

nor simple narrative telling of Josiah's purging of the temple of the symbols of Assyrian influence which had been introduced by Manasse (II Kings 21-25). In 621 the Assyrian Empire was breaking up, and Josiah recognized that the opportunity had come for a reaffirmation of the nation's ancient faith in the Lord, and acted accordingly.<sup>56</sup>

If this is a valid reconstruction of the event, then Josiah's reform was not the implementation of the provisions of the Deuteronomistic Code, and the code itself must have had another origin than that usually assigned to it. Some light is thrown on this question by Welch, who both argues for the northern provenance of the code,<sup>57</sup> and maintains that many of its provisions come from an earlier period than the time of Josiah.<sup>58</sup>

A likely occasion for its compilation would seem to be the fall of Samaria in 722, and, like E, it may well have been a product of the movement for the reconstruction of the northern community already referred to. If this is the case, then it is reasonable to assume that the code was the fundamental law of the north at the time of the fall of Judah.

The extent to which this movement, with its insistence that the Lord was the only God for Israel (Deut. 10: 17:27), had affected the south prior to 588 cannot be determined. But the present form of the account of Josiah's reformation, linking it as it does with Deuteronomy, may well echo a historical fact—that Josiah had been influenced by what the Deuteronomists had achieved in purifying the religious life of the north.

It has already been suggested that, following the fall of the state, the religious leaders of the south effected a rapprochement with the north. This involved ultimately their acceptance of the code of Deuteronomy, which was incorporated into the JE narrative, possibly displacing the code known as the Book of the Covenant (Exod. 20: 22-23:19). This code, a compilation of elements of diverse origin, seems to have been first incorporated into the national history just before the account of Moses' death, and later to have been moved to its present position to make room for the code of Deuteronomy. However that may be, the fact that the latter code was eventually integrated with the JE narrative is evidenced by the presence of E material in Deut. 11:29-30—adapted to make it part of the introduction to the code—and in Deut. 27: 2-8; of J material in Deut. 31:11-13, 22; and of both J and E in Deut. 34.

<sup>56</sup>See Deutscher, *Das deuteronomische Grundgesetz*, pp. 1-38, 57-58-59.

<sup>57</sup>*The Code of Deuteronomy*, pp. 145, 190-92, 287-291, 321-33, 36, 133, 154-55.

This new document, JED, was then elaborated by a succession of editors, who added such parts of Deut. 1:1-11:25; 27:11-31:13; 31:21-32:47; 33, as had not already found a place in D prior to its conflation with JE. They may in this process of elaboration have dropped some earlier material. They also made other additions and changes of varying degrees of importance, both in the narrative and in the code.

JED is thus the product of the Exile, and became the official history, so to speak, of the Palestinian-Jewish community. In its final form—and perhaps considerably earlier—it contained the law of the central sanctuary. It may well be, in view of the implications of Deut. 11:26-31; 27:2-8; Josh. 8:30-35; 24:1-27,<sup>59</sup> that this originally referred not to Jerusalem but to Shechem. That is, during the Exile, following the integration of the north and south, Jerusalem fell into the background, and men looked to Shechem for leadership. For it was the priests and prophets of Shechem who had responded selflessly to the situation resulting from the fall of the state in 722, and, thus responding, had been able by the grace of God to rebuild a broken community. It was the priests and prophets of Shechem who played the role of the good Samaritan, and brought help and healing to the bewildered people of the south a century and a quarter later. Jerusalem had fallen despite its supposed inviolability, and its priesthood had been carried into exile. It is little wonder that the prestige of Jerusalem passed to the north—at least for a time.

XIV. The Origin and Purpose of P

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.

The interest of this group was naturally focused upon Jerusalem, and it was due to their influence that, in the favorable circumstances which followed the rise of the Persian Empire, the temple in Jerusalem was rebuilt in 516, and the ancient cult restored.

<sup>59</sup>See Simpson, *Early Traditions of Israel*, ad loc.

It is difficult to recover the actual course of events during the next seventy-five years, so completely has the Chronicler confused the record now contained in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Nevertheless, a critical examination of the memoirs of Nehemiah,<sup>60</sup> leaves one with the inescapable impression that when Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem he found the city in a sorry state, divided in its leadership, largely controlled by a priesthood which was content to keep the temple going, but had lost its vision of the city as the dynamic center of a religion of world-wide significance.

Nehemiah's appointment as governor of Judah by the Persian king meant that Judah was made politically independent of Samaria. The governor of that province opposed Nehemiah's efforts to restore Jerusalem's self-respect. Nevertheless, the walls were rebuilt and measures taken for the security of the city (Neh. 2:17-6:15).

We have no way of knowing whether the political opposition to Nehemiah and his policy on the part of the governor of Samaria was reinforced by ecclesiastical opposition from the religious community finding its center in Shechem—the Deuteronomist community. This may have been the case. On the other hand, the hostility may have begun with the Jerusalemites, who saw in the continued prestige of Shechem a threat to their aim of making Jerusalem the center of the religion of Israel. However that may be, such hostility did eventually develop. The Priestly Code in its original form<sup>61</sup> was adopted as the manifesto of the Jerusalem group, backed by the influence of the Babylonian Diaspora. It contained the P narrative of Genesis, the account of the oppression in Egypt, the call of Moses, the plagues, the Passover and the Exodus, the passage through the Red Sea, the arrival at Sinai, the making of the tabernacle, the setting apart of the priesthood, the numbering of the people, the departure from Sinai, the sending of the manna and the quails, and the P narrative from Num. 15 through the account of the division of the land in Joshua. It thus provided divine sanction for the sabbath, the prohibition of eating blood, and circumcision. In its description of the tabernacle it is dependent upon the plan of the Jerusalem temple for the uniqueness of which it thus by implication claims divine authority. And it makes a similar claim for its priesthood.

<sup>60</sup>See Guzik Hölcher, *Die Bücher Ezra und Nehemia. Die Heilige Schrift des Alten Testaments*, ed. E. Kautsch and A. Bertholet (3rd ed., Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1921), II, 491-522.

<sup>61</sup>See Guzik Hölcher, *Geschichte der israelitischen und jüdischen Religion* (Göttingen: Albrecht, Lohmann, 1922), pp. 131-35.

The adoption of the Priestly Code made clear and definite the points at issue between the south and the north. Things can be no doubt that many were persuaded to transfer their allegiance from Shechem to Jerusalem. Evidence for this is provided not only by the general Deuteronomistic editing of the history of the monarchy (cf. I Kings 15:14, 22:43; II Kings 15:35; etc.), which assumes that Jerusalem, not Shechem, was the place the Lord had chosen "to cause his name to dwell there" (Deut. 12: 14); but particularly by the implied claim of the account of Josiah's reformation, in its final form, that Deuteronomy was a southern document, and that it was implemented by the suppression of all sanctuaries outside of Jerusalem (II Kings 23:8).

Nevertheless, this acceptance by the Deuteronomists (or a group of them) of the claims of the Jerusalem priesthood was by no means a simple act of submission. The Jerusalemites on their part seemed to have been forced to make a considerable concession when they accepted as authentic the sacred document of the north, JED. This was eventually conflated with the P Code, and the structural form of the present Pentateuch at last emerged. To this new document other laws, including the Holiness Code, were added from time to time as circumstances demanded. Indeed, it seems likely that additions had already been made to P in the interval between its promulgation and its fusion with JED. Other narratives were also inserted here and there, for instance, the story in Gen. 14.

The agreement between the north and the south which produced the Pentateuch did not, however, settle finally the fundamental point at issue. Shechem's claim to be the one legitimate sanctuary of the God of Israel continued to be voiced. Whether or not it issued in action—the offering of sacrifice at Shechem—formal schism was avoided for some time. But eventually the break occurred. In the reign of Darius III (522-485) a temple was erected on Mount Gerizim at Shechem, where—according to E—Israel, as commanded by Moses (Deut. 11:29-30; 27:27), had offered the first sacrifice following their entry into Palestine (Josh. 24:1-25; 8:30-35; see above), and the tie with Jerusalem was broken.

Nevertheless, the Samaritans retained the Pentateuch as their scriptures. Joshua, however, was not accepted, perhaps because of the redactional transposition of Josh. 8:30-35. This passage in its present form substitutes Bethel for Gerizim as the place of sacrifice (vs. 30), and

<sup>62</sup>Josephus (*Antiquities* XI, 8, 2) ascribes the erection of the temple to Sanballat, Nehemiah's contemporary, who lived a century earlier. It seems likely that his error lies here, not in his placing of the event in the reign of Darius III.