviticus 11 from an anthropological methodology. She argues that these dietary laws possess a symbolic significance but her interpretation is based on a comprehensive reading of all the laws and a consideration of the distinctions emphasized in Leviticus itself. Her concern in interpreting the laws is to do so,

"in reference to a total structure of thought whose keystone, boundaries and internal lines are held in relation by rituals of separation" (13).

The rules are postscripted by the command to be holy (Lev. 11 v.44-45) and, therefore, they are to be interpreted by that dictum.

"Holiness requires that individuals shall conform to the class to which they belong. And holiness requires that different classes of things shall not be confused. ... Holiness means keeping distinct the

categories of creation. It, therefore, involves correct definition, discrimination and order" (14).

The animal world is divided into three spheres: those that fly in the air, those that walk on the land and those that swim in the seas. Each sphere has its respective form of locomotion associated with it, so birds have two wings to fly with and two feet for walking, fish have fins and scales to swim with, while land animals have hoofs to run with. The clean animals are those that conform to such standard classifications, with the creatures that transgress these boundaries deemed as unclean. Therefore, the division between the clean and the unclean is presented in terms of order and strict classification. This analysis explains the main divisions of clean and unclean creatures but does not explain why pigs are unclean while sheep and goats are deemed to be clean. A reason for this differentiation is suggested by Douglas in the social background of the laws, in that sheep and goats would have been the standard meat of pastoralists.

Bulmer (15) criticised Douglas' initial approach, suggesting she offered

"an animal taxonomy for the explanation of the Hebrew dietary laws".

The criticisms were accepted later by Douglas (16) and she proceeded to develop her approach so that

"an analysis of a system of ideas"

was connected,

"with the dominant concerns of the people who used it for thinking with" (17).

In relation to the dietary laws,

"if food is treated as a code, the messages it encodes will be found in the pattern of social relations being expressed. The message is about different degrees of hierarchy, inclusion and exclusion, boundaries and transactions across the boundaries" (18).

In the study of other cultures, there is recognised a correspondence between eating and sex, however in Leviticus,

"only a very strong analogy between table and altar stares us in the face" (19).

From Lev. 1 v.2, 'when any one of you bring an offering to the Lord, it shall be a domestic animal, taken either from the herd or from the flock', we see that the Israelites only sacrificed domesticated animals (20), while other cultures sacrificed wild animals. However, a distinction between clean and unclean animals, that is edible and inedible, is seen throughout the whole of creation, as Douglas has shown (21). This rigid classification,

"assigns living creatures to one of three spheres, on a behavioural basis, and selects certain morphological criteria that are found most commonly in the animals inhabiting each sphere. It rejects creatures which are anomalous, whether in living between two spheres or having defining features of members of another sphere or lacking defining features. Any living being which falls outside this classification is not to be touched or eaten. ... anomalous creatures are unfit for altar and table. This is a peculiarity of the Mosaic code" (22).

The threefold division of animals into unclean, clean and sacrificial parallels the division of mankind by the Priestly writer into the unclean, i.e. those beyond the camp of Israel, the clean, i.e. the majority of ordinary Israelites and those who offer sacrifice, i.e. the priests. The world of the Priestly writer is presented as carefully structured with all things being correctly differentiated. Douglas suggests further that,

"the rules which Israelites obey as part of the Covenant apply to their animals. The rule that the womb opener or first born is consecrated to divine service applies to firstlings of the flocks and herds (Ex. 22 v.29-30; Deut. 24 v.23) and the rule of sabbath observance is extended to work animals (Ex. 20 v.10). ... The analogy by which Israelites are to other humans as their livestock are to other quadrupeds develops by

indefinite stages the analogy between altar and table" (23).

The system underlying the uncleanness regulations and their symbolism was felt in ancient Israel for they expressed an understanding of holiness and Israel's special status as the holy people of God. This system of symbolic laws allowed the Israelites at every meal to think about their status as God's holy people. The diet was limited in imitation of their God who had restricted his choice among the nations to Israel. Such an interpretation is attractive because of its comprehensiveness and coherence,"

"the dietary laws would have been like signs which at every turn inspired meditation on the oneness, purity and completeness of God. By rules of avoidance, holiness was given a physical expression in every encounter with the animal kingdom and at every meal. Observance of the dietary rules would thus have been a meaningful part of the great liturgical act of recognition and worship which culminated in the sacrifice in the Temple" (24).

There is recognised a considerable overlap between the analogies of table and altar, as well as human and animals. Indeed,

"the metonymical patternings are too obvious to ignore. At every moment they are in chorus with a message about the value of purity and the rejection of impurity. At the level of a general taxonomy of living beings

the purity in question is the purity of the categories At the level of the individual living being, impurity is the imperfect, broken, bleeding specimen. The sanctity of cognitive boundaries is made known by valuing the integrity of the physical forms. The perfect physical specimens point to the perfectly bounded temple, altar and sanctuary. And these in their turn point to the hard won and hard to defend territorial boundaries of the Promised Land. This is not reductionism. We are not here reducing the dietary rules to any political concern. But we are showing how they are consistently celebrating a theme that has been celebrated in the temple cult and in the whole history of Israel since the first Covenant with Abraham and the first sacrifice of Noah" (25).

Leach, in his analysis of the genealogy of Solomon, reminds one of the problems which surround a community who claim by pure religion and descent to own a territory that others held and continually encroached upon. Douglas used this work to suggest that

"Israel is the boundary that all the other boundaries celebrate and that gives them their historic load of meanings" (26).

The obvious difficulty in such a correspondence is how we are to understand Israel; it may be better to conceive of Israel not in specifically land terms but rather as an identity factor. Nevertheless in most people's minds such a differentiation may have been

hard to establish and there appears an inevitable interrelation between Israel and the land. Thus the stress on purity in terms of perfect categories in the animal world provides a valuable stress in an environment where the pressures for assimilationism are unrelenting. Thus P utilises a device to preserve the purity of the people Israel by emphasizing, at every encounter with the animal world, the purity of the respective categories.

Having established P's concern for the correct classification of animals, we now proceed to consider another important component of the dietary laws, as it relates to blood. Soler observes relative to this,

"Only the God who gives life can take it away. If man freely uses it for his own ends, he encroaches upon God's domain and oversteps his limits" (27).

Originally man was conceived of as vegetarian (Gen. 1 v.28-29) and, as a consequence of man's rebellion, he ceases to be so and becomes carnivorously inclined (Gen. 9 v.3f.). Such a concession is granted with the proviso, 'only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood'. Such a blood prohibition is significant for it is enjoined on all men and not just Jews.

"Blood becomes the signifier of the vital principle so that it becomes possible to maintain the distance between man and God by

expressing it in a different way with respect to food. Instead of the initial opposition between the eating of meat and the eating of plants, a distinction is henceforth made between flesh and blood. Once the blood (which is God's) is set apart, meat becomes desacralised - and permissible. The structure remains the same, only the signifying elements have changed" (28).

This blood prohibition may be in opposition to the idolatrous practices of ancient Israel's environment, as Milgrom suggests, but it runs deeper than any simple polemic. It perceives the dietary system as resting on ethical foundations and teaching the inviolability of all life.

"Since Israel alone among its neighbors enjoined a blood prohibition that was universal and absolute - for both Jew and non-Jew, for both sacrificial animals and the ordinary kind - we may conclude that this blood prohibition was no vestigial leftover of an ancient taboo; it must have been the result of a rational, deliberate opposition to the prevalent practice of the environment. The reason for this opposition, then, becomes clear when we recall that the blood prohibition is part of the same context in which the concession to eat meat is given for the first time (Gen. 9 v.3f, quoted above). Man has no right to put an animal to death except by God's sanction. Hence, he must eschew the blood, drain it, and return it, as it were, to the Creator. Blood taboos may have existed elsewhere. But for the first

time they are ethicized and extended to all animal life. The pagan fear of expropriating the food which is divine now becomes transmuted into Israel's innovation - the fear of expropriating life which is divine. The abstention from blood is a constant reminder to man that though he may satisfy his appetite for food he must curb his hunger for power" (29).

Such ethical constraints purpose that

"the slaughterer's sense of reverence for life may never be blunted" (30).

While that stress may be an element, it is but one and a closer examination of the blood prohibition in Lev. 17 will reveal more. If all of life was regarded as God given, then the shedding of blood, a vital constituent in the process of expiation, was to be done under God's direction (31). This chapter in P's ordering succeeds the description of the great Day of Atonement rituals which cleanse Israel, in which blood plays a major role. Also chapter 16 concludes a major section of Leviticus in which the priests have been instructed concerning the various rituals connected with expiation. The careful order of P reveals a movement from how the priests handle blood to how laymen should handle it.

The law of Lev. 17 v.3-7 prohibits the killing of animals anywhere except in the tabernacle. It is to

the tabernacle that an Israelite must bring his chosen animal if he wished to eat meat and there the priest would offer it as a peace offering. The penalty for non compliance with such a rule entails being 'cut off' while the motive for such severity is explained in v.7 'no more slay their sacrifices for satyrs, after whom they play the harlot'. It would appear that pagan occult involvement was a threat that P sought to counteract by centralising slaughter to the tabernacle alone. P offers two explanations for the blood prohibition in v.11, 'For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it for you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement, by reason of the life'. By refraining from eating blood, man is honouring life and in Gen. 9 v.4f. the sanctity of human life is associated with not eating blood (32). The second explanation, that of expiation, is somewhat paradoxical. The context is to sacrificial blood and the setting of the prohibition on eating blood means that the šelāmîm offering is meant (33),

"the šelāmîm is the only sacrifice which never serves in a kippēr role. Its uses are carefully detailed in the Priestly Code and abundantly attested in the biblical literature; both law and practice unanimously testify that the offerings of well being are joyous in character and not expiatory" (34).

Such an impasse is resolved by noting that the language of the pericope deals with the improper disposal of the animals' blood as a capital crime.

"v.3-4 now make this explicit: animal slaughter constitutes murder except at the authorised altar. v.11 complements the indictment with the remedy and its rationale: the blood must be brought to the altar to expiate for the murder of the animal because, 'the life of the flesh is the blood ... for it is the blood, as life, that expiates'" (35).

The Priestly writer, therefore, endeavours to control man's power over life. The stress upon the sanctity of animals and the prohibition on their improper slaughter will serve to underline the sanctity of human life. The second explanation for this blood prohibition relates to its ritual usage, and is in marked contrast to other religions in the ancient Near East,

"the reservation of blood to God because it was life and so divine is specifically Israelite" (36).

It has been shown how, in contrast with many other cultures, Israel associated blood not with death and the netherworld but with life (37). This connection of blood with the process of atonement is an obvious part of the O.T. The blood, though it possess magical, mystical powers, in fact effects purification but it is never given to God as atonement. The ideas assigned to

blood are part of a system which sought to unify sacrificial practice and

"because this system emphasized the expiatory role of sacrifice in general (c.f. Lev. 1 v.4), the connection between the power of expiation and the divine element of life in the blood is practically a general theory of sacrifice. When blood was utilised in sacrifice, one dealt with something close to God and which sanctified whatever it touched" (38).

Such explicit ideas about the meaning and power of blood are late and belong to the sacrificial theory of P (39), although it is accepted their prehistory is much older than P. Despite the antiquity of the belief that life is in the blood, this meaning of blood is normative for the O.T. in the form in which it has come to us. In the context of the overall O.T. attitude to blood and ritual, it must be seen as marking off the chosen people and signifying their holiness, that is, separatedness to and for the divine. Whatever the origins, within P, there is a shift in meaning towards the purification and consecration proper to sacrifice. Many different ideas from divergent sources admit the antiquity and wide diffusion of a conviction that blood had a cardinal role in efficacious sacrifice. The developing systematisation of these usages increased the emphasis on blood and so the conviction of its importance grew rather than diminished as theological

reflection developed. The volume of details surrounding the place of blood in sacrificial practices must not obscure the purpose of such rites, which was to deal with a threat to the relationships between man and the divine from the forces of impurity. The Priestly writer dealt with the expiatory process in Leviticus 1f., as fundamental to his whole conception of life and vital in his manifesto for the control of society with the priests being handlers of the blood. The stress on the expiatory process, with its climax in the great Day of Atonement ceremony, was characteristic of P as he sought to provide an understanding for the Israelite community as they faced the future consequent to the exilic crisis. The motive for blood prohibition focuses especially upon the importance of blood within that expiatory process, contingent upon the place of the priests in the sacrificial ritual. The consequence of such rites meant that the people of Israel could enjoy the blessing of God for it was required of them to maintain a state of purity commensurate with their status as God's chosen people.

Therefore, the dietary laws of Leviticus 11 stress the importance of purity of class within creation with its inevitable correspondence for Israel among alien nations and the blood prohibition of Leviticus 17, which stresses the expiatory process, permits a way to be offered to the Israelites to maintain their status

of a pure or purified people. Thus P's purpose is to organise and control society so that they will live up to their calling as God's holy people. Such a concept of holiness was not purely idealistic but the practical ramification for the Israelites related to dietary matters. Milgrom summarises,

"since the destruction of the Temple and the suspension of the sacrificial system, it became vital to the survival of Judaism that every home be a temple, every table an altar, every meal a sacrifice and every consumer a priest" (40).

The blood prohibition has deeper connotations than merely as a major factor in the expiatory process, for it is evidenced in the dietary rules of Leviticus 11. Douglas argues in relation to the abominations of Leviticus 11, Genesis establishes a threefold classification of animals - land, water and flying animals and that anomalous animals are those that do not exhibit the mode of locomotion peculiar to one of these three classes: Carroll has challenged this threefold classification and suggests a fivefold one on the evidence of Gen. 1.

"Leviticus states that all land animals that do not chew the cud and part the hoof are unclean. Yet many of the land animals defined as unclean by this rule (including those mentioned in Leviticus, namely, the hare and the rock badger) would easily fit

into the 'beasts of the earth' category and thus are not anomalous" (41).

While accepting her theory about water creatures, he is very critical about her treatment of flying creatures (42) and concludes that,

"a majority of the 'swarming things' specifically defined as unclean are not anomalous with respect to the classification scheme established in Genesis" (43).

He proceeds to develop an alternative explanation suggesting

"within the logic established in Genesis 'meat eating' is appropriately associated only with men (and thus culture) and is not associated with animals (nature). Within this framework, meat eating animals are a class of things that blur the nature/culture distinction" (44).

A similar conclusion is reached independently of Carroll and Douglas, by Soler,

"Why are herbivorous animals clean and carnivorous animals unclean? Once again, the key to the answer must be sought in Genesis, if indeed the Mosaic laws intended to conform as much as possible to the original intentions of the Creator. And in fact, Paradise was vegetarian for the animals as well ... carnivorous animals are not included in the plan of Creation ... (they) are unclean. If man were to eat them, he would be doubly unclean".

He goes on to say,

"the prohibition against eating most of the birds that are cited as unclean becomes comprehensible, they are carnivorous" (45).

Douglas cites the Mishnah to the same effect,

"The characteristics of birds are not stated but the Sages have said, every bird that seizes its prey (to tread or attack with claws) is unclean. The idea that the unclean birds were predators, unclean because they were an image of human predation and homicide, so easily fits" (46).

Douglas again observes,

"According to the second rule, meat for the table must be drained of its blood. No man eats flesh with blood in it. Blood belongs to God alone, for life is in the blood. This rule relates the meal systematically to all the rules which exclude from the temple on grounds of contact with or responsibility for bloodshed. Since the animal kinds which defy the perfect classification of nature are defiling both as food and for entry to the temple, it is a structural repetition of the general analogy between body and temple to rule that the eating of blood defiles. Thus the birds and beasts which eat carrion (undrained of blood) are likely by the same reasoning to be defiling. In my analysis, the Mishnah's identifying the unclean birds as predators is convincing."

The rules in Lev. 11 v.2-7 which deal with the eating of beasts of the earth are complex and yet I suggest reveal the same trait. Soler again asks,

"Why is the criterion 'hoofed foot' complemented by two other criteria? The reason is that it is not sufficient to classify the true herbivores, since it omits pigs. Pigs and boars have hoofed feet and while it is true that they are herbivores they are also carnivorous. In order to isolate the true herbivores it is, therefore, necessary to add a second criterion 'chewing the cud' ... One important point must be made here: The criterion 'cloven hoof' eliminates a certain number of animals, even though they are purely herbivorous (the horse, the ass and especially the three animals expressly cited in the Bible as 'unclean'; the camel, the hare and the rock badger). A purely herbivorous animal is therefore not automatically clean ... In addition it must also have a foot analogous to the foot that sets the norm: that of domestic animals. Any footshape deviating from this model is conceived as a blemish and the animal is unclean" (48).

The case of the pig in Douglas' work

"that the pig was an unclean beast to the Hebrew quite simply because it was a taxonomic anomaly"

is criticised by Bulmer who sees Leviticus and Deuteronomy as

"taxonomic rationalisations, made by very sophisticated professional rationalisers, to justify the prohibition of a beast for which there were probably multiple reasons for avoiding" (49).

Douglas proceeds further,

"The pig to the Israelites could have had a special taxonomic status equivalent to that of the otter in Thailand. It carried the odium of multiple pollution. First, it pollutes because it defies the classification of ungulates. Second, it pollutes because it eats carrion. Third it pollutes because it is reared as food by non Israelites. ... by these stages it comes plausibly to represent the utterly disapproved form of sexual mating and to carry all the odium that this implies" (50).

However, the conclusion in linking it with sexual mating may go too far and, while accepting the multiple reasons for avoidance of the pig, a more simplistic approach may be in order. If the unclean animals are classified thus because they are either uncertain in their mode of locomotion or are carnivorous, then we see two analogies interacting closely. The concern for the purity of the species or category is matched by an avoidance of any creature which displays predatory traits, in that it encroaches on the divine sphere which is characterised by blood. This fear of encroachment (51) is perceived as a factor in Aaronide

thinking relative to the priesthood and temple organisation and here may reflect a concern from alien influences seeking to infiltrate the community of the people of Israel.

"Whenever a people are aware of encroachment and danger, dietary rules controlling what goes into the body would serve as a vivid analogy of the corpus of their cultural categories at risk" (52).

The special attention focussed on the pig may also be due to it being regarded as a synonym for assimilationism. It carries a multiple of reasons for its avoidance because it does not conform to its prescribed classification but rather confuses the categories. Douglas observes,

"It is the only non-cud chewing hoof cleaver in the whole creation, a monster with no other judgement possible of its improper, law defying existence than outright abomination" (53).

Its dietary habits, of being both herbivorous and carnivorous may help further, in that it does not discriminate in eating and, therefore, may symbolise the assimilated Israelite. That person is one who does not hold to the purity laws although they were born of Israelite parents (cf. Lev. 11 v.7 'parts the hoof and is cloven footed'). Thus the pig could attract a special taxonomic status for a multiple of reasons, which may be encapsulated in the symbol of the

Israelite who has succumbed to the pressure of the alien environment and renounced his 'holy' status within the people of Israel. This interpretation would explain the reason for the multiple pollutions associated with the pig (54). It may also be relevant to cite Bulmer again,

"the fact that the pig was probably not a commensal associate of the Ancient Hebrew itself perhaps requires more explanation. If the archaeologists could tell us whether or not it was commensally associated with the neighbouring worshippers of heathen idols, this could be relevant"

and to mention the allusion by Heider of pork being used in the Canaanite cult of the dead, which in P's day was associated with the cult of Molech. Thus the interconnection of the two provides powerful evidence for P's special treatment of the pig.

In conclusion, an important aspect of the dietary rules reveals a concern to classify carnivorous animals as unclean because of their predatory or encroaching behaviour and this reiterates P's concern that strict boundaries and limits should be observed in every aspect of life. His predominant concern is for order within the world and society as a way of preserving the identity for the community of Israel. So the Mosaic system,

"sets up its terms in contrasting pairs and lives by the rule of refusing all that is

hybrid, mixed or arrived at by synthesis and compromise" (55).

It is Soler who regards the dietary rules as well as the account in Genesis of Creation as,

"based upon a taxonomy in which man, God, the animals and the plants are strictly defined through their relationships with one another in a series of opposites. The Hebrews conceived of the order of the world as the order underlying the creation of the world" (56).

By way of summary, the dietary rules of Leviticus 11 and the blood prohibition of Lev. 17 stress the importance of the purity of the categories and, while acknowledging the danger of infringement, this is rectified through a process of ritual expiation and thus the importance of handling blood in a proper manner is stressed. One of the greatest threats to the people of Israel was perceived as from outside forces which sought to encroach upon the status of the holy nation and, therefore, the individual is reminded by his diet of this threat and the need to preserve the identity of the people of Israel in a very practical manner.

(c) Health Controls

In the previous chapter on dietary controls, Leviticus 11 with other corresponding passages, dealt with external pollutions. There follows in Leviticus 12-15 a variety of pollutions which are caused from what might be described as 'internal sources of pollution'.

Chapters 12-15 consist of a number of originally separate collections of priestly case law, which have been collated by the Aaronides under a common theme. While not wishing to dismiss the complexity of the history of these passages, the decisive element here is the purpose of P's final presentation of this material. The materials are grouped together as they concern various bodily functions and defilements and these pollution beliefs will reveal that Israel as a holy nation faces challenges from inside itself as well as from outside.

The concept of pollution, as it relates to bodily functions, affects individuals and only the person involved in many instances will know whether they are unclean or not. Such pollution beliefs do not necessarily correspond to moral rules for while some kinds of behaviour may be judged wrong they may not provoke pollution beliefs. In the same way other kinds of behaviour not thought of as reprehensible may be

held to be polluting. Therefore, we must note that P seeks to utilise pollution beliefs as part of the whole spectrum of control. Its effectiveness will be discussed at a later stage in this work.

If Leviticus 12-15 is considered a unit, then the purpose of these regulations is defined in 15 v.31: 'Thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst'. Those who are unclean are not permitted to join in the worship of the tabernacle, lest they pollute it or die. A similar prohibition surrounds the giving of the law on Sinai (Ex.19 v.10f.) and the perils of entering the tabernacle in an unfit manner have been recounted in the incident of Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10). Certain types of uncleanness require only washing and/or waiting, although it is stressed that failure to observe such basic rules could have serious consequences (Lev. 17 v.16; 19 v.8; 22 v.9). It was, therefore, important for a person to know when he was unclean lest he break these regulations and become liable to the appropriate penalties. The purpose of Lev. 12-15 is to define the conditions that made a person unclean and thus the laws reveal a didactic purpose for they attempt to prevent people sinning through ignorance.

It was noted with regard to Lev. 11 that the rules were fairly straightforward although the rationale behind them appears obscure. Why were certain conditions regarded as unclean while others were not and why were certain conditions regarded as unclean and then after a time lapse with no further deterioration recorded, were they pronounced clean. Therefore, the same issue confronts us here, as with regard to Lev. 11, to discern the principle which P uses to define what is clean or unclean.

Clements suggests that hygienic considerations underlie these laws about bodily secretions and, while it appears attractive on the surface, it does not adequately interpret all the data (57). The most obvious difficulty is in Leviticus 12 which prescribes an extended period of uncleanness for a girl rather than a boy. It is suggested that sex was associated with demonic powers and inevitably incurred uncleanness (58). Demons are not mentioned in the laws and, therefore, this appears as mere speculation. Only some of the laws are relative to the sexual realm and so it fails to account for all the evidence, as well as posing problems for our understanding of sexual behaviour within the Bible. Bertholet observes that other ancient religions have similar concepts but does not try to explain their function, which suggests bewilderment on his part (59). It could be suggested

that the ideas in Lev. 12-15 are primitive taboos carried over from a bygone day but this would contradict with P's sense of method and purposeful design which is characteristic of his work. It also fails to explain why, if these are primitive taboos, P has incorporated them within his finished work. Older commentators have interpreted them allegorically and seen these discharges as symbolising sin and death, so even the natural processes of reproduction make a person unclean and one is reminded that every one is a sinner (60).

The work of Douglas, and other anthropologists, has been helpful in this realm, and, although the main focus of their attention has been on Leviticus 11, nevertheless some pertinent comments have been offered. In describing holiness, its dual meaning of separateness and wholeness is noted.

"Much of Leviticus is taken up with stating the physical perfection that is required of things presented in the temple and of persons approaching it. The animals offered in sacrifice must be without blemish, women must be purified after childbirth, lepers should be separated and ritually cleansed before being allowed to approach it once they are cured. All bodily discharges are defiling and disqualify from approach to the temple".

The idea of physical completeness is worked out especially in reference to the warrior's camp,

"The culture of the Israelites was brought to the pitch of greatest intensity when they prayed and when they fought. The army could not win without the blessing and to keep the blessing in the camp they had to be specially holy. So the camp was to be preserved from defilement like the Temple. Here again all bodily discharges disqualified a man from entering the camp as they would disqualify a worshipper from approaching the altar. A warrior who had had an issue of the body in the night should keep outside the camp all day and only return after sunset, having washed. Natural functions producing bodily waste were to be performed outside the camp (Deut. XXIII v.10-15). In short the idea of holiness was given an external physical expression in the wholeness of the body seen as a perfect container" (61).

The purity rules which relate to everyday life and especially those rituals which surround the body and deal with secretions reflect a far wider concern, which is that of the social structure itself.

"We cannot possibly interpret rituals concerning excreta, breast milk, saliva and the rest unless we are prepared to see in the body a symbol of society and to see the powers and dangers credited to social structure reproduced in small on the human body" (62).

Discharges are not just incompatible with holiness, understood as physical normality, they symbolise

breaches in the nation's body politic. Douglas suggests that,

"when rituals express anxiety about the body's orifices, the sociological counterpart of this anxiety is a care to protect the political and cultural unity of a minority group" (62).

As a result of the exile, the Israelites found themselves as a hard pressed minority group striving to preserve their identity and so they believed that all the bodily secretions - blood, pus, excreta and semen were polluting. So

"the threatened boundaries of their body politic would be well mirrored in their care for the integrity, unity and purity of the physical body" (64).

The insight of Douglas is helpful for it provides a rationale to an apparent diversity of rules, so it is significant for our purposes to recognise

"ritual as an attempt to create and maintain a particular culture, a particular set of assumptions by which experience is controlled" (65).

It is suggested that any body or structure of ideas is vulnerable at its margins and, therefore, we might expect the orifices of the body to symbolise the particularly vulnerable points. If this is so it would explain the differences which occur in rituals with

respect to the body, for they are reflecting the cultural and social danger points.

Douglas observes,

"Each culture has its own special risks and problems. To which particular bodily margins its beliefs attribute power depends on what situation the body is mirroring To understand body pollution, we should try to argue back from the known dangers of society to the known selection of bodily themes and try to recognise what appositeness is there" (66).

The difficulty we face is to argue from the body pollution to try and perceive the attendant dangers to society. The correlation suggested by Wenham appears to claim too much,

"the rules about bodily discharges give symbolic expression to the laws barring intermarriage with the Canaanites and the prohibitions against foreign customs and religion, which conflicted with Israel's special status as the one elect and holy nation" (67).

Pollution beliefs, while not obviously corresponding to moral rules, in fact serve to undergird morality or at least reflect the moral principles accepted in society. By stressing that certain actions entail uncleanness, the act itself is discouraged and this may be especially useful in the area of private morality where legal sanctions are unlikely to be effective or

enforceable. Therefore pollution beliefs occur where there is insufficient authority within the social framework to enforce certain rules. This may lead us to suggest that P is concerned to control behaviour through pollution beliefs because he does not have sufficient power to authorise punishment for particular acts or more probably he is seeking to influence behaviour in the private, personal realm where specific social controls would be unworkable.

Leach has already suggested that bodily discharges including semen, menstrual blood, faeces, etc., are almost universally tabooed because they threaten the major distinction between self and the outside world (68). If we assume that childbirth also threatens that same distinction, then Leach's explanation would be capable of accounting for the 'uncleanness' rules relating to childbirth and bodily discharges in Leviticus, although it does not account for the rules concerning leprosy in Leviticus 13. However, the major significance of such pollution rules is in their symbolic expression of undesirable contacts which would have repercussions on the structure of social or cosmological ideas. Therefore, we expect to find pollution beliefs guarding threatened disturbances of the social order.

In the light of this, let us consider Leviticus 13 and 14 which deal with serious skin diseases in people,

clothes and houses. Traditionally, these diseases have been rendered in most versions as 'leprosy' (Hebrew tsāra'at) following the LXX lepra,

"The Hebrew term tsāra'at comes from a root meaning 'to become diseased in the skin', and is a generic rather than a specific description,"

comments Harrison (69). In the O.T. such a word is extended to apply to mould or mildew in fabrics, (Lev. 13 v.47-58) or materials (Lev. 14 v.34-53). Medical opinion is agreed that leprosy (Hansen's disease) is not one of the diseases being described here (70). It is suggested that what is referred to is a scaly skin disease of some kind (71). It seems puzzling to modern ears to use the same terminology to describe such diverse conditions. All such marks are designated unclean and are blemished by discolouring the surface or affecting part of an object. Such symptoms are perceived as abnormal and destroy the wholeness which should characterise creation. The triadic pattern of the Priestly writer is seen in Lev. 13 and 14 with three main sections making the unit:-

13 v.1-59 Serious skin disease in men and clothing: its diagnosis and treatment;

14 v.1-32 Ritual cleansing after the cure of serious skin disease;

14 v.33-57 Serious skin disease in houses; diagnosis, treatment and cleansing.

The first tests in 13 v.2-8 are to decide what is a serious skin disease and if it is deeper than the skin then it is considered serious and the person pronounced unclean. Consequently, he is excluded from the camp and follows the pattern of 13 v.45-46. 'The leper who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose and he shall cover his upper lip and cry, "Unclean, unclean". He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease; he is unclean; he shall dwell alone in a habitation outside the camp.' If the disease is only superficial, then, after a period of confinement, the person is re-examined and, if it has not developed, then he is pronounced clean (v.6-7). Such quarantine periods would distinguish between superficial and serious diseases, with the same procedure being adopted for other skin complaints (v.9-17, 18-28, 29-37, 38-39, 40-44). The exclusion of the diseased person with their solitary existence must have been viewed as a disaster in itself in ancient Israel, for outside the camp was not only unclean but it symbolised the place removed from God. Life and society were conceived of in terms of a series of concentric circles centered on the tabernacle (72) and, therefore, to live outside the camp was to suffer great distress and not surprisingly certain of the actions of the diseased person are those traditionally associated with mourning. Frymer-Kensky comments,

"The boundaries between life and death are crucial and no individual who has had contact with the world of death can be part of life. He must, therefore, stay in limbo - outside the camp - The severe isolation of the leper may also be related to this distinction between life and death. If the disease was at all similar to modern leprosy, its effect in an advanced state was similar to the decomposition of a corpse; the biblical association of leprosy and corpses is expressed in Num. 12 v.12 where the leprous Miriam is compared to one born dead and half decomposed. The afflicted individual ... might have been considered to be in a no man's land between two realms which must be kept rigidly apart. It may be relevant that dishevelled hair and rent clothes are a sign of mourning (Lev. 10 v.6); the leper may be mourning his own 'death'. The ritual that the healed leper undergoes ... may also indicate that this blurring of the demarcation between life and death lies behind the virulence of the contamination of leprosy" (73).

The leprous condition is related to clothing in Lev. 13 v.47-58 with similar diagnostic tests being applied. It is to be remembered that the priests were anxious to differentiate between those conditions that were clean and unclean, thus preserving the boundaries of life. The disease itself may not have been considered infectious, as it is not specified, it was rather the symptoms that were deemed incompatible with membership

of the community. Holiness for P was symbolised by a wholeness and, just as animals must be perfect and without blemish when used in sacrifice, so any blemish or deformity was regarded as unclean. Men must behave in a way that expresses wholeness and integrity in their actions, so when a man shows visible signs of a lack of wholeness in a persistent patchy skin condition, he has to be excluded from the community, for mixtures are considered abominable since they confuse the categories of creation. Carroll develops his thesis about the purity laws preserving the distinction between nature and culture with regard to leprosy in Lev. 13 v.1-59 and Lev. 19 v.33-35 (which deals with infected buildings) thus,

"From the description of the symptoms that Leviticus gives in connection with 'garment' and 'building' leprosy, it is generally concluded that what is being referred to is mould and mildew. Since mould and mildew are both forms of plant life, what is being defined as unclean here are plants (which belong to nature) and invade the world of man (culture), by infesting his garments and his dwellings. Here again then what is being defined as unclean is a category of things that blurs an otherwise sharp distinction between nature and culture. (In fact, mould and mildew can be seen as the plant kingdom's equivalent to 'vermin', already defined as unclean in Lev. 11 v.29-38).

While the leprosy that Leviticus mentions as infecting individuals probably includes a

variety of skin diseases, certainly the most notable such disease would be the one that we today call leprosy. It seems plausible to suggest that the physical deformities induced by this disease also blur the nature/culture distinction by distorting the 'human' appearance of the person so afflicted. This interpretation receives some textual support from Leviticus itself.

For instance, leprous individuals are required (Lev. 14 v.46) to dwell 'outside the camp' (though obviously this by itself could be explained in purely hygienic terms). More telling is the requirement (Lev. 14 v.45) that a leper 'shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose'. Since clothing and dressed hair clearly belong to culture, this requirement can be seen as reflecting the leper's disassociation from culture" (74).

Again, we see the concern to preserve the identity of the boundaries in life and, it seems in this regard, between life and non life.

It has already been noted how pollution beliefs were linked with the moral values of a culture, forming part of the structure of ideas for which pollution behaviour is a protective device. Pollution beliefs not only reinforce the cultural and social structure, they actively reduce ambiguity in the moral sphere. Moral situations are not easy to define for a moral rule is

general and its application to a particular context may be uncertain.

"Pollution rules, by contrast with moral rules are unequivocal The only material question is whether a forbidden contact has taken place or not" (75),

observes Douglas, who then relates pollution beliefs and moral rules to the Nuer.

"Nuer cannot always tell whether they have committed incest or not. But they believe that incest brings misfortune in the form of skin disease, which can be averted by sacrifice. If they know they have incurred the risk, they can have the sacrifice performed: if they reckon the degree of relationship was very distant and the risk, therefore, slight, they can leave the matter to be settled post hoc by the appearance or non appearance of the skin disease. Thus pollution rules can serve to settle uncertain moral issues" (76).

It could be suggested that this impersonal punishment for wrongdoing is evidenced in Leviticus 13 and such pollutions serve to reinforce the system of values of the Aaronides. Support for such a view is cited by Frymer-Kensky,

"The only instance in which there was any moral approbium attached to a polluted state is the case of the leper. In narrative portions of the Bible, leprosy is a divine sanction imposed for the commission of certain wrongs: on Miriam for her affrontery

against Moses (Num. 12 v.10-15) and Gehazi for wrongfully taking money from Naaman (2 Kings 5 v.27) and Uzziah for presuming to offer incense by himself (2 Chronicles 26 v.19-21). Since the tradition records instances in which leprosy was a divine punishment, there may have been a tendency to suspect lepers of wrongdoing" (77).

If this was so then the 'blemishes' in material could be explained in a similar way. In Lev. 15 the discharging man, as well as the menstruating woman, makes a series of objects unclean by his use of them which are subsequently forbidden until cleansed again. A standard of cleanliness was to be upheld and evidence of such diseases may indicate the failure of some people to carry out these purification processes. This would allow for a comprehensive approach to pollution beliefs by P as well as revealing the complexity of controls involved within society. The legalistic character of P would suggest that these blemishes in people and substances are consequent upon some undetected wrongful acts.

Leviticus 14 is closely linked with the preceding chapter and deals with the ritual cleansing of a man whose skin disease has cleared up and the treatment of the disease in houses. The ritual cleansing of a cured man is clearly set out in v.2-32. The rites are long and involved as one would expect when a person is re-

admitted to the life of the community. They serve to underline the gravity of the condition from which the man has come.

Such rites are described by anthropologists as 'rites of aggregation' which refer to ceremonies in which a person who is in a 'marginal state' is 'brought back into normal society and aggregated to his new role'. Shaving and washing are regular ingredients of such rites and portray a cleansing from the pollution caused by the skin disease and the uncleanness consequent on dwelling outside the camp. The bird rites, in which one of the two is killed over a bowl with running water, while the living bird is dipped in the blood of the dead and the leper is sprinkled with the blood of the slain bird, with the living bird let loose in the field, are similar to the ritual of the Day of Atonement. In both instances two creatures are involved with one being killed and the other set free. In the case of the leper the symbolism focuses on the living bird, who has been in contact with death and is then set free, which may be analogous to the leper who has been set free from his brush with death. Davies develops the parallel;

"With respect to the two pigeons used in the restoration rites, we may compare them with the two goats of the atonement rites; the release of the one pigeon which was first dipped in the blood of the sacrificed bird may be seen as effecting a similar function

to that of the scapegoat, in that it carried away into the outside world the problem afflicting the man and society. That a similar ritual took place for a house which had some sort of mould is significant, for it further exemplifies the principle that whatever disrupted social life in Israel, as did both leprosy and uninhabitable houses, necessitated ritual action which took the form of sacrifice"

and suggests that,

"sacrifice has to do with the correction of social disruption and the reformation of confused categories" (79).

On completion of living seven days in the camp but outside his tent, the cured man is reincorporated into the community by sacrifice.

All the mandatory sacrifices had to be presented, that is the burnt, cereal, purification and reparation ones with the peace offering omitted. It is surprising and apparently contradictory that the reparation offering appears in this context. The reparation or 'asam offering was required by Lev. 5 v.14-26 in three instances, the trespass against sacred property, suspected trespass and false oaths, with its sacrificial procedure described in Lev. 7 v.1-7. Levine in his study of 'āšām examines 1 Sam. 5 and 6 helpfully:-

"The ark had been captured by the Philistines in battle, and the captors were experiencing gruesome consequences of their exploit; worst of all, the affliction of tumors and hemorrhoids. On the assumption that one or another particular locale was offensive to the God of Israel, the Philistines transferred the ark from city to city, but to no avail. They surmized that the continued presence of the captured cult object was the cause of their misfortunes, and decided on a test plan to verify their interpretation of the events. If the wagon bearing the ark proceeded without guidance directly to the Israelite settlement, the Philistines could be assured that by restoring the ark to the Israelites they were acting in accordance with the will of the Israelite deity, and would be spared further suffering. Having tasted the severity of Yahweh's wrath, the Philistines saw fit to send an expiatory gift, termed 'āšām, along with the ark. This 'āšām consisted of gold figurines in the form of tumors and rats, the carriers of plague. The magical character of the 'āšām is expressed by the homeopathic forms of the figurines, and by their number, which corresponded precisely to the number of the Philistine principalities.

The plan was efficacious, and the afflictions ended. This remarkable account has important implications for our study of the 'āšām, as a sacrifice. In anticipation of conclusions to be arrived at further on, we here note several of these implications, emerging from a close analysis of the account in 1 Samuel:

(1) The context of the Philistine 'asam is the misappropriation of sacred property, devoted to specific cultic use. As such, the 'āšām is a gift to the offended deity, remitted in addition to restitution of the object which had been improperly taken. The Hebrew legal term for such misappropriation is ma'al, and it is this circumstance which necessitates the offering of the 'āšām, as payment additional to the 'principal' of the misappropriation, according to the Levitical codes.

(2) The 'āšām here assumed the form of objects of value to be presented to the God of Israel, presumably to be placed before him. It did not assume the form of an altar sacrifice, in the usual senses. In form and substance, the Philistine 'āšām resembled a votive presentation.

(3) The Philistines were led to present the 'āšām by the reality of misfortune, seeking the cause for their misfortune in an offense to a deity. Although the capture of the ark cannot properly be termed an inadvertent act, since it was undertaken with calculation, one could say that the offenders, in this case, were unaware of the extent of their offense and of its consequent penalties, else they would not have retained the ark in their cities once the battle was won. They knew of its potency, to be sure, but they did not know what would happen if they kept it, as captors often did with respect to cult object of their defeated enemies. The 'āšām thus emerges as a response to misfortune, when the

causes of misfortune are not fully identified and an element of uncertainty exists" (80).

With respect to the case of suspected sancta trespass, in Lev. 5 v.17-19, Milgrom concurs,

"The language of v.17 is almost the same as that describing the occasion for a sin offering for purification (4 v.1, 22, 27). The significant difference is that, whereas the sin offering is predicated on later discovery of the cause of guilt (4 v.14, 23, 28), here the person still does not know it. Nevertheless, he feels guilty, usually because suffering his iniquity, i.e. punishment - e.g. illness, axiomatically viewed as the result of sin - and to obviate the possibility of further divine wrath he brings a guilt offering. This provision is witness to the psychological truth that he who does not know the exact cause of his suffering will imagine the worst; he will assume that he has incurred liability for damage or loss to holy things rather than mere ritual error and therefore make the more expensive reparation offering" (81).

It is suggested by him also,

"In the ancient Near East, leprosy was frequently attributed to sanctum trespass and it may explain why an 'āšām is included in the sacrificial ritual for the healed leper" (82).

The 'āšām offering by the cured man was offered since he presumed that his leprosy had been caused by

trespassing on God's sancta. The use of the blood from the 'āšām which was smeared on the right ear, thumb and big toe of the cured man, presumably purified the recipient and ensured the role of the priesthood in such cases (83). Seven days before a parallel act had been undergone outside the camp using the blood of a bird, without a priest, and this served as an initial cleansing. Now the blood of a sacrificial lamb was used to complete this purifying process with the co-operation of the priest. Oil, which was first dedicated to God and placed in the priest's left hand, was sprinkled seven times before the Lord and some of it was put on the cured man's right ear, thumb, big toe and over his head. The blood which cleansed the man is complemented by the oil which spoke of purification. In ancient, Ugarit observes Milgrom,

"a female slave was freed when the officiant pronounced: 'I have poured oil upon her head and I have declared her pure'" (84).

The man, re-admitted to full membership of the community, could offer the standard sacrifices, burnt, cereal and purification, expected of all Israel.

The laws concerning serious skin disease close with a section on infected houses v.33-53. They reveal nothing that would alter the picture already described as Israel endeavoured to be a holy people.

The final part of this chapter deals with the uncleanness associated with the reproductive processes. It seems obvious to group Lev. 12 and 15 together for this purpose, although other considerations may determine the present structure of Leviticus. Wenham suggests that the structure relates to the duration of uncleanness,

"the uncleanness laws start with uncleanness that is permanent: that associated with various animals and food (Chapter 11). Then they deal with the uncleanness of childbirth, which may last up to eighty days (Chapter 12). Chapter 13 and 14 deal with uncleanness of indefinite duration; it all depends on how long the serious skin disease persists. Finally, Chapter 15 deals with discharges associated with reproduction, pollutions which usually only affect a person for up to a week" (85).

Such an approach to structure may be superficially attractive but a deeper perception is to be seen. Leviticus 11 seeks to classify the creation into its respective categories of clean or unclean as they accord with the appropriate sphere of existence. There follows in Leviticus 12 a stress on the cost of childbirth, in terms of impurity for the woman. It may be a device to reinforce the mystical elements of the culture which surround birth. Leviticus 13 and 14 deal with skin diseases which may be the result of behaviour which necessitates safeguards. Such an emphasis on

sexual behaviour would accord with the use of pollution beliefs as a way of controlling conduct in an area where it was difficult to legislate. The following chapter will serve to confirm that emphasis as a major concern of P.

Leviticus 12 deals with the pollution caused by childbirth. The birth of a male child renders a woman impure for seven days while the birth of a female for fourteen days. After this initial period, although no longer impure, the mother is not totally pure and must avoid the realm of the holy for a further thirty-three days for a male and double for a female. No reason is given why a female pollutes her mother more than a male, although the necessity of having circumcision on the eighth day made it impossible for the period of full impurity to last more than seven days after the birth of a male child. The doubling of that period for a female may suggest an attempt at male dominance within society (86) and emphasize that more dynamic forces of impurity are constituent within a female. (It may be an ancient way of suggesting that women are twice as likely to be troublemakers than men in community conflict!).

The lengthy transitional period of purification after childbirth is unique. It could stress the profound importance attached to the birth process and the

possible consequences of sexual intercourse or, as Frymer-Kensky suggests,

"the person who has experienced birth has been at the boundaries of life/non life and therefore cannot directly re-enter the community" (87).

Leviticus 15 deals with uncleanness from genital discharges with the word body used as a euphemism for the genital organs. The chapter is carefully structured with four cases;

v.2-15 deal with male pathological discharges;

v.16-18 deal with normal emission of semen;

v.19-24 with normal menstruation;

v.25-30 deal with female pathological discharges.

The impurity from a normal discharge or from contact with another person having a pathological discharge is a lesser matter and is removed by washing and the passage of the specified time. While the impurity from a pathological discharge is presumed to have contaminated the sanctuary, which requires sacrificial purification after recovery. As early as the Septuagint, the complaint described has been identified as gonorrhea (88).

Identification of the disease is not as vital as the consequences of the uncleanness, for such discharges

affect not only the person concerned but also polluted people and objects that came into contact with him. This stresses the potency of the pollution, which is far greater than Lev. 13-14, although the man is not excluded. The person recovers by waiting seven days, washing and then offering the two cheapest sacrifices (v.14). Such pollution was deemed not so serious as that associated with skin disease. The reason for that may lie in the premise that skin disease was evidence of impure actions; he had not only committed an impure act but consciously sought to conceal it.

Transient male discharges are dealt with v.16-18 and require only washing and waiting. Wenham observes,

"The practical effect of this legislation was that when a man had religious duties to perform, whether this involved worship or participation in God's holy wars, sexual intercourse was not permitted" (89).

The general stress of such rules may have been on sexual restraint or more precisely on the awareness that sex was a powerful force.

Female discharges are considered v.19f. as transient or with long term aspects. The uncleanness associated with menstruation was noted in 12 v.2 and 5 and, although such pollution is considered as potent as male discharges, v.2-15, no sacrifices are required. These laws concerning menstruation seem harsh to modern minds

for they consign every adult woman in Israel to a state of untouchability for one week a month. Wenham notes,

"In ancient Israel three factors would combine to make menstruation very much rarer, at least among married women. These were early marriage, probably soon after puberty and late weaning and the desire for large families. The only women likely to be much affected by the law of Lev. 15 v.19-24 would be unmarried teenage girls"

and he concludes,

"these regulations may have promoted restraint in relations between the sexes and have acted as a brake on the passions of the young" (90).

The long term discharges for a female v.25-30 are dealt with in the same way as male (v.2-15).

Douglas has suggested that all bodily secretions are polluting (91) but in the Bible this is not the case for only genital emissions are deemed polluting. Frymer-Kensky observes,

"Despite the fact that food (entry into the body) was carefully regulated, the excreta involved in the digestive process - saliva, urine, feces - are not mentioned as polluting. Defecation is supposed to take place outside the ideal camp (Deut. 23 v.13-15) but individuals excreting or even touching feces are not considered defiled until evening nor is it prescribed that they must bathe. Even those emissions that might

be considered somewhat diseased - nasal discharge, sputum, pus - are not mentioned as polluting agents. The most conspicuous human emission absent from the list of polluting agents is human blood (or for that matter, any blood). Blood, of course, may not be eaten. However, despite the fact that menstrual blood is a major contaminant, and that (innocent) bloodshed is the most important pollutant of the land (see below), ordinary blood is not mentioned as a contaminant. Bleeding or touching blood is not considered polluting, and people who are wounded and bleeding are not defiled and are not forbidden to come to the temple or to partake of sacrifices. The only bodily emissions that pollute are those involved with sex: menstrual blood and discharges as major pollutants, ejaculation (with or without intercourse) until the evening. The reason that these are considered polluting must lie in the social relations between men and women and in the culture's attitude towards sex" (92).

So these pollution beliefs were utilised in the enforcement of behaviour which the Aaronides deemed consistent with Israel's status as a holy people. However, the effectiveness of such beliefs was entirely dependent on the people's respect for that code or ethos. The specificity of the situation to which these rules apply seem beyond our grasp from the material available. Wenham suggests,

"They would tend to encourage restraint in sexual behaviour ... because sexual intercourse made both partners unclean and, therefore, unable to participate in worship for a whole day, this regulation excluded the fertility rites and cult prostitution that were such a feature of much Near Eastern religion. It also served to make ordinary prostitutes social outcasts. Evidently ancient Israel, like many other societies, was unable to ban prostitution altogether but this rule deprived the prostitute of social respectability and therefore helped to undergird the stability of family life" (93).

The presence of pollution beliefs about sex is indicative of society's power in this realm.

"Sex is likely to be pollution free in a society where sexual roles are enforced directly"

notes Douglas, who goes on,

"When the principle of male dominance is applied to the ordering of social life but is contradicted by other principles such as that of female independence, or the inherent right of women as the weaker sex to be more protected from violence than men, then sex pollution is likely to flourish" (94).

There appears in P's consideration of pollution beliefs surrounding sex a priority given to man's behaviour although women's behaviour is also controlled. Such a balancing many indicate P's awareness that,

"no other social pressures are potentially so explosive as those which constrain sexual relations" (95).

(d) Family Life

The bulk of rules and regulations within Lev. 18 and 20 bear on this subject. Some commentators see these chapters as dealing with marriage (96), but this does not cover all the data and it is preferable to describe P's work as dealing with sexual relations within an extended family setting along with other sexually prohibited relations. The chapters convey an obviously strong polemic against Canaanite practices (97). Israel's sexual morality is shown to distinguish it from its neighbours and providing evidence of their 'chosen' status. The chapters reveal a considerable amount of redaction but it is with their final form that we are concerned.

Clements comments on Israel's sex ethics,

"It is evident from the Old Testament that in its basic personal demands Israel had a much stricter and more dignified code of behavior for sex and marriage than was customary in the ancient world. The standard of sexual behavior expected in Israel was much more chaste than we find reflected in other ancient Near Eastern law codes, and the severe penalties imposed upon breaches of the marriage laws indicate that such laws were normally adhered to. The sacredness in which the bond of marriage was held stands in contrast to the loose, and often confused, relationships which could arise in ancient

communities, especially among the Canaanite peoples.

That Canaanite society in particular had very low standards of sexual morality is fully borne out by the extant texts of Canaanite mythology, as well as by the repeated emphasis in the legal and prophetic parts of the Old Testament against imitation of the Canaanites. Thus the particular references to the Canaanites (18 v.3, 24-30) undoubtedly had a very special relevance for Israel, the more so since the Canaanite religion actually promoted sexual laxity, rather than condemning it" (98).

In Lev. 18, following the introductory exhortation to avoid Canaanite customs v.1-5, there is a list of family connections within which sexual relationships were prohibited. Nielsen says of v.6-17,

"it consists of a series of prohibitions directed against sexual relations within the extended family, i.e. with other members of the family of one's own generation, of the generation preceding and of the generations of the children and the children's children" (99).

The general principle underlying these detailed rules, v.7-18, is stated in v.6, 'None of you shall approach any one near of kin to him to uncover nakedness'. Porter notes,

"their purpose is not to prohibit certain kinds of marriages ... not even simply to prevent sexual intercourse with females of

close blood relationship. Rather, the primary concern is with those who are living together in close proximity to one another in a tent encampment, although, of course, the real kernel of those so living was formed of people closely related by blood. The rules aim to regulate sexual relationships and to forbid all promiscuity within the group, with the object of preserving peace and harmony among those living together" (100).

The family connections are frequently termed, 'blood relationships', as many of them were, yet others show a wider connection than one of actual blood kinship. The old family law which is the basis of Lev. 18 v.6f. has been extended by P to include any female relative whether found in the tent encampment or not and explanations given for the various prohibitions are based on blood relationship rather than mere physical proximity. Therefore, sexual intercourse with the wife of a near male relative is now forbidden as it uncovers her husband's nakedness (Lev. 18 v.8, 14, 16 and Lev. 20 v.11, 20, 21). Marriage with a near male relative effectively makes the woman herself into a blood relative and, as in the case of female near relatives, sexual relations with her are treated as an unnatural offence (101). The necessity to make all women in Lev. 18 v.6f. into blood relatives had led to the insertion of the obvious explanation, in v.7, that sexually a wife belongs to her husband. So we have two basic

principles in v.6-18, 'a man may not marry any woman who is a close blood relation, or any woman who has become a close relative through a previous marriage to one of the man's close blood relations' (102).

Therefore, casual sexual relations were prohibited with one's mother (v.7), step-mother (v.8), full sister (v.9), grand-daughter through one's son (v.10), half-sister through one's father (v.11), paternal aunt (v.12), paternal uncle's wife (v.14), daughter-in-law (v.15) and sister-in-law (v.16). Other than the daughter, the only female relative whom one might have expected to be included in the list is the wife of one's grandson. It is not clear why daughter should be omitted, since the story of Lot and his daughters show that this was also taboo. Grandmother is not mentioned, possibly because a much older woman would not represent a genuine temptation (103). Phillips sees in Lev. 18 v.6f. and 20 v.10f.

"the working out of a fully comprehensive code of all sexual crimes for the post exilic period" (104).

It is assumed that the code of family law did not exist in a written form as we find it in Lev. 18 v.6f. Customary family law simply forbade sexual relations outside marriage with any female relative normally found in one's tent or house and no-one needed to have these relatives spelt out. Leviticus 18 v.6f. is the

work of P, who uses this customary law for his own extended purposes. Such laws would be tabulated for as a result of the exile, with the possible breakdown of family life, there would be a need to strengthen the family unit and introduce harmony within relationships. The basis of the list is social rather than genetic, since first cousins are not taboo, although closely related biologically, and a number of wives of kin are taboo although unrelated biologically. It would appear that a possible explanation for the list is that in all the specified relationships, sexual contact would be potentially disruptive of family relations within an extended setting by creating competition between related men for the same women. It is not an accident that in almost every case, a woman is specified in terms of the man whose rights to her would be violated by an act of sexual intercourse. The Priestly writer is, therefore, anxious to maintain harmony within the family unit. Taber comments,

"It is clear that all these prohibitions have as their aim the avoidance of conflicts within the nuclear family and the lineage" (105).

While Bigger sees these prohibitions as attempts,

"to reduce the possibility of domestic tension and show concern for the purity of the descent line ..."

and,

"if these laws were kept, this family group could live together with the minimum of jealousy and tension and no descent line would be threatened" (106).

A major assumption underlying this material is not to be missed. Wenham briefly mentions it,

"that a man will seek a partner among his own people. Marriages with non-Israelites are firmly forbidden elsewhere (e.g. Deut 7 v.3). Preference was shown for marriages within the tribe (Num. 36; cf. Judges 21) and even between cousins (Gen. 24). But anyone more closely related than this was excluded by these rules" (107).

It is significant that within the list of prohibited relations, mention is only made of those within the extended family situation and, therefore, we have no reference to rules controlling the exchange of women.

Douglas comments on Lev. 18 thus,

"biblical scholars are often unaware of the implications of the list of prohibited degrees of kinship (Lev.18). The interpretation varies according to whether the list is taken to be illustrative of the category of forbidden kin, or exhaustive. By comparison with many tribal societies, if it is exhaustive, the list is extremely short. Certain close agnatic relations are not named. I would conclude that they are not prohibited for sex and marriage. Not only are these lineage endogamous marriages permitted in Leviticus 18 but they are

mandatory for the High Priest (Lev. 21 v.14-15)" (108).

She continues,

"Here is a people who prefer their boundaries to remain intact. They reckon any attempt to cross them a hostile intrusion. They expect no good to come of external exchange and have no rules for facilitating it. ... boundaries are never strong enough. There is no rule requiring them to exchange their womenfolk, either with other lineages, or between their own tribes, still less with foreigners" (109).

Such a concern to preserve boundaries intact and maintain the order of society, finds complementation for Douglas in P's regulative principle of holiness which is interpreted and utilised in a diversity of circumstances. Thus the emphasis to maintain ethnic purity which underlies Lev. 18 and 20 is part of a broader and more comprehensive approach to life. The genius of P is seen in his use of one concept, i.e. holiness, which provides a variety of interpretations and applications and demonstrates an inclusiveness.

It is Soler who develops the concept of purity within the sphere of sexual behaviour in Lev. 18 v.20,

"once a woman is defined as 'mother' in relation to a boy, she cannot also be something else to him" (110),

for there is a need to uphold the separation between two classes or between two types of relationship.

"To abolish distinction by means of a sexual or culinary act is to subvert the order of the world. Every one belongs to one species only, one people, one sex, one category ... The keystone in this order is the principle of identity, instituted as the law of every being" (111).

That theme of separation in order to preserve the identity of the community continues throughout the material in this section and we perceive how it is an integral part of P's whole outlook and manifesto.

The law prohibiting sexual relations with a brother's wife in v.16 was not intended to contradict the law of levirate marriage of Deut. 25 v.5f (112). Snaith observes,

"the prohibition here has to do with sexual intercourse with the brother's wife while the brother is still alive".

It has been argued that this law revokes the law and practice of levirate marriage (113), but such a view does not adequately explain why the practice continued into later generations as well as ignoring the fact that a wife's status changed when she became a widow so new rules applied. Bigger comments on this law,

"The law prohibiting sexual relations with a brother's wife does not outlaw levirate marriage. It was a group-wife prohibition

whose primary object was to prevent promiscuity within the family and so it concerned only the wives of living brothers. When a brother died, his widows were free to remarry either within or outside of the immediate family and they thus enjoyed a new status and position in the community. Of such a widow, a marriage to the dead husband's eldest surviving brother would be expected if the husband died without an heir. The husband's brother was a legitimate surrogate from the point of view of family descent and could father a child who would be legally regarded as the offspring of the dead man. A brother presented the least threat to a man's descent line, and this was reflected in the penalty given in Lev. 20 v.21, that they should be 'proscribed' (NEB) or 'childless' (RSV). The end result of the incestuous relationship was nidda 'impurity' (114).

The carefully delineated structure assumed here is to prohibit sexual intercourse with the brother's wife while he is still alive, without denying the importance of providing for a child if the man died without an heir. It is concern for order within the community without contradicting the need to maintain family lineage.

The question of simultaneous marriage with a woman and her daughter or grand-daughter or sister is prohibited in v.17, since the principle of blood relationships is

utilised. Wenham sees v.18 as falling within the same category,

"this is another example of the basic principle that through marriage a woman's sister became her husband's sisters. Therefore, he may not take any of them as a second wife" (115).

Such a view has been challenged (116), the verse reads 'you shall not take a woman as a rival wife to another' and thus it is interpreted as a law against polygamy and divorce. Tosato argues,

"the interpretation of Lev. 18 v.18 given at Qumran has conserved faithfully the original sense and value of the biblical law" (117),

which he sees as a law against polygamy within the context of Lev. 18. He argues thus,

"the present series (v.18f.) collects laws which are, in relation to those of the preceding series and one another, of similar but not identical content. This suggestion is convalidated by the internal analysis of the single verses (19-23; let us not deal for the moment with v.18). These laws, in fact, still prohibit sexual union: in v.19 with a menstruating woman, in v.20 with the wife of one's neighbor, in v.21 with a foreign woman(?), in v.22 with another man, in v.23 with a beast. Yet, here the concern is no longer incest. Nowhere in these verses is mention made of a bond of kinship to justify the new prohibitions, even though they are clearly based in every case upon a particular

state or identity of the prohibited partner"
(118).

He proceeds,

"The motivation, therefore, and the duration of the prohibition which are expressly established in v.18 render this law irreconcilable with the laws against incest, marking it instead as a law against a second marriage of the husband as long as the first wife is alive (119).

Ginzberg has already identified in C.D. 4:20-21 condemnation for those who take to themselves,

"two wives during their lifetime" (120),

which finds confirmation in 11Q Temple 57:17-19 (121).

It is characteristic of P that he seeks to prevent rivalry and distress within the community through this enactment against polygamy. It has the practical effect of strengthening P's anti-divorce views for he seeks to provide a secure and firm base for society and this most naturally happens when the exchange of women is reduced to a minimum. He is anxious to remove all conflict and jealousy within wider social relationship since he is aware of their destructive nature.

A number of other prohibitions which continue the theme of sexual behaviour are found in Lev. 18 v.19-23. The reference in v.19 to having sexual relations with a woman while she is menstrually unclean is paralleled in

20 v.18 where the penalty specified is that both parties involved shall be 'cut off'. Lev. 15 v.19f. contains a similar prohibition, except that in Lev. 15 we are dealing with pollution beliefs while Lev. 18 contains categorical prohibitions and Lev. 20 deals with punishments consequent on various sins. It could be suggested that Lev. 15, within its context, relates to the husband's actions with the aim of controlling behaviour accordingly, while Lev. 18 and 20 prohibit any sexual involvement with a woman during menstruation, to any man. This prohibition may contain the ancient idea that the woman is 'safe' from conception during such a time and, therefore, it is the obvious time to indulge in promiscuity. Such a prohibition if it related outwith the marital situation was capable of proof and, therefore, it is appropriate to cite the requisite punishment. Thus P endeavours to curb all licentious behaviour by women and he seeks to draw strict lines around any sexual behaviour.

The prohibition on adultery with one's neighbour's wife in v.20 is paralleled in Lev. 20 v.10 which specifies that both parties will be put to death. The O.T. definition of adultery is stated by Rowley,

"By adultery we mean any disloyalty to the marriage bond on either side but in Israelite thought there was only adultery where a married woman was concerned. For a married man to have relations with a woman not his wife was not regarded as adultery, unless she

were another man's wife. It could, of course, be regarded as reprehensible, as many sexual offences other than adultery were regarded" (122).

He cites Abrahams in support,

"In Jewish law adultery was the intercourse of married woman with any man other than her husband. Though his conduct was severely reprobated, and at all events in later centuries gave his wife a right to claim a divorce, a man was not regarded as guilty of adultery unless he had intercourse with a married woman other than his wife" (123).

Greenberg has argued (124) that Israel's attitude to adultery was different to other ancient people in that Babylonia, Hittite and Assyrian law viewed adultery as an offence committed against the husband who decided the fate of his wife and her lover while in Israel adultery was regarded as a sin against God which required the death penalty. Phillips argues that the purpose of this prohibition was,

"to protect the husband's name by assuring him that his children would be his own. This explains why the law of adultery is restricted to sexual intercourse with a married woman, but does not seek to impose sexual fidelity on the husband. There is no thought of sexual ethics as such, but of paternity. This is the reason why once women were brought within the scope of the criminal law by the Deuteronomist, he extended the crime of adultery as far as they were

concerned to include lack of virginity on marriage (Deut. 22 v.20f.). Thus the act of adultery was a crime which involved the person of a fellow member of the covenant community, and not a tort on his property. The Sinai Decalogue was concerned with persons not property. But as adultery was a crime, it was regarded as a repudiation of Yahweh (Gen. 20 v.6; 39 v.8f.) and, therefore, like other crimes, threatened the covenant relationship. Consequently it demanded state, not private, action which culminated in the execution of the criminal in order to propitiate Yahweh (125).

Adultery was conceived of as the violation of a husband's right to have sole sexual possession of his wife and to have the assurance that his children were his own.

"It is not sexual ethics but paternity which is uppermost in the legislator's mind" (126)

says Phillips who proceeds to see Numbers 5 v.11f. as

"an ancient paternity rite designed to determine the legitimacy of the husband's children" (127).

He elaborates more fully,

"Num. 5 v.11f. lays down the procedure to be adopted by a husband who suspects that his wife has committed adultery and might therefore bear him a child which was not his own, but who has no concrete evidence, and so cannot institute normal legal proceedings through the courts. Indeed it is probable

that prosecution for adultery could only be undertaken if the couple were caught in flagrante delicto (Num 5 v.13), which explains why cases which rested on unsubstantiated accusations of adultery are missing from Deuteronomy (cp. CH 131-132). Instead the husband may bring his wife to the priest who forces her to utter a self-curse, the outcome of which is decided by drinking certain waters. Though this primitive ordeal, originally to be undertaken at the local sanctuary, has now been brought within Yahwism, the precise details of what was expected to happen to a guilty wife are uncertain. It is however clear that they relate in some way to pregnancy probably resulting in a miscarriage or sterility. But an innocent wife had nothing to fear. Any children born to her could safely be regarded as the husband's" (128).

Frymer-Kensky brings more light on the incident, highlighting the supernatural aspect within the ritual.

"Num. v.11-31 is essentially a descriptive text that described (and at the same time prescribes) a unique religio-legal procedure. In the procedure a woman who has been accused of adultery by her own husband drinks a sacred potion while she accepts an adjuration that the potion will cause grievous injury to her reproduction system if she drinks it while guilty. The procedure ends with the drinking of the potion. After the woman drinks, she presumably returns to her home and husband on the assumption that she would not have dared to drink the potion if she had

been guilty, but would rather have confessed instead. Final proof of the woman's innocence would be pregnancy; final proof of her guilt would be the 'belly-swelling and thigh-falling' which possibly describe the prolapsed uterus.

In the trial of Sotah, the society has relinquished its control over the woman to God, who will indicate his judgement by punishing her if she is guilty. Not only does God decide whether she is guilty, but even the right of punishment is removed from society and placed in the hands of God. The ritual of the Sotah most closely resembles the classic purgatory oath, in which the individual swearing the oath puts himself under divine jurisdiction, expecting to be punished by God if the oath-taker is guilty. Num. v.11-31 describes a legal 'curse' which functions as an oath once the woman has accepted the conditions of the curse by answering "Amen, amen". Conflation with trials by ordeal has resulted in unnecessary confusion about the mechanism and result of the Sotah procedure. The only feature of this procedure that is similar to ordeal trials is the drinking of a potion, which in form looks like the potion-ordeal known from Africa. Drinking of potions, however, is also known to accompany such oaths as the drinking of Maat among the Nuer. Purgatory oaths may consist of words alone; the words may also be accompanied by ritual, symbolic or 'magical' actions which effectuate the oath. The drinking of a mystical potion actuates the words of the oath, for the potion is expected to punish the guilty

party. The use of such an oath as a means of resolving the societal problem posed by suspicion of adultery is a uniquely Israelite institution. Both the form and the function of this ritual are paralleled by Near Eastern materials, but the combination of form and function is not found outside Israel. The function is that of the Laws of Hammurabi 131, in which a woman who has been accused of adultery by her husband swears an oath to her innocence. As in Num. 5, this is enough: the Laws envision an ordeal only in cases of public scandal. The form of the trial in Num. 5 bears some resemblance to the drinking of a potion in an incomplete text from Mari (ARM X:9), in which several minor deities appear to take an oath before Ea, promise fealty to the city of Mari and its ruler, and drink a potion of water mixed with dust and 'cornerstone' of the gate of Mari. As in Num. 5, the dust carries some of the numinous power of the place and the drinkers understand that the power of the oath will bring punishment to whoever swears falsely. The Mari drinking, however is not part of a legal trial. It is therefore presented in the Bible as a special 'supernatural' procedure granted to Israel as a divine ritual instruction (Torah)" (129).

The purpose of this ritual

"was not to convict the criminal (the adulterer) who remained undetected, but to ascertain whether a crime had in fact been committed, with the sole purpose of

establishing the legitimacy of any child subsequently born" (130).

The punishment for adultery is the death penalty, for which McKeating notes,

"there is no recorded instance, in the whole of Jewish narrative literature of the biblical period, of anyone actually being put to death for adultery" (131).

He proceeds to describe the operation of other sanctions against adultery and although he refers to the excommunication formula of Lev. 18 v.29, he fails to perceive its significance and the lateness of its operation. Lev. 18 and 20 are the work of P who seeks to classify sexual behaviour in the post exilic period and, while the death penalty is mentioned in Lev. 20 v.10, in the changed situation of P's time, such a provision is replaced by excommunication from the cultic community (132).

The practice of homosexuality is condemned in v.22, when it is described as an 'abomination'. Snaith comments,

"usually this word has to do with idolatrous actions, actions connected with the cult of other gods Thus homosexuality here is condemned on account of its association with idolatry" (133).

It is noted by Phillips that,

"homosexual practices are prohibited neither in the Book of the Covenant nor in Deuteronomy, but are first made criminal in the Holiness Code (Lev. 18 v.22, 20 v.13)" (134).

It would be suggested that while homosexuality may have been associated with idolatry, P prohibits it because it is deemed unnatural and contrary to holiness. Soler comments,

"a human being is either a man or a woman, not both, therefore, homosexuality is outlawed (Lev. 18 v.22)" (135).

P's concern for order and structured relationships leads to this prohibition of homosexuality which violated the natural order of sexual relationships and catered to perverted lust rather than to procreation of the species.

A similar prohibition is found in v.23 with respect to bestiality and is paralleled in 20 v.15 and 16. The practice of bestiality is implicitly rejected in the biblical account of the creation of Eve (Gen. 2 v.18-24), according to which search for a fitting partner for a man from among the animals necessitated God's creation of woman. The explicit prohibition against the copulation of human beings with any animal appears in the Covenant Code (Exodus 22 v.19), the Holiness Code (Lev. 18 v.23; 20 v.15-16) and the Deuteronomic ban (Deut. 27 v.21), because it is 'tebel', that is

confusion. Such a notion is unnatural because it transgresses the God given boundaries between man and the animal world. Holiness for P is a matter of keeping apart what God has created to be separate and any mixing or confusion is to be avoided.

Such a rule possesses a strong polemical thrust since bestiality was common among Israel's neighbours (136). Apart from the biblical laws, the Hittites are the only other peoples who deal with bestiality in their legal literature. The Hittite laws distinguish between forbidden and permitted forms of bestiality, while Mesopotamian and Canaanite references are limited to the mythological plane, although it cannot be supposed that it was permitted with the aim of attempting a physical union with the deity through a sacral animal (137). The Biblical polemic would serve as corroborating evidence for this.

Apart from the reference to Molech, (Lev. 18 v.21) which will be considered separately below, all these prohibitions in v.19-23 possess a sexual connotation and are subject to severe penalties. The prohibitions enumerated carry a possible polemical element but this should not detract from P's primary motive in forming this legislation which was to maintain the fabric of community life and in particular the family unit. It could be argued on the basis of the structure of Leviticus 18 that such rules, while following the

prohibited family relationships, are in no direct way connected with them but merely an extension of the theme of sexual behaviour. Such a view is difficult to uphold in the light of Lev. 20, in which the various rules in Lev. 18 v.19-23 are interspersed among those prohibited relationships in the family. Lev. 20 is the result of considerable editing, however, the final form of chapter 20 is a deliberate product of P. This would serve to show that the rules about bestiality, homosexuality, etc., while linked to the theme of sexual behaviour are directly concerned with maintaining the stability of the family unit which requires that sexual behaviour be carefully structured and regulated. Many of these prohibited practices would have a disruptive impact on society but P views the family unit as the primary one in the ordering of a controlled and disciplined society. Bigger comments,

"The family laws of Leviticus 18 thus demand order and purity in society which must begin from the local family group" (138).

Such an emphasis reiterates the Priestly writers view of reality as consisting of three concentric circles, which in this case, are the individual, the family unit and the community (139).

The reference to the cult of Molech in Lev. 18 v.21 which is expanded in Lev. 20 v.2-5 deserves separate

treatment for this topic has been extensively debated.

Heider in his recent work begins,

"Both scholars and popular writers have long been fascinated with the Old Testament's Molek and with the cult associated with that term (140).

The separate legal, historical and prophetic texts have been analysed by Cogan, with reference to the cult of Molech,

"Legal texts are unequivocal in their descriptions of the prohibited cult. The priestly 'Holiness Code' outlaws 'dedicating' (nātan) and 'transferring' (he^{ce}bīr) offspring to the god Molech, without indications of the procedure (Lev. 18 v.21; 20 v.1-5). The context implies that the Molech rite was sexually and/or magically offensive. Deuteronomic law, too, employing analogous terms, prohibits the 'transfer by fire/passing through fire' of sons or daughters (no god is mentioned) - this in a list of traditional Canaanite divinatory practices (Deut 18 v.10).

The terms of Deut. 12 v.31, enjoining Israel from 'burning (śārap) their sons and their daughters in fire' in service of YHWH as do the Canaanite nations in service of their gods, are entirely different. Not only is Molech absent, but the usage of śārap contrasts with priestly technical terminology, which never uses that verb in sacrificial contexts. In priestly texts, śārap is always extra-ritual; it refers to disposal of refuse and invariably takes place

outside the camp. These verbal distinctions, coupled with contextual considerations point to two separate rituals identifiable within legal literature: (1) a divinatory fire cult of Molech that did not involve child sacrifice, and (2) a common Canaanite cult of child sacrifice.

Historical accounts record similar distinctions ...

It is in the denunciations of Jeremiah and Ezekiel that the terminological distinctions are lost. The verbs 'transfer/pass through fire' and 'burn' are freely interchanged and new vocables - 'sacrifice' (zābah) and 'slaughter' (šāḥat) - are introduced (cf. Ezek. 16 v.20-21; 23 v.29). Jeremiah accuses the Jerusalemites of child sacrifice to Baal and Molech, which the people seem to regard as legitimate dedications to Israel's YHWH (e.g., Jer. 7 v.31; 19 v.5; 32 v.35). These broad denunciations clearly do not discriminate between the burning of children as 'offerings to Baal' (19 v.5) and the 'transfer to Molech' of sons and daughters at 'Baal cult sites in the ben-Hinnom valley' (32 v.35).

The thrust of prophetic polemics resulted in a literary fusing of the two separate rituals distinguished in legal contexts" (141).

The ritual associated with Molech has generally been understood to refer to child sacrifice. De Vaux suggested that it derived from Phoenician influence with reference made to the Punic term molk, which

indicated a particular type of sacrifice, namely that of a child, for which an animal could be substituted (142). This had led to the theory by Eissfeldt, that m-l-k does not refer to a deity but to the sacrifice itself (143). However, Lev. 20 v.5 confirms beyond doubt that in m-l-k one is to recognise the designation of a deity, which Jer. 7 v.31; 19 v.5; 32 v.35 indicates is Yahweh himself (144). Pedersen affirms that the Israelites adopted the Canaanite custom of 'sanctification of the first born' by sacrifice to God but, at the same time, biblical religion, 'shrank from fully accepting' this demand for holiness by restricting human sacrifice to times of disaster, with consecrated children being redeemed through animal substitution (Ex.34 v.20) (145). Child sacrifice remained basically a private devotion, according to Kaufmann, since there was no regular staff or site (146), also Lev. 20 v.5 specifies 'that man against his family' as those liable for punishment. While Gaster, using classical examples, suggests,

"it is possible also that the Israelite writers have confused with human sacrifice a more innocuous practice, widely attested, of passing children rapidly through a flame as a means of absorbing immortality or giving them extra strength" (147).

Snaith, with reference to the Talmud (b. Sam. 64a), notes,

"it is significant that this reference to the children and the Molech cult occurs in the middle of a series of prohibitions of illegal sexual intercourse The possibility is that the children were given to the authorities at the shrine to be trained as temple prostitutes, male and female" (148),

and, therefore, Lev. 18 v.21 is seen as a law forbidding cultic prostitution in the name of Molech. Carroll sees Snaith's view as,

"a brief statement of the correct understanding of the practice" (149).

However, Snaith fails to consider Ezek. 16 v.21; 23 v.37, where Zimmerli (150) relates the practice to killing and agrees with Elliger's view that Molech worship involved the sacrifice of newly born children who were the result of immoral cultic intercourse (151). If this is so then Ezek. 16 v.20f.; 23 v.37f.; may have a literal application.

Heider prefaces his study of the biblical evidence of Molech with a prolonged study of the comparative material from Ebla, Mari, Ugarit, Phoenicia and Punic sources. He rejects the view of Eissfeldt that Molech was a sacrificial term cognate with Punic molk and argues that Molech was a Syro-Palestinian underworld deity. He argues that the Molech cult involved actual human sacrifice and not simply cultic dedication in the fire as Weinfeld and others have claimed. With

reference to Lev. 18 and 20 incidences of Molech, Heider concentrates on Lev. 20 and provides some helpful insights. He sees as critical

"the evident linkage between v.1-5 and v.6" (152),

which agrees with Elliger, who sees v.1-6 as a unit.

"verse 6 shares numerous words and phrases with the preceding verses: lznwt 'hry, 'to whore after' (v.5); wntty 't pny b, 'and I shall set by face against' (vv.3, 5); whkrty 'tw mqr b 'mw, 'and I shall cut him off from the midst of his people' (vv.3, 5). This strong formal resemblance leads us to ask if there might not be a material connection between vv. 1-5 and v.6 stronger than 'illegitimate cultic practices'. One possibility quickly presents itself, but a brief discussion of v.6 is required to appreciate it.

Verse 6 specifically condemns 'turning to the 'ōbōt and to the yidde'ōnîm' (cf. 19 v.21). These entities appear several times in the O.T., but the clearest context is 1 Samuel 28, the account of Saul and the 'witch' at Endor. Both terms have been extensively discussed (especially 'ōb), both as to Biblical usage and possible cognates. As for the more common 'ōb, the debate has resolved to two alternatives: a cognate of Hittite/Hurrian a-a-pi (a pit connecting one with the underworld), or a cognate of the common Semitic 'ab ('father, ancestor'), especially of Ugaritic ilib ('deified ancestor'). In addition to the philological

arguments, Biblical usage adds fuel to the discussion since some attestations suggest that a means of necromancy is involved (e.g., 1 Sam. 28 v.8), while others appear to point to the object of the conjuration, i.e., the ghost of the deceased (e.g., Isa 8 v.19) ... we must be content to make several observations:

- (1) the terms clearly have to do with the practice of necromancy, that is, the seeking (drs) of information from or via the 'ōbōt and the 'knowers' (taking yidde'ōnîm, by consensus, from yd', 'know');
- (2) the usual translation of the RSV, 'mediums and wizards', is unlikely on both philological and contextual grounds; and
- (3) as we shall see, the occurrence of these terms is, to an amazing extent, in the context of passages which clearly have to do with the cult of Molek ...

Leviticus 20 v.5-6 represent but the first example: in rapid succession the two verses condemn the one who 'whores after' Molek, the 'ōbōt and the yidde'ōnîm. Here, at last, the portrait of M-l-k suggested by our study of the comparative evidence begins to make sense vis-a-vis the Biblical attestations. The chthonic connection of Molek could not be clearer than it is in the roster of netherworld-entities in Lev. 20 v.5-6. The unifying principle of vv.1-6 is not merely 'illegitimate cultic practices', but the practice of the cult of the dead. This realization makes sense, also, of the condemnation of the guilty party's entire clan (mišpahtô) in v.5: as we saw at Mari and

Ugarit, the cult of the dead is a family affair, to secure the blessings (and avert the wrath) of past family for the sake of the family present and yet to be" (153).

A careful study of the relevant material in Leviticus and Deuteronomy provides a helpful summary,

"First, as we have already observed, both collections associate the 'cult of Molek' with necromancy (or at least divination) by context. Secondly, they both employ the technical term h'byr in reference to the cult. Thirdly, while the references to the cult are in both cases relatively rare, it is clear that both sources saw the cult as a serious threat to orthodox Yahwism: for Deuteronomy it was the very pinnacle (or nadir) of Canaanite abominations; for Leviticus it was serious enough to call for the stoning of the practitioners by the community and the personal intervention of Yahweh if the community failed to act. Thus, we may deduce that the cult was actively practiced, at least in Jerusalem, at least by the late monarchical period.

Other information appears in only one book. Only Deuteronomy explicitly designates the cult as Canaanite in origin, and only that source specifies the means of 'transferring ownership or control', viz. 'by the fire' (b's). On the other hand, only Leviticus states that the children were being 'given' (ntn) to a god 'Molek'; indeed, Deuteronomy implies that the (Israelite) victims were burned to Yahweh. We have suggested how this apparent contradiction may be but different

perspectives on the same historical practice, whether Molek was included in the cult of Yahweh by syncretism or by a latitudinarian version of Yahwism which sought to incorporate elements of the 'religion of the land' which 'pure' Yahwism seemed to neglect (such as the cult of the dead) ...

The legal material leaves no question, however, that by the time of the exile the cult of Molek was unambiguously condemned as the archetypical 'abomination' (Deuteronomy), offered to the chthonic deity of old, Molek (Leviticus) (154).

Heider sees his views as finding confirmation within the O.T. narrative material for,

"no evidence ... compels us to abandon the 'traditional' interpretation of 'Molek' as a Canaanite deity, whose cult was adopted and adapted by the Israelites. Indeed much ... points us ... to suggest a connection between the chthonic Syro-Palestinian deity Malik-Milkn/i, known at Ebla, Mari and Ugarit and Molek, whose cult likewise appears to have a chthonic (specifically, necromantic) character" (155).

The practice of the cult of Molech by the time of exile had diminished and was 'likely quite secretive' although,

"the 'old-time religion' of Molek continued, albeit in the 'clefts of the rocks in the wadis', before slowly fading away" (156).

In posing the ultimate question of why the parents did it, Heider suggests a partial answer lies in an understanding of the cult of the dead in ancient Israel. He recognises this has been the object of intensive study (157) which lacks a working definition and, therefore, provides a working definition thus,

"'the cult of the dead' is not restricted to the relatively short-term requirements of burial and attendant practices which follow immediately upon a death (i.e., the 'rites of passage'). A 'cult of the dead' is established in response to the belief that the dead have a continuing claim upon the living, either because of the deplorable state of the dead without care, or because the dead are perceived as having some power to influence events in the world of the living, for good or ill (or out of both piety and fear). However, as Ribar observes, 'rationales for death cult activities and the beliefs connected with them are variable and are not necessarily to be regarded as constitutive elements'. We therefore join him in defining a 'cult of the dead' according to the following 'formal criteria': 'activities (especially offerings) which

- (1) are oriented toward the dead,
- (2) periodically conducted, [and]
- (3) at sites specially associated with the dead'.

That some activity within the limits of our definition went on in Biblical Israel seems clear enough from the passages cited by Ribar (see note above), as well as Deut. 14 v.1 and

18 v.11 (see 4.3.3.); Isa. 8 v.19-22 (e..5.4; cf. the other occurrences of 'obot and yidde'ōnîm discussed in 4.3.1) and 65:4 (below cf. also Isa. 66 v.17); and, especially, 1 Sam. 28 v.8-25 (4.3.1).

Indeed, given the cultural context, it would be startling if Israel did not have a cult of the dead in some form. Of course, one must always be sensitive to the possibility that Israel went its own way at a given point. We are, therefore, much indebted to H C Brichto for his thorough study, which shows conclusively, I believe, that traces of a belief in the ancestors' afterlife and of a felt necessity to provide for their needs are pervasive in the Scriptural record (158).

While acknowledging the limitation of knowledge about the Israelite cult of the dead,

"there is sufficient support for its existence in some form" (159).

According to Heider,

"Israel was familiar with and at least periodically shared in the funeral feasts know to us also from our investigation of the Mari and Ugaritic evidence (160).

Citing de Vaux's study on the ritual use of pork in the ancient world, it is suggested that

"the Israelite law ... forbade the eating of pork ... was condemning in particular participation in the Canaanite cult of the dead" (161).

Such a connection would explain the particular castigation given to the cult of Molech in P's work as well as verifying his total loathing for the pig and according it special taxonomic status in Leviticus 11.

The precise reasoning behind the practice of the cult seems lost and yet there appears,

"clear connections of the cult with necromancy and the much vaguer possibility of a fertility function" (162).

The precise nature of benefits of the cult may be obscure but the threat it posed for P in his ordering of society was sufficient to call forth significant condemnation. While Heider's thesis has developed the cult of Molech to associate it with the cult of the dead, nevertheless, he fails to give due weight to the context of Lev. 18 for our purposes. In that respect the interpretation offered by Snaith and Elliger is more credible within the Lev. 18 material, although it must be conceded that Heider's link up with the cult of the dead provides a convincing explanation for the material in Lev. 20 v.1-6. It is unacceptable that Heider dismisses Elliger's explanation so lightly,

"it amounts to a story to harmonise two texts (or, in this case, 18 v.21 and its context). ... In short, the context of 18 v.21 provides little help to us" (163).

It is difficult to see how the context of Lev. 18 v.21 with its stress on deviant sexual behaviour accords with the understanding of Molech from Lev. 20. The incorporation of two penalties, death and ^{being} cut off, within Lev. 20 v.1-6 will be considered later in this study, but it serves to underscore the abhorrence with which P viewed the cult of Molech. I would suggest that we have the residual remains of an ancient cult which contains a sexual connotation as well as incorporating some aspect relative to a cult of the dead. It appears that the cult was practised within the confines of the domestic situation but it was seen by P to be so horrendous as to call for strong penalties, although the use of different penalties may be accounted for within the domestic scene, in that if the people failed to deal with the matter then God himself would intervene. The emphasis on the cult of the dead with its attendant aspects may have been seen by P to pose a threat to the efficacy and effectiveness of the Aaronide revolution and, therefore, P's condemnation may be more polemical than real. He may be anxious to limit any activity which transgressed the boundaries of 'normal' sexual behaviour and, therefore, he is prohibiting cultic prostitution. In other words, the deviation is contrary to holiness in that sexual fluids mix which ought to be kept separate. The cult of the dead possibly sought to gain information about the future and P is anxious to limit such seeking for

he wishes to focus everything upon the cultic aspect of life, where God dwells and over which he has control. The mixing of the realm of life and death would be considered by P as taboo as well as destroying the strict boundaries which characterised P's view of existence.

While it is amply attested in the O.T. that the Israelites were engaged in magic practices, the repeated prohibition of the use of magic by law, as well as the fervent struggle waged against it by the prophets, proves how deep rooted was the belief in the efficacy of this art. The surrounding cultures were influenced by such beliefs and yet within Israel sorcerers were viewed as an antisocial group and reckoned to be enemies of the people, that is according to the biblical material's viewpoint. The Priestly writer reiterates the prohibition (Lev. 20 v.6 and v.27) that is characteristic of Hebrew life but adds little to it. The disruptive nature of such behaviour may have needed no expansion in the mind of P.

A final prohibition, not so far considered, occurs in Lev. 20 v.9 and refers to cursing one's parents. 'To curse' means more than uttering the occasional angry word. Other references give some idea of the strength and bitterness that cursing could entail, and it is seen as the antithesis of 'honouring'. In Hebrew to honour means 'to make heavy or glorious' while to curse

means 'to make light of'. The sanctity of parental authority implied in this law is considerable, for while it is seen that O.T. penal law in many respects was far more lenient than neighbouring contemporary cultures, it was stricter with regard to offences against family life. Cursing father or mother is singled out for special censure, because of a determination to maintain the structure of the family, as well as the parents possessing a representative aspect of God's authority to the child. We may conjecture that to curse one's parents was tantamount to blasphemy. It was certainly a violating of the agreed structure of life and an attempt to disrupt the God ordered pattern of existence. Therefore, holiness required that everyone and everything conformed to its appropriate place or position. Anything which sought to challenge this order was viewed as a force of chaos and destruction and since, God had instituted the structure of life, then it was perceived as a threat against God.

In conclusion, we have noted how the Priestly writer sought to impose order on society, especially through the family unit. The laws of Lev. 18 and 20 reveal a desire to limit and control sexual behaviour within the extended family setting as well as legislating on other sexual related aspects of behaviour with the aim of promoting social harmony. The Priestly writer has

endeavoured to expound the concept of holiness within the compass of sexual behaviour and we see how thorough and comprehensive his approach has been as relevant for his own situation. While much of the variant sexual behaviour may be directly related to the pagan cults of the time, it nevertheless is prohibited for such behaviour is viewed as incompatible with Israel's status as God's chosen people. Whether we are to see sex per se as wrong in that context, or rather its involvement with pagan elements as calling for condemnation, is difficult to discern and it may be a combination of both. The Priestly writer attempts to structure the family life of his day very carefully as a means by which the people might reveal their special status as God's chosen ones. It also attempted to bring order, stability and harmony within society, through the regulative principle of holiness.

(e) Society

The Priestly writer was concerned to make his programme effective and, therefore, required to exercise control over the people of Israel in every aspect of their life. In previous chapters, we noted how he encompassed large areas of life and endeavoured to relate his controls to the basic principle of holiness, with its practical expression in purity. The intention of this chapter is to consider the various commandments in Leviticus 19 under the heading 'society' for it consists of a compilation of rules which seek to make explicit the ramifications of holiness in every day life.

Harrison observes,

"The concluding words of the preceding chapter, 'I am the Lord your God', serve as a natural transition to this particular body of legislation, which also regulates the holiness of community life ... An introductory section reiterates God's demand that His people shall be holy. This injunction, ... is to be made public and observed by all. The emphasis upon 'the congregation' indicated that all members have to play their part ... no one is exempt from responsibility in ensuring that holiness is a regulative principle of daily living" (164).

Although the chapter contains a variety of topics which seem unrelated, Wenham boldly asserts,

"once it is recognised that "I am the Lord (your God)" marks the end of a paragraph, its structure becomes much clearer. The chapter falls into sixteen paragraphs, arranged in three sections (4, 4, 8)" (165).

It is further suggested by Harrison that

"Jewish scholars have seen in the material a counterpart of the Ten Commandments, the precepts of which are recapitulated as follows: I and II in v.4; III in v.12; IV and V in v.3; VI in v.16; VII in v.29; VIII and IX in v.11-16; and X in v.18" (166).

A more cautionary approach is taken by Noth in his commentary,

"In its transmitted form, this codex is indeed remarkably diverse and disordered. Even the apparently capricious and random alterations between second singular and third plural, often even within one verse and within the same topic, show that the whole probably took shape as part of a fairly long and complicated process. Most of the numerous detailed precepts are only bound together in unity of a kind by the apodeictic style - 'thou shall (or shalt not)', 'ye shall (or shall not)'" (167)

This complex pattern has led scholars to question whether a basic form cannot be discerned and whether a decalogue has concealed in these rules. Noth again,

"It is indeed possible that there lies concealed an apodeictic 'decatalogue' or 'dodecatalogue' which has gradually been expanded. But no one has so far succeeded in reconstructing this basic decatalogue or dodecatalogue. There is not even any agreement whether the primary elements of the chapter are to be sought in the sentences with singular, or with plural, address. In many places the plural sentences are manifestly secondary to the singular ones (cf., e.g., v.9aa with vv.9a b, 10; v. 15aa with 15a yb, 16-18; v. 19aa with v.19a yb); in other places, however, the relationship is reversed (cf. v.12a with v.12b, and the complicated relationship in vv. 33, 34). On the whole one gets the impression that the material formulated in the singular has grounds for being reckoned the older; which would fit in with the fact that in the Old Testament apodeictic law in general the singular address was originally the usual one. But it remains an open question whether in this chapter the alternations of primary and secondary correspond at all to the alternations in the form of address; or whether perhaps the whole was not from the beginning a combined series of prohibitions, expressed partly in the singular and partly in the plural. For it is at any rate clear that the chapter contains several series of prohibitions, referring each time to a particular subject and presenting a fairly clear original unity. It can be assumed that these once possessed an independent existence as short collections of pronouncements on behaviour in each particular relationship.

They would be continually recalled to memory by the Israelites, whenever occasion arose. Now this kind of list of prohibitions appears for the most part in the singular (vv.9aa b, 10; vv. 15a y-18; v. 19a by), but does also occur in the plural (vv.11, 12a, vv. 35, 36a)" (168).

Several scholars have tried to find in v.11-18 part of the original list of the ten or twelve commandments. Nielsen in considering this matter highlights the work of Mowinckel (169) and summarises thus,

"His starting-point is a distinction drawn between the commandments which are plural and those which are singular in the form in the pericope 19.2-18. The decalogue in the plural form - Mowinckel calls it Decalogue A - is shown on analysis to comprise vv.3a+b, 4a+b, the first to the fourth commandments: honouring parents, observing the sabbath, prohibition of idolatry and image worship. The fifth commandment is to be reconstructed from vv.5-8, in which only the words 'ad yom hašš^elīšī 'until the third day', have been retained from the supposed original text - the subject is a prohibition of leaving over any of the meat of festal sacrifices until the third day. The sixth commandment directs that in the corn and grape harvests a little should be left in the field or vineyard for the poor and the sojourner, vv.9-10. Only the opening words, however, have been kept in the plural - this plural form could even be regarded as an attempt to compensate for what has been omitted - and besides this the unusually complex formulation of the

commandment is striking. 19. 11a, b, c, 12a contain four very briefly formulated commands in the plural. According to Mowinckel they constitute the seventh to the tenth commandments in the collection (prohibitions of theft, lying, fraud and perjury). Mowinckel's Decalogue B, in which the precepts are formulated in the singular, extends from v.13 to v.17. In v.13 he finds three commandments (against oppression, robbery and the withholding wages from day-labourers), while v.14 contains only one (against cursing the deaf and putting stones in the way of the blind). Mowinckel finds the fifth to the seventh commandments in vv.15-16: against partiality in judgment, talebearing and persecution. And he finds the eighth and ninth commandments in v.17: against hatred and in favour of judicial decisions in cases which could lead to strife. Finally he finds the tenth commandment in v.18: 'Thou shalt not maintain a revengeful attitude towards thy fellow countrymen or harbour grudges'. To this is appended a supplement which is expressed in the positive form: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself'" (170).

Nielsen comments, about Mowinckel's so called 'Decalogue A',

"It is not a decalogue now and it is hard to believe that it ever has been, but it does quite clearly presuppose the present formulation of the 'classic' decalogue" (171),

and he prefers to agree with Alt's view (172) of Lev. 19,

"it is an offshoot of the decalogue that is found here".

While again we face the difficulty of deciphering the prehistory of this passage, its final form reveals the hand of P, who has sought to bring together into a composite whole, a multiplicity of situations under the inclusive category of holiness. Porter summarises the issue,

"Chapter 19 has been described as 'the priestly Decalogue', and not without justification, for the brief, apodictic and predominantly negative form of the thirty or so separate regulations is very similar to that of the Ten Commandments. Probably the purpose is similar too: as the Decalogue represents an early summary of the basic law which formed the content of God's covenant with his people, so the aim of this chapter is to produce a similar summary for the period of the exile and this accounts, in contrast to the two preceding chapters, for the wide range of topics which it covers ..."
(173).

Reventlow (174) makes Leviticus 19 the central section around which the entire Holiness Code has crystallised, while Nielsen prefers to regard it as

"the 'waste paper basket' of apodictic law, although with the proviso that immensely

important material can lie concealed in such containers" (175).

He also sees the use of Lev. 19 as

"popular preaching, priestly 'tora' instruction in the broad sense ... with a frequent use of the formula of divine self presentation: 'I am Yahweh your God'. But this is not used as an introduction, and is not followed, as in the covenant formula, by the 'historical retrospect': '... who brought you out of the land of Egypt'. Instead it is used here to lend further emphasis to the duty of obeying the law of the jealous God. Here it is the moral and religious interest that is wholly predominant: the struggle against pagan customs, the moral concepts derived from ancient times are here emphasized anew" (176).

It has been noticed that Lev. 19 is regularly punctuated by the use of the formula 'I am Yahweh your God' with its attendant stress on obedience and another characteristic is the demand for holiness in v.2. It is this later demand which provides the key to our understanding of so much within the Priestly material for it gives a coherence to the diverse parts. Milgrom entitles this chapter 'Positive Holiness' and asks, 'How can man imitate the holiness of God?' The answer of this chapter is given in a mingled series of ethical and ritual commands; no distinction is made between them. Throughout the ancient Near East morality was

inseparable from religion. Indeed it is precisely within a ritual context that scriptural ethics rise to their summit.

"Not only is the Decalogue encompassed here ... but soaring above it is the commandment to love all men, fellow Israelites (v.18) and aliens (v.34) alike The law of love is probably not one of the older laws assembled by the H compiler but his own composition - his generalisation of the meaning of the laws. ... That the law of love may be implemented, the initiating components in the nature of man, callousness (v.14, 33) and hatred (v.16-18), are also proscribed" (177).

Several of the commandments in Lev. 19 are dealt with elsewhere in this work, including:

- reverence for parents (v.3);
- no idolatry (v.4);
- a correct observance of sacrifice and diet (v.5);
- no pagan practices (v.26-28);
- no prostitution (v.29-30);
- no necromancy (v.31);
- correct observance of the sabbath (v.3).

Reverence for the elderly is mentioned in v.32 and this is an extension of v.3 which requires a proper regard for parents. This list highlights the important points in P's manifesto as he seeks to implement his programme for the control of society. It may be more accurate to

say that these aspects reflect pressure points where P feels the forces of assimilationism present their greatest threat to the 'holiness' of Israel. The intention in dividing the material thus allows us to note the prescriptions which remain, which appear diverse, and yet intend to express holiness within every day life. It also allows for the far reaching implications of this regulative principle to be observed and to appreciate the magnitude of the Aaronide revolution.

Douglas, in considering holiness, comments briefly,

"Developing the idea of holiness as order, not confusion, this list upholds rectitude and straight-dealing as holy and contradiction and double-dealing as against holiness. Theft, lying, false witness, cheating in weights and measures, all kinds of dissembling such as speaking ill of the deaf (and presumably smiling to their face), hating your brother in your heart (while presumably speaking kindly to him), these are clearly contradictions between what seems and what is" (178).

Thus holiness is expressed in terms of moral integrity and an emphasis on motive is clearly noticed as part of P. Such integrity is important for the well being of the community, as trust and confidence are crucial in any social relationships of meaning and worth.

It is from this understanding of the purpose of the Priestly writer that we consider briefly some of the individual precepts.

The original reason for the prohibition in v.9-10 against making a clean sweep at harvest time is that the odd stalks and grapes are for the spirits of the soil. This ancient prohibition undergoes a reinterpretation by P with a humanitarian reason clearly stated in v.10, 'you shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner'. The story of Ruth, (Ruth 2), gives a glimpse of how this law was put into practice. The reference to fallen grapes is commented on by Snaith,

"the word here refers to single grapes which have fallen to the ground and also to grapes which are neither kātēp (growing on a stalk out of the central stem and in a cluster) nor neṭep (hanging directly from the central stem). All true grape clusters are to be gathered; odd grapes are to be left" (179).

The impression of leaving remnants for the poor may seem to conflict with P's basic concern for order and cleanliness, yet it must be remembered that the holiness required of Israel was in response to the gracious act of God in redeeming Israel. Therefore, a humanitarian aspect is plausible on that basis and it serves as a corrective to the zealous follower of P who carried the principle of order through with

ruthlessness and unyielding orthodoxy and, thereby, destroys the basic intention behind this call to holiness which is to imitate the essence of God.

Other kinds of anti social behaviour are mentioned in v.11-12,

"these are offences of varying degrees of seriousness, but all uncharitable and improper in any society, especially among a holy people" (180),

notes Snaith. Do not steal (v.11) is a quotation of the eighth commandment and is followed by a paraphrase of the ninth and fourth in v.12. While these verses concern dishonest business relationships, Porter sees this verse's purpose as

"to make clear that what the basic law meant by 'the wrong use of the name of the Lord' (cp.Exodus 20 v.7), was an oath taken with intent to deceive. In Hewbrew thought a man's name enshrined his personality (cp. 1 Samuel 25 v.25) and thus to invoke the name of your God in such a case involved the deity himself in the deception" (181).

Whereas v.11-12 forbid crooked dealings between equals, or at least between those capable of taking one another to law if they have a grievance, v.13-14 deal with exploitation of the weak who would not be able to seek such redress. Sharp practice against them is called oppression and robbery and sees a violation of the principles of order within society which causes

disruption and disharmony. The presupposition of v.13 is that the hired labourer received his pay each day, so that a refusal to pay after the day's work was completed could have been manipulated as an attempt to defraud him, not to mention the hardship it would cause to the man and his family. The humanitarian concern in v.14 is obvious. Noth comments,

"there is a basic assumption that a curse uttered, even if the victim of it could not hear it, was nevertheless effective: it is therefore forbidden against a helpless person who was not in a position to take any counter-measures" (182).

The theme of justice in the courts is dealt with in v.15-16. This had a direct significance for every man since the elders of the community, as a body, formed the judges of the court, which customarily assembled in the open square opposite the main city gates. There was to be no perverting of justice through considerations of social or economic circumstances. By implication, the acceptance of a bribe was condemned and false or improvable accusations were not to be made against fellow citizens (v.16). In the situation of a local trial it would be easy for neighbours to allow their personal feelings to intrude and distort the proceedings. 'I am the Lord' reminds all the participants that God is the ultimate judge and their

decisions ought to reflect that perception. Porter says,

"Justice is one of the key themes of the Old Testament, which sees it as the foundation of the whole social order" (183).

The emphasis of v.17-18 moves from the court scene to a more general consideration of social relations. It is preferable to discuss matters with your brother than take him to court. Harrison comments,

"Responsibility towards one's neighbour involves a positive attitude of heart and mind. Hatred is an emotional response which should only be employed against evil and least of all against one who is a fellow member of the covenant community. Where reproof is thought necessary, the matter should be discussed openly with the offender, not behind his back lest anger should lead to resentment and hatred" (184).

It is in this context of openness within social relationship, that the supreme ethical demand of the O.T. appears in v.18. Concern and care for oneself are assumed to be natural human attitudes and this same care is to be extended to others. For the Priestly writer assumed as natural a healthy care for oneself and proceeds to specify the need to recognise that others are God's creation and entitled to similar concern. The true quest for fulfilment can only be made when it includes within its compass the fulfilment

of our neighbour's' lives also, for this is an integral part of community. Again we notice an emphasis characteristic of P that a correct inward attitude was important for the well being of society.

The following section, v.19-25, seems totally unrelated to the last, with its prohibitions on mixed breeding. They are both concerned with holiness which does not permit the mixing of antithetical aspects, so producing confusion and chaos, whether that be truth and falsehood, or different cattle and seed. In Leviticus 11 holiness was exemplified in the animal kingdom classification of clean and unclean creatures. The purpose of P was to uphold the correct ordering and categories of creation. Man must not confuse what God has made distinct and the ban on mixtures is an inevitable follow on. The application of such a ban within Israelite society would be obvious to P's listeners, for the greatest threat to the community was of mixing with other peoples and thus destroying the distinctiveness which was Israel. Milgrom provides a variation on the theme,

"A cloth made of two kinds of stuff, wool and linen, is prescribed for the curtains of the tabernacle (Exodus 26 v.1, 31, 36) and the vestments of the high priest (Exodus 28 v.5-6, 8, 15). Such a mixture is holy and therefore forbidden to the laity. Similarly a field sowed with two kinds of seed becomes

holy (Deut. 22 v.96) and cannot be used by the lay owner" (185).

Within this context of mixed breeding, there is the case of the betrothed slave girl, v.20-22. It is placed here because slaves like cattle and cloth were regarded as possessions and not individuals. Slave girls would often be foreigners and thus explain its insertion here. In the O.T. sexual intercourse with a betrothed girl by someone who was not her fiance was equivalent to adultery, with both parties liable to the death penalty. This law stipulates an exception to that general principle because the girl was not free. Milgrom explains why a guilt offering is required in this case,

"The seducer of the betrothed slave-girl is indeed guilty of adultery and though her slave status renders the death penalty inoperable, the 'great sin' against God still must be expiated. As in all cases of desecration where sacrificial expiation is allowed, the offender must bring a 'šm.

Summary: The resolution of the crux of the 'šm brought by the seducer of a slave-girl rests on the assumption that in Israel adultery was considered a violation of the Sinaitic covenant. In the ancient Near East though adultery was considered a sin against the gods it had no juridical impact, whereas in Israel its inclusion in the Covenant guaranteed legal consequences. The death penalty for clear-cut adultery could never be commuted. However, in the case of Lev. 19

v.20-22, where investigation shows that the betrothed slave-girl had not been emancipated, her seducer could not be punished. He is not an adulterer because she is not a legal person. Nevertheless, he has offended God by desecrating the Sinaitic oath and must bring his 'šm expiation" (186).

This incident shows a tolerance for sexual relations with slave girls and, only if it is discovered, does the man have to offer the dearest kind of sacrifice.

The legislation forbidding the fruit of new trees to be eaten (v.23-25) is based on sound horticultural principles, although the P emphasis emerges in dedicating the fourth year's crop to God as the first fruits with the consequence that such fidelity will mean abundance and blessing. Wenham comments,

"Holiness involves the total consecration of a man's life and labor to God's service. This was symbolised in the giving of one day in seven and a tithe of all produce and also in the dedication of the first fruits of agriculture" (187).

The final regulations to be considered concern fair trading v.35-36 and, again, are an implementation of the regulative principle of holiness, as Douglas mentions. Harrison comments,

"Fairness and equity are important aspects of God's moral nature and these qualities must also be reflected in the life of the covenant nation, particularly where legal and business

decisions are concerned. Equitable decisions by those in authority are consonant with God's own righteousness and work for the immediate benefit of society as a whole Unfair trading practices were evidently very common in antiquity" (188).

The whole collection of laws is concluded by a solemn reminder, 'you shall observe all my statutes and all my ordinances and do them: I am the Lord' (v.37). Such a demand for obedience to the law is set within the context of the assertion of God's grace, 'I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt' in v.36 and provides a motivation for the people.

Within Leviticus 19 we see how holiness was interpreted for the people of Israel, not just as an idea concerning religious and personal life but which involved various and diverse social actions. In this way P attempted to structure society so it conformed to this concept of holiness. The orderly and open dealings not only ensured a stable society but were also underpinned by a theological interpretation. The use of the regulative principle of holiness allows the diversity of matters like mixed breeding, fair trading, honesty and correct judicial practice to be collated without any apparent contradiction. Hertz comments,

"Holiness is thus not so much an abstract or a mystic idea as a regulative principle in the everyday lives of men and women Holiness is thus attained not by flight from

the world, nor by monk-like renunciation of human relationships of family or station but by the spirit in which we fulfill the obligations of life in its simplest and commonest details: in this way - by doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with our God - is everyday life transfigured" (189).

(f) Footnotes

1. Carroll, 1985
2. Milgrom, 1972, p75
3. Douglas, 1975, p276f. esp. p312

"I argued that knowledge in the bones, a gut response, answers to a characteristic in the total pattern of classification. Something learnt for the first time can be judged instantly and self-evidently true or false. The flash of recognition would correspond to the split-second scanning of animal knowledge. The essence of my argument is that the stable points of reference for this kind of knowing are not particular external events, but the characteristics of the classification system itself. We are talking about the way the system has been set. It may be a setting that welcomes some anomalies and rejects others or one that rejects all anomalies. Using such a classification system there is no need to work out by slow deductive processes how to respond to a new anomaly that turns up."

4. Clements, 1970, p34
5. Harrison, 1980, p120f. goes into manifold details in this connection and the issue seems endless.
6. Noth, 1984, p56f.

"It is here, too, in connection with the rejection of foreign cults, that the apparently so abstruse regulations about clean and unclean animals belong. The normal Hebrew technical terms for cultic cleanness

and uncleanness, i.e. cultically permitted and cultically forbidden are used throughout. The animals declared unclean are not rejected on hygienic or other practical grounds, but because they are animals which were revered or sacrificed in various other cults in the areas occupied by Israelite tribes. Consequently they were forbidden for cultic slaughter and even for food, because every possible connection with foreign cults was to be avoided.

Even apart from this, certain animals are declared cultically unclean because they were regarded by the Israelite tribes and their contemporaries as demonic beings or as hosts to demonic powers, so that contact with them was regarded as a meddling with a separate superhuman sphere irreconcilable with the exclusive cult of Yahweh. The Old Testament tradition itself shows that this was the meaning of the regulations concerning clean and unclean beasts. We have two Old Testament law-codes which give lists of edible and non-edible animals; they largely correspond, although apparently independent of one another from the literary standpoint. In Deuteronomy a list of clean and unclean beasts has been appended to a short law, which forbids the eating 'of anything abominable' (XIV.3, 4-21aa). This list was probably added later as a suitable exposition of the summary prohibition. But in vs.21a this short law is expressly based on the statement: 'For thou art a nation holy unto Yahweh thy God', i.e. a people whose exclusive relationship to Yahweh and to his cult forbade the sacrifice and consumption of

such animals as had a place in foreign cults. Similarly the other lists of clean and unclean animals in Lev. XI are rounded off with a specific motivation, which strictly applies only to the last clause concerning small cattle (vss.41ff.), but in fact should certainly be applied to the whole of the list:

For I, Yahweh, am your God, and you shall keep yourselves holy and be holy, for I am holy; and you shall not make yourselves cultically unclean (with all small animals that creep on the earth); for I am Yahweh who brought you out from the land of Egypt to be your God. So shall you be holy, for I am holy. (Cf. also Lev. XX.25).

In some instances proof is still available that the animals forbidden in the Old Testament law-codes as unclean did in fact play some role in the foreign cults bordering on the Israelite tribes. We may single out as an example the well-known fact that swine, or more correctly the wild pig, might not be sacrificed or eaten (Deut. XIV.8; Lev. XI.7). In the cult-mythological texts of Ras Shamra from the first half of the fourteenth century B.C. eight boars (h n z r) appear in one place in the train of the god Al'iyān Ba'al, clearly being animals sacred to him.

Furthermore, we have the mention, in the additions to the book of Deutero-Isaiah, of sacrifices of the blood of swine or boars (Isa. LXVI.3), and of eating the flesh of swine or boars (LXV.4, LXVI.17) in connection with accounts of illegal cult practices amongst the post exilic community. In

addition too there are the various remarks of later Greek authors of the Hellenistic and Roman periods about the spread of the cultic role of the boar in Syria and the neighbouring regions.

Apart from the report of Lucian of Samosata in *De dea Syria* LIV, which tells us that in certain cities of Syria the boar was regarded as sacred and - on that account - was not sacrificed or eaten in other parts of Syria, the boar played a particularly important role in the Phoenician Adonis myth associated with the cult of the mother goddess; Antiphanes commented that in Syria the boar was sacred to Astarte, i.e. the mother goddess. John of Lydia tells us that on the island of Cyprus, with its long and close cultural connection with Phoenicia, wild pigs were sacrificed to Aphrodite - clearly an ancient Astarte. This association of swine with the cults of the great mother goddess in the areas fringing on Israel sufficiently explains its rejection in the Old Testament law-codes in the light of what has been said above (pp.54ff.).

Not all animals which were sacrificed elsewhere are, however, declared unclean in the Old Testament; neither the ox nor the sheep nor the goat. These beasts were everywhere used in the sacrificial cult in lands possessing pastoral and agricultural economies: they therefore represent such widely distributed materials of sacrifice that they had no special links with any cult in particular; consequently their use implied no recognition of any specific cult, and was permitted - even prescribed - in the Old

Testament law-codes, which indeed recognise and require on their own side a sacrificial cult as such. Only those animals were declared 'unclean', and therefore not to be sacrificed or eaten, which were especially associated with particular foreign cults or with all manner of forbidden superstitious ideas and their corresponding celebrations.

So then the enumeration of 'unclean' beasts has, quite simply, developed out of practical requirements to provide a specifically formulated prohibition against taking part in cultic practices for 'other gods'",

also Eichrodt, 1961, Vol. II, p226f.

7. Origen, Contra Celsum 4:93
8. Robertson Smith, 1907, p449
9. Douglas, 1966, p7, deals with the approach of Robertson Smith and Frazer on these laws as well as updating their views in the works of others p45f.

Clements, 1965, makes no mention of purity while he deals with concepts such as divine presence and the cult, which have close connections with purity.

10. The Letter of Aristeas, pl45f. quotes the High Priest Eleazar,
"admits that most people find the biblical food restrictions not understandable. If God is the Creator of everything, why should His law be so severe as to exclude some animals even from touch (l28f.)? His first answer still links the dietary restrictions with the danger of idolatry The second answer attempts to refute specific charges by means

of allegorical exegesis. Each law about forbidden foods has its deep reason. Moses did not enumerate the mouse or the weasel out of a special consideration for them (143f.). On the contrary, mice are particularly obnoxious because of their destructiveness, and weasels, the very symbol of malicious tale-bearing, conceive through the ear and give birth through the mouth (164f). Rather have these holy laws been given for the sake of justice to awaken in us devout thoughts and to form our character (161-168). The birds, for instance, the Jews are allowed to eat are all tame and clean, as they live by corn only. Not so the wild and carnivorous birds who fall upon lambs and goats and even human beings. Moses, by calling the latter unclean, admonished the faithful not to do violence to the weak and not to trust their own power (145-148). Cloven-hoofed animals which part their hooves symbolise that all our actions must betray proper ethical distinction and be directed towards righteousness Chewing the cud, on the other hand stands for memory."

12. Bonar, 1875, p214-215
13. Douglas, 1966, p41
14. Douglas, 1966, p53
15. Bulmer, 1973, p191-192

"Dr Douglas tells us that the pig was an unclean beast to the Hebrew quite simply because it was a taxonomic anomaly, literally, as the Old Testament says, because like normal domestic animals it has a cloven hoof, whereas unlike other cloven-hoofed

beasts, it does not chew the cud (Douglas, 1966). And she pours a certain amount of scorn on the commentators of the last 2,000 years who have taken alternative views and drawn attention to the creatures feeding habits, the quality of its flesh, the moral virtues with which it is or is not endowed, and so on. Without pretending to having any knowledge of Hebraic or Semitic studies, I would myself regard the brief statements in Leviticus and Deuteronomy as taxonomic rationalizations, made by very sophisticated professional rationalizers, to justify the prohibition of a beast which there were probably multiple reasons for avoiding. It would seem equally fair, on the limited evidence available, to argue that the pig was accorded anomalous taxonomic status because it was unclean as to argue that it was unclean because of its anomalous taxonomic status. In any case, Dr Douglas's argument does not concern itself with the reasons why the pig, originally prohibited by a tribe of pastoralists, has remained such a questionable beast right through from Old Testament times to the peoples of the Middle East, the Islamic world and many western Europeans. Here I find Dr Leach's discussion (1964) very much to the point. The commensal association of pig and man does seem to be the nub of the matter, and the fact that the pig was probably not a commensal associate of the Ancient Hebrew itself perhaps requires more explanation. If the archaeologists could tell us whether or not it was commensally associated with the neighbouring

worshippers of heathen idols, this could be relevant."

16. Douglas, 1975, p249f.
17. Douglas, 1975, p207-208
18. Douglas, 1975, p249
19. Douglas, 1975, p262, she notes the work in New Guinea and Thailand where there is a connection between food and sex.
20. Driver, 1898 v.1, f13
21. Douglas, 1966, p54f.
22. Douglas, 1975, p266
23. Douglas, 1975, p267
24. Douglas, 1966, p57
25. Douglas, 1975, p269
26. Douglas, 1975, p269
27. Soler, 1979, p24
28. Soler, 1979, p24
29. Milgrom, 1963, p289
30. Milgrom, 1963, p291
31. Milgrom, 1963, p290-291

"What is probably the oldest sacrificial law in the Bible is contained in Chapter 17 of Leviticus. It prohibits the arbitrariness of a Saul and designates the proper place and person for animal slaughtering as the local sanctuary and its priest. One of the later Judean kings, however, centralized the cult in Jerusalem and abolished the local sanctuaries, making it necessary to permit the laity to slaughter their meat at home. Such permission is reflected in the code of

Deuteronomy. Its very language is instructive: 'If the place where the Lord your God has chosen to establish His name is too far from you, you may slaughter any of the cattle or sheep that the Lord gives you, as I have instructed you' (Deut. 12:21;).

This verse clearly implies that there was already established not only a proper place for slaughtering but a proper method as well. Although they are released from the requirement as to place, the people are still bound to the method.

What is this proper method? The Bible gives us no answer, but the Talmud does, and with many details. All of these clearly demonstrate the perfection of a slaughtering technique whose purpose is to render immediate unconsciousness to the animal with a minimum of suffering. The plethora of regulations cannot be entered into here. Let the example of the slaughtering knife suffice: it must be razor-keen and it must regularly be inspected for imperfections, lest the slightest notch cause unnecessarily prolonged pain. Could this concern for humaneness be the invention of the rabbis rather than the legacy of the past? Hardly so. The rabbis themselves are ignorant of the humane origin of their method and point to the verse quoted above from Deuteronomy as proving that the same technique was employed by the biblical priests. And in keeping with the originally sacral nature of the rite of slaughtering, they insist that he who would perform the slaughtering - the shohet, or ritual slaughterer - though not a priest shall act as a priest. He shall recite an

appropriate blessing, thus dedicating his slaughter to God. Moreover, by virtue of his training and piety, his soul shall never be torpified by his incessant butchery but kept ever sensitive to the magnitude of the divine concession in allowing him to bring death to living things."

32. Milgrom, 1963, p293

33. Milgrom, 1971, p152

34. Milgrom, 1971, p153

35. Milgrom, 1971, p155

36. McCarthy, 1969, p176

37. McCarthy, 1973, p205-210

also Cogan, 1974a, p75f.

38. McCarthy, 1976, p115;

De Vaux, 1961, p447-454.

39. Anderson, 1962, comments,

"The basis of the priestly sacrificial system ... (was that) on the principle of the sacrifice of life for life, the shedding of blood was efficacious in forgiving sin and reconciling man to God."

40. Milgrom, 1963, p297

41. Carroll, 1985, p118

42. Carroll, 1985, p119

"There is, however, much difficulty in Douglas' treatment of flying creatures. To be sure, in the Revised Standard Version of the O.T., Genesis records 'birds' as being created on the fifth day, and 'birds' (as seems obvious to us all) are two-legged creatures. Hence Douglas' argument that

'flying insects' (four legged flying creatures) are defined as unclean in Lev.11:20 because they are anomalous with respect to the 'bird' category seems perfectly reasonable. Unfortunately, although 'birds' and 'flying insects' may seem to the modern reader to be quite separate categories, this is not really the case here. The Hebrew term that the Revised Standard Version translates as 'birds' in Genesis (and again in Lev. 11:13) is really a generic term for a variety of flying creatures, including birds, bats, and flying insects. The sense of all this is better conveyed in older translations which talk simply of the creation of 'fowls' on the fifth day (in Genesis) and the prohibition (in Lev. 11:20) of those particular 'fowls that creep, going upon all fours'. In other words, two-legged fowls (birds) and four-legged fowls (flying insects) are just subcategories of the general 'fowl' category established in Genesis. But because flying insects are not anomalous with respect to the classification scheme established in Genesis, Douglas' theory cannot really explain why they are defined as unclean. "

43. Carroll, 1985, p120

44. Carroll, 1985, p123

45. Soler, 1979, p26. Such a view is confirmed by Carroll, 1985, p121,

"Now consider the list of twenty specific birds defined as unclean in Lev. 11:13-19. Douglas says she can say nothing about this list because there are no descriptions associated with the various birds named and

the translation of many of the names is open to doubt. Without denying that some of the names are uncertain, there is enough specificity about the list to have suggested to some scholars that most of the prohibited birds are either birds of prey (e.g. eagle, hawk, falcon, etc.) or carrion eaters (e.g., vulture). In short, the prohibited birds seem to be carnivorous birds."

46. Douglas, 1975, p270
47. Douglas, 1975, p270
48. Soler, 1979, p27
49. Bulmer, 1973, p191
50. Douglas, 1975, p272
51. Milgrom, 1970, p5f.
52. Douglas, 1975, p272
53. Douglas, 1975, p284
54. Douglas, 1975, p306

"By its cloven feet the pig nearly gets into the class of ungulates, hence a double odium. A further association with the undesirable marriage lies in the fact that the people of Israel, whether in exile, or before, or afterwards, were never living apart from foreigners and they must have frequently succumbed to the temptation to marry foreign girls. How else did the resident Canaanites come to be absorbed? In the relevant periods, betrothal to a foreigner was certain to be celebrated with feasting in breach of the Mosaic rules. But far more likely to appear on the table than the camel, the hare and the rock-badger was the domesticated pig.

So we move towards understanding its special taxonomic status."

55. Soler, 1979, p30

56. Soler, 1979, p29

Also Heider, 1985, p390 cites de Vaux as support thus,

"Le porc est considéré comme un animal 'chthonien', que sa nature destine à être offert aux divinités infernales ... le cochon est réservé pour des rites plus ou moins secrets qui s'accomplissent rarement."

57. Clements, 1970, p43f.;

Harrison, 1980, p158, gives brief mention of Douglas's work but continues to work on the premise that the laws are hygienic in essence.

58. Elliger, 1966, p157f.

59. Bertholet, 1901, p41

60. Calvin, 1853, p32

Bonar, 1875, p287

Keil, 1864, p179f.

61. Douglas, 1966, p51

62. Douglas, 1966, p115

63. Douglas, 1966, p124

64. Douglas, 1966, p124

65. Douglas, 1966, p128

66. Douglas, 1966, p121

67. Wenham, 1979, p223

68. Leach, 1965, p206-220

69. Harrison, 1980, p136

70. Browne, 1970, provides an authoritative and full account of the matter.
Also Hulse, 1975;
Wilkinson, 1977, 1978.
71. Browne, 1970, p5;
Hulse, 1975, p93.
72. Douglas, 1975, p268
73. Frymer-Kensky, 1983
74. Carroll, 1985, p124
75. Douglas, 1966, p130
76. Douglas, 1966, p130-131
77. Frymer-Kensky, 1983, p403-404
78. Leach, 1976, p78f.
79. Davies, 1977, p397
80. Levine, 1974, p92-94
Also Milgrom, 1976a, p78f.
81. Milgrom, 1972, p72
82. Milgrom, 1976c, p768
83. Harrison, 1980, p151, sees this procedure as part of the conservation of the Aaronides in Lev. 8 v.24 with the symbolism suggested of hearing God's voices, doing works of righteousness with his hands and walking in God's ways.
84. Milgrom, 1972, p76
85. Wenham, 1979, p216
86. Lev. 27 v.2-7 sets the redemption price of woman as half that of man.
87. Frymer-Kensky, 1983, p401

88. Snaith, 1967, p106;
Wenham, 1979, p217.
89. Wenham, 1979, p219
90. Wenham, 1979, p224
91. Douglas, 1966, p124
92. Frymer-Kensky, 1983, p401
93. Wenham, 1979, p223;
Harrison, 1980, p165f. supports Wenham's
view.
94. Douglas, 1966, p141-142
95. Douglas, 1966, p157
96. Wenham, 1979, p250, quotes Hertz, 1932
"These chapters set out 'the foundation
principles of social morality. The first
place among these is given to the institution
of marriage ... the cornerstone of all human
society Any violation of the sacred
character of marriage is deemed a heinous
offence, calling down the punishment of
Heaven both upon the offender and the society
that condones the offence."
97. cf. 18 v.3, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30; 20 v.2, 5, 6,
15, 23, 25, 26.
98. Clements, 1970, p49, who cites in support,
Kapelrud, 1962;
Gray, 1964.
99. Nielsen, 1968, p17
100. Porter, 1976, p145;
Stamm, 1967, p44;
Elliger, 1955, p1-25;

Noth, 1965, p135f.

101. Wenham, 1979, p255, explains this further,

"With our understanding of biology we readily see that our children are an extension of ourselves; they are in a vertical blood relationship with us. But foreign to our way of thinking is the idea that a wife's nakedness is her husband's nakedness and vice versa (vv. 7, 8, 16). In other words, marriage, or more precisely marital intercourse, makes the man and wife as closely related as parents and children. In the words of Gen. 2:24, 'they become one flesh'. Marriage thus creates both vertical blood relationships in the form of children and horizontal 'blood' relationships between the spouses. The girl who marries into a family becomes an integral and permanent part of that family in the same way that children born into the family do. Even if her husband dies, or divorces her, she still has this horizontal 'blood' relationship with the family. In Hebrew thinking marriage made a girl not just a daughter-in-law, but a daughter of her husband's parents (Ruth 1:11; 3:1). She became a sister to her husband's brother. For this reason, if her husband dies, her brother-in-law may not marry her (v.16). Brothers may not marry sisters (v.9)."

102. Wenham, 1979, p255

103. Elliger, 1955, p9f.

104. Phillips, 1970, p123

105. Taber, 1976 p.574

- 106. Bigger, 1979, p198
- 107. Wenham, 1979, p255
- 108. Douglas, 1975, p309
- 109. Douglas, 1975, p304-305
- 110. Soler, 1979, p30
- 111. Soler, 1979, p30
- 112. Driver, 1895, p282,
- 113. Brewer, 1903, p144;
Patai, 1960, p86.
- 114. Bigger, 1979, p199
- 115. Wenham, 1979, p257-258
- 116. Murray, 1957, p251, argues that bigamy is
condemned here.

Tosato, 1984, p200f. f2 defends a similar
opinion although he approaches the matter
from Qumran's use of Lev. 18 v.18.
- 117. Tosato, 1984, p201
- 118. Tosato, 1914, p205-206
- 119. Tosato, 1984, p207
- 120. Tosato, 1984, p200 f3
- 121. Tosato, 1984, p200 f4
- 122. Rowley, 1963, p29
- 123. Rowley, 1963, p29 f3
- 124. Greenberg, 1960, p12f.
- 125. Phillips, 1970, p117
- 126. Phillips, 1981, p7
- 127. Phillips, 1981, p8
- 128. Phillips, 1981, p7

129. Frymer-Kensky, 1984, p24f.
130. Phillips, 1970, p119
131. McKeating, 1979, p58
132. Phillips, 1970, p125, sees a development within the P material by the different uses of penalties,
"in the exilic situation execution was replaced by reliance on divine activity to inflict punishment, which in turn was replaced by the post exilic punishment of excommunication."
133. Snaith, 1967, p126;
Harrison, 1980, p193;
Pope, 1976, p416.
134. Phillips, 1980b, p39
135. Soler, 1979, p30
136. Hoffner, 1973, p81;
Eichler, 1976, p96.
137. Driver, 1956, p117f.
138. Bigger, 1979, p203
139. Douglas, 1975, p263-273
140. Heider, 1985, pIX
141. Cogan, 1974a, p77-79
142. De Vaux, 1961, p445-446,
"Its origin must be sought, evidently, in Canaanite culture (in the broad sense). Punic and Neo-Punic inscriptions contain the expressions mlk 'mr (transcribed molchomor in Latin) and mlk 'dm. Very probably, these phrases mean respectively 'offerings of lamb' and 'offering of man', and refer to the

sacrifice of an infant, or of a lamb as substitute. This interpretation is supported by a find in the sanctuary of Tanit at Carthage, where archaeologists have discovered urns containing burnt bones of lambs and goats, and, more often, of children. There is, too, a famous text of Diodorus Siculus (Biblioth. Hist. XX 14): in 310 B.C., when a disaster was threatening Carthage, the inhabitants of the town decided it was due to the anger of Kronos, to whom they had formerly sacrificed their finest children: instead, they had begun to offer sickly children, or children they had bought. Thereupon, they sacrificed two hundred children from the noblest families. There was a bronze statue of Kronos with outstretched arms, and the child was placed on its hands and rolled into the furnace. Whether the details be true or false, the story is evidence of a custom to which other classical authors also allude.

These inscriptions and texts are of late date, but the milk offering is mentioned in two steles from Malta belong to the seventh or sixth century B.C. The sacrificial term has not so far been found in inscriptions from Phoenicia proper, but child-sacrifice was practised there: a fragment of Philo of Byblos cited in Eusebius (Praep. Evang. 1 10) says that the Phoenicians had an ancient custom - 'they offered their dearest children in a way full of mystery' when danger threatened the nation. Porphyry (De abstin. II 56) says that the Phoenician History written by Sanchuniathon and translated by Philo of Byblos was full of stories about

child-sacrifices offered to Kronos in times of calamity. These texts furnish the connecting-link with the story told by Diodorus Siculus, and we may mention also the reference to the king of Moab's offering his son as a holocaust when his capital was under siege (2 K 3:27).

The sacrifice of children, then, by burning them to death probably made its way into Israel from Phoenicia during a period of religious syncretism. The Bible mentions only two specific instances, and they are motivated by the same exceptional circumstances as the Phoenician sacrifices: Achaz 'made his son pass through the fire' (2 K 16:3) during the Syro-Ephraimite War, and Manasseh did the same (2 K 21:6) when confronted with some Assyrian threat which is not mentioned in the Books of Kings but which may be alluded to in 2 Ch. 33:11f. Yet the custom must have been fairly widespread to have deserved the condemnations uttered by Deuteronomy, Leviticus and the Prophets. Though Phoenician texts properly so called do not mention the word, it is possible (we say no more) that the sacrifice was called molk in Phoenicia, as in Carthage, and that it came into Israel under this name.

But even if this is true, the sacrificial meaning of the word was soon forgotten in Israel; perhaps it was never taken in this sense at all. There was a god called Malik ('king') in the pantheons of Assyria and of Ras Shamra, and the god of the Ammonites was called Milkom (2 S 12:30; 1 K 11:5, 33; 2 K 23:13), which is merely another form of the

same word. More often, the word *melek* ('king') is an appellative of a god, used instead of the god's proper name. This appellative use is found in the Bible itself in Is 57:9 (*Melek*) and in the Massoretic text of Is 30: 33 (in connection with the 'roaster' in the valley of Ben-Hinnom); it is also found in composition with divine names (*Adrammelek* and *Anammelek*, 2 K 17:31, again in connection with the burning of infants for sacrifice). These offerings, then, were held to be offerings to a king-god, a *Melek*, who was an idol (Ez 23: 39), a *Baal* (Jr 19:5; 32:35), a *Disgrace* (perhaps Jr 3:24). The form *molek*, which predominated in these texts, is to be explained by a change of vocalization telling the reader to say *bosheth* (disgrace, shame); this is in fact the reading of the consonants too in Jr 3:24. (Compare the substitution of *bosheth* for *Baal* in Jr 11: 13; Os 9:10 and in certain proper names.)"

- 143. Eissfeldt, 1935
- 144. Noth, 1965, p148
- 145. Pedersen, 1959, p318-322
- 146. Kaufmann, 1960, p267f.
- 147. Gaster, 1962, p154
- 148. Snaith, 1967, p124
- 149. Carroll, 1981, p304
- 150. Zimmerli, 1983, p344, 411f.
- 151. Elliger, 1955, p17
- 152. Heider, 1985, p248
- 153. Heider, 1985, p248-249

154. Heider, 1985, p272
155. Heider, 1985, p301
156. Heider, 1985, p382
157. Heider, 1985, p383
158. Heider, 1985, p385
159. Heider, 1985, p388
160. Heider, 1985, p389
161. Heider, 1985, p390
162. Heider, 1985, p407-408
163. Heider, 1985, p246-247
164. Harrison, 1980, p195
165. Wenham, 1979, p263
166. Harrison, 1980, p195 who cites Hertz as reference.
167. Noth, 1965, p138
168. Noth, 1965, p139
169. Mowinckel, 1937
170. Nielsen, 1968, p20-22
171. Nielsen, 1968, p21
172. Alt, 1966, p117
173. Porter, 1976, p151
174. Reventlow, 1961, p77 and 162
175. Nielsen, 1968, p142
176. Nielsen, 1968, p143
177. Milgrom, 1972, p79
178. Douglas, 1966, p53f.
179. Snaith, 1967, p129
180. Snaith, 1967, p129

- 181. Porter, 1976, p154
- 182. Noth, 1965, p141
- 183. Porter, 1976, p154
- 184. Harrison, 1980, p199
- 185. Milgrom, 1972, p79
- 186. Milgrom, 1977, p49
- 187. Wenham, 1979, p271
- 188. Harrison, 1980, p203
- 189. Hertz, 1932, p190f.

CHAPTER V

Controls within the Aaronide manifesto

- (a) Introduction
- (b) The death penalty
- (c) The ban: Herem
- (d) The karet penalty
- (e) Footnotes

(a) Introduction

In any consideration of the specific controls operative within the post exilic society, it would seem appropriate to consider the various words specifically used to describe punishments. The death penalty appears in all the strata of the literature and may, therefore, be considered as the most ancient and original measure for the control of society. The karet penalty belongs to the P and H strands of the tradition but it never occurs in Deuteronomy. It is acknowledged that the factors relating to control in the Deuteronomic material differ substantially to those in P. In the Deuteronomic writings it is assumed that the pre exilic community was coincidental with the nation and derived its identity from its political standing, with religion being an integral but secondary factor. While in the Priestly writings, with political power removed due to the exile, the religious aspect predominates. It is in the Priestly material that we see specific controls of the community for a religious purpose and thus can discern a system or structure of discipline that is dependent on its prehistory but invariably builds a new superstructure or at least reinforces traditional patterns with new motivation or impetus.

Various expressions and concepts related to the disciplinary procedures of the community will be discussed in an attempt not to overlook separate items and thus provide as comprehensive a picture as possible.

(b) The Death penalty

This provides an appropriate starting point, for the death penalty is common to all strata of the material and presents 'a neutral picture of which deviations are punished by death' (1). Forkmann notes the various references to the death penalty and comments,

"these texts belong to widely differing contexts and times and are of varied literary character" (2).

It is important to note the significant and precise use by P of the qal and hophal forms of the verb מָוָה (3), for he differentiates between cases of death by man and death by God. Rabbinic exegesis has preferred to see death as at the hands of God (4), but a consideration of the location of מָוָה מָוָה in P reveals that death by man is meant. Indeed, the hophal מָוָה , can only mean, 'be put to death', that is by man. A detailed examination of all the occasions of these words will shed further light on this difference and present us with a fuller understanding.

(i) Sabbath breaking (5)

The sabbath was observed in Israel from an early date and yet nowhere is there a statement about the origin of this day, which leads Schmidt to comment,

"the origin of the sabbath remains obscure,
in spite of numerous theories" (6).

After the fall of Jerusalem, with the destruction of the temple, the exile in Babylon involved a return to what were in effect the conditions of Sinai, that is the isolation of Israel among foreign people. Consequently, the absence of idolatry along with sabbath observance and the rite of circumcision became, for the exiles, the visible distinguishing marks of true Israelites and separated them from their conquerors. It was through maintaining these practices that the former covenant community could remain bound together and the hope of restoration could be kept alive. This accounts for the stress on the sabbath in Ezekiel (20 v.12f.; 22 v.8; 23 v.38).

The Priestly writer considered the Mosaic covenant to have been irrevocably broken by the events of 586 B.C., unlike the Deuteronomist. He made no attempt to return to this concept but rather understood Israel's relation with Yahweh as a matter of divine grace through which Yahweh had elected Israel as his chosen people. The relationship was to be maintained not by obedience to a code of laws but through the cult.

Both circumcision and sabbath observance were used by the Priestly writer to establish this doctrine of election by which the Mosaic covenant concept was

transformed. Thus, while he connected circumcision to the election of Abraham (Gen. 17), he made the sabbath the climax of his creation narrative by imposing it on what was formerly an eight day creation scheme (Gen. 1-2 v.49; Ex. 20 v.11). To emphasise that the sabbath was the culmination of creation itself, inconsistently, he noted that it was on the seventh day that Yahweh completed his work. Thus for P, the sabbath, once a sign of the Mosaic covenant, now became a sign that in the very creation of the world Yahweh had designated Israel his elect people, for they alone were the people of the sabbath (Ex. 31 v.12f.). P antedates the sabbath in order to stress its importance and so he can raise it to the

"level of a confessional indicator" (7).

In order to make the sabbath known to man for the first time, P utilised the J tradition that the giving of manna conformed with the sabbath commandment. But it cannot be assumed from Ex. 16 that the sabbath was practised by Israel prior to the disclosure of the Sinai legislation. The position of Ex. 16 is due to P's desire to begin his account of the wilderness period by stressing sabbath observance.

While in pre exilic Israel only male occupational work was prohibited, under the priestly legislation sabbath observance, to which both men and women were subject, was extended. Thus Ex. 35 v.3 prohibits domestic fires

and Num. 15 v.32f., which is intended to be a new criminal law precedent being deliberately set in the Mosaic period, condemns to death the man who gathers firewood on the sabbath.

The incident in Num. 15 v.32-6 shows a person caught in flagrante delicto while gathering wood on the Sabbath. An oracular ruling is sought from God on how to deal with the man and yet the punishment does not clarify the nature of the crime but only mentions the punishment of stoning. Weingreen has argued that the crime was not at issue but rather the question was whether the gatherer of wood showed intent to desecrate the sabbath by lighting a fire (8). Phillips prefers to see the story as an extension of sabbath principles to all forms of domestic activity (9). Budd develops that,

"What is clear is that the application of a great principle, such as abstention from work, is bound to raise questions as to what falls within its orbit and as to what precisely constitutes 'work'. This story is certainly part of the process whereby answers were found and it provides a ruling on one particular form of activity" (10).

Only in P is the penalty for breach of the commandment specified (Ex. 31 v.14f; 35 v.2) but as part of the criminal law, this would from the first have been death by communal stoning. The combining of karet with the

death penalty in Ex. 31 v.14 reveals a development mirrored in Lev. 20 v.1-5, where it is suggested that God promises to intervene against the said offenders in the contingency that the community does not put them to death. It has also been suggested that the sabbath law precedent of Num. 15 v.32f. must be understood primarily as an illustration of what constitutes 'sin with a high hand' (v.30). However, one can also see in this pericope a parallel to that of Lev. 24 v.10-23. In the context of Num. 15 one could see that this rule of sabbath observance is required, not only of the Israelite but also of the sojourner (γ $\dot{\text{A}}$). The writer stresses in v.16 that there is one law for the Israelite and the stranger among you and, while the law was specific about the chosen people's behaviour on the sabbath, it did not legislate for those strangers in the land and thus the Priestly writer seeks to amend it in that way. Previously such aliens were dependent on the goodwill and empathetic consideration of the Israelites (Ex. 22 v.21; 23 v.9), while now resident aliens have legal status conferred upon them (Deut. 1 v.16; Lev. 20 v.2). This change of status could be due to the proliferation of mixed marriages and the children of such unions feeling no obligation to comply with the restrictions of the Israelite faith of one of the parents. It may be seen as an acceptance of the inevitable process of assimilation while, at the same time, bringing such individuals under the jurisdiction

of the Jewish law and exercise some measure of discipline and control in that wider context.

The verses dealing with the sin of high-handedness (Num. 15 v.30-31) would appear to be of a later date than the pericope on sabbath working (Num. 15 v.32-36), for the later verses only use the penalty, 'put to death by stoning', while the former passage uses the terms of 'cutting off' and 'his iniquity shall be upon him'. It would appear that P has combined together two passages dealing with separate issues and probably from different times for his own purpose of emphasizing that failure to observe the sabbath in this manner was sin with a high hand, while the punishment was the same for native or sojourner alike. Therefore, Weingreen's and Phillips's interpretation of the case of the woodgatherer may not necessarily be mutually exclusive, especially as the two passages do not easily go together and present more problems in their combined form than as separate items, which may indicate the compilative influence of P.

The motivation behind such a prohibition could be seen in the disruptive impact that this man's crime would have had on the religious community. If such instances proliferated, they would contribute to a breakdown of religious discipline and the morale of the community, as well as diminishing the distinctiveness of Israelite faith. This would be viewed as a particular menace in

the exilic community where P seeks to draw the lines of demarcation specifically in order to emphasize the identity of the Israelite people. P's aim in describing the sabbath as part of creation was to give the concept such an ancient prehistory as to strengthen its impact and provide a powerful incentive for its correct observation, since it is conceived of as integral to the fabric and structure of the created order.

(ii) Sexual offences (11)

We find in Lev. 20 v. 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16 cases where death by man is meant. Such a conclusion finds confirmation in the historical narratives of Dinah (Gen. 34 v.31) and the concubine at Gibeah (Judges 20 v.13). There is the synonym וְהָרָגוּ אֶת הַזָּנוֹה (11, 12, 13, 16; cf. Ex. 22 v.1; Deut. 19 v.10; Josh. 9 v.24; 1 Kings 2 v.33, 37 which are clear cases of bloodguilt for homicide) as well as the explicit mention of death by burning in v.14 (cf. Lev. 21 v.9) (12). The literary structure of the chapter which divides itself up into an ordered series of graduated penalties (v.9-16 מוֹת ; v.17-19 כִּרְתִּי ; v.20-21 וְהָרָגוּ אֶת הַזָּנוֹה) lend weight to the idea that death by man is meant. The very clear distinction between the death penalty and the karet clauses and the diminishing severity in the arrangement prove that the

initial penalties (מִוֶּתֶת יָדָיו) must refer to immediate death by man.

It may be suggested that whereas Lev. 18 addresses itself directly to the would be offender, Lev. 20 is directed to the whole community of Israel who is responsible for seeing that the offender is punished. With the exception of Lev. 20 v.20-21 which Milgrom comments on,

"To the ancient Israelite to die childless was the supreme penalty" (13),

all the offences described in Lev. 20 carry the death penalty. One assumes with regard to private sins of a sexual, marital nature, there was a temptation for the local community, which was directly responsible for enforcing its laws, to ignore the matter and to let the sin go unpunished, especially when it carried the death penalty.

The responsibility of all Israel for maintaining the holiness and purity of its life before God is stressed in a distinctive way. Israel could not condone sin by turning a blind eye to it, for that would be to accept a personal share in it. Sin had to be removed from the community and, although the infliction of the death penalty appears as an exceedingly harsh punishment, its intention was to remove the cause of impurity and to prevent it affecting the life of the people of God. It

is possible to see the infliction of such harsh punishments in these categories as the strongest kind of deterrent which could be suggested and, therefore, they were more ideal than practical. At least, we might suggest that at one time they may have carried such a weight and, while they may not now, inevitably added weight is given to the present penalties in view of their prehistory. We, therefore, recognise that the death penalty is a significant antecedent for the contextual understanding of the present penalties. It has been noted in the study of general controls on family life that P is anxious to strengthen the relationship within the wider family unit and this he does in some measure by attempting to control the sexual practices of his day.

The case cited in Lev. 19 v.20-22 which also mentions the death penalty, deals with the case of the betrothed slave girl. The issue is one of adultery with a slave girl assigned to another man. Elsewhere in the O.T. (Deut. 22 v.23-24) sexual intercourse with a betrothed girl by someone who was not her fiance was regarded as tantamount to adultery and so both parties were liable to the death penalty. This law as recorded in P states an exception to that general principle because the girl was not free and so the death penalty does not apply to her or her seducer. A completely different penalty is imposed on the man for he must bring a ram as a

reparation offering (v.21) (14). This shows that adultery was regarded in this case not just as an offence against the girl's fiance and her parents but as a grave sin demanding the dearest kind of sacrificial atonement.

We see the characteristic attempt of P to present his own interpretation and emphasis in this matter. In this context P is anxious that the culprit confesses his guilt and, therefore, the penalty was a low one so that voluntary surrender should be encouraged. This is in marked contrast to Ex. 22 v.6f. where the level of restitution was high. It is integral to P's thinking to see the composite nature of life where the sin committed has a social and spiritual dimension to it. The man has to pay for his misdeed through the animal sacrifice and the guilt is atoned for. This stress on the gracious mercy of God, if people will confess their sinfulness, is a mark of P and an attempt to utilise the sacrificial system to control people's behaviour.

(iii) Molech worship

This case is described in Lev. 20 v.1-6 and v.2 specifically mentions the death penalty by means of communal stoning. Lev. 18 outlaws Molech worship, with Lev. 20 prescribing the death penalty as one punishment for those who ignore the ban. A fuller discussion on Molech has already occurred. The clear instruction

about Molech worship in Lev. 20 is partly because it falls within the sphere of idol worship and according to Deut. 13 v.16; 17 v.5, such idolaters fall under the death penalty due to their disruptive impact on society and the introduction of profane elements into Israel.

This enactment in v.2 may reflect a very early stage in the development of the Holiness Code when only execution could be contemplated as the proper penalty for the crime. This could be dated to the period immediately preceding the exile, being for the most part a reflection or development of certain current thought already apparent in the expansion of the criminal law in Deuteronomy. For it will be recognised that Deut. 18 v.10f. was the first provision to make criminal, necromancy and other occult practices, including the sacrifice to Molech. This would see the use of the karet penalty as a later development in the disciplinary methods of P. It could be that the simultaneous occurrence of the death penalty and karet in the case of Molech worship indicate that God promises to intervene against such offenders in the event of the community failing to put them to death (15), although the alternating use of karet and the death penalty will be dealt with more fully later. It is sufficient to note that the combining of these two penalties may indicate a pressure point for the

Aaronide revolution and, therefore, P seeks to bolster his condemnation of this by means of dual penalties.

(iv) Blasphemy (16)

The only case in P occurs in Lev. 24 v.16 and death by stoning is obvious and is confirmed from 1 Kings 21 v.10, 13f. The episode in Lev. 24 v.10-23 illustrates how many of the case laws of the Pentateuch may have originated. They arose out of specific situations which were brought to court for a legal judgement. The penalty in a given case is recorded as a guide for judges in the future, should similar cases occur again. It should be noticed that the judge whose decision is here recorded is not Moses but God. It was not simply uttering the holy name of Yahweh that constituted the offence or cursing by itself but it was using the Lord's name in a curse that merited the death penalty (v.14f.).

Misuse of God's name is condemned in the third commandment (Ex. 20 v.7) and cursing God is forbidden in Ex. 22 v.27. The story of Naboth shows that the death penalty for blasphemy was no dead letter in O.T. times and blasphemy was one of the charges for which Christ and Stephen were condemned to death (Matthew 26 v.65-66; Acts 6 v.11f). Blasphemy brings guilt on those who hear it as well as on the blasphemer himself for he has contaminated all within earshot and only his

immediate destruction, preceded by 'hand laying' as a means of transferring guilt, can remove the impurity. Such talk is a violation or repudiation of the relationship between God and man and is seen by P as introducing a virulent form of impurity into society.

The taboo against pronouncing the Divine Name is a development of the post exilic period with P introducing it in Lev. 24. The Priestly writer has read back into an earlier period a custom from his own time that he felt required Mosaic authority and since the crime has been committed in Israel's desert period, no other punishment could have been prescribed. The intrusive nature of this material is obvious for this is the only occurrence of narrative in the Holiness Code and the only instance in the O.T. of defining blasphemy as merely pronouncing the Divine Name. It is difficult to decipher the original purpose of the story but P perceived in it an opportunity to define blasphemy in such a way that was obviously relevant to his own situation. It did not present itself as such a threat to the community since only one penalty is used, also it required corroborating evidence which may have been deemed easier to find. It is significant that, while blasphemy is defined as pronouncing the Divine Name, it is demonstrated in the case of a child of a mixed marriage and we see that the prohibition extends equally to such an offspring as he lives amongst the

community of Israel, Lev. 24 v.16. Again the resident alien is included within the regulation and comes under the same penalty as the Israelite.

The Hebrew of v.10-16, 23, reveals that two different Hebrew verbs were used to convey the crime for which the punishment was required.

and קָטַל 3 times
 שָׁח 4 times. Weingreen shows that NEB version of v.11 corrects the usual mistranslation of the first verb by rendering it

" 'he uttered the Holy Name in blasphemy' and adds 'it carries no implications beyond the sense of uttering the Name of God' (17).

The second verb

שָׁח
"refers to the behavioural circumstances in which the Name was uttered by the accused".

Weingreen sees the use of קָטַל in v.16 as

"a later development, extending the prohibition to the uttering of God's name indiscriminately and without compelling reason".

Such a deduction must also apply to the use of שָׁח in v.11 which is the point at which the redactor first shows his hand. The Priestly writer, already committed to the belief that the Divine Name should not be pronounced, found in the story of the half breed who blasphemed God an opportunity to narrow the definition

of blasphemy by making the uttering of the Divine Name, for any purpose, a sin.

Another important issue in Lev. 24 v.10f. is not whether an action which could be termed criminal has occurred but whether the court has the necessary jurisdiction to convict the alleged criminal. There is no doubt that, had the arrested man been a full Israelite, he would have been liable, for as v.11 indicates, the third commandment had been broken. But as the man had a foreign father, although an Israelite mother, his liability under Israel's law was obviously a matter in doubt and this explains the emphasis on the arrested man's parentage. Thus Lev. 24 v.10f. reveal an extension of control by P in the community and, far from making the crime of blasphemy negligible, it is made more stringent and a greater emphasis on total obedience to Yahweh is placed on all who live 'in the camp', native and sojourner alike.

(v) Abuse of parents (18)

In the Decalogue, the command to honour one's parents comes after religious duties and before responsibilities to neighbours. In Lev. 20 the same order is followed, for cursing father and mother is sandwiched between necromancy (v.6) and adultery (v.10). 'To curse' means more than uttering the occasional angry word. 2 Sam. 16 v.5f., Job 3 v.1f.

give some idea of the venom and bitter feelings that cursing could entail. It is the very antithesis of 'honouring'. To honour in Hebrew literally means 'to make heavy or glorious', whereas to curse means 'to make light of, despicable'. That such cursing deserves the death penalty is confirmed elsewhere in Scripture (Ex. 21 v.17; Proverbs 20 v.20; Matthew 15 v.4; Mark 7 v.10; Deut. 21 v.18f.). The point is underlined here by the phrase 'his blood is upon him' and that phrase occurs only in Ezek. 18 v.13; 33 v.5 and Lev. 20 v.11, 12, 13, 16, 17, as a justification of the death penalty in these cases. Its equivalent seems to be the commoner phrase 'his blood shall be on his head' (Joshua 2 v.19; 2 Sam. 1 v.16).

The sanctity of parental authority implied in this law is marked, for in certain respects O.T. penal law was much more lenient than that of neighbouring contemporary cultures, however, it was stricter with regard to offences against religion and family life. Abusing parents was singled out for special censure because of a determination to maintain the structure of family life in Israel.

The family unit represented a microcosm of society with the parents of that unit representing the authority of God's appointed ones to the remainder of the unit. Therefore, to curse was to challenge the structure and order of the respective unit and, since this was

ordained by God, it was tantamount to questioning the purpose of God, which could be considered a practical expression of blasphemy.

It is difficult to perceive the purpose of P in stressing the honouring of one's parents and discern what elements he is underlining as relevant to the situation of his own day. The fifth commandment has a social explanation for it ensured that parents need never fear old age and the possibility of expulsion from the home. Children would see to the burial of their parents and the basic unit of society is kept intact and guarded from threat of annihilation. However, these various results from the commandment must not detract from their original purpose. Undoubtedly, it ensured a unity and authority among the family unit and was the inevitable implication of holiness within the close relationships of the family. Phillips sees,

"its concern was the relations with Yahweh, for its aim was to secure that sons would automatically maintain the faith of their parents. Once a man entered into the covenant relationship, then his children would be born into that relationship and were to have no opportunity of repudiating it" (19).

In line with P's basic purpose, the emphasis on this command was an attempt to underline the importance of

the family unit as fundamental for the preservation of Israelite faith. It was crucial that there were ordered relationships within that family unit and a recognition of the God ordained classifications which were to be observed. By stressing the obedience of children to their parents, P was endeavouring to preserve the continuity of Israelite faith and ensure its perpetuation. Such a break up of the family unit would threaten the very fabric of the community and, therefore, it is to be dealt with at all costs. Since it is also included in the Ten Commandments, the use of the death penalty is inevitable, with P using it as the ultimate deterrent. In utilising the commandment, P was bound to use the death penalty in order to maintain continuity but he may have considered that those who leave the community of Israel and repudiate their faith were 'dead'. Therefore, the death penalty may describe the action of the remaining family who would treat the person as if deceased. While such interpretations build upon the basic idea of Phillips, they do not comply with the strictures of P in his careful delineation of the use of *מִוֶּת* *יָקָמָהּ* (qal and hophal) and, therefore, it is preferable to see the death penalty invoked here as the ultimate threat.

(vi) The proscribed person

The case cited in Lev. 27 v.29 deals with a person or persons devoted to God and specifies they fall under

the death penalty. A fuller discussion of this will follow under herem later.

(vii) Playing the medium (20)

There are various brief references in P about forms of pagan divination and religious practices. While Lev. 19 v.26 and 31 prohibit such practices, it is Lev. 20 v.27 which specifies the penalty of communal stoning for being a medium or a wizard, while Lev. 20 v.6 deals with a person who turns to mediums or wizards and is threatened with karet.

Such references need to be considered against the larger canvas of the Pentateuch which prohibits all forms of pagan practice. Deut. 18 v.9-14 is a major passage dealing with this subject and the period envisaged is the time when the Israelites would possess the promised land (v.9) and they must be careful not to copy their forerunners in the land with regard to various religious offices and practices. In v.10-11 we have a comprehensive list of the types of religious and magic functionaries who were forbidden in Israel. Craigie comments,

"The exact significance of all the terms employed is now uncertain but the emphasis of the list is to be found in its character as a blanket prohibition of all types of divination, magic and consultation with the

spirit world, such as would be typical of the religion of the Canaanites" (21).

The prohibition of divination in Deut. 18 v.9-14 is immediately followed by regulations on prophecy in v.15-22 and it may be suggested that the two are intertwined, in that the writer of Deuteronomy deemed it necessary to prohibit divination in such a blanket way so as to strengthen or make exclusive the position of the prophet in Israel.

It is significant that P has nothing to say on the subject of the prophet like Deuteronomy and yet it contains laws that are parallel in part to the prohibitions of v.10f. This omission may be explained in terms of P's desire to strictly control all intrusions into his system. His intention is to create an ordered universe which is reflected in the life of the community, and the prophet with his message is seen as a disruptive element which defies specific control. It is also a basic factor of the Aaronide revolution that the new party of Aaronides recognised the need to control all the power. Rivkin comments,

"The Aaronides succeeded where Deuteronomy had failed. They saw Yahwism threatened unless they wielded absolute authority. They therefore designed the Pentateuch to attain this end, arrogating to themselves not only altar rights but also control over the process of expiation from sin. They broke prophetic authority by having Moses invest

Aaron and his sons with the priesthood forever.

The leitmotif of Aaronidism is preserved most effectively in the very last verses of the Pentateuch: 'And there never again arose a prophet like Moses whom the Lord knew face to face'. Since there never again was a prophet like Moses, the vast corpus of legislation establishing Aaronide hegemony, which God had revealed to Moses on Sinai, was absolutely binding. Originally this tribute to Moses had been penned by the writers of Deuteronomy to underwrite Levitical power. Now it effectively solidified Aaronide power, since in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, Moses bestowed supreme authority upon the Aaronides.

The Pentateuchal 'All power to the Aaronides' did indeed come through and the Aaronide program did indeed become operative ...

Yahweh was now preeminently the God who had proclaimed His will with such sufficiency that His word need never be modified again. It was there - immutable, final and holy - in the Pentateuch. Not a word too much, not a word too little. Yahweh had revealed commandments, statutes, judgements, testimonies to Moses on Sinai and in the wilderness and had taken up residence in the Tent of Meeting-Tabernacle, where, daily and on the Sabbath and festivals, he savored the sweet-smelling sacrifices offered up on his holy altar by his beloved Aaronides. And abiding within the Holy of Holies, His presence assured the sinful that their sins would be shriven. And year in and year out

His presence was confirmed when the high priest, with pomp and circumstance, entered the Holy of Holies and offered incense directly to Him to seek atonement for Israel.

This stress on expiation through priestly mediation had not been the religion of Israel prior to the promulgation of the Pentateuch. There had indeed been a cultus; there had been priests; there had been sacrifices. But there had not been the concentration on the expiatory role of sacrifices (the sacrifices in Deuteronomy are not expiation sacrifices); expiation had been a function of the prophet: he interceded on Israel's behalf. And now all that had changed. The Temple and the Aaronides are now at the center of the stage. Here, in the Temple, is where Yahwism lives. One now turned to the Aaronides for divine guidance and forgiveness" (22).

P thus skillfully dealt with the issue of prophecy by a significant reinterpretation.

In P 'ôḇ and yiddē'ōnîm appear in Lev. 19 v.31; 20 v.6, 27 and it appears that an 'ôḇ was deemed to declare itself in the body of the person who had to do with it. Isa. 29 v.4 shows that the oracles of an 'ôḇ were uttered in a twittering voice, which seemed to rise from the ground, while the narrative of 1 Sam. 28 v.8, 11, shows that those who followed the art professed the power of calling up from the underworld the ghosts of the dead. In what respect 'ôḇ differs from yiddē'ōnîm is

uncertain for the latter word is usually understood to signify 'knower'. Possibly both these terms are comprehensive and intended to prohibit whatever other forms of the same superstition not already mentioned that were in vogue. Such prohibitions reinforced the idea that Israel's duty was to be blameless and without reproach in its relationship with its God and it was not to adopt heathen practices. If holiness is relational then this would be an expression of God's jealousy and exclusivism. It was an infringement of Yahweh's sovereignty for men were only to be informed of what lay in the future as Yahweh himself chose to reveal it. Heider has attempted to show that the cult of Molech incorporated a cult of the dead (25) and, therefore, it may be appropriate to see this condemnation in Lev. 20 v.27 as part with Lev. 20 v.1-6 which was seen as obnoxious to P. This was presumably because it posed the greatest threat to P's own control of society and, in a desire to remove all contenders, he prohibits it under penalty of stoning.

While it seems certain that divination from cultic and natural phenomena was first prohibited by Deut. 18 v.10f., one is more hesitant about divination through necromancy for 1 Sam. 28 v.3 records that Saul expelled the necromancers from the land. It is possible that Saul's expulsion of the necromancers was a unilateral act which did not become part of the criminal law until

prohibited by Deuteronomy along with other forms of divination. This would be confirmed by the emphasis on necromancy in P which would seem to indicate that its prohibition was a matter of recent legislation that still had to be stressed or it still presented a threat to society. While P refers to other forms of divination first prohibited by Deut. 18 v.10 (Lev. 19 v.26) together with the ritual to Molech (Lev. 18 v.21; 20 v.2f) it makes no mention of sorcery. This would indicate that in contrast to divination in general, including necromancy and the ritual to Molech, the Priestly writer felt no necessity to repeat legislation concerning sorcery, even though this practice reappeared in the last years of the Davidic monarchy (Jer. 27 v.9 cf. Deut. 18 v.10f.) since it alone had always been forbidden to men by virtue of the Decalogue and to women by Ex. 22 v.17.

Although the woman in 1 Sam. 28 v.9 clearly fears for her life, the fact that Saul did not put the necromancers to death but merely expelled them from the land (28 v. 3) indicates that he was aware that their action could not be considered a breach of the criminal law. They were treated as undesirables rather than criminals. Therefore, it appears that Saul's expulsion of the necromancers was an act of excessive zeal, for he saw them as disruptive. It could be seen that P is following in that vein and seeks to prohibit them and

the obvious device for him to invoke is the death penalty.

(viii) Ascending Mount Sinai (26)

In Ex. 19 v.12, 13, a case of the death penalty being imposed for drawing near to Mt. Sinai is recorded. The source attribution is disputed here and, therefore, it is difficult to use this example. Eissfeldt (27) sees the passage as belonging to the most ancient Pentateuchal source yet, the introduction to the Sinai pericope (Ex. 19 v.1, 2a) is clearly the hand of P and, therefore, the Priestly source could have incorporated the older account and let it stand at the head of his description of the Tabernacle and its cult.

For P, Mt. Sinai is the archetype of the Tabernacle and is similarly divided into three gradations of holiness. Its summit is equivalent to the Holy of Holies, so the mountain top is off limits to priests and laymen and a sight of it means death just as the same is true of its tabernacle counterpart. Moses alone ascends Mt. Sinai as does the High Priest. Another gradation is up to the cloud perimeter which is equivalent to the courtyard and is the domain of the priests and elders, while the third area is the bottom of the mountain. So there is a tripartite division of holiness of Mt. Sinai just as there is for the Tabernacle. Ex. 19 v.12b talks of $\Delta \uparrow \downarrow$, touching Mt. Sinai, such touching

of Sinai corresponds to entering the Tent. The principle of intention plays no part here as is the case with כָּרַח , even accidental contact is fatal. The reason for the common rationale is to prevent divine wrath from venting itself, not just on the intruder but on the people at large (cf. 19 v.22b, v.24bf.). The Priestly writer cannot turn to the Levite guards to siphon off the wrath of God for the rebellion of Korah has yet to be born, therefore, he seeks to impose his interpretation on traditional material at this early stage.

The Priestly writer is careful to differentiate in his use of the hophal and the qal of מָת so that it becomes clear that death by man is meant by the former while death by God is implied by the latter (28). A consideration of the various uses of the qal will reveal this.

(ix) Improper entry (29)

The High Priest is warned that improper entry into the shrine may result in death (Lev. 16 v.2, 13). The contents of Lev. 16 v.1 provide us with a link with Lev. 16 and would lead us to assume that the threatened death of the High Priest is in the manner of Nadab and Abihu, i.e. by God. The laws about the Day of Atonement are placed firmly in a specific historical context for they were revealed to Moses to prevent any

other priests meeting an untimely death when they served in the tabernacle. Aaron is warned 'not to go at any time into the sanctuary behind the curtain' v.2. He cannot enter into the innermost part of the tabernacle for it is there that God comes to his people. The law reinforced the truth that God is holy and demands reverence. God's holiness was a power for life and blessing while, at the same time, it was full of danger for the person who was sinful and unholy. It could be suggested that this rule sought to control behaviour within the cultic arena and the punishment was more fundamental than practical and a device by P to ward off all contenders.

(x) Improper state

The same penalty is invoked for the priest who officiates while he is in an improper state. There are four disqualifications which prohibit priests from being in contact with sancta, they are:-

improperly washed	Ex. 30 v.20; 40 v.32;
improperly dressed	Ex. 28 v.43, 35;
physically unfit	Lev. 21 v.23, 17, 18, 21;
intoxicated	Lev. 10 v.9.

So the latter control would have been especially important during a festival celebration when the lay-worshippers enjoyed wine with their sacrificial meal and when the priests, who had their duties to perform,

may have been tempted to join them. It also distinguished Israel's priesthood from those of surrounding nations, where the use of intoxicating drink was sometimes resorted to in order to produce an especially elated and ecstatic condition. The reason for this abstention in Israel becomes perfectly clear from v.10 for the priest had an educational responsibility to ensure that each worshipper knew the distinction between what was holy and what was profane. He was also charged with teaching worshippers the divine regulations regarding worship and conduct and he could not do this properly if he were in a drunken state.

Such verses state that the prohibition barring the disqualified priest from the sanctuary building is absolute, even if he has no intention to officiate. The unconditional holiness of the sanctuary interior is emphasized by further prescriptions, that of the belled robe of the High Priest, Ex. 28 v.35. The deadly power of sancta within the sanctuary can be communicated to the non priest on sight and not just by touch (Num. 4 v.19f.). The disqualified priest is, therefore, considered a non priest in regard to the sanctuary interior as long as his unfitness lasts. This holds true for all the temporarily disqualified - the ritually unwashed, undressed and unsober. However, the blemished priest (Lev. 21 v.16-23) is treated

differently, for an explicit concession permits him to eat sacred food (Lev. 21 v.22) and one expects a prohibition on entering the sanctuary but this is transmuted to 'he shall not enter the veil' (v.23a). Thus we see that physical blemishes are less exacting than the other three disqualifications. This is possibly because blemishes are permanent or cannot be ended at will, while the other disqualifications are deliberate acts and, therefore, the principle of intention is invoked in cases of sancta trespass.

(xi) Death

Dead bodies were unclean and anyone who came in contact with them became unclean (Num. 19 v.11f.). For this reason priests were forbidden to take part in funeral ceremonies for anyone who was not a very close relative (Lev. 21 v.2-3). After the death of Nadab and Abihu the narrative relates a specific command, 'Do not let the hair of your heads hang loose and do not rend your clothes, lest you die and lest wrath come upon all the congregation' (Lev.10 v.6).

Priests were forbidden to go near the dead because corpses brought defilement which would preclude their officiating in the sanctuary (Lev. 21). This ban was absolute in the case of the High Priest (Lev. 21 v.10f.) but other priests were allowed to bury their nearest relatives. We should have expected the

brothers of Nadab and Abihu to have buried them but instead the task is delegated to Aaron's cousins Mishael and Elzaphon (v.4).

Aaron and his sons are also forbidden to join in the customary rites of mourning for if they did they would die and God's wrath would fall on the whole congregation (v.6). This was probably because Nadab and Abihu had not suffered a natural death but a direct judgement from God. The surviving priests, even though they were brothers, had to identify themselves entirely with God's viewpoint.

The defiling nature of corpses has been seen by Wold as an attempt to avoid a cult of the dead,

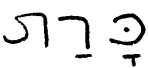
"With the threat of kareth, P defends the jugular of Hebrew religion against the jaws of paganism - in this case against the likelihood of participation in the cult of the dead. The Israelite who placed stock in joining his ancestors at his death and in being joined by his children would not be likely to risk involvement in a cult of the dead if there were extended to him the possibility that he himself might be punished with extirpation and thus be deprived of whatever benefits he thought such a cult might afford" (30).

Such a view would re-emphasize P's concern with any contamination from that aspect, which he saw as an enormous threat (31). A more fundamental reason for

the defiling nature of corpses would be seen in P's desire to maintain the structure of the universe by keeping all the distinctions of life firm. The boundaries between life and death are crucial and no individual who has had contact with the world of death can be part of life. The priests are not to have contact with this realm for it symbolised the domain of all the forces of chaos and confusion.

(xii) Priestly uncleanness

The primary duty of the priest was to serve the altar of the sanctuary by offering upon its altar the sacrificial gifts of Israel. These gifts had been given to God and were, therefore, holy just as the altar was, upon which they were presented. Therefore, the priest had to guard his own holiness and the various rules in Lev. 22 show how the priest was to avoid 'uncleanness' in regard to the sacrificial offerings. When a lay person contracted uncleanness he could simply carry out certain rites to purify himself from it and allow a set period of time to elapse. The consequences for a priest could be much more serious, v.3-9, impose a severe penalty upon any priest who touched holy things while in a state of uncleanness. v.3 implies banishment from the priesthood as the punishment for any infringement of this rule, while v.9 speaks of his death through bearing sin. Elsewhere it will be shown that the penalty for impurity - holiness

contact is established as  and, therefore, the death penalty here must be at the hands of God.

This judgement seems strict in many ways and yet it is an integral part of P's thinking about holiness and impurity and serves to underline the awesomeness of the task that the priests are involved in. Uncleaness results either from natural causes (e.g. disease) or from human actions (e.g. sin) while holiness is not simply acquired by ritual action or moral behaviour. The Priestly writer would stress that there are two aspects to sanctification - a divine act and human actions. The divine side to sanctification is expressed in the frequent refrain 'I am the Lord your sanctifier' (Lev. 20 v.8, 21 v.8, 15, 23; 22 v.9, 16, 32). While the main emphasis of P would be on the human contribution to sanctification, this in no way diminishes a basic premise that the divine side is vitally important, for only those people whom God calls to be holy can become holy in reality. However, that call to holiness must be reciprocated with a determination to live a holy life. Keeping the law is indeed one of the most important duties of the people of Israel, if they are to demonstrate holiness. To disobey God is profanity, worthy of death and such punishment would be effected by God when his own realm of holiness is involved or threatened.

(xiii) Sancta trespass

In order to stress the power of sancta, using it for his own purposes of control, to delineate the roles of various persons involved in priestly service, P invokes the punishment of death with regard to the Levites who either touch the covered sancta (Num. 4 v.15) or who view interior sancta (Num. 4 v.19f.).

The descendants of Kohath were favoured among the sons of Levi for they were of the branch of the Levitical tree from which Moses and Aaron traced their lineage. Their duty involved the most holy things and, while the priests would pack all the utensils, it was the Kohathites who would carry them and they were to move with the tent. They must not touch the holy things under the threat of death (v.15), nor even look upon them (v.20). Thus we see that sancta can transmit a fatal charge even through its covers and such a death by divine agency is confirmed by 1 Sam. 6 v.19.

This viewpoint is important in any consideration of community discipline, not only for the penalty incurred but also for the case it relates to. Here it is used to differentiate who does what with regard to sacred service and strictly delineates the responsibilities of the Kohathites. It is not surprising, in that context, that death by God is expected for such infringement because it forms an integral part of P's thinking with

regard to holiness and the sancta elements. It also provides the necessary reinforcement to the threat of the delineation of duties and reveals the genius of P in utilising such a device for control within the community. It was unlikely that people would attempt to test whether he was right or not!

(xiv) Holy service

In Num. 18 we have another example of the division of duties, this time with regard to the Levites and the priests. The task of the Levites is to serve the Aaronides while they are before the tent and, as the priests are preparing to approach the vessels of the tent or the altar, the Levites are to attend them. All the people are holy but the Levites were selected and given the privilege of being permitted to join the priests, attend to the tent of meeting and do the service of the tent. No one else shall come to the tent or it would be viewed in the same light as the rebellious of Numbers 17.

We see a clearly delineated area of service for priests and Levites expressed in this chapter. Aaron and his sons are given the priesthood as their area of service (v.7) and their exclusive domain was the altar and the veil. They were to do everything in this regard, whereas the Levites were to do everything for the tent outside this area. Clear lines of structure and areas

of responsibility have been marked out and this pattern is reinforced by any infringement meeting with the threat of death. Again we see P's desire for structure and order within the service of Yahweh.

The clergy's sins in the sanctuary are punished by God and not by man and one wonders, if tampering with sancta can incite divine wrath upon the community, why are the clerical offenders not put to death by man immediately. The answer is that the encroacher himself is a guard and consequently armed, therefore, who would execute the death sentence? The clergy operate in the vicinity of the sancta and could not be stopped in time. This holds true for the priests who guard the most sacred objects in the Tabernacle or, if disqualified, who still may remain in the courtyard but also for the Levites who carry and guard the sancta during the march. As a matter of principle where man is incapable of executing the death penalty imposed for offending the Deity, Yahweh himself will intervene, according to P. A new message is also contained in Num. 18 v.3, for it stresses that if priests do not succeed in stopping a Levite encroacher then the entire Levite and priestly guard is liable to death. This emphasis on corporate liability is ingenious for the Levites will consider seriously before jeopardising the family and tribe by such actions as well as providing additional motivation for the priests to guard

effectively. There is a shift of responsibility for sanctuary encroachment detected here, the Levites on behalf of the laymen, the priest and Levites for Levites and priests for themselves. Thus clear lines of demarcation are being developed in sanctuary service and the emphasis on corporate personality was indicative of the aggressive individualism that was emerging in society and threatening the basis of holy service. Holiness is a relational concept for P and he is anxious that each person conforms to his set mode and each single part acts in harmony with the remainder.

(xv) The final example in Num. 18 v.22 of death by God reveals no exceptions at all but seeks to stress the need for the right person to approach the sanctuary. Again, P reinforced his gradated scheme of approach to the sanctuary and this time it concerns the people of Israel. Approach to the sanctuary contains awful risk and this is underlined by such a severe penalty. It is significant that death by God, expressed by *qal* מוֹת is meted out to priests and Levites but never layman. The exception of Num. 17 v.28; 18 v.22, provides no difficulty for these verses form a section whose main teaching is that the situation whereby laymen have died at the hands of God, for the sin of *לִקְרֹךְ*, will take place no more.

In instances of the בְּרָחָה formula (Num. 1 v.51; 3 v.10; 18 v.7) death by man is the penalty for sanctuary encroachment but for no other cultic sin. The rationale for this is in the meaning of בְּרָחָה as encroachment or deliberate defiance of the law. According to Num. 15 v.30f. death by God is imposed for all wilful violations of God's commandments. The answer is in the consequences of בְּרָחָה for illicit contact with the holy produces divine wrath קָדַשׁ or plague קָדַשׁ which not only strikes down the sinner but engulfs his community. קָדַשׁ and קָדַשׁ are a reflex action, an outburst of the Deity resulting from egregious evil rather than a legal penalty and contact with sancta. It is P who restricts the outbreak of divine wrath for encroachment on sancta to the clergy alone. The establishment of the Levite guard is coupled with the motive clause 'that wrath shall no longer strike the Israelites' (Num. 1 v.53; 18 v.5). It is crucial that the intruder be stopped before he carried out the encroachment and triggers off the deadly consequences. The sacerdotal guards must cut down the criminal before God cuts down everyone else.

The right to kill which the sanctuary guards possess is not to be confused with the legal category of capital punishments. The action of the guards has nothing to do with justice but concerns self defence and self

preservation. The encroacher is the enemy who has it in his power to unleash forces that will slay all of Israel and, therefore, he must be struck down in his tracks. The formula ' וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁכַּח אֶת יְהוָה ' has been an illusory exception to the confirmed rule that God himself exacts the death penalty for cultic crimes. It serves only to reinforce the rule for it states that unless the encroacher is slain, the Deity is sure to exercise His wrath.

The last instance of the formula, Num. 18 v.1-24, declares that the Levites and priests will be responsible for lay encroachment. This increases the urgency for the guards to kill the encroacher and explains why twice only the layman's encroachment is punishable by God and not by man. The people no longer need fear that they will perish with such isolation of sancta, for the Levites alone will be punished. From Num. 18 v.1-24 a table of sacral responsibility in the tabernacle is also discerned:-

- (a) v.1-7 priests and Kohathites are liable for incursions on most sacred objects and priests for their priesthood;
- (b) v.3 Levites are liable for personal encroachment on priestly functions;
- (c) v.22-23 Levites are liable for lay encroachment but this is delayed in the chapter so that the size of tithes granted to

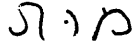
them is a reward for mortal risk attending their labours in the sanctuary.

Such a scale of clerical responsibility for the tabernacle clarifies why sanctuary guards were given the power to strike down all encroachers on the spot. The wrath of God kindled by the offender no longer vents itself on the people but strikes down the Levites and the sanctuary guards are armed because their lives are at stake.

No cultic crime, against the tabernacle or its sancta, is punishable by man and the execution of the encroacher cannot be viewed as a legal punishment but as an act of self defence by the levitical guards.

P has skilfully used the power of sancta again for his own purposes to order relationships within the cultic realm. It is difficult to know how real that power was, for the dominant motif that emerges from the instances observed is the employment of it for ideological purposes in that it delimits power to various groups. The stories of those who transgress the designated boundaries and are punished accordingly may have been true or composed to emphasize the point P seeks to make. It would be the case that whatever the nature of their historical base, they served to underscore the need to comply with the stipulations laid down in the law.

Conclusion

The Priestly writer is careful in his use of the qal and hophal of  as he differentiates between death by God or man. Ezekiel was influenced by P for he uses the qal form whenever he means death by God with crimes against the sanctuary all described as death by God.

There are only a small group of crimes which require death by man and these may be seen in their disruptive impact on society. Abusing parents and certain sexual offences affect the stability and future development of the family unit and, since this unit was seen as a microcosm of society, the need for order and structure was obvious.

Idolatry in the form of mediums and Molech worship, if allowed to go unchecked, would contribute to the breakdown of religious discipline and morale of the whole Israelite community.

The special attention given to cultic offences underlines the importance with which such matters were viewed by P, points which P considers crucial if Israelite faith was to continue as a viable entity. They present themselves as the greatest threat to Israelite identity from the forces of assimilationism, and indicates that the powerful nature of sancta is a fundamental aspect of P's theology. He utilises this

concern for sancta to delineate areas of responsibility within sancta service with a great stress being placed on the right person to officiate at cultic events. Thus he uses 'the holy' to organise his structure and control it according to his own design.

Three cases are specifically mentioned by P where the sojourner is involved and an established law is revoked and they include sabbath observance, the blasphemer and Molech worship. The inclusion of the sojourner in such prescriptions may reveal that the community was under threat of disintegration by such people's behaviour and in order to control the situation P includes the sojourner along with the people of Israel. While it must be recognised that some interaction with the surrounding culture was unavoidable, P is careful to legislate so that children of mixed marriages are brought within the compass of the law.

(c) The ban : herem

The use of herem has a long prehistory and finds manifestations in a variety of locations in the O.T. from the war ban in Deuteronomy to excommunication in Ezra (32). It is because of its obvious importance in Ezra, as a measure for controlling the post exilic community as they settle in the land and establish themselves as a religious entity under spiritual authority, that we wish to consider the term. Ezra 10 v.8 is the latest biblical attestation of the herem as a practical measure in the post exilic period as a penalty to coerce individuals to obey certain communal authorities. This is the first indication of a herem operating by way of excommunication. The power vested in Ezra by Artaxerxes included a power to root out (7 v.26: $\dot{\text{ו}} \text{ } \neg \text{ } \dot{\text{ו}}$: banishment) which was interpreted in the Talmud to mean persecution by niddui and herem.

Niddui is the term employed in tannaitic literature for the punishment of an offender by his isolation from, and his being held in enforced contempt by, the community at large. A precedent for such punitive isolation and contempt is found in the Bible (Num. 12 v.14) and was described as niddui (Sif. Num. 104). Some hold that the tannaitic niddui was the expulsion of a member from the order of the Pharisees: 'if he

failed to maintain the standards required' he would be expelled from the order and 'declared menuddeh' (defiled) and his former comrades would withdraw from his company 'lest he defile them'. This theory is based mainly on the records of infliction of niddui on renowned scholars for non-compliance with the rules of the majority but it takes no account of the fact that niddui was, even during the tannaitic period, inflicted or threatened also on laymen and for offences or misconduct unconnected with any rules of the Pharisees. While niddui may well have implied expulsion from scholarly or holy orders, the sanction as such was a general one, applicable at the discretion of the courts or of the heads of academies. As it was a criminal punishment, a great scholar who was threatened with niddui rightly protested that before he could be so punished it had first to be clearly established on whom might niddui be inflicted, in what measure and for what offences. Later talmudic law reintroduced the herem as an aggravated form of niddui. A niddui was pronounced and, when it had not been lifted after thirty days, it was extended for another thirty days. After the sixty days had expired, a herem was imposed and these remained in force until lifted by the Bet-Din.

Niddui differed from herem mainly in that with the menuddeh social intercourse was allowed for purposes of study and of business, whereas the muhram had to study

alone and find his livelihood from a small shop he was permitted to maintain. Otherwise the restrictions imposed on the muhram were those imposed on the menuddeh, namely: he had to conduct himself as if he were in a state of mourning, not being allowed to have his hair cut or his laundry washed or to wear shoes. He was even forbidden to wash, except for his face, hands and feet; but he was not obliged to rend his clothes nor to lower his bedstead and he had to live in confinement with his family only, no outsider being allowed to come near him, eat and drink with him, greet him or give him any enjoyment.

Both niddui and herem appear in the Talmud at times in the Aramaic form shamta - a term which, by being retransliterated into Hebrew, was interpreted as indicating the civil death (sham mitah) or the utter loneliness (shemamah) involved in this punishment.

In the post-talmudic period the distinction between the punitive and coercive functions of niddui and herem became more clearly marked. On the one hand, they grew into the most deterring and often very cruel punishment for past misdeeds or past misconduct, while on the other hand, they were invoked for purposes of future law enforcement, either by warning potential individual offenders of imminent excommunication, or by attacking

the threat of excommunication to secure general acceptance of and obedience to a newly created law.

In the light of its post biblical usage and development, we will consider the derivation, definition and development that is attached to herem within the biblical corpus. It is recognised that herem contains long antecedents and it is difficult to disentangle the many strands which comprise this term. It is also recognised that to discriminate as to whether the measure was operative in its fullest sense or not requires the kind of verification we do not possess by nature of the material under consideration. Therefore, there is a great danger of seeing it as a coercive measure to secure a conditioning on particular matters of the present time of the writer. However, within the context of other controlling measures, it is deemed appropriate to view many of the more extreme measures as more of an idealistic portrayal of events than as an actual description of happenings.

The word herem is used in all the Semitic languages to denote things forbidden to common use and, therefore, involved in the realm of the sacred to some degree. Arabic ḥarām was used of the sacred precincts of Mecca; ḥarīm, the area forbidden to all except the husband and eunuchs. Akkadian ḥarimtu means 'sacred prostitute' (33). The original meaning of the root was probably 'refuse, forbid' without any religious significance in

the developed sense of the word 'religious' - the harim; thus it has a primitive negative significance. In Hebrew and Moabite inscriptions, herem means nothing if it does not mean 'forbidden'.

In Hebrew the word herem came to refer, with a few exceptions, to that which has been qodesh to a god other than Jehovah and which, therefore, whenever possible, was 'devoted' to Jehovah by being utterly, completely and ruthlessly destroyed. This same use is found on the Moabite Stone in line 17, where Mosha of Moab (9th C. B.C. contemporary of Ahab c.f. 2 Kings 1 v.1; 3 v.4f.) "tells how, after he had succeeded in carrying off the 'vessels of Yahweh' from Nebo (Num. 32 v.38) and 'dragged' them before Chemosh, he 'devoted' seven thousand Israelite prisoners to 'Ashtor Chemosh (כִּי־אֶשְׁתָּר כִּמְשׁ דְּחָרַמְתִּי)" (34). These were all devoted to Chemosh because, until their capture, they had belonged to Yahweh. What was qodesh to Yahweh was herem to Chemosh and what was qodesh to Chemosh was herem to Yahweh. One god's qodesh was another god's herem. The devotees of one god, therefore, destroyed all they could capture of the other god's property, whether it was animate or inanimate and, therefore, were able to restrict the sphere of influence of the other god. Thus it was

"a mode of secluding or rendering harmless, anything imperilling the religious life of the nation, such objects were withdrawn from

society at large and presented to the sanctuary which had power to authorise their destruction" (35),

notes Driver. It was one device for checking the development of idolatry within the nation and, while the form of control seems to be to some degree extreme in the context of struggling for the life or soul of the nation, it would be deemed an appropriate measure. There was a great threat posed to the well being of the nation by an alien spiritual force which if unchecked would bring devastation in its wake.

With the implied necessity of complete annihilation which is involved in the Hebrew and Moabite use of the word, herem can be used in the sense of complete destruction, even when there is no connection between the object and a god and no necessary reference to apostasy. The semi exceptions to the normal use are 2 Kings 19 v.11 with its parallels in Isaiah 37 v.11, 2 Chron. 32 v.14, also 2 Chron. 20 v.23, Dan. 11 v.44. Robertson Smith suggests that,

"holiness is essentially a restriction on the licence of man in the free use of natural things and this seems to be confirmed by the Semitic roots used to express the idea" (36).

Herem conveys that notion of prohibition so that a sacred thing is one which, whether absolutely or in

certain relations, is prohibited to human use. The prohibition or ban

"is a form of devotion to the deity and so the very 'to ban' is sometimes rendered 'consecrate' (Micah 4 v.13) or devote (Lev. 27 v.28) Such a ban is a taboo, enforced by the fear of supernatural penalties (1 Kings 16 v.34) and, as with taboo, the danger arising from it is contagious (Deut. 7 v.26; Josh. 7)" (37),

comments Robertson Smith.

In the early history of Israel, war was an inevitable part of existence because the land was composed of differing groups, each seeking to gain pre-eminence and territorial rights. The community sought to make a place for themselves among other nations by struggle and strife. The dominant part played by warfare in the life of the people is shown by the fact that the wanderings in the desert are described as a military expedition. The men are organised according to tribes in the camp around the sanctuary with each unit gathering around its banner as the rallying point while the sanctuary is carried in front of the people on the march. It was recognised that life in Israel depended on the interaction of the psychic forces of the people and, therefore, it was imperative for the army's viability to conserve its strength and each man was required to possess a high degree of purity so that no

strength may be dissipated. Some of the military laws reveal the strictness with which purity had to be maintained. It is recognised that among the things that cause impurity are the issues of the body (Deut. 23 v.10-15) and, therefore, such impurity is carefully controlled. The special demands made on the army carried caution to extremities for it was acknowledged that the slightest breach meant a danger which could be fatal to the army and, therefore, to the whole people, e.g. Deut. 20 v.8 c.f. Judges 7 v.3. Similarly instances are found, (Num. 5 v.1-4, Deut. 20 v.5-7) and they all contain the basic concern that such breaches involve a risk of sin and, therefore, threaten the psychic strength of the army.

Such devotion is only properly understood when it is observed that the Israelites call the warrior's state *qodesh*, for they and everything that belongs to them is pervaded by the same force. The warriors are 'the sanctified of Yahweh' (Isaiah 13 v.3 c.f. Jer. 22 v.7; 51 v.27f.) and their weapons too, so long as they remain in the warlike state, (1 Sam. 21 v.6 c.f. Jer. 22 v.7). The entire camp constitutes a sacred sphere from which all that is unclean must be kept away (Deut. 23 v.15). Thus, the camp with the army forms a firm coherent organism. The army is the people in a condensed and intensified form and as the army prepared for war, the holiness is created which is the

prerequisite of its power to act. Douglas observes about the concept of holiness relative to war,

"The culture of the Israelites was brought to the pitch of greatest intensity when they prayed and when they fought. The army could not win without the blessing and to keep the blessing in the camp they had to be specially holy. So the camp was to be preserved from defilement like the Temple. Here again all bodily discharges disqualified a man from entering the camp as they would disqualify a worshipper from approaching the altar. A warrior who had had an issue of the body in the night should keep outside the camp all day and only return after sunset, having washed. Natural functions producing bodily waste were to be performed outside the camp (Deut. XXIII, 10-15)" (38).

The Hebrew word for prepare is qds, which

"may refer to commencing battle with a sacral rite,"

according to Carroll (39), while Thompson says,

"this would lay special stress on the serious purpose of the invaders and, therefore, of Yahweh" (40).

It is de Vaux who sketches out some of the factors involved in those religious rituals preceding a battle, thus,

"the wars of Israel were the wars of Yahweh (1 Sam. 18 v.17; 25 v.28), ... the enemies of Israel were the enemies of Yahweh (Judges 5 v.31; 1 Sam. 30 v.26 c.f. Ex. 17 v.16).

Before marching out to battle a sacrifice was offered to Yahweh (1 Sam. 7 v.9; 13 v.9, 12); most important of all, Yahweh was consulted (Judges 20 v.23, 28; 1 Sam. 14 v.37, 23 v.2, 4) by means of the ephod and sacred lots (1 Sam. 23 v.9f.; 30 v.7f.) and he decided when to go to war. He, himself, marched in the van of the army (Judges 4 v.14; 2 Sam. 5 v.24; c.f. Deut. 20 v.4)" (41).

As the state of sanctification is maintained, so the warriors go to war, sure that God is with them (Deut. 23 v.15 c.f. Num. 5 v.3). The Israelites seek by every means to secure the participation of the might of Yahweh in their undertaking. It was understood that the invisible powers at work behind decided the issue but the warrior must be sure that they are active in him - act more vigorously than the forces filling his opponents. Warfare, as seen in the old narratives, was largely a psychic contest.

When the hostile armies stand facing each other, cleansed from all impurity, at the highest level of holiness, they constitute two spheres sharply marked off from one another. In the battle, however, these two spheres intermix and, when the battle is over, the victor is left the possessor of goods and property which have belonged to the hostile sphere. It is a question of grave import how the victor may gain

ascendancy over the spoil he has acquired and appropriate it without injuring his soul.

The Israelite desire for spoil was the same as their neighbours and, apart from the human captives, they took in the first place the enemy's cattle (1 Sam. 14 v.32, 15 v.30), also clothes (Judges 5 v.30) and treasure of a costlier kind (Judges 8 v.21, 24-26). Under a law ascribed to Moses the spoil was to be divided into two equal parts of which one fell to warriors, the other to the rest of Israel (Num. 31 v.25f.).

We see from Deut. 20 v.19-20, with its exemption of enemy trees, a certain moderation and respect for life. But this law was not generally valid, as seen when Jehoram and Jehoshaphat were waging war against Mesha, King of Moab (2 Kings 3 v.19-25). The severe measures demanded by Elisha were common in the case of human beings but, again, there are shades of difference. In one of the stories from the age of the Judges, we learn that two noble prisoners are merely killed because the law of revenge exacts precisely their lives, while otherwise they would have been spared (Judges 8 v.19). In the war against the Amalekites, David put to death all who fell into his hands, only four hundred succeeded in saving their lives by flight (1 Sam. 30 v.17). When a city or a land had been taken, so many were killed that the enemy suffered a grave reduction

of his forces. But under normal conditions, there is no question of a general extermination. When David had captured the Jebusite town of Jerusalem, no massacre took place, while after the successful war against Moab, David had the men measured and caused the tall, well grown ones to be put to death, whereas the short ones were allowed to remain alive (2 Sam. 8 v.2).

Here we see that a reduction in the enemies forces was carried out in contrast to extermination or killing as many as possible. Such a differentiation may be explained that a reduction of enemy forces was the usual practice in secular fighting, while the desire for extermination related to the concept of holy war. It is difficult for us to be specific in this matter for the material before us does not provide us with that kind of detail to make a clear differentiation. Deut. 20 v.10-14 specifies that the enemies who give up all resistance at the commencement of a confrontation shall be allowed to live, albeit as slaves. If they rise against the Israelites, then all the males are to be exterminated, while women, young children and all property fall to the Israelites as spoil, provided they are victorious. Despite its absolute terms, the law of extermination of all men is hardly a fixed rule always acted upon but appears as the consistent expression of certain ideological tendency. It may be that rules relating to the treatment of war captives have been

overlaid with an ideological emphasis of holy war where all opposition to God is to be liquidated and thus we see a fusion of material which is difficult to disentangle. There are a few stories recorded where this strict law is carried into effect. In the narrative of the Midianite war, it is stated that, after the victory, the Israelites killed all males, while women, children, cattle and property were carried off as spoil but Moses and Eleazar also demanded that all boys and all women not virgins should be put to death, while the plunder was to be subjected to a purification (Num. 31 v.7-9, 17-18, 20f. c.f. also Judges 21 v.11). The conquest of Canaan and the neighbouring tracts is also described in Deut. 20 v.16f. according to this precept (Num. 21 v.1-3; Deut. 2 v.34f., 10 v.28f. c.f. Judges 1 v.17; Josh. 6-7, 8 v.2, 27f.).

Thus we have two laws in Deuteronomy concerning the treatment of the enemy and his property, the one more rigorous than the other. It would seem that the first is meant to be a law of general application which may relate to secular fighting and that the second, which requires all breathing things to be exterminated, has been added later appears from the fact that it begins with a restriction of the first law (in v.15) which one would otherwise have expected to have been stated in the first law itself. Therefore, we see the

ideological emphasis of holy war being superimposed at a later date on to traditional material which deals with the principles of the treatment of war captives.

Both laws, in fact, have probably generalised and made absolute statements, while life itself must have presented many variations as a consideration of the early history will show us. In so far as both laws are to be regarded as the outcome of a theoretical construction, they take for granted the claim of the monarchy to the whole country but they further imply that this claim means that the whole population must be uniformly Israelite. In this form the claim would agree only poorly with conditions in the monarchical period but it is in perfect agreement with conditions in post exilic times, when the Israelites had to regain for themselves a position in the land and, as a background to their war against the other peoples settled there, had the consciousness of a historical right which had grown to be absolute to them by the fact of its detachment from reality during the exile.

The same applies, however, to the martial laws of Deuteronomy as to the other theoretical laws in that they are by no means utterly baseless. There was a foundation in the early history of Israel for the demand for the complete extermination of enemies and this is connected with the whole character of war.

Deuteronomy states that the Canaanites must be exterminated in case they should teach the Israelites their rites (Deut. 20 v.18). Here we observe the dread prevalent in exilic or post exilic times that regenerated Israel should suffer the same fate as early Israel which acquired foreign customs and thus obliterated the boundary line between Israelite and alien. The law in fact exacts the same treatment for an Israelite city which proceeds to introduce the worship of alien gods, as for the strangers (Deut. 13 v.13-19). According to this rule hardly any Israelite city of the monarchic time would have survived. However, this rule is merely a one-sided consequence of the old Israelite view of the relation between the Israelite and the hostile army. The enemy and all his property was pervaded by a soul foreign to Israel and, in order to preserve themselves, the Israelites had to exercise the utmost caution towards what was alien and in all instances only appropriate what they could actually assimilate.

The appropriation by the Israelites of the foreign spoil normally takes place by surrendering part of it to Yahweh. When it is consecrated to Yahweh, he causes his might to pervade it, thus making it possible for the Israelites to appropriate the rest. The whole of it is made Israelite and the Israelites avoid the terrible discord which would arise if they were to take

over something which was incompatible with their God. In the old days, there were hardly fixed rules as to how much was to be dedicated to Yahweh, it was left to the judgement of the leaders (Judges 8 v.24-27; 1 Sam. 21 v.10; 2 Sam. 8 v.7). It is possible that gradually certain rules were formed as to how large a portion of the spoil was thus to be dedicated to Yahweh. According to the incident in Num. 31 v.25-54, it is the warriors who give a five hundredth part while the rest of the community give a fiftieth part to Yahweh; in addition the warriors sanctified the gold and jewels they had taken. When part of the spoil is consecrated, the consecration takes effect on that part also which is taken over by men. No-one could safely enjoy his booty if he was not sure that a suitable portion had been dedicated and surrendered to Yahweh.

The taking over of the spoil always implies that a psychic appropriation is possible but there are enemies whose soul is so incompatible that appropriation is difficult or quite impossible. Then the relentless law of extermination comes into force for the enemy and what is thus given over to destruction is designated by the word herem. The Israelites must carry through the extermination in order to assert themselves. Thus the extermination of the hostile herem is pleasing to the Lord and the narratives have examples of a war beginning with defeat but when the Israelites took a

vow to make the hostile city herem, Yahweh blessed the war and it was successful (Num. 21 v.1-3 c.f. Judges 1 v.17).

The most detailed description of how a city was made herem is given in the narrative of the capture of Jericho, Joshua 6 v.18-26. We see that certain things are exempted from extermination. The costly treasures are not to be destroyed but are given to the temple and sanctified in the usual way. It is understood that, by the existence of the temple it is meant the sanctuary at Jerusalem and this is taken for granted since all the narratives of Joshua bear the mark of a later time.

The grim seriousness of the ban appears from the sequel to the story. One of the Israelites, Achan, the son of Carmi took some of the spoil under the ban and immediately the blessing left the army and it suffered an unexpected defeat. Joshua learnt from Yahweh what had happened and Achan was found to be the delinquent and punished accordingly (Joshua 7).

When the ban is placed on a family this means that it is rooted out and every trace of it must be removed because everything connected with it is a danger. A hostile city placed under herem was to be exterminated and its name was to disappear, lest Israel be contaminated by contact with it.

This demand for the extermination of the enemy is most readily to be understood in the post exilic time, although its antecedents are seen in the passionate assertion by the prophets of the peculiar character of Israel and the complete dissimilarity of its God to the gods of other peoples. It may be suggested that, during the post exilic period, the old concept of the holiness of war with the recognised guilt between Israel and the enemy was used ideologically as a mode of religious discourse. This could be done all the more easily since the consequences were merely of theoretical importance. The law of herem was seen as a general demand for the extermination of enemies with the old stories of the early Israelite wars with Canaan shaped accordingly. It would be assumed that, because of Israel's impotence, such an act would be due to the mighty intervention of her God as vindication of Israel's status as a specially chosen nation.

According to Joshua 10 v.1, 28-40; 11 v.11-21, Joshua is credited with accomplishing the wholesale extermination of many Canaanite states but this appears as an exaggerated statement of a later time which does not correspond to 1 Kings 9 v.21, where the Israelites were unable to carry out the destruction. Such stories have been utilised to serve an ideological purpose and emphasize the dangers of contamination in the involvement with alien forces. The stringency of the

threat would provide an incentive to dissuade involvement in such corrupting affairs.

The use of herem as the sphere which is utterly incompatible with what is sacred, what is hostile and alien and because it is incapable of assimilation must be destroyed, has been most clearly seen in area of war. The enemy was herem but it was also recognised that Israelites might become herem too. If they passed over to the alien in its most intensified form, they were transformed from within and must be exterminated as herem (Ex. 22 v.19; Deut. 7 v.26). A city which meddled with an alien cult was to be made herem and burnt down to the ground with all that was in it (Deut. 13 v.13f.). To make herem, or to place under a ban, means to root out of the community of Israel and to place entirely outside the Israelite psychic totality, so herem is identical with the curse in its most potent form.

The fact that the greatest contrast to what is holy is the utterly alien implies that holiness is to a certain extent determined by the relation of Israel to foreign peoples. In that respect there was a great difference between early and later Israel. In early times there was no difficulty about admitting aliens to the community and thus making it possible for them even to enter the sacred sphere. Doeg, the Edomite, could dwell in the Israelite temple at Nob before the face of

Yahweh (1 Sam. 21 v.8, 22 v.9 c.f. 2 Sam. 6 v.10f.). Aliens had generally the qualifications for associating themselves with and being admitted to the sphere of holiness. Interestingly, the Israelites had no hesitation in allowing strangers to serve in the royal temple and, as late as post exilic times, the priest Eliashib could place an Ammonite who had become a member of his family in a temple cell (Ezekiel 44 v.7; Neh. 13 v.4). But when the alien element was utterly hostile and particularly when it clothed itself in its own holiness as opposed to that of Israel, then a union was impossible, it was herem. It was always a gross defilement of the sanctuary of Israel if hostile strangers invaded it.

A fierce contest waged in time between the Israelite and alien element and it taught those Israelites who wished to keep the soul of Israel intact how difficult it was for them to assimilate the alien element and yet keep it under control and preserve their own identity. This created a tendency in them to withdraw into themselves and surround their own inner life with a shell so as to defend themselves against the alien element. All that was alien now became hostile and it was impossible to absorb any part of it in the sacred sphere. This tendency was heightened during and after the exile, when events had established the weakness of Israel in relation to strangers. This view is

predominant in Ezekiel, where it is a gross infringement of holiness that strangers have entered the sanctuary (Ezekiel 44. v.7). The law forbids not only alien cults as a violation of what is sacred (Lev. 20 v.2f.; Ezekiel 20 v.39) but also a stranger must not consume anything that is sacred, not even if he is in the service of the priest (Lev. 22 v.10), and a stranger who approaches the domain of the Levites or the priests is invariably to be killed (Num. 1 v.51, 3 v.10). Post exilic prophets look forward to a time when the temple will be truly holy, when the Canaanites are kept out of it (Zech. 14 v.21). It was in this context that Nehemiah acted when he drove Tobiah the Ammonite out of the temple.

The concern about holiness within the nation now became intensified and there was a growing terror of the alien element. Post exilic Israel was caught up in a convulsive struggle to exclude the foreign element which saw an intensification in the impurity of what was alien with its corresponding increase in the holiness of what was native. There is the obvious element of overstatement to bring the contrast into starker relief. Thus Israel was able to draw more clearly definable boundaries around itself which provided for an easier discrimination between the alien and the native.

The Israelite religion in this way is becoming more exclusive and detached from reality and so it more easily permits the obvious dangers of extremism coupled with a certain romanticising of the past. This would find a corresponding parallel in the development of apocalyptic thought and literature. Such a reaction to the trauma of the exile is understandable in that the real world is a difficult entity to relate to meaningfully and, therefore, a certain exaggeration of the past is used as a justification for a present course of action. It could be suggested that, in view of this growing sense of detachment, attempts to control the whole community in any real and meaningful way are probably very poor because it is impotent and divorced from reality. Such observation of rules as would be required would become inevitably the province of only a dedicated few who espoused the particular viewpoint. In the context of an exclusive or cult mentality one can afford to be extreme about the fate of those who transgress the stated boundaries and it is a device for confirming the security of one's own position as part of the select community.

This principle of herem as that which belongs to an alien god, needing to be devoted to destruction to neutralise its effect and thereby prevent any spread of the contagion in the process of time, underwent a development.

In the description of Jericho's destruction through herem and Achan's consequent sin (Josh. 6-7), we see how qodesh and herem, the greatest contrasts are brought close together. This is consistent with the very nature of the concepts for what is banned is destroyed for the sake of Yahweh because it is incompatible with the Israelite soul, while the treasures are given to Yahweh because by his power they can be absorbed in his holiness. It is only a short step to see herem developed so that all that was banned was to fall to the priests, (Lev. 27 v.21; Num. 18 v.14; Ezekiel 44 v.29) and the banned thing actually becomes a special kind of holy gift. In Lev. 27 v.28, it clearly stated that the banned things are most sacred (qodeshqodashim) but from the text it does not say how they are distinguished from ordinary holy gifts. Banned things have preserved a special character as is seen in v.29 where the old view of herem is quite unaltered. The word herem is used to make it plain that these things are completely withdrawn from man and not even the intensive form of qodesh could carry this idea of complete and final withdrawal.

By this development of herem which allows the priests to become handlers of such objects devoted to Yahweh, we see the Priestly writer attempting to strengthen the position of the priesthood and permit them to be

handlers of the 'most holy'. This would automatically increase their position and power base within the community for they are seen to be an extension of Yahweh and able to enter into realms not normally permitted to common people. It would be a device for increasing the revenue of the priesthood without imposing any financial burdens on society, except for those directly involved. Such a device would be deemed prudent by the vast majority of the people and may reflect a concern of the Priestly writer not to impose financial burdens on the people in general. Thus, acceptance of the Aaronide manifesto may not be prejudiced by a concern for its cost, which would be particularly relevant to many in Israel, not least the 'poor of the land'.

In the post exilic period herem was no longer utilised in strictly militaristic terms but rather developed as a means of eliminating undesirable elements from the community. When Ezra attempts to strengthen the cohesion of the nation through its religious activity and thus protect the returned exiles from the heathen influence of the people of the land, he proposes that those who fail to assemble at Jerusalem within three days shall have their property devoted. This confiscation of their goods was a part of the punitive process in economic terms, while their expulsion from the community would be a socio-religious punishment.

Thus it would be hoped that such pressures would be sufficient incentive for appropriate behaviour. If such punitive incentives were not sufficient to induce a change of action, then the congregation of the exiles must recognise that the person concerned has deliberately chosen to dissociate themselves. The person, by the unwillingness to listen to their spiritual and appointed leaders, places himself outwith the religious community and, therefore, must be regarded as a rebel. The penalty for such disobedience is financial deprivation and socio-religious isolation. It is recognised that the needs of the day would combine these two issues so as to give greater strength through the economic weapon and impetus to the socio-religious dimension and, in a climate of escalating assimilationism, stress the need to remain faithful to the faith of Yahweh. Thus it could be seen as a device for the removal of undesirable elements in society but it is questionable whether the matter presented thus is more ideal than real. It is debateable in such a highly syncretistic scene whether it would ever be possible to enforce such restrictions in the economic sphere or was it considered a measure whereby the congregation recognised that some people had placed themselves beyond the influence of the congregation by their actions and, therefore, one is simply recognising what has already taken place? Then it would be entirely consistent to deduce that such a rebellious

action would result in financial ruin and deprivation. It is an integral part of herem, i.e. things being devoted to Yahweh, to make brief mention of the scope or purpose of vows (42). To state the obvious, it was a universal custom in ancient religions for men to seek the help of the deity in times of peril or distress or to secure the fulfilment of some cherished hope by promising him some special gift that would enlist his own interest on their side. A vow may be less in the nature of a bargain and more the expression of unselfish zeal and pious devotion.

The practice is very ancient in the Old Testament. Thus Jacob vows at Bethel that if Yahweh will be with him and give him bread and raiment, so that he comes to his father's house in peace, he will make the pillar a sanctuary of God and pay a tithe of all that he gives him (Gen. 28 v.20-22). In the period of the Judges, we have Jephthah's vow, that if Yahweh delivered the Ammonites into his hand, he would offer as a burnt-offering, the person who first came from his house to meet him (Judges 11 v.30-31). Though it was his own daughter, the inviolable character of the vow forced him to sacrifice her. Hannah vowed that if Yahweh would give her a son she would dedicate him to his service all the days of his life and no razor should come upon his head (1 Sam. 1 v.11). In the period of the early monarchy, Absalom secured permission to go to

Hebron on pretext of a vow he had made while in exile at Geshur that he would worship Yahweh if he restored him to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 15 v.7, 8). In each of these instances a vow is intended to secure a favour and in its essence is a commercial transaction.

A vow of unselfish devotion, which was also a vow of abstinence, is exemplified in the Psalmist's poetical description of David's vow that he would not enter his house, lie in his bed or suffer himself to sleep, until he had found a place for Yahweh to dwell in (Ps 132 v.2-5). Saul's taboo on eating before sundown (1 Sam. 14 v.24) was a vow of abstinence, imposed on others as well as himself, in order to secure victory by the help of Yahweh.

In Deuteronomy we have little legislation on vows. It is insisted that what has been thus dedicated must be eaten at the central sanctuary (Deut. 12 v.6, 11, 17, 18, 26). The hire of sacred prostitutes must not be brought into the sanctuary for any vow (Deut. 23 v.18). There may have been a relaxation of sentiment as to the stringency of a vow, such as may be observed in the post exilic period; for the legislator while insisting that there is no religious obligation to make a vow, enjoins that, once made, the pledge must be honoured under pain of Divine pleasure.

In P we have fuller regulations. In Num. 30 both vow and bond are declared to be binding when uttered by a man. But a woman who lives in her father's house or is married is in a different position. Her father or husband has a right of veto, provided that it is exercised at once. Otherwise silence gives consent and the vow must be regarded as irrevocable. If at a later period her husband cancels it, he does so on peril of Divine punishment. A widow or a woman divorced from her husband, since she is not dependent on another, is bound by her vow. Vows and freewill-offerings must be without blemish (Lev. 22 v.18, 19) but while a freewill-offering may be made from that which has something lacking or superfluous, this is forbidden in the case of a vow (v.23). The laws about the discharge of vows are found in Lev. 27 (43). Persons vowed to Yahweh could not be sacrificed as Jephthah's daughter had been, they must be redeemed and a fixed scale is laid down. This could be due to the fact that population levels were so low and a more humane element emerges. It would accord with P's theology to preserve all those who are part of the covenant community and this may explain Lev. 27 v.29, where non-community people are considered. It could also be that the political power was not available to carry through such punishments and, therefore, the conflict between the

ideal and reality expresses itself in the compromise of a practical kind.

Males between the ages of twenty and sixty years were redeemed at '50 shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary', females at thirty shekels. From five to twenty years males were redeemed at twenty and females at ten shekels; from a month to five years, males were redeemed at five and females at three shekels, while from sixty upwards the tariff was fixed at fifteen and ten shekels respectively. If, however, the person who made the vow was too poor to pay the redemption price, it was to be fixed according to his ability. In the case of animals no charge could be made - the vow must stand as originally uttered. Not only was it forbidden to substitute a bad for a good but also a good for a bad. If such a change was made, both became holy to Yahweh. If the animal was unclean and, therefore, incapable of being used in sacrifice, it was sold at the priest's valuation and the money given to the sanctuary. If the owner wished to redeem it, he might do so on payment of the valuation plus 20%. Firstlings, however, could not be vowed to Yahweh since they already belonged to Him. The law for the dedication of a house is similar to that for the dedication of animals, while the law as to the fields is more obscure, because of the concept of jubilee. The rules about the redemption of vows are made in the

light of the economic conditions of the day which were austere and where any extravagance would be viewed with disquiet. It is also to be pondered whether we see a later reinterpretation of the making of vows at a time when there was a move towards a cash society.

According to Num 15 v.3, 8 (a late section of P) when an animal sacrifice was offered in fulfilment of a vow, a meal offering had to be presented with it. Another late law (Lev. 7 v.16, 17) prescribed that a peace offering in discharge of a vow must be eaten on the day on which it was offered.

The warning in Deut. 23 v.21-23 that while there is no sin in not vowing, when a vow has once been made it must be scrupulously fulfilled, finds an echo in the wisdom literature. In Prov. 20 v.25 we have a protest against hasty vows followed by repentance and attempts at evasion. Koheleth advises his readers to make haste with the payment of their vows and not trifle with God by delay, for He takes no pleasure in fools. It is far better to refrain from vows than to make and fail to fulfil them.

A man might not only vow to 'hallow' some object to God, he might devote it by his vow so that it became herem. What was so devoted became intensely 'holy', in that God guarded his rights in it most jealously, for it could neither be sold nor redeemed. Lands or

animals so dedicated belong irrevocably to the sanctuary, that is the priests, (Num. 18 v.14; Ezekiel 44 v.29), while men thus devoted must be put to death (Lev. 27 v.29). As part of his religious observance man recognises the alien influences that are operative and, in an attempt to prevent any harmful effects coming upon him, he therefore dedicates such questionable items to Yahweh. Where such alien elements are handed over and devoted to Yahweh it is recognised that they contain such strong forces that only Yahweh can adequately neutralise them. This would be to recognise they contain demonic elements or are mediums for demonic power to flow into any circumstance, thus we would discern the ancient equivalent of a deliverance/exorcist aspect in the religion of Israel. The treatment of human beings is obviously distinct from other categories and it is recognised that there was no other way of handing them over to Yahweh than to destroy them and so rid the community of the contagion. Again we must ask whether this punishment is more ideal than actual or was it the characteristic attempt by the biblical writers to reinterpret events with the benefit of hindsight. It would need to be said that we would expect that such 'persons' would be handed over to the priests and for them to effect the cleansing. Unless of course the fear of contamination was so considerable that it was deemed easier to eradicate than to cleanse. There is

also the possibility that the ultimate threat factor - annihilation, is being used with regard to anything that does not belong to God and possesses alien elements. It would be a threat that may have been surrounded with various oaths and herem is used as the most vital form of the curse.

It could be suggested that man is charged with keeping life in order and that anything which is questionable was to be devoted to Yahweh and with regard to persons, then death would be God's own judgement on the issue. Here we see the strands of herem and mot yumat coming together and consequently recognise the co-ordinating hand of the Priestly writer.

There is obviously a very significant differentiation in hallowing and devoting something which may concern the character of the item in question. This would cause people to be especially particular in any judgements they made in this realm for if they were to deem various matters as alien then it would be costly. On the other hand, by such sacrifice, it would heighten in people the consciousness of alien forces operative in the world.

The fundamental issue which must be underlined in all of the consideration of herem is the fact that it is used in various ways but always with the same purpose which was to allow for the interfering elements in

Israelite society to be removed and thus cease to corrupt the remaining whole and allow its psychic strength to return to its maximum. It is suggested that P has consciously taken this idea of herem, which has its roots in very ancient times and concerns particularly the sphere of war, and has reworked the idea for his own ends so that the priests are confirmed as the handlers of the most holy and they are provided with a regular means of income in a society where economic conditions are austere and constricted. It is doubtful that herem was an operative measure in terms of extermination but it was transmuted and used as a coercive measure to secure present conditioning on particular matters.

(d) The karet penalty

The Biblical penalty karet (כרת) has been the subject of many studies which reveal a wide diversity of interpretation applied to this term. It is used particularly by the Priestly writer in the full form, 'that person shall be cut off from his people' (45) and is seen to be an integral part of his thinking as he endeavours to give cohesion and structure to society through the acceptance of his Aaronide manifesto, which aims at preserving the identity of Israelite faith against alien infiltration (46).

In contrast to the study of the death penalty, where a more neutral picture emerged, here the theological consciousness is greater in instances where karet is used. The stipulations as to which deviations will cause a person to be cut off are often provided with explicit motivations. Forkman observes,

"one whole category of deviations is missing: the social category" (47).

P's major concern is the transgressions that belong within the realm of the sacred and which seek to blur the distinctiveness of Israelite identity. Karet is found only in the legal collections of P, H and Ezekiel and may be seen as the deliberate creation of P. It occurs in passages either in the niphal with the

individual to be punished as the subject or in the hiphil with God as the subject. In either case, it is followed by כִּי and an expression for the social category from which the individual is to be cut off, such a formula occurs twenty-seven times. A second group comprises eleven occurrences described by כִּי יִשְׁלַח and a third group consists of eight instances with the formula כִּי יִשְׁלַח . כִּי יִשְׁלַח and כִּי יִשְׁלַח are commonly followed by a genitive of a person or persons. The execution of the sentence and the nature of the adjudication appear from the above not to be the function of human tribunals but of God and so karet is the work of God. This matter will be discussed more fully at the end, when the various instances where it is used have been considered.

Karet was a major factor in the Aaronide manifesto as P sought to create order and delineate structure in the Israelite community by classifying certain actions, especially in the sacred and relational realms, as contrary to holiness. P is anxious to differentiate between the pure and the impure, the sacred and the profane. Such a categorisation moved beyond a purely theological fascination and was an attempt by P to lend order to a society which faced dissolution and disintegration. Horbury sees karet as a penalty which,

"guards circumcision, sabbath and ... other badges of Jewish loyalty" (48).

Frymer Kensky comments,

"The deeds that entail the karet sanction are acts against the fundamental principles of Israelite cosmology; in particular, acts that blur the most vital distinction in the Israelite classificatory system, the separation of sacred and profane. The protection of the realm of the sacred is of prime importance in Israelite thought in view of the belief that God dwells among the children of Israel. Since he is holy, they must be holy (Lev. 11: 44, 45; 19: 2; 20: 7, 26) and must not contaminate the camp, temple or land in which he lives. The protection of the realm of the sacred is a categorical imperative in Israel: it must be differentiated, not only from the impure but also from the pure, which serves almost as a buffer zone between the sacred and the defiling" (49).

Douglas has stressed the importance of pollution beliefs in the structuring of society and in particular suggests that they are employed in areas where practical sanctions are lacking,

"when the sense of outrage is adequately equipped with practical sanctions in the social order, pollution is not likely to arise. Where, humanly speaking, the outrage is likely to go unpunished, pollution beliefs

tend to be called in to supplement the lack of other sanctions" (50).

P seeks to create a theocratic society by means of the Aaronide manifesto which has sought to carefully differentiate between the different realms of life, that is, the holy, the impure, etc. He views as violations those actions which mix or confuse these categories of existence and they are viewed as offences against God, since he brought everything into being, according to P. Karet crimes are against the divine order, as P views it, and which P seeks to impose upon the society of his day. Since it would appear there are not sufficient legal sanctions to implement his policy, P creates karet as a device to sanction those acts which violate the boundaries which he considers are important to preserve Israelite identity. In the absence of legal sanction, divine intervention is skilfully introduced as a necessary reinforcement which contains sufficient threat factor for it to be viewed seriously.

It may be further suggested that karet crimes are against the divine structure in realms where it is difficult to judge and discriminate since they may concern motive and intention and, consequently, God alone is able to judge. P may write at a time when his power base and sphere for effective action are restricted and, since his manifesto requires controls

in it to make it viable, he invokes God's aid and intervention to strengthen their claim for enforcement. This would permit us to view instances where karet and the death penalty appear together, as of a more ancient genre, for there is a need to invoke the recognised and more ancient sanction of the death penalty along with the new one of karet in order for it to gain validation. The use of karet alone could relate to times when P's power in the community was greater and the force of karet was recognised in its own right as an effective and acceptable device of control. It is clear that karet is a major device of P to implement the Aaronide manifesto within society and is the particular punitive measure of his ideology. It may also be true that such threats were interpreted in a retrospective manner in order to then project them forwards. This would mean acknowledging that superstition and magic played an integral part in P's thinking and were basic assumptions underlying his manifesto, which is different from today.

The combined usage of karet and the death penalty

Karet and the death penalty are mainly used together in Lev. 20 where a whole series of regulations are listed. The exception is Ex. 31 v.14 which concerns sabbath working where it is sandwiched between two instances of the death penalty and it is located there as a foundational element in P's ideology. This would be an

obvious point of conflict between alien elements in society and the Israelites. P is anxious to seek validation for karet and, in order to achieve this, he antedates such a penalty in traditional material. Such a positioning of the karet formulae within the sabbath control material is significant for it would indicate the importance attached to this issue in P's thinking and plan for the ordering of society. Sabbath observance was viewed as a major instrument of the Israelite people to preserve their own identity against the forces of alien elements which threatened to diminish the distinctiveness of the chosen people. P roots the major device for control of the community alongside one of the key issues in the struggle against assimilationism and subsequently he is able to allow the usage of karet to be developed.

The birth place of P's theology is in Ex. 31 v.14f., while Lev. 20 is viewed as a transitional stage with karet and mot yumat juxtaposed. P has skilfully taken traditional material and used it to ground his own device for the effective control of society. The significance attached to mot yumat passages diminishes, while greater importance is attached to karet.

The history of the sabbath is a complex issue and has been dealt with by others (51). I would suggest that P utilised this concept for his own ends and viewed it as

a day for the worship of God and the nurture of the family unit. In some ways these issues are interrelated, for a united family unit was important for the stability and cohesiveness of the community as well as the continuance of Israelite faith, while P may have stressed that faithful worship of Yahweh would be a factor in the survival and effectiveness of the family unit. In an age of increasing individualism and social disintegration, P seeks to bring to bear on the Israelites those pressures which militate for cohesion, integration and conformity.

It has already been noted that it was P's design to make sabbath observance an important part of his theology, rooting the command not in the Sinai covenant but as part of the creation narrative. By the first three commands, the Decalogue established the exclusive covenant relationship with Yahweh in the context of widespread idolatry. The fourth command was designed to stress Israel's special position, in that she existed through the free act of grace of Yahweh upon whom she was utterly dependent. This unique law on work and leisure marked out the covenant people as different among all others. Robinson sees, in pre exilic times, the root שָׁבַט having a basic sense of

"coming to an end or completion"

while

"rest from labour"

was not a central issue in the pre exilic writings of the O.T. (52). This opposes von Rad, who suggested that 'rest' from labour was a 'Heilsgut' to early Israelites and, therefore, a dominant motif in the O.T. (53). Jenni views the origin of sabbath in the economic, social sphere (54), while Morgenstern earths it in the agricultural calendar (55). It is Kline who comments,

"The creator has stamped on world history the sign of the sabbath as his seal of ownership and authority" (56).

The strengthening of the sabbath command as 'the' commandment of the Decalogue reflects the exilic situation and the interpretation given by P to events, for with the temple destroyed and the land occupied, this distinctive day was a clear reminder of the uniqueness of God's people and the need for them to preserve their identity in some public way. Thus observance of the sabbath was the visible distinguishing mark of a true Israelite and it was the linchpin of the Decalogue and of crucial importance for P. Von Rad comments,

"It was in the exile that the sabbath and circumcision won a status confessionis which they afterwards preserved for all time" (57).

It is only in P that breaches of this commandment are punished and this underlines the value given to it by P. P extends the scope of the sabbath to include the domestic sphere with Ex. 35 v.3 prohibiting domestic fires and Num. 15 v.32f. condemning to death the man who gathers firewood on the sabbath.

While it is stressed that the sabbath be observed as a holy day, it is only during the exilic period that it is connected with the worship of God. A strong correlation between worship and its socially cohesive effect is seen in the stress on sabbath observance.

Noth sees

"the sabbath as the 'sign' of the peculiar relationship between God and people by which the whole world is to recognise the existence of this relationship (Ex. 31 v.13b) which makes Israel 'holy', i.e. which marks Israel off from the other nations" (58).

Thus P stresses the centrality of sabbath observance for his theology which expresses publicly the uniqueness of Israel and the importance of worship of Yahweh. He utilises ancient material in which to embed the karet formula and thus gain acceptance for its usage.

The other major passage to be considered where the use of karet is linked with *mōt yūmat* occurs in Lev. 20 v.2-5. This passage could date to a time when Molech

worship was very strong and P views Molech worship as the major manifestation of idolatry of his day. He may also view it as a faction which would not respond readily to the karet measure and, therefore, it is combined with the more ancient formula of mōt yūmat. The worship of Molech and the penalties associated with it have, in part, been mentioned elsewhere (59). It is acknowledged that there are various and diverging opinions as to the precise nature of Molech worship. However, the major issue that such a passage as Lev. 20 v.2-5 raises is the combining of different punishments in a single or composite pericope. It would appear that v.2 clearly sets out a death penalty for such a crime in a simple form although one recognises P's characteristic method of execution, stoning, is employed. There is an additional threat to the judicial execution in v.3 and this is further expanded in v.4. Prosecution was left to individual initiative and it was always easier to ignore an offence than instigate proceedings. Those most likely to know about such a case of apostasy to Molech would be close neighbours and members of the family, who naturally, would be loathe to prosecute. However, P is stressing the importance of loyalty to God which must override ties of blood and friendship, thus karet occurs in addition to the capital sentence. Man is required to effect the offender's death while God causes the offender's extinction and this latter threat would be

particularly relevant for P as he attempts to counter the strong emphasis on Molech worship of his day. Anyone who believed in the importance of having children to carry on his name, if not to assure himself of vitality in the future life, would not offend God so as to expose himself to the divine curse of extinction. It also brings a pressure to conform to God's laws by a specific sociological group, for not only is the man cut off but also his family. Such a prohibition would be particularly apt, if as Heider suggests, the cult of Molech was connected with the cult of the dead, where attempts were made to contact deceased relatives. This may explain the interpretation of karet as extinction of one's lineage as the only punishment that would be effective within the terms of reference of the cult of Molech as P understood it. It is true that such a prohibition would counter the normal attitude of protection within the family unit while encouraging family members to acknowledge the wider consequences of certain individual's actions. In the context of the exile, the message reiterated would be that sin has consequences on a wider canvas than the immediate context of the action. P seeks a device to control the bonds within a family unit, which may comprise anti Yahweh elements, so that they do not become so excessive and protective as to permit any kind of action, good or ill, within the confines of that unit. A standard of moral behaviour is interjected against

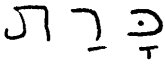
possible family rationalisations. This is seen in the context of P's emphasis on the family as the microcosmic unit of society which requires bulwarks against the forces of destruction.

This passage is a key one in the transitional stage between the substitution of karet for mōt yūmat.

In the first place, Lev. 20 prescribes that death shall be exacted for sacrificing to Molech, along with other crimes in that chapter. Such enactments reflect an early stage in the development of the Holiness Code when only execution could be contemplated as the proper penalty for the crime and date before the exile when the civil authority permitted such offences to be punished thus. It reflects the current of thought already apparent in the expansion of the criminal law in Deuteronomy. It is recognised that Deut. 18 v.10f. was the first provision to make necromancy and other similar occult practices, including the sacrifice to Molech, a criminal offence.

The second aspect of this process was the move from execution to dependence on divine intervention. This is most clearly expressed by the hiphil of יָרָא where Yahweh is subject and is found in Lev. 17 v.10; 20 v.3, 5f. and Ezekiel 14 v.8. The passage in Lev. 20 about Molech shows the development for, according to Lev. 20 v.2, death by stoning was prescribed which would accord

with the earliest stage of the Holiness Code, which related to the last years of the pre exilic period when this practice was revived following Josiah's death (Jer. 7 v.31; 19 v.5; 32 v.35). However, in the exilic situation, where the civil authority was not powerful enough to implement such a judgement, execution could not be carried out and yet there was a need to proscribe the practice and so Lev. 20 v.3 was added.

The final part of this process was reached when excommunication from the community replaced the necessity to depend on divine intervention to punish the offender. This is seen from the absence in the Priestly Code of the use of  in the hiphil with Yahweh as subject and in the insertion of the excommunication formula. Since the Holiness Code was incorporated into the priestly legislation, it is not surprising that the excommunication formula has been introduced into it. So Lev. 20 v.17f. is the final development of the process of Lev. 20 v.10f.

A parallel to this process is seen in the treatment shown to necromancers. Deut. 18 v.10f. rendered illegal every type of occult practice and, although no penalty is prescribed, it may be assumed that all these practices were declared criminal and resulted in the execution of the offender. With the possible exception of necromancy, divination had until the Deuteronomic reform been a legitimate part of the cult. The

Deuteronomist prohibited all forms of divination because he understood such practices to be an infringement of Yahweh's essential freedom from man's control. Men were informed of what lay in the future as and when Yahweh himself decided to inform them through the prophets. As a consequence of Deut. 18 v.10f. the teraphim and ephod were condemned as idolatrous.

While Deut. 18 v.10f. first prohibited divination from cultic and natural phenomena, one cannot be sure that such a control extended to divination through necromancy for 1 Sam. 28 v.3 tells of Saul expelling the necromancers from the land. It is possible that Saul's expulsion of the necromancers was a unilateral act which only became part of the criminal law when prohibited by Deuteronomy.

The emphasis on necromancy in the Holiness Code indicates that its prohibition was a matter of recent legislation which still needed to be stressed (Lev. 19 v.31; 20 v.6, 27). The fact that in Lev. 20 v.27 the death penalty is demanded for the necromancer shows that this is an early enactment and its position after the concluding clause of v.26 would indicate that once it belonged elsewhere. Possibly it belongs before Lev. 20 v.6 which states that Yahweh himself will take action against those who consult necromancers, direct

divine action being the only punishment which could be relied upon in the exilic situation.

It is suggested that the transition from *mōt yūmat* to *karet* related to the time when political power had been removed from the Israelite community and the close correlation of religious and civil crimes did not exist. Since there was no effective punishment in the civil realm to control behaviour of a religious nature, P utilises *karet* as a device to control certain behaviour which he considers incompatible with Israel's holy status. The obvious option open to P is to relate that to God and, therefore, direct divine intervention is described as a means of exercising sanction within the community. Also, as part of P's introduction of *karet* into his manifesto in Lev. 20 v.1-5, he specifies that unless man carried out the required punishments, God himself will intervene directly into the situation to effect the necessary measures. Thus P wins both ways! Such a pressure would serve to bolster the other controls, it may also indicate a mood of apathy, indifference and compromise which were characteristic of P's situation. The break up of social patterns due to the exile accompanied by a general sense of disintegration may lead to a deterioration of standards as well as a diminution in the influence of authority figures. Hence the use of Yahweh as the threat factor

with the ultimate sanction of death is a basic part of P's strategy for controlling the community.

A study of the various usages of karet will provide more detail. It is sufficient to suggest that the introduction of karet occurred in traditional material where mōt yūmat was used. There may have been a period of fluidity in use of karet and mot yumat, but by the time of Ezra we see that karet has gained a vitality of its own while mōt yūmat has diminished.

Karet alone

It is helpful to recognise that in comparison with the two composite passages, Ex. 31 and Lev. 20, there are numerous other passages which use karet as the only device for the control of society. The two composite passages are crucial to our understanding of P's thinking for they are the bridge used to connect the old controls of the pre exilic community with the new measures he seeks to introduce to control the society of his day, centred on the cult. These two passages reveal the major pressure points in P's path to take control of the community; one is a positive device to underscore the importance of adherence to Yahweh with its constituent socio-economic benefit to the slave sector of society, while the other one most clearly challenges the forces of assimilationism at their most virulent in the community.

The uses that P makes of karet reveal in broader scope the extent of his programme for the formation of a new society under the control of the Aaronide party with the necessary controls in social and cultic matters. They also seek to deal with the fundamental issue of any religiously orientated people which is how one deals with guilt associated with wrong behaviour. Such feelings are dealt with through sacrificial ritual and atonement thinking. To those who flout such moral and cultic controls, Yahweh promises to intervene and exterminate them.

(1) Sexual offences

Lev. 18 v.29 comprises the concluding epilogue which warns Israel of the dangers of adopting certain Canaanite sexual practices. It is set within the context of other expressions which present a picture of God's revulsion at such behaviour.

The chapter starts and finishes with the pregnant phrase 'I am the Lord your God' (v.2, 4, 30) which is a characteristic refrain of P, although an almost identical phrase introduces the ten commandments in Ex. 20 v.2, Deut. 5 v.6. The succinct nature of the phrase disguises the rich association of ideas that it evoked in ancient Israel. In this context it provides the motive for observing a particular law. Under the covenant, the people of God were expected to keep the

law, not merely as a formal duty but as a loving response to God's grace. So the Israelites are thus reminded of who they were and whom they served (60).

In Lev. 18 sexual relations of a diverse nature are proscribed by P for they serve to pollute the land. It has been already noted that this chapter serves to delineate structure about sexual behaviour within the extended family unit (61). Some of the crimes listed in Lev. 18 are specifically assigned the death penalty elsewhere in P. It may be assumed that in those cases guilt will have been established by man so that the penalty may be effected. In the event of some cases not coming to trial, P invokes karet as a general measure to dissuade participation in practices which he considers contrary to Israel's status and, therefore, its use in Lev. 18 v.29 may be of a summary nature.

There are several instances in Lev. 20 v.17-21 where karet is used in relation to sexual offences within the extended family unit. V.17 mentions karet and couples it with 'he shall bear his iniquity', which is copied in v.19 except that karet is omitted. Zimmerli comments that such a phrase always indicates divine punishment, although it is not specified how it occurs. Within the same passage, v.20, 21, we have the punishment cited, 'they shall die childless'. This has caused Wold to conclude,

"childlessness is one way of effecting the kareth curse"

and

"Numbers 5 (P) provides the most probable example of kareth in the Bible. The suspected adulteress is made to participate in an ordeal to prove her innocence or guilt. The special potion she is made to drink is prepared by the priest from sacral water and earth taken from the Tabernacle floor (vv.16f.). The woman must stand before the Lord for the ordeal. Clearly it is God who causes the curse to befall her if she is proven guilty: 'May the Lord make you a curse and an imprecation among your people' (vv.21, 27). 'But if the woman has not defiled herself and is pure, she shall be unharmed and able to retain seed' (v. 28 וְהָיָה זָרָעָהּ). In addition to this childlessness, the kareth penalty may be inferred from the paradigmatic expression כִּשְׁאֵל בֶּרֶךְ used at v.31 'but that woman shall bear her punishment' (אֲךָ עֲרַנָּה וְהָיָה עָלֶיהָ כִּשְׁאֵל בֶּרֶךְ) (62)".

However, such a ritual is not directed against adulterous acts but is an ordeal designed to see if adultery has taken place in the first case and guard the paternity of any children born and, therefore, it is questionable whether kareth is rightly associated with this passage. It may be true to say that one possible way of effecting the kareth curse is childlessness but this does not deal with the instance

of such unacceptable behaviour occurring beyond the child bearing years of the woman. It could be suggested that such measures were introduced because the greatest threat to P's system of ordered relationships came from the younger women in society and so he seeks to control the behaviour relevant to his day. This punishment by God of the persons involved must have acted as a strong deterrent to such immoral actions and reveals P's desire to strengthen the family unit in society, which is consistent with his ideology so far described.

(2) Blasphemy

The passage in Num. 15 v.22-31 is a self-contained unit with no introductory formula of its own and is not a continuation of the preceding passage. It deals with the atonement for offences committed unintentionally, inadvertently, 'unwittingly' against a divine command. The cases dealt with are the same as those in Lev. 4 vv.13-21; 27-35 but Lev. 4 is concerned with the actual atonement ritual, while here the purpose is to develop Lev. 4 and specify which sacrifices are to be offered. Cultic atonement takes place for all unintentional violations of the law. There is no atonement for a conscious, intentional violation, (v.30 'with a high hand') for it could only be punished by exclusion from the community.

The sin of v.30 is defiant and because the person has acted arrogantly against God, so the offender is cut off. The conception of the punishment here is underscored 'cut off from among his people' (v.30), 'be utterly cut off', 'his iniquity shall be upon him' (v.31).

This action of discipline could be seen as a recognition of what had already occurred in the person's mind. Their actions reveal that they have already separated themselves from the covenant for no one of the covenant community would consider acting with a high hand. The community, by cutting them off, is only recognising what has already occurred and formalising it. If we see karet as meaning extinction, then it would be an added sanction to prevent any further defections from the covenant community. It has been suggested that v.32-36 are an example of defiant sin and significantly the crime surrounds a person's behaviour on the sabbath. The crucial importance attached to sabbath observance is underscored again.

The juxtaposition of these two pericopes indicate the compiling work of P who sees no problem in combining the two pieces and could be using traditional material collated for his own purpose of stressing the position of sabbath observance as well as introducing the karet penalty. The fact that stoning of the criminal is prescribed in v.32-36 is no difficulty for P since the

crime is purported to have been committed in Israel's desert period and, therefore, no other punishment could have been utilised.

In v.30-31, we see the distinctive emphasis of, and development by, P in recognising that intention determined responsibility and so in a theological realm, individuals are held to be responsible for their actions. That factor is coupled with the karet penalty of direct divine intervention, for it is God who sees into the hearts of men and perceives their motives and thus judges them accordingly. In this instance it is difficult to see karet as applying to lineage extinction as Wold suggests (63), since the stress of the passage is on the individual and his due recompense for such actions (v.31c).

(3) Cultic failures

A major area that utilises karet in P's schema is the cultic realm to classify certain actions as violations against the divinely ordered pattern. The whole cultic realm has been introduced by P in such a way to show that atonement for sin is possible and that, as the Israelites observe the guidelines, so they can prevent a further catastrophe similar to the exile. With the growing individualism of the age in which P is writing, we see the use of karet as a device to control behaviour and delimit the destructive aspect of

people's sin. Nevertheless it is recognised that such violations can have an effect on people other than the offender alone and, therefore, the sociological group from which the person is cut off is invariably stated. This obviously increases the moral pressure for a person to conform to the accepted pattern of behaviour. It is recognised that in the cultic realm P seeks to preserve the identity of the Israelite people by ensuring that the appropriate rites are carried out correctly and thus avoid incurring divine displeasure and wrath. It also serves to reinforce the position and power of the Aaronide priesthood as they are the major cultic figures.

(i) Passover observance

In Numbers 9 v.13, the case of failure to observe Passover at the proper time is sanctioned with karet. The person who is part of the covenant community and is ritually pure was required to observe Passover at its appointed time. P recognises that people might legitimately miss the first Passover because of travel or ritual impurity (Num. 9 v.9) and so a second date, one month later is designated. To observe Passover carried a positive aspect for the Israelite and there is an accompanying clause explaining the motive for not observing it, 'because he did not offer the Lord's offering at its appointed time' (v.13), in other words the transgressor is seen as not giving to God the due

that is required to him from a member of the covenant community. Wold cites parallel instances from Hittite material to confirm a similar emphasis (64). The final phrase 'that man shall bear his sin' reinforces the issue that the man has acted against God and invites direct divine intervention or awaits the judgement of God, whatever form that may take. It could be suggested that such a formula is an abbreviated form of a longer penalty that was already well known, which incorporated the concept of extinction or it could be taken at face value and represent the individual nature of the punishment meted out to the offender.

There is also a prohibition on eating leaven at Passover and the feast of unleavened bread according to Ex. 12, v.15, 19. The Bible combines together two originally separate feasts so that the Passover sacrifice on the eve of 14th of Nisan inaugurates the feast of unleavened bread. The consuming of leavened bread during the week of Passover festivities is a transgression of a negative command. It is conceived of as a contemptuous action against God's directions and, therefore, is parallel to or of the same genre as Num. 15 v.30. While leaven is never called impure in the O.T., it was in later Judaism and in N.T. where it became almost synonymous with corruption or evil. According to Ex. 23 v.18; 34 v.25; Lev. 2 v.11; 6 v.10, it is proscribed to the altar in the offerings to the

Lord but it is allowed to the officiating priest with the thankoffering (Lev. 7 v.13).

The significance attached to the command to abstain from leaven during the Passover is based on the importance of using sacred time properly. If one ate leaven on the days of Passover, one was going against God's command and treating such rules contemptuously. It was to reject the significance and import of the whole meaning of Passover itself. The first and last days of the Passover week are considered holy (Ex. 12 v.16; Lev. 23 v.8).

We note again P's desire to preserve holy days as special and distinguishing marks of the nation Israel along with the correct observance of cultic matters. There is also in Ex. 12 v.19 the extension of such controls to encompass not only the Israelites but also the sojourner alike, which reflects the need to draw distinct boundaries in a mixed society and prevent the spread of assimilationism through ignorance.

(ii) The Day of Atonement

Another prohibition concerns working or eating on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23 v.29, 30). According to Lev. 23 v.27, the Day of Atonement is a holy day and, therefore, is similar to sabbath and Passover. It is a day set aside for penitence and repentance and only on this day fasting is required of Israel. The important aspects of the Day of Atonement are centred in the sanctuary and involve the blood of two purgation offerings and the scapegoat's despatch into the wilderness. The effect of these rituals is to purge the sanctuary, propitiate the deity and also expiate the sinner.

Purging of the sanctuary is seen by Milgrom to be of primary importance for he has shown that the dynamic quality of impurity penetrates the sanctuary in three stages according to the nature of its source:

- "(a) The individual's inadvertent misdemeanor or severe physical impurity pollutes the courtyard altar which is purged by daubing its horns with the ḥaṭṭa'ṭ blood (Lev. 4:25, 30; 9:9ff.).
- (b) The inadvertent misdemeanor of the high priest or the entire community pollutes the shrine which is purged by the high priest by placing the ḥaṭṭa'ṭ blood on the inner altar and before the parôket-veil (Lev. 4:5-7, 16-18).

- (c) The wanton, unrepented sin not only pollutes the outer altar and penetrates into the shrine but it pierces the veil to the holy ark and kap-poret Since the wanton sinner is barred from bringing his ḥaṭṭa'ṭ ... the pollution wrought by his offense must await the annual purgation of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement and consists of two steps: the purging of the Tent and the purging of the outer altar" (65).

It would appear that karet crimes are seen by P to generate impurity which is so virulent that it can penetrate the adytum of the tabernacle and this shows P wanting to make them the most heinous kind of offence. Such crimes are particularly concerned with P's ordering of cultic life and his desire to preserve Israelite identity and, accordingly, reinforce Aaronide privileges. They are also attempts to control man's wilfulness in not wishing to be part of the community and seek to prevent a wholesale desertion of followers to alien ways. Milgrom observes,

"three deliberate sins in the Priestly Code are expiated by sacrifice: our case, (Lev. 5 v.20f.), the sin of the individual who withholds evidence under an imprecation (Lev. 5:1) and the sins of the community carried off by the scapegoat (Lev. 16 v.21). Strikingly, these three cases, and only these, explicitly demand a confession from the sinner over and above his remorse. But what function does the confession serve? Why

must the contrition of the heart be augmented by the confirmation of the lips? Confession must be a vital link in the judicial process. Since it only occurs in the cases where deliberate sin is expiated by sacrifice, the conclusion is ineluctable: confession is the legal device fashioned by the Priestly legislators to convert deliberate sins into inadvertencies, thereby qualifying them for sacrificial expiation" (66).

For involuntary sin, guilt or remorse suffices, while deliberate sin must both be articulated and responsibility assumed. Milgrom explains why the sinner who acts 'with a high hand' is denied atonement:

"sacrificial atonement is barred to the unrepentant sinner, to the one who 'acts defiantly ...', but not to the deliberate sinner who has mitigated his offense by his repentance" (67).

P makes provision for the karet cursed, by suggesting that the deliberate sinner may repent and in P's soteriology the only sin which cannot be forgiven is the one which is not repented of. This places responsibility for action on the individual concerned to secure his place within the religious community. By his contrition, repentance and trust in the Day of Atonement rituals, the deliberate sinner may have his curse of extinction removed while his deliberate crime is reduced to an inadvertency by such repentance and confession and, consequently, the purging offerings may

be effective for him. Failure to observe the Day of Atonement is, in itself, an act of arrogant conduct, leaving the deliberate sinner exposed to the imminent imposition of karet as well as expressing their egotism and contempt of God. It is because of the severity of the defilement generated by him that the whole camp of Israel is threatened with disaster through the removal of God's presence from His desecrated sanctuary (Ezekiel 5 v.11). P views deliberate sin and the associating arrogant conduct as not only jeopardising the sinner and his seed but also as a threat to the national security of Israel. The Day of Atonement rituals provide for the cleansing of the shrine annually and thus provides for the continued occupation of Yahweh in his sanctuary as a sign of Israel's security.

It may be further suggested that P invokes the karet penalty for breaches of observance of the Day of Atonement for he views this Day as vital in his control of the community and an integral part of his manifesto. This matter will be developed further later in the work.

It is recognised that to observe set festivals and holy days was an important way of distinguishing the community from its syncretistic environment. Three major times are selected as important - sabbath,

Passover and Day of Atonement and all have various controls and penalties surrounding their violation.

Tsevat notices that the Semitta text of Lev. 25 v.3f. shows correspondences with the sabbath laws, suggesting that the sabbath is essentially a day when one desists from his own pursuits and sets it aside for God,

"he renounces his autonomy and affirms God's dominion over him" (68).

P is anxious to surround important days, by which he seeks to reinforce Israelite identity and self consciousness, with the necessary penalties to secure their observance. He emphasizes the three mentioned, since the Passover was integral and fundamental to Israelite faith, while he gives greater impetus to sabbath as a weekly observance and the Day of Atonement as an annual community experience, engrafting them into Israelite life as part of his plan for control.

(iii) Neglect of circumcision

Circumcision was instituted as a sign of the covenant by which God had extended to Abraham a threefold promise of numerous progeny (Gen. 17 v.5), of God's promise in perpetuity (17 v.7b) and the land of Canaan as an inheritance (17 v.8). Neglect of this command incurs the karet curse (17 v.14).

Circumcision was understood by P as a way of ratifying God's sovereignty of Abraham and his seed, giving to them their identity as a peculiar people in relationship to Yahweh. The blessings of the covenant will not come if the person does not comply with the circumcision requirement, for Gen. 17 v.14 says, 'he has broken my covenant'.

Circumcision was a widely diffused rite of primitive religion among most ancient Semites except the Assyrians and Babylonians and there is no authentic tradition about its introduction among the Hebrews. One account, (Ex. 4 v.24f.), suggests a Midianite origin, while another, (Jos. 5 v.2f.), suggests an Egyptian, although the mention of flint knives in both these passages may be proof of the extreme antiquity of the custom or a deliberate archaism. Anthropological evidence shows that it was originally performed at puberty, Ishmael is said to have been circumcised at the age of thirteen, (Gen. 17 v.25), as a preliminary to marriage or more generally as a ceremony of initiation into the full religious and civil status of manhood. This primary idea was dissipated when it came to be performed in infancy. Passages like Deut. 10 v.16; 30 v.6; Ezekiel 44 v.7, 9, show that in Israel it came to be regarded as a token of allegiance to Yahweh and in this fact we have the germ of the remarkable development which the rite underwent in post exilic

Judaism. The importance it then acquired was due to the experience of the exile, when the suspension of public worship gave fresh emphasis to those rites which (like sabbath and circumcision) could be observed by the individual and served to distinguish him from his heathen neighbours. Thus we understand while the earlier legal codes have no law of circumcision, in P it becomes a prescription of the first magnitude, being placed above the Mosaic ritual and second in dignity only to the sabbath. The explicit formulating of the idea that circumcision was the sign of the relationship with Yahweh was the work of P.

"Very few legislative acts have exercised so tremendous an influence on the genius of a religion or the character of a race as this apparently trivial adjustment of a detail of ritual observance" (69).

Gen. 17 v.9-27 ascribes the origin of circumcision to the time of Abraham but the account is part of the priestly code. It must have been widely practiced in the pre exilic period, but there were prophetic circles in which the rite was not highly valued. Deuteronomy nowhere enjoins physical circumcision but twice speaks of circumcision of the heart (10 v.16; 30 v.6). Craigie comments on Deut. 10 v.16,

"The metaphor of circumcision in this context seems to be prompted by the reference to the patriarchs in v.15; the election of the patriarchs and God's covenant with them was

marked by the sign of circumcision. ... The metaphor thus aptly employs an act symbolising the covenant relationship but applies it to the present moment in a spiritual sense" (70).

He notes another metaphorical use in Jer. 4 v.4, where Carroll notes,

"circumcising the mind is a metaphoric extension of an ethnic practice but, whereas the social practice is one of tribal identification, this symbolic use of the term is far from clear" (71).

It is suggested that Deuteronomy's symbolic use of circumcision must arise out of the physical practice itself which had become a meaningless rite. It is during the exilic period that circumcision assumed great importance for the Israelites and became a distinctive rite.

The idea of circumcision as an act of bodily purification may have played a part in the rite, for Wold sees,

"Circumcision has a practical aim based on the Priestly writer's pollution concept. Accordingly, the act of circumcision is a purification rite which grants to the initiate positive ritual status. It transfers him initially from the realm of the ritually impure to that of the pure, serving, so to speak, as his passport to participation in Israel's cultic worship" (72).

However, such an emphasis is not to be pressed too far since circumcision is transferred by P to infancy.

It is noted that P especially requires circumcision for sharing in the Passover (Ex. 12 v.47f.) which remembered God's sparing of the Israelite first born in Egypt and the subsequent liberation of Israel. Both circumcision and Passover require bloodshed and are associated with the preservation of children and the affording of an inheritance. Circumcision is required before Passover is to be celebrated as Israel enters Canaan to possess her inheritance (Jos. 5 v.2f.). P portrays Israel as a holy people among whom God himself dwells (Num. 5 v.3) separated from the nations (Lev. 20 v.26). The contamination of the sanctuary by the uncircumcised (Ezekiel 44 v.7) is not expressly stated by P but would be consonant with his pollution concept. Although the cult does not exist at the time of Abraham, it is inconceivable to P that Abraham could be ritually impure and, therefore, in P's philosophy of causation, Abraham is made to serve as the paradigm for the practice of circumcision. It is also pertinent that the promise of God to Abraham found fulfilment in the evolution of the nation of Israel and the obvious parallel would be clearly drawn for Israelites at the time of P's writing and thus impress upon people the need to fulfil the requirements of the law in order to experience the blessing of God. Anyone who chose not

to follow such requirements was in fact repudiating God and contemptuous of his promise. It is perhaps more practically seen as a hedonistic desire without any consideration for the future and could thus be clearly seen as an anti-God approach. This could conceivably be the result of the growing stress and emphasis on individual responsibility in society and so karet becomes a device to control such thinking and force people to recognise their dependence and involvement with others in their social grouping.

The major significance of circumcision was as an act of initiation into the community of Israel. Gen. 17 v.1-8 specify what God will accomplish and v.9-14 consider the observance which falls to Abraham with the inauguration of the communal relationship. Here an attitude is demanded of Abraham toward God's act, an attitude which he is to make explicit by circumcising every male of his house. Thus circumcision is the act of appropriation and the sign of its acceptance and whoever refuses this recognition sign is to be 'cut off from his people'. This emphasis on the conscious attitude of the individual towards the relationship, which required of the individual Israelite personal decision and responsibility, appears only in a later phase in the history of O.T. cult for all older rites were collective in nature. This transition could be related to Israel's situation in the Babylonian exile

with the abolition of temple festivals, etc., which possessed a national aspect, so the individual and family were suddenly summoned to decision. Each family was bound to Yahweh's offer and since the Babylonians did not practice circumcision, the observance of this rite was a 'status confessionis' for the exiles, that is, it became a question of their witness to Yahweh and his guidance of history. Circumcision is understood formally as a sign of the covenant, as an act of confession and an appropriation of the divine revealed will.

The reason for circumcision to be effected as a covenant sign is not, as Fox suggests, a reminder to God to keep His promises. Fox says,

"circumcision is a cognition sign ... like the other 'ôtôt in P ... whose function is to remind God to keep his promise of posterity In plain language that means that God will see the Israelite's circumcised penis during or before sexual congress and will remember to keep his covenant by making the union a fruitful one" (73).

The promise of progeny as a feature of the circumcision ritual is developed by Wold who suggests,

"the circumcision sign stands opposite the kareth curse as the external symbol of the assurance that God will not permit the extinction of Abraham and his seed" (74).

Thus it is a sign of hope and cause for optimism.

It is Van Seters who acknowledges P's use of circumcision as a

"'sign', 'ot, (v.11) - a perpetual or permanent mark of recognition" (75)

and he continues,

"Keeping the covenant means, for P, maintaining this mark of identity as an Israelite. There is a certain amount of ambiguity in the matter of who is included within this covenant. Since all the males in Abraham's household are circumcised, including Ishmael, who also receives a special 'blessing' (v.20), the covenant would seem to be wider than Israel. Yet it is specifically stated, in a kind of dynastic sense, that the covenant is with Isaac with an implied contrast to Ishmael (v.21). This may imply that Israel has a special 'royal' role among the larger group of nations. The problem of ambiguity may also result from the fact that the sign of the covenant - circumcision - was in fact practiced by the Arab peoples of the day as well, so that some recognition was given to them on this account. On the other hand, the limits of the covenant are also narrower than all the natural born Israelites because those who do not circumcise their children cannot participate in it.

This last statement in the instructions (v.14), which speaks about 'excommunication from the community', is most interesting. In place of the older agreement form of

covenant, with its laws and attendant curses, there is only this threat of excommunication In this post exilic context it is the conscious choice of the people to maintain their identity, which alone can perpetuate the covenant community" (76).

This concept is expanded further for he goes on to suggest,

"the covenant of Abraham in Genesis 17 was not primarily viewed as a message of hope, as it was in J, but was accepted as a fixed datum of the sacred tradition and was thus institutionalized by association with the custom of circumcision. Such a form of continuous covenant 'renewal' emphasized the individual responsibility of every family unit to affirm their identity with the people of God - a most crucial need in the post exilic period. Furthermore, J's concept of a 'blessing' to the nations, which reflected his situation in the diaspora, is worked out in P in the form of a possible non-Israelite inclusion within the 'household' of Abraham through the sign of circumcision. This 'ecumenical spirit' may be found in many parts of the larger priestly work. Needless to say, precisely this form of the Abraham covenant allowed for the possibility of proselytism among the diaspora. It seems to me then, that Genesis 17 represents a movement toward reconstituting the religion of Israel for the condition and needs of the post exilic period" (77).

This allows us to see circumcision as a distinguishing mark of identity for the Israelites in P's day. He invokes karet for the non performance of it because he seeks to instigate it as a major aspect of his manifesto and, therefore, he appropriately used his own special penalty.

Bettelheim has suggested an interpretation of circumcision as an expression of male envy of the female procreative role, from the rituals of the Murngin and Amnta Australian aborigines (78). Such an approach originated in his work among schizophrenic children approaching adolescence, combined with his own Jewish origin. This interpretation, while derived from clinical experience, is lacking for it is descriptive rather than interpretative of a public rite. Douglas observes,

"A public ritual ... is the summation of a whole community's experience. It expresses a common, public concern and uses whatever symbolic language is to hand for bringing the point home" (79).

It is the anthropological approach of Douglas which provides most help here, for

"tribal rituals are being used by one individual to coerce another in a particular social situation, or by all members to express a common vision of society" (80).

This would provide confirmation of the view that P provides the rite of circumcision with fresh meaning as the distinguishing mark of the Israelite. It is an attempt to express through the symbolism of the body something of the identity of the holy nation, Israel, as P wishes to fashion it. Douglas again,

"Certain cultural themes are expressed by rites of bodily manipulation. In this very general sense primitive culture can be said to be autoplasmic. But the objective of these rituals is not negative withdrawal from reality. The assertions they make are not usefully to be compared to the withdrawal of the infant into thumb-sucking and masturbation. The rituals enact the form of social relations and in giving these relations visible expression they enable people to know their own society. The rituals work upon the body politic through the symbolic medium of the physical body" (81).

Therefore, circumcision is seen as a major aspect of P's manifesto, by which he seeks to create a community which is conscious of its identity and has the corollary sign in the male body. By such a symbolic sign, P endeavours to emphasize the distinctiveness of the Israelite people.

(iv) Corpse contamination (Num. 19 v.13, 20)

P requires expulsion from the camp for everyone who has become defiled by contact with a human corpse (Num. 19

v.11) so 'they will not contaminate the camp of those in whose midst I dwell' (Num. 5 v.2-3). Unlike other impurities, death was thought to be transferred by mere overshadowing, affecting both persons and objects. People possessing a special degree of positive ritual status are placed under greater restriction regarding corpse defilement in the Bible. The Nazirite, for the duration of his vow, is forbidden all contact with the dead (Num. 6 v.6f.) as is the high priest (Lev. 21 v.11) and the priest may defile himself only for a member of his immediate family (Lev. 21 v.1f.).

For the removal of corpse defilement, P prescribed the distinctive ceremony of the red heifer (Num. 19 v.1f.). This ceremony has been the object of great study and, even as late as Qumran, this rite may have been practised (82). While the origin and history of this rite have been given diverse interpretations, it is clear from Num. 19 of the purpose of this rite. The animal is taken outside the camp, slain and the blood sprinkled seven times in the direction of the sanctuary (this may possibly be a symbolic cleansing of the sanctuary) and burned with the intent that its ashes will be mixed with water and applied to the corpse contaminated person in order that he might re-enter the encampment of Israel without severely defiling the sanctuary and so falling heir to karet. Expulsion from the camp for death pollution (Num. 5 v.2f.) is not

itself karet if that is thought of as excommunication but rather karet is invoked for the wilful defiant action of a person.

It is to be expected that deaths would have occurred naturally in the camp of Israel but the impurity thus generated was unintentional and would have affected only the outer altar. Significantly, no sacrifice is required of the person cleansed from corpse contamination as in other cases (Lev. 12 v.6; 14 v.10, 19, 22, 30; Lev. 15 v.30) and this would suggest that death pollution was, relatively, of a less severe category and yet the corpse contaminated person must be cleansed in stages, on the third and seventh day, so suggesting a certain degree of impurity for death. Karet penalty is imposed for the deliberate desecration of the adytum by bringing the impurity of death pollution into the camp.

Even impurity which is contracted outside the camp is potentially dangerous. Death pollution poses no serious threat as long as it remains outside but whoever brazenly brings it into the midst of Israel is liable to karet. This would explain why Moses went outside the camp to meet the returning soldiers and advise them to follow the purification procedures for corpse contamination (Num. 31 v.19) for they must not cause the residence of God to be defiled.

Robertson Smith believed that P's laws of contagion are
"remains of a primitive superstition" (83),

and here, in P's portrayal of death pollution, we may have justification for that statement. Kaufmann has suggested that the area outside the camp in ancient Israel was the source of impurity:

"The Priestly Code preserves traces of the notion that impurity is grounded in the realm of demons and satyrs. Illicit sacrificing 'in the open fields' is done to satyrs; lustral birds of the leper and the 'leprous house' are released there. The open field ... is the abode of such satyrs as Azazel Contact with this domain is apparently the source of the defilements listed above" (84).

But P does not consider the entire area outside the camp of Israel unclean and dangerous, since man alone is the source of the impurity which defiles God's sanctuary, not demons, magic, nor the realm of the impure (85). For P impurity is not geographically or metaphysically generated and he removes death pollution from the realm of the demonic and magical. Significantly, P attaches to the deliberate violation of purity rules concerning death, the harsh penalty of karet for he seeks to defend the mainstream and life blood of Hebrew religion against paganism in its most virulent form of his day, the likelihood of participation in the cult of the dead (86). The

Israelite who attached importance in joining his ancestors at his death and in being joined by his children was not likely to risk involvement in a cult of the dead if it were suggested to him that he himself might be punished by extirpation and so deprived of whatever benefits he thought such a cult might afford.

P's pollution rules concerning contact with the dead are given another motivation. Contact with the dead is not only restricted by P, he also adds a theological incentive to his karet clauses. Corpse contamination must not be brought into Israel's camp because it offends the divine presence, 'defiles the tabernacle of the Lord' (Num. 19 v.13). P's concept of death pollution is an incentive to enforce the distinction between the sacred and the profane and to motivate the individual and Israel, as a people, to emulate the holiness of God, as well as stressing that the boundaries of life and death are to be preserved as carefully as possible.

Related to this subject is the practice of consulting the dead, (Lev. 20 v.6), a practice which invites karet. It has been widely debated and diverse opinions proffered. For this study we shall consider only the key issue that two classes of criminal are described relevant to necromancy in P: the male or female practitioner whose business it is to summon the dead (Lev. 20 v.7) and the client of these practitioners

(Lev. 20 v.6). In the former instance, death by stoning is prescribed while, in the latter, karet is demanded by P. It might seem that karet would not befall the practitioner but since karet may be a more severe punishment than mere death, it is difficult to imagine that the user would receive a harsher sentence than the pusher and the nature of the crime is such that the pusher is at the same time a user. Therefore, it may be supposed that the death penalty should apply at Lev. 20 v.6 if the offender is caught and karet will ensue and, if he is not caught, he still needs to fear the imminent karet penalty. It is also expected that karet will apply to the practitioner at Lev. 20 v.27 for their involvement in necromancy but since a user would then become a pusher, such duplication was seen as unnecessary. Thus all involvement in necromancy incurs karet so long as the acts in question are deliberate. This would provide a rationale for karet in that P invokes it for deliberate involvement in practices which threaten to blur the distinctiveness of Israel. It may be suggested that karet is more fundamental than practical and a device to control behaviour from a divine threat standpoint. It could also apply to a time when there was insufficient acceptance of the concept for it to assume any practical form. That it later on, especially in Ezra's time, assumes a meaning of excommunication illustrates

the development it underwent within the situation of the exilic period.

Two further usages of karet are relevant in considering alien aspects of worship associated with death and the world of the dead.

Lev. 17 v.4 prohibits slaughtering outside the sacred precinct. The purpose of the pericope v.1-9 is to legitimate slaughter of sacrificial animals only at the central sanctuary. Patai comments on Lev. 17 v.4,

"it is quite evident that regarding the sin of bloodshed and its punishment, no difference was made between the blood of a man and the blood of an animal" (87).

A distinction exists in P, not regarding the polluting power of all blood, but in the nature of the punishment for bloodshed, in that karet is never imposed for homicide. P rules that the intentional murderer, after a trial, is to be executed by the blood avenger, while the manslayer, after his innocence has been proved, is given refuge in an asylum city where he is detained until the death of the high priest, (Num. 35 v.9-34). This notion of an asylum city detracts from the purpose of the study, I note that such cities appear to be little thought out in the Bible, raising more questions than they answer. Wold would see them as the creation of P who,

"appoints asylum cities to which the homicide might flee for refuge until justice could be expedited by his community" (88).

The use of karet for the killing of wild animals would be an attempt by P to control the people's association with blood of any kind. It may also reveal that P was anxious not to provide any opportunity so that sacrifice to pagan deities was possible. If people slaughter an animal outside the precincts, they may be dabbling in occult practices. P is anxious to deal with any possible loopholes which would allow the people to become involved in alien religious practices, as he conceived them. Such sacrifice outside the temple precincts may be associated with the cult of the dead or it may be seen to threaten the position of the Aaronides which P seeks to defend against any intrusion.

It might be suggested from this prohibition by P that the sacrifice of animals to pagan gods or the use of shed blood for other idolatrous practices was rampant at the time P constructed his manifesto and so he goes to such lengths to control it, for he views it as a considerable threat. He views such practices as the greatest threat to the efficacy of his own system and, therefore, invokes divine intervention to bolster his claims for allegiance. It may be true that it would be difficult to ascertain whether such acts of profane

slaughter had occurred and, again, karet is activated as a moral pressure to control behaviour in an area where human judgement may be uncertain. The practicality of restricting slaughter to the central sanctuary would be a factor in seeing this measure as more pertinent to P's attempt to control alien religious practices than anything else.

4. Ritual failures

P uses karet to cover a range of violations in the ritual realm. It is characteristic of P to ensure that the proper procedure is observed in that area in accordance with his basic concern for order and symmetry. He seeks to integrate his own disciplinary procedures into the whole fabric of the sacrificial system. He also wishes to gain acceptance of Aaronide claims to be handlers of 'holy' things. Such claims must be placed within the context of other cults or cultic practice which seek recognition and it is typical of P to outlaw the rival practices as a way of reinforcing his own. P is anxious to ensure Aaronide supremacy and, therefore, the polemical element must always be recognised.

(i) Eating blood

Such a prohibition occurs in Lev. 7 v.27; 17 v.10, 14. P permits the consumption of meat as a supplement to man's originally vegetarian diet. Gen. 1 v.29 portrays

man as a vegetarian but this is most likely idealistic rather than historical reality. The real situation is represented by the post diluvian Noah to whom P concedes the right to eat meat (Gen. 9 v.3). The dietary regulations to which P appends the karet curse as an incentive may be designed to return man to his ideal state in Gen. 1 v.29. P's ideal shows a humane ethic motivated by a theocratic pollution concept.

P places stress on God as Creator and instigator of the whole process of creation and, therefore, his concern for profane slaughter could be motivated by a fear of offending Israel's God who is seen as Creator. It may also be due to the economic conditions prevalent at the time of writing which, after the ravaging effects of the exile, would be severely constricted. Such a construction would lead to a desire to conserve natural resources.

P's rationale for the prohibition against eating blood is that life is seated in the blood (Lev. 17 v.11). Indeed blood is equivalent to life (Deut. 12 v.23 does not use karet but adds the motive clause 'that it might be well with you and your children after you', - again concern for one's lineage and posterity is obvious).

Many peoples forbid the consumption of blood for, according to Durkheim, in this act contact with the numinous powers which are thought to reside in the

blood is most intimate (89). It may be that P's prohibition against the consumption of blood was a polemic against pagan notions that animistic or totemistic powers believed to be resident in blood could be appropriated by its ingestion. It could also be an attempt to place controls on the sacrificial system newly established and P may have been aware that this was one of the worst excesses of the old system when it existed. Grintz associates the phrase with the practice of consulting the dead,

"the people performed this ritual in order to gain knowledge of the future."

In this Grintz follows Maimonides who sees 'eating the blood' as an attempt to establish contact with the spirit world (90).

The opposite aspect of this matter is expressed by Ezekiel 44 v.7 which sees the blood of sacrificial animals as God's food, as were the fat and the burnt offerings (re Lev. 21 v.6). According to Lev. 17 v.11 there was power in the blood of animals assigned to the altar to make atonement for sin. Milgrom has stressed P's concern here with the problem of how to eat meat without partaking of the blood which was a problem concerning only the offering of well being or peace offering and also that

"improper disposal of the animal's blood is a capital violation" (91).

The special and specific designation of the blood for the altar makes its use for other purposes a sacrilege. Thus P appeals to karet to appropriate what rightly belongs to God.

The most fundamental reason behind such a stress on blood belonging only within the sacrificial realm could be seen against a background of alien religious practices which utilise blood and, in order to prohibit such practices, the use of blood is strictly curtailed. The Priestly writer has emphasized as part of Aaronide ideology the use of blood in the process of expiation with the Aaronides as the cult officers and, therefore, he is anxious to secure the implementation of his programme as well as protecting the privileges of his own class of priests. Such a view provides a rational explanation for what may have incorporated many diverse and magical elements.

(ii) Eating sacrificial fat

The same principle of desecration which applied to the consumption of blood, also applies to the eating of sacrificial suet, (re Lev. 7 v.25). As in Ezekiel 44 v.7, the fat is assigned to the altar as God's 'food'. Karet is invoked for eating the fat of all animals consecrated to the altar but does not extend to hunt animals and, according to v.24, fat of all carrion though forbidden as food may be put to any other use.

It is generally acknowledged that the fat was in ancient times deemed to be the choicest part of the sacrifice and Gaster saw that the blood and fat were tabooed because in them were

"the primary seats of vitality and energy"
(92).

It may be suggested that P's restriction of the fatty portions of the omenta, kidneys and the lobe of the liver, to the altar flames was a deliberate attempt to prevent the use of these parts for the purpose of divination. The Babylonians considered the liver the seat of the blood and hence of life itself. On the basis of this they identified the liver of the sacrificial sheep with the gods and, therefore, deemed it a proper vehicle by which to divine the will and intentions of the higher powers. Thus by the aid of such artificial means they sought to foretell the future, in sharp contrast to inspired prophecy.

The Israelites may have been contaminated by these concepts and practices while in exile and, therefore, P is anxious to control such alien and destructive influences.

(iii) Eating the peace offerings on the third day

The peace offerings are holy because of their dedication to the altar. The portions of the offerings permitted to the layman are to be eaten on the day of

their presentation and on the following day. What remains to the third day is to be consumed by fire. The sacrifices will not be credited to the offerer if the flesh is eaten on the third day; they are designated as 'refuse' or defilement (which according to Ezekiel 4 v.14 is a term for ritually unfit food whose consumption is shunned by the prophet).

According to Lev. 7 v.18, 'If any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering is eaten on the third day, he who offers it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be credited to him; it shall be an abomination and he who eats of it shall bear his iniquity'. Lev. 19 v.8 adds the motive clause with the karet penalty. Only with the peace offerings is the layman allowed a share, although he must be pure when eating of them and he must observe the rules of time relevant to them or be threatened with extinction. There is a concern for orderliness as to when and how to eat. However, it is the deliberateness of the act in violation of the negative command which brings on karet because a sacrificial substance had been profaned and this on the third day.

The significance of the third day is not explained in the Bible, it could be a simple hygienic device to

prevent eating food which had begun to putrefy or some superstitious idea prevalent at the time.

From this instance we notice a stress on the appropriate time to eat the peace offering but also a stress on being ritually pure. Lev. 7 v.20f. deals with the layman's eating of the peace offering while ritually impure. The sources of impurity generalised at v.21 are those contracted naturally by the layman. The layman is not liable to karet for merely becoming unclean, impurity in the course of life is routine and the exclusion from the cult is not itself karet, rather karet is threatened for the intentional disregard for the Priestly distinction between the holy and the profane.

The priests, according to Lev. 22 v.1-9, are to be circumspect as regards eating the portions of the sacred offerings guaranteed to them as the emoluments of their office, lest they desecrate the name of the Lord (v.2). Permission to eat the holy foodstuffs of the priests is not granted to the layman for, according to Ex. 29 v.33, only the priest and his dependents who are part of his household, including the slave he has purchased, may partake but explicitly not a stranger nor a hired day labourer. The priests themselves are restricted as to both the time, Ex. 29 v.34, and the place, Ex. 29 v.31f., of their most sacred sacrificial meals. The threat of karet hangs over the priest who

partakes of the sacred offerings knowing that he is ritually impure.

The sources of defilement for the priest are enumerated thus:-

- (1) Dermatological disorders v.4;
- (2) Non seminal discharges from the genitals v.4;
- (3) Contact with corpse contamination v.4;
- (4) Emission of semen v.4;
- (5) Contact with 'swarming things' v.5;
- (6) Contact with any human uncleanness v.5;
- (7) Consumption of carrion v.8.

We notice that P gives no examples of the priests' culpability to karet for trespass against the holy foodstuffs. Lev. 22 v.9 shows that death by God comes upon the priest who disdains the rules of purity/impurity contact and so fails to live up to his own job specification (Lev. 10 v.10).

Two other sacred substances are highlighted as likely to invoke karet for their misuse.

Ex. 30 v.33 deals with the compounding and/or misusing of the oil of installation. Ex. 30 v.28 specifies that the oil of anointing is most holy and used to sanctify

the sacred objects of the sanctuary as well as Aaron and his sons. Karet is imposed for purposely desecrating sancta by the use of the oil by an unauthorised person. It is implemented so that the categories of sacred and profane are not mixed.

Ex. 30 v.38 deals with duplicating and/or misusing the sanctuary incense. Such incense is deemed most holy, (v.36), and is burned only on the altar of gold within the sanctuary proper (Ex. 30 v.7-8), in contradistinction to the ordinary incense of the courtyard which is only holy (שָׁמֶן קֹדֶשׁ) and is burned in censers. Profanation of this sacred incense by duplication or use of it for any purposes other than those prescribed for the sanctuary ritual is a direct affront against God and, therefore, punishable by karet.

Conclusion

We have discussed all the instances where karet is used by P. The crimes deal with specific areas where P sees a conflict between purity and impurity and he seeks to define the lines of structure for the society of his day. The acts which merit karet are deliberate violations of laws and rules which seek to preserve the various divisions of life as P considers it.

In the cases of the death penalty witnesses were required and the issues were reasonably

straightforward. In instances where karet is used, it is often the case that matters are more complex and an emphasis is placed on motive or intent which is usually known only to God.

Such a view of karet, as relating more to intention than act, receives some confirmation as such a penalty can be transmuted through repentance. Atonement is available, according to Num. 15 v.22-29 and this is a major consideration when dealing with karet. It could be suggested that karet is the practical consequence of a person's inward intent and God does not so much judge a person as effect the consequences of a person's attitudes. 'Sin with a high hand' would be a clear example of such a case. To be cut off from God for defiance recognises that a breakdown in the relationship between God and man has already occurred and an inevitable consequence is a fracture in relationships within the community. Such acts are viewed as a poison which infects society and which have to be dealt with radically in case the infection or contamination spread and the whole of society is corrupted. Therefore, there are cases where karet could be viewed as simply recognising that the person has removed himself from the covenant community by his actions which are in defiance of God's rules. Buchanan comments,

"Even when the person, group or nation cut off was also killed, the term 'cut off' was

used rather than 'kill' or 'murder' because the emphasis was upon his relationship to the covenant community rather than his condition of health" (93).

There are also occasions of karet where God intervenes in a situation if the people fail to act and this seeks to introduce a moral pressure on people rather than perhaps effecting an actual punishment. Therefore, people who commit acts contrary to the rules of faith, even if they are not seen, cannot be certain that they will escape punishment. Those who transgress in realms where it is very hard for people to ascertain the truth, God is seen to implement the necessary punishment. This would increase the guilt factors within society and reinforce the moral restraints in society. It helps that through the sacrificial system such wrongdoing can be atoned for and people can expiate that guilt and this serves to validate and authenticate the sacrificial system as P has re-established it, as well as creating a circularity of thinking controlled exclusively by the Aaronides. Karet has been viewed as premature death and this may be a retrospective way of arguing which utilises the magical element in the society to persuade people to conform to set patterns of behaviour. The great desire of people is to enjoy a long life and, presuming on this, P seeks to present occasions of wrongdoing which end in premature death. A further consideration and

development would be to see the threat of karet as including the extinction of one's lineage and, consequently, the removal of the whole name of the family, whether that were immediate or over a course of years. Such a threat would lend weight to the importance of social groupings and be a deterrent to an individual's highly disruptive behaviour. Man is reminded that he is not only an individual but also a responsible part of a larger social grouping and his conduct contributes to the health or otherwise of that entity. It would also be an appropriate punishment for those associated with a cult of the dead, as they and the deceased would face extinction. It serves to suggest that there is a punishment more harsh than death. Such an argument is characteristic of P who seeks to antedate his devices in order to supercede traditionally accepted penalties and ideas. Indeed, the bigger the idea, it might be suggested, the easier that it is accepted.

Retrospective judgements are difficult to handle, especially in some cases. Rashi understands karet as premature and childless death but childlessness is only one way to effect karet. This must be so if the offender already has children at the time of his actions. (It could be a specific understanding of karet which deals with the threat of sexual promiscuity within the single population; while it is assumed, for

reasons not known to us, that married people are less at risk.) God will demand the death of the children as well, simultaneously with the death of the offender, or the children themselves will be without progeny so the lineage comes to an end in a later generation. However, P is not specific in this instance but it may be suggested that karet was most successful as a deterrent. The parent would naturally be concerned to preserve his own name, as well as having a strong bond with his children and, therefore, not do anything intentionally to harm, least of all expose them to the threat of extinction. If this is so, then P's pollution rules are closely linked to the family as a keystone to social structure.

In a situation where P seeks to create a sense of community around God and his way, a desire to establish positive and strong relationships would be important and the need to watch motives would be of vital importance. To safeguard that fragile process and ensure its continuance, the threat of divine intervention was a strong force.

It is suggested that P seeks to establish a new society and, because he does not have sufficient political power to effect cases of capital punishment, he relies on God to effect the destruction of a sinner. It would be important to stress that such a sinner would be someone who deliberately transgresses rather than

inadvertently defaults for it is the fear of such waywardness and wilfulness that poses problems for P in the control of society and threatens the continuance of the Israelite community.

We may infer from this that P is working at a time when the freedom of the individual is strong and such freedom easily leads to license with the resultant disintegration in the fabric of society. He, therefore, endeavours to strengthen the moral pressures on society that people will conform to an accepted pattern of behaviour.

Such a pattern seeks to underscore the power structure which P finds conducive for his own purposes as well as highlighting areas where the threat to P's power from alien or antagonistic forces is most acute. It is disappointing in Wold's study that he fails to develop this matter satisfactorily (94). Karet is a device used by P to counteract the forces of assimilationism at their most intense and insidious. Wold seems to be content in analysing the various instances where karet is used, rather than perceiving a dominant thread through these various usages and what these individual pieces contribute to our understanding of the whole picture of P and the society of his day. He undoubtedly gives some helpful insights and useful comparisons in other religions and our understanding of karet is enhanced but he fails at the critical point of

applying this knowledge in the sociological framework of P and, therefore, we are left with an incomplete work. The whole question of the meaning of karet must also be allied with whether such a penalty was ever effected, was the measure more fundamental than practical and, if this is so, why was it used and to what effect?

I would suggest that karet is introduced by P at critical junctures in his manifesto where fundamental principles of Israelite cosmology are threatened. In particular it is invoked where acts which blur the vital distinctions between the separation of sacred and profane are threatened. The protection of the realm of the sacred is of prime importance in P's thought in view of his belief that God dwells among the children of Israel. Violating the distinctions between sacred and profane disrupts the entire system which P seeks to impose on his society. Karet serves as a divine reinforcement of the boundaries between sacred and profane by providing a sanction for acts which violate those boundaries but which are not normally provided with legal sanctions.

Israel was conceived of as a holy nation and, in order to preserve its identity against assimilationistic forces, P uses karet for acts which he sees as vital for the community's survival. It is also a device used by P to ensure the implementation of the Aaronide

manifesto by which he seeks to impose a monopolising cult representative of a powerful political group upon the Israelite community. He creates measures and penalties to implement that programme of ideas, many of which may be opposed to ideas of a rival group and, in order to reinforce his own plan, he outlaws rival practices.

The crisis of the exile threatened Israelite faith with disintegration and to give it fresh impetus and vitality, P stresses certain aspects of religion as well as re-interpreting traditional material for his own purposes. The two key areas of sabbath observance and circumcision emphasize those who conform to the community and those who choose not to. Other measures in the cultic and ritual realms ensure the continuance of religious matters under the direction and control of the Aaronides. Karet is, therefore, a major tool in the Aaronide manifesto which involved death and encompassed the idea of extinction. It is admitted that the magical and superstitious elements in P's society would have played an enormous part in his utilisation of karet, however, we are too far removed from that to be able to appreciate them. It is also the case that P's intent is to gain control of society and propagate the Aaronide ideology, and such a fundamental purpose must be recognised in any evaluation of P's work.

(e) Footnotes

1. Forkmann, 1972, p16
2. Forkmann, 1972, p16-17
3. Milgrom, 1970, p6
4. M Sanh 9:6; Sifre Zuta (on Num. 18 v.7);
Y Sanh 48b
5. Greenberg, 1962, p734f.;
De Vaux, 1961, p34f.;
Neufeld, 1944, p123f.;
Pedersen, 1959 I-II, p71;
Noth, 1965, p143f.;
Burrows, 1938, p55f.;
Speiser, 1960, p33.
6. Schmidt, 1983, p89, cites various ideas
"(a) The sabbath occurs several times in connection with the new moon (in the oldest period in Amos 8:5; 2 Kgs. 4:23 et al.; later Ezek. 46:1; Isa. 66:23 et al.), and in Babylonia the fifteenth day of the month, or day of the full moon, is called shabattu. It has therefore often been assumed that the sabbath was originally the day of the full moon. The Babylonian shabattu is not however attested as a day of rest. If however the sabbath is derived from the well-known unlucky days of the moon, it remains unexplained why (probably very early) it became independent of the course of the moon. Since the lunar cycle differs substantially from 28 days (it is $29\frac{1}{2}$ days), the week would need constantly to be corrected, so that the

sequence of six working days and one day of rest would be destroyed. The similarity with the Babylonian name does point to an early connection but the derivation of the sabbath from the phases of the moon is not really convincing; and at least in the later period the sabbath in Israel was not a day of the full moon.

(b) A group of number sayings are known from Mesopotamia and Ugarit, which have a particular course of events or an action last for six days, to end on the seventh day as the climax and turning point (similarly Josh. 6). The number seven is in such cases only intended to indicate a short round period of time, not to give an exact time for a particular event. The regular recurrence of the week can certainly not be explained from such number sayings.

(c) almost everywhere in the world particular days for certain forms of work, and also days without work, are known. Among the Romans, for instance, there were particular market days as days of rest. Since however they did not occur in a seven-day rhythm and are not attested among Israel's neighbours, they are ruled out as the origin of the sabbath.

(d) Finally the derivation of the week, which recurs throughout the year, from a seven day New Year Feast (with the sabbath as the climax) is extremely dubious, especially since the duration of the autumn feast for seven days in Israel does not perhaps go back to the earliest period."

7. Schmidt, 1983, p92
8. Weingreen, 1966, p316-364
9. Phillips, 1969, p125-128
10. Budd, 1984, p176
11. Greenberg, 1962, p734;
De Vaux, 1961, p34f.;
Neufeld, 1944, p123f.;
Pedersen, 1959, I-II, p71f.;
Noth, 1965, p143f.;
Burrows, 1938, p55f.;
Speiser, 1960, p33f.
12. Snaith, 1967, p143, explains the reason here
in Lev. 21 v.9 as,
"the essential thing is to bring about the
death without shedding blood, thus avoiding
the blood feud."
13. Milgrom, 1972, p80
14. Milgrom, 1976a
15. Milgrom, 1970, p6 n 10
16. Montgomery, 1951;
Brichto, 1963, p147f.;
Blank, 1950-51, p83;
De Vaux, 1961, p74f.
17. Weingreen, 1972, p118;
Gabel, 1980, p227.
18. Brichto, 1963, p132f.;
Stamm, 1967, p95f.;
Robertson Smith, 1885, p68;

- Porter, 1967.
19. Phillips, 1970, p81
 20. Pedersen, 1959, p124f.;
Rowley, 1958, p247;
Hoffner, 1973, p385f.;
Lust, 1972, 133f.;
Driver, 1895, p221;
Von Rad, 1966, p122;
Smith, 1971, p124f;
Mauchline, 1971;
Robertson Smith, 1912, p238f.
 21. Craigie, 1976, p260
 22. Rivkin, 1971, p31
 23. Rivkin, 1971, p36
 24. Rivkin, 1971, p38-39
 25. Heider, 1985, p383f.
 26. Milgrom, 1970, p44f.;
Noth, 1962, p153f.
 27. Eissfeldt, 1965, p191-194
 28. Milgrom, 1970, p7f.
 29. Cody, 1969
 30. Wold, 1979, p18-19
 31. See Heider, 1985, p383f. who connects Molech
with the cult of the dead.
 32. De Vaux, 1961, p213-267;
Von Rad, 1965a;
Forkmann, 1972, p21-23;
Lohfink, 1977, p188f.;

- Snaith, 1944, p32-34;
Pope, 1981, p839;
Gottwald, 1964, p296-310;
Malamat, 1966, p40-49;
Robertson Smith, 1907, p641;
Cross, 1973;
Miller, 1973.
33. Lohfink, 1977, p188
34. cited by Driver, 1895, p98
35. Driver, 1895, p98
36. Robertson Smith, 1907, p150
37. Robertson Smith, 1907, p454
38. Douglas, 1966, p51-52
39. Carroll, 1986, p191 on Jer. 6 v.4 ^{refers to} cites
Soggin and Bach in defence. *in comparative terms!*
40. Thompson, 1981, p254
41. De Vaux, 1961, p259
42. Brichto, 1963;
Blank, 1950-51;
De Vaux, 1961, p464f.
43. Noth, 1965, p207f.;
Wenham, 1979, p334;
De Vaux, 1961, p76.
44. Greenberg, 1960, sees it as vertical
collective punishment;
Paschen, 1970, p43, sees it as the death
penalty;

Cassuto, 1967, p144, views karet as a punishment imposed by heaven in the form of childlessness and premature death;

Maimonides, in Mishneh Torah, Hilchoth Shabbath, 1.1 has karet used for crimes where there are no witnesses;

Wold, 1979, sees karet as death by God because man fails to observe the rules expected of him, p25,

"kareth is aimed at discouraging Israelite participation in activities which would compromise Israel's holiness as a people separated unto God".

Milgrom, 1972, considers it as death by God when the community failed to act;

Tsevat, 1961, p195, views karet as a premature death or an untimely death, i.e. death before 50-60 years;

Phillips, 1970, p28, views it as excommunication, although he recognises a development in its understanding which moves from death to direct divine intervention and finally excommunication.

Wenham, 1979, p285, sees it as direct divine punishment in the form of premature death in areas that are difficult for human judges.

Skinner, 1910, p294, views it as the punishment of death which became,

"a strong affirmation of divine disapproval".

Buchanan, 1970, p309, sees karet as a cutting off socially but the person is not killed.

Harrison, 1980, p204, sees it as direct divine intervention in the form of sudden death.

Noth, 1965, pl48, interprets karet as Yahweh himself cutting off the evildoer and his whole kindred if the people fail to punish the offence.

45. Gen. 17 v.14, also Forkmann, 1972, pl8
46. It is recognised that P is only one of the many groups and ideologies which seek to give a coherent interpretation of the exile and a hope for restoration, see also Ackroyd, 1968.
47. Forkmann, 1972, pl8
48. Horbury, 1985, p31
49. Frymer-Kensky, 1983, p404-405
50. Douglas, 1966, pl32
51. see Chapter 2, f54 of thesis; also
Heschel, 1951, p78-83;
Andreasen, 1974;
Greenberg, 1971, p557-572.
52. Robinson, 1980, p32-42
53. Von Rad, 1965a, pl6, footnote 3
54. Jenni, 1956, plf.
55. Morgenstern, 1962, pl38-140
56. Kline, 1963, pl8
57. Von Rad, 1965a, p79
58. Noth, 1962, p241
59. see Chapter IV, p286-299 and p355-357 of thesis
60. Zimmerli, 1953, pl79-209

61. see Chapter IV, section (d), p266-301 of thesis
62. Wold, 1979, p23
63. Wold, 1979, p24,
"karet was ... a divine curse of extinction visited upon the sinner and his seed."
64. Wold, 1979, p3-4
65. Milgrom, 1976d, p393f.
66. Milgrom, 1976a, p119
67. Milgrom, 1976a, p109-110
68. Tsevat, 1972, p455f.
69. Skinner, 1910, p297
70. Craigie, 1976, p205
71. Carroll, 1986, p158
72. Wold, 1979, p16
73. Fox, 1974, p595
74. Wold, 1979, p15
75. Van Seters, 1975, p290
76. Van Seters, 1975, p291
77. Van Seters, 1975, p292-293
78. Bettelheim, 1955
79. Douglas, 1975, p67
80. Douglas, 1975, p71
81. Douglas, 1966, p128
82. Num. 19 v.1, see Budd, 1984, p208
83. Robertson Smith, 1907, p447
84. Kaufmann, 1960, p105
85. Milgrom, 1976b, p334

86. Heider, 1985, p383
87. Patai, 1939
88. Wold, 1979, p19
89. Durkheim, 1963, p83-84
90. Grintz, 1970, p78f.
91. Milgrom, 1971, p155
92. Gaster, 1962, p150
93. Buchanan, 1970, p311
94. Wold, 1979

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

The Priestly writer was involved in an enormous nexus of change within the sixth century B.C. and especially as a result of the crisis of the exile. As has been noted there was a diversity of material produced as a result of this event which reveals a variety of responses to it (1). Such evidence reflects a serious struggle for the survival of the Israelite faith as it seeks to preserve its identity. Questions were raised about the nature of the catastrophe and the interpretation given to it. It must be recognised that, in composing the Aaronide manifesto, P presents only one response to these events although it is suggested it is the most convincing. Ackroyd stresses the richness of the material available to us,

"within the life of the O.T. there is not simply one circle of life and tradition but many" (2).

He continues,

"uniformity of religious life appears as the less natural form; pluriformity, complexity in the inter-relationship of differing groups as the normal,"

and yet he acknowledges,

"the more we stress this richness and diversity, the more perplexing does the problem of continuity become The attempt to make the whole intelligible, as distinct from the understanding of this or

that part of it, demands the discovery of an underlying principle" (3).

The Israelite community had its political power removed as a result of the exile and, therefore, the question of its continued survival was to be interpreted in terms of its religion. It was crucial for the survival of Israelite faith that a cogent understanding of the events of the exile could be presented along with a practical pattern for the future. P seeks to address these issues when he creates the Aaronide manifesto, which endeavours to incorporate a diversity of aspects under a few basic principles. His endeavour is to restore order and vitality to a confused and struggling people which is accompanied by his own quest for power and the control of society. The vigorous reinterpretation of Israelite faith which P offers does not detach it from its historical roots but attempts to infuse life and energy into it so that it might flourish. Ackroyd suggests,

"discontinuity is resolved in the discovery of a continuity within it" (4).

The Priestly writer's attempt to present God's will as revealed through the Law is creative especially as it is coupled with a call to holiness which embraces a cultic approach to life. His particular emphases on sabbath observance and rite of circumcision as distinguishing marks provide tangible means of

discerning who belongs within the community. The correct demarcation of cultic life and the ordering of every sphere of existence reveal a determined attempt to organise life in a comprehensive manner for the community. Alien elements are seen as a threat to the continued viability of Israel's distinctiveness. Indeed it is the forces of assimilationism in their manifold guises that P seeks to check and control lest their infiltration obscure and finally obviate Israel's identity.

It may be suggested that an identity of the community needs to be created and earthed before any disciplinary measures can be instituted. While that point is accepted, nevertheless it is important to notice the close interaction that operate between the two. In the case of P's desire to create an identity for the community of Israel, it is understood that he does not approach such a task without any prior beliefs, model or patterning. He attempts to reinterpret the previous concepts of Israelite faith so they conform to his own ideological considerations. While P's attempt in composing the Aaronide manifesto would be theoretical, it is based on his understanding of previous measures used to control society. In positing the identity of the Israelite community in terms of holiness, which delineates strict boundaries and categories of organisation, he is able to develop various measures of

control to preserve that structure which he wishes to see instituted in society and deal with those instances where there is a breach of the rules or a transgressing of the respective boundaries.

The brilliance of P's approach is seen in his ability to create this sense of Israelite identity on the basis of his own ideological method which simultaneously preserves continuity for,

"continuity rests in the realisation of the traditional element within the newness of presentation related to the immediate historical situation",

observes Ackroyd (5). P does this as he rewrites vast amounts of traditional material for his own purpose. Ackroyd again develops that theme,

"when restoration is brought about, its validity is claimed on the basis of lines of succession to the past"

and he cites the theme of the temple vessels and the priestly genealogies (6). While not denying the worth of the instances cited by Ackroyd, he fails to emphasize the comprehensiveness of P's approach. For he rewrites the Pentateuch, incorporating traditional material in to his own particular priestly structure which goes back to the Creation for its inception. Such a tour de force was so encompassing that P is trying to obviate any other claimants' attempts to gain

authentication for their own viewpoint. Also in antedating his own composition, he seeks to prevent any opposition as well as win immediate and absolute approval for his own manifesto.

It has been suggested that disciplinary measures necessitate a certain degree of organisation and structure within a community for them to be effective (7). There are various forms of disciplinary control, in particular excommunication, found in the Qumran community, the Essenes, the early Christians and the Jewish groups focussed on the Mishnah. While this practice is seen in Ezra 10, it is questioned whether pentateuchal sources contain any similar kind of practice (8). Therefore, such a practice may relate more fittingly to a small group than to post exilic Judaism as a whole. However, such a generalisation would seem to neglect the emphasis on order which is characteristic of much of the literature of the Second Temple period (9). It also fails to give sufficient weight to the vital work of P who reshapes the Pentateuch for his own ends and presents an ordered and structured universe in every respect. The evidence of Qumran and the early Christians provide us with clear examples of community discipline and, therefore, their spawning ground must be found within the Judaic tradition from which they developed, which I would suggest was P's final shaping of the Pentateuch.

It is suggested that P creates the Aaronide manifesto to control the community of Israel and disciplinary measures are an integral part of that approach so that a sense of identity is maintained and buttressed with sufficient and suitable safeguards to preserve it. By the utilising of the regulative principle of holiness in its diverse applications, the anomalous is viewed as a danger to society's well being and infractions of the limits are clearly seen or able to be deduced. The range of measures introduced by P are relative to the needs and circumstances of society. In this respect prohibitions are introduced against those whose behaviour is incongruent with holiness. Deviations in behaviour of a cultic or moral nature were the reasons for expulsion from the community, rather than on the basis of any doctrinal divergence (10).

The concern for purity is used by P to authenticate Aaronide claims for religious office and to monopolise all power in the cultic realm. It is also used to control the religious behaviour of the community in a detailed way, and often on a daily basis, for the food laws affected people daily and caused them to apply their faith in such a basic manner.

The same rules are also used to control behaviour at what P considers critical junctures if his manifesto is to gain credence and effectiveness. It is important to

differentiate, therefore, between behaviour which might be distinguished as light and grave sins.

Douglas suggests that,

"pollution rules do not correspond closely to moral rules"

for,

"pollution rules only highlight a small aspect of morally disapproved behaviour" (11).

However,

"if pollution dangers were placed strategically along the crucial points in the moral code, they could theoretically reinforce it" (12)

but such a distribution is not possible. Rather it is suggested,

"pollution rules can serve to settle uncertain moral issues"

as well as

"marshalling moral disapproval when it lags" (13).

For

"when the sense of outrage is adequately equipped with practical sanctions in the social order, pollution is not likely to arise. Where, humanly speaking, the outrage is likely to go unpunished, pollution beliefs

tend to be called in to supplement the lack of other sanctions" (14).

Thus P utilises pollution beliefs as part of his attempt to control society and distinguish which behaviour is deemed unacceptable. Such pollution beliefs also provide,

"an index of different cultural patterning. It seems that physiological pollutions become important as symbolic expressions of other undesirable contacts which would have repercussions on the structure of social or cosmological ideas" (15).

and this we have seen in the controls he seeks to introduce in the areas of family life and health. Such pollutions have various and specific rituals of purification and, although these pollutions are contagious, they are not dangerous. The only misfortune associated with the condition is isolation from the people and alienation from all things holy.

Frymer-Kensky notes,

"Biblical Israel had two separate sets of what anthropologists would consider 'pollution beliefs': a set discussed extensively as pollutions in the Priestly laws, since the priests were responsible for preventing the contamination of the pure and the Holy; and a set of beliefs that we might term 'danger beliefs'. The deeds that involve these danger beliefs differ fundamentally from the deeds that result in

ritual impurity. There is a clear implication of wrong-doing, for the individual has placed himself in danger by doing something that he and the people have been expressly forbidden to do; the danger is seen as a divine sanction for the deed. Unlike the ritual pollutions, which last a set period, the danger caused by these deeds is permanent (until the catastrophe strikes). The ritual pollutions may have accompanying rituals of purification and readmission; the danger pollutions cannot be ameliorated in this way, although there is a sense that repentance and sacrifice can avert some if not all of the calamity" (16).

The last point concerning repentance and sacrifice averting some of the calamity has been dealt with by Milgrom who sees the Priestly writer's attempt to re-interpret the asham sacrifice (17). P propounds a new doctrine of repentance in that the voluntary repentance of a deliberate crime transforms the crime itself into an involuntary act. Therefore, it is suggested that, by repentance, a deliberate sin can be converted into an unintentional offence and, to ensure its complete annulment as well as the assurance of divine forgiveness, sacrificial expiation was required. The Priestly writer has managed to provide a means for dealing with both unintentional and deliberate sin, through the ritual process.

Such rituals are important for they provide a means by which the affected individual may be restored to their place within the community. They are also valuable in that they publicly express that process of reconciliation, so that a person is not only restored but seen to be re-integrated (18). Such an approach to the specific mechanisms involved in sacrifice in Leviticus is developed by Davies who posits that,

"sacrifice has to do with the correction of social description and the reformation of confused categories, as well as involving the problem of sin in other contexts" (19).

Douglas notes,

"Rites of reconciliation which enact the burial of the wrong have the creative effect of all ritual. They can help to erase the memory of the wrong and encourage the growth of right feeling" (20).

She cites Levy-Bruhl who noted that the act of restitution itself takes on the status of a rite of annulment and sees the law of talion thus,

"To the necessity of a counter-action equal to and like the action, is associated the law of talion ... because he has suffered an attack, received a wound, undergone a wrong, he feels exposed to an evil influence. A threat of misfortune hangs over him. To reassure himself, to regain calm and security, the evil influence thus released must be stopped, neutralised. Now this result will not be obtained unless the act

from which he suffers is annulled by a similar act in the opposite direction. This is precisely what retaliation procures for the primitive" (21).

An external act is not sufficient for strenuous efforts are made to bring the inward heart and mind into line with the public act. This emphasis on intention and motive is an integral part of P's manifesto, indeed it is the person who defiantly sins that is viewed as the greatest threat to the community. In order to control such behaviour or at least express disapproval in the strongest possible terms, P invokes penalties against those individuals.

As we have already noticed, the death penalty resides in the more ancient material, and, due to the political situation, would not be a penalty available to P. He invokes the karet penalty as a means of expressing disapproval for certain actions. It may be suggested that, as a consequence of P's stress on divine initiative which characterised his description of creation in Genesis 1, it is an inevitable corollary that he interprets karet as direct divine intervention. Such a usage reflects a lack of political power in P's manifesto but it may be part of P's idealism to see the restoration programme due to Yahweh's intervention, with Yahweh himself dealing automatically with any deviations of a serious nature. Since Yahweh was

viewed as authenticating Aaronidism, then Yahweh is called on to make it effective. The message, 'do not trifle with Yahweh' would be a lesson easily communicable by the Aaronides and would permit an interpretation of some past events in those terms with the obvious purpose of controlling future behaviour.

Karet is a major methodological tool which P uses to control the tide of assimilationism and it leaves the initiative with Yahweh. The task of expounding the penalty karet falls to the Aaronides who can interpret events to suit their own purpose. It may be misplaced to search for a single meaning for karet and instead be preferable to view it as a blanket term denoting direct divine intervention, which may mean extirpation and/or premature death or any current interpretation of the phrase 'he shall bear his iniquity'. Such concepts are more theoretical than practical which is expected in the nature of a manifesto and yet we see by Ezra's time that the punishment karet had been accepted and it had assumed the concrete meaning of excommunication. The threat factor contained within such a penalty is considerable, for Cohn notes,

"The threat of being 'cut off' by the hand of God, in His own time, hovers over the offender constantly and inescapably; he is not unlike the patient who is told by his doctors that his disease is incurable and that he might die any day. However merciful, because of its vagueness and lack of

immediacy, this threat of punishment may seem to modern criminals, in ancient times its psychological effect must have been devastating. The wrath of the omnipotent and omniscient God being directed particularly at yourself of all people and being certain to strike at you with unforeseeable force and intensity any day of the year and any minute of the hour, was a load too heavy for a believer to bear" (22).

The belief in the possibility of direct divine intervention was an important aspect in ancient Israel's self understanding. It is recognised that human justice at best is fallible and uncertain and, therefore, the belief in divine sanction was an important deterrent, as well as providing a garrisoning of human conscience. The pressure to conform with certain accepted norms was considerable and the possibility of incurring divine displeasure was a great threat to the Israelite community in the wake of the exilic crisis. Perhaps P hoped it would be more effective as a deterrent than the threat of the death penalty had been before the exile.

The invoking of karet in certain areas also served to highlight what behaviour was considered unacceptable. No society's ethical norms can be stated readily in the form of hard and fast rules or by sharply distinguishing acceptable behaviour from unacceptable. There is the behaviour that is regarded as desirable

and the behaviour which is regarded as tolerable. In order to define these points, we need both statements of ideals and descriptions of actual behaviour and its consequences. What is ideal behaviour and what is acceptable behaviour may not be identical but they are not unrelated and the definition of the ideal helps, indirectly, in defining the acceptable. P thus seeks to create a pure Israelite community and elaborates those ideals which are integral to such a society, as well as invoking karet to counteract behaviour which he deemed unacceptable. Since he does not possess the necessary political power, the most attractive option available to P is to invoke the threat of divine intervention.

It should be stressed that, while direct intervention by God was viewed as a punishment, the prime concern of P was to encourage confession and repentance by the people with the assurance that their sin and guilt would be dealt with by the sacrificial process. However, if such appeals went unheeded then there was a device which could be utilised so that the cult was not contaminated by the presence of those who persisted in their sinfulness. The use of pollution beliefs in a variety of circumstances and for diverse conditions with their accompanying rituals enabled P to influence and control society so that the ideals propounded in the Aaronide manifesto might be observed. While a

distinction can be drawn between light sins which might be associated with pollution beliefs and grave sins which might be associated with danger beliefs, the difference which P sees as crucial centres around motive and intention. The whole system of P seeks to influence people to conform to certain standards, providing the necessary mechanisms if transgressions occur. The greatest difficulty, which carries the sternest penalties, is the deliberate violation of accepted norms with no intention of reform or repentance. P deals most harshly with those who sin defiantly and invokes the karet penalty. They have transgressed accepted norms and violated the boundaries cherished by P for the identity of Israel. It may be assumed that they have acted defiantly in face of the heavy threat and deterrent factors by which P seeks to influence society. Their action is calculated and decisive. P, by invoking karet on such individuals, may be simply recognising what has already occurred in that the person has effectively removed themselves from the conscience of the community and, therefore, in disciplining them P is making formal what has already occurred. It is also in the nature of ideological proposals to resort to the harshest of penalties as a means of challenging such deliberate opposition. One can afford to be extreme in those instances since practical measures are never going to be used.

It might be suggested that the system of community discipline becomes effective on those who defiantly reject this system as they choose to go their own way. Since they choose to remove themselves from the community, then they must bear their iniquity and face the wrath of God in whatever form it may take. If the Day of Atonement ritual cleanses the sanctuary of its accumulated impurity and every year provides the opportunity to start afresh, do we have in this ritual refashioned by P an important pointer in the treatment of delinquents?

Milgrom has suggested that it is the defiant sin which penetrates the inner sanctuary and can only be removed by the Day of Atonement ritual (23). It is suggested that, in this ritual, we have a device by P to control the community, in that the delinquent has the opportunity to repent until the Day of Atonement ritual, after which time he is recognised as being cut off and the effects of his sinfulness are purged from the sanctuary by that ritual (24). This would provide a specific time structure for the restoration of wayward members and suggest a determined approach by P to preserve the purity of Israel. It also places responsibility on the individual to secure his place within the religious community of Israel, a consistent theme of P. We have seen how the deliberate sinner can have his curse of extinction removed with the

deliberate crime reduced to an inadvertence through repentance and confession; while failure to observe the Day of Atonement was in itself an act of arrogance, exposing the deliberate sinner to the penalty of karet. His behaviour has already indicated that he has chosen not to be part of the Israelite community, now the religious authorities officially recognise that.

It is accepted that such a construction as the Aaronide manifesto was ideal and yet we notice that its controls reveal a comprehensiveness and the penalties invoked seek to control behaviour in specific areas, with the use of karet as a penalty invoked when it is acknowledged that the person concerned has chosen to remove themselves from the community. The effectiveness of such a manifesto is seen in later years, in particular in Qumran, where there is a carefully controlled community life, as well as recognising the continuing effect the food laws still exert in the Jewish faith to this day. The Aaronides sought to preserve the identity of the Israelite community from the encroaching forces of assimilation and thus provide for its continued survival. Therefore, it is possible to see in P some of the early stages of control in the community of his time.

Footnotes

1. Ackroyd, 1968;
Chapter 1, p22-23 of thesis.
2. Ackroyd, 1962, p14
3. Ackroyd, 1962, p15
4. Ackroyd, 1962, p29
5. Ackroyd, 1962, p19
6. Ackroyd, 1977, p225
7. Horbury, 1985, p13
8. Horbury, 1985, p14, cites Hunzinger as denying,
"that any measures of exclusion from the general Jewish community were known before A.D.70".
9. Horbury, 1985, p14
10. Aune, 1976, p5, notes with reference to 1st Century Judaism that,
"deviation in matters of ritual practice and ethical behaviour constitute the only known causes for expulsion"
and alludes to Forkmann, 1972, as confirmation for this view. While McEleney, 1973, would see that doctrinal and theological deviations were responsible for expulsion. Aune, 1976, p7, defends the matter emphatically,
"it is certainly that ideas about God, Israel and Torah were not the basis either for separation or unity of Jewish sects; rather it was the intentional - behavioural

explications of those topics upon which Jewish religious life and thought centred".

I would concur with such an emphasis relative to P.

11. Douglas, 1966, p129
12. Douglas, 1966, p130
13. Douglas, 1966, p132
14. Douglas, 1966, p132
15. Douglas, 1975, p55
16. Frymer-Kensky, 1983, p404
17. Milgrom, 1976a, p123-124
18. Ackroyd, 1977, p222
19. Davies, 1977, p388-398
20. Douglas, 1966, p136
21. Levy-Bruhl, 1936, p392-395
22. Cohn, 1970, p72
23. see Chapter 5, p445-449 of thesis
24. Davies, 1977, p393-394, discusses the Day of Atonement ritual thus,

The nature of the covenant as an agreement between parties of different categories became clearer as their respective moral characters were acknowledged and the terms of reference reasserted. This dangerous state of ritual chaos came to an end and the natural order was restored after the immolation of the one goat for the nation's sin and the sending of another into the desert; the change was symbolized by the revesting of the high priest prior to the burning of the slaughtered victim. In other ritual contexts the priest and altars are

located at the sacred pole and serve to mediate the holy to the people who remain within the impure section. One context in which they were neither sacred nor profane but in a transitional state was that of ordination when they ate their own offering on the border between the 'tent and camp'. We may now understand other aspects of the atonement ritual such as the significance of the goat sent into the wilderness and we need not identify Azazel with the spirits of the wild but merely interpret the symbolism of the continuum. The goat then, passed through the people after having been identified with the sins of the nation and was led into the desert, not into the 'dumping ground for Jewish sin', but rather from the realm of ordered society, from the holiness of the Tabernacle into the chaos, into the symbolic nothingness which obtained outside the community of God's people. In one sense the goat no longer existed, for the wilderness did to it what the fire did to the remains of the slaughtered victim. In both cases a movement occurs from one pole to another of the continuum, and in the process a readjustment takes place in the status and relationships existing among those symbolically associated with the victims by the laying on of hands and the confession of sin. Destruction overtook both victims as the one drew too close to the divinity and the other too far away; they both passed through the normal boundaries of the social world. The destruction of one goat may symbolise at one level the destruction of the impurity resultant from the deliberate

violation of the law while the driving off of the other may symbolise the person who has chosen to leave the ordered society of the Israelite community and enter the world of chaos".

ABBREVIATIONS

ABR	Australian Biblical Review, Melbourne
AJT	American Journal of Theology, Chicago
AJSL	American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature, Chicago
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament, Kevelaer
ASTI	Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute, Leiden
BA	Biblical Archaeologist, New Haven
BAR	B A Reader, New Haven
Bib	Biblica, Rome
BJRL	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Manchester
BJVD	British Journal of Venereal Disease, London

BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London
BTT	Banner of Truth Trust, London
BWANT	Beitrage zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament, Leipzig
BWAT	Beitrage zur Wissenschaft vom Alten Testament, Stuttgart
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary, Cambridge
CBQ	Catholic Bible Quarterly, Washington
EJ	Encyclopedia Judaica, Jerusalem, 1971-72
EQ	Evangelical Quarterly, London
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Gottingen
HDB	Dictionary of the Bible, ed. J Hastings, Edinburgh, 1898-1904
HDB rev. ed.	Dictionary of the Bible, revised, ed. F C Grant and H H Rowley, 1963, Edinburgh

HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual, Cincinnati
ICC	The International Critical Commentary, Edinburgh
IDB	The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Nashville, 1962
IDBS	IDB Supplementary Volume, Nashville, 1976
Interp	Interpretation, Richmond
IEJ	Israel Exploration Journal, Jerusalem
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society, Baltimore
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature, New Haven
J Phil	Journal of Philosophy, London
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review, London
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Sheffield
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism, Leiden

JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies, Manchester
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies, Oxford
NCB	New Century Bible, London
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament, Grand Rapids
NT	Novum Testamentum
NTS	Nieuwe Theologische Studien, Groningen, Den Haag
OTL	Old Testament Library, London
OTS	Oudtestamentische Studien, Leiden
PEQ	Palestine Exploration Quarterly, London
RAI	Rencontre assyriologique internationale, Paris
RB	Revue Biblique, Jerusalem
RE	Realenzyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche, Gotha
RSR	Recherches de Science Religieuse, Paris

SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SJT	Scottish Journal of Theology, Edinburgh
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the O.T., Grand Rapids, 1977, ed J T Willis
UF	Ugarit -Forschungen, Neukirchen
VT	Vetus Testamentum, Leiden
VTs	Supplements to V.T., Leiden
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament, Neukirchen
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, Giessen, Berlin
ZTK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, Tubingen

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