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*Journal of Biblical  
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## Introduction to the Journal

The purpose of the Journal of Biblical Pentecostalism is to bless the church with pentecostal scholarship from the faculty of Bridges Christian College. One part of the journal is exegetical and the other part is more practical in nature. The rationale for such a broad scope is so that there will be literature for the biblical researcher and the ministerial practitioner.

### Mission of the Journal

The *Journal of Biblical Pentecostalism* presents biblical exegesis, ministerial training literature, and research of church history through a Pentecostal hermeneutic.

### Goals of the Journal

This Journal has the following goals.

1. To present exegesis of the Scriptures with a Pentecostal hermeneutic to help the church understand the Bible and its theological principles.
2. To demonstrate the unity of the Scriptures through intertextual interpretation of the Old Testament and New Testament.
3. To apply Scriptural principles to a Pentecostal, practical ministry environment.
4. To present research of the roots and traditions of the Pentecostal movement throughout church history.

### Journal Categories

This Journal will present articles that are separated into the following categories:

1. Biblical Studies
  - This category presents interpretation of the biblical text with a Pentecostal perspective. Various themes and theological principles in the Old and New Testaments will be presented.
  - This section is primarily focused on research on the biblical text.
2. Spirit-Empowered Ministry
  - This category presents articles that provide guidance in modern-day, Pentecostal ministry topics.
  - The biblical text, historical concerns, and Pentecostal doctrines are taken into consideration. The emphasis in this section is on application of the biblical principles to Pentecostal ministry.

## A COMPARISON OF THE DEUTERONOMIST'S AND JEREMIAH'S PERSPECTIVES OF THE LEVITICAL PRIESTS

Richard Miller, Ph.D.

### *Introduction*

The study of the biblical-historical books and their relationship to the Book of Jeremiah has fascinated biblical scholars for centuries. Scholars still debate the influence of the historical books upon Jeremiah or Jeremiah's influence upon the historical books. Biblical Scholars have compared these two works as follows: 1. the influence of the covenant; 2. the influence of the kingship and the promise to King David; 3. the influence of the high places and idolatry; and 4. redactional criticism. One area of study which needs more attention is a comparison of the role of the Levitical priesthood and their failure to lead the people's spiritual lives.

The Book of Jeremiah soundly condemned the priesthood and the priesthood leadership for their failure to lead the people in proper worship of Yahweh. The author or authors<sup>1</sup> of the historical books did not criticize the failure of the priesthood to lead the people in proper worship. This divergent treatment of the priesthood between the Dtr and Jeremiah might be a significant difference in these works. This difference raises some critical questions which need to be addressed. If the Dtr redacted the Book of Jeremiah, why did the Dtr not harmonize these viewpoints? If the history were dependent upon Jeremiah, why did the Dtr not include a similar criticism of the priesthood? Did the Dtr intentionally omit this criticism for a political agenda? Does this omission help identify the Dtr? These questions raise issues that the author of this paper considered.

### *Who Was the Deuteronomist?*

One's identification of Dtr directly influences one's perception of the historical books. Scholars have proposed various suggestions over the last century. The four prominent positions which scholars maintain are as follows: 1. single authorship and unity of the historical work; 2. multiple authorship and unity of the work; 3. dual redactions in two different periods, one pre-exilic and the other exilic; and 4. "trito-redactions after 587 B.C.E."<sup>2</sup> The lack of positive identification of the Dtr contributes to the diversity of opinion.

The date of the Dtr influences the possible interpretations of the material. If one divides the material into pre-exilic and exilic, the basis for interpretation greatly changes. The same holds true for a total-exilic dating of the work. Unfortunately, scholars cannot settle this issue beyond a reasonable doubt. The limitations of this paper prohibit an in-depth study of all the possible views. Therefore, the author chose to consider the dual redaction hypothesis as the primary model of authorship by which to investigate the comparison of Jeremiah and the history. Frank Cross at the Harvard School of Divinity helped develop this model. The hypothesis argues eight factors to support this theory. The first four are considered minor, and the last four are considered significant: 1. The mention of final disasters was used in the early portions of the work (Dt. 4:25-28; Jos. 23:16; I Kg. 8:33-34, 46-51);<sup>3</sup> 2. The expression "unto this day (עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה)" is used fifty-seven times in the Masoretic text of the history and Deuteronomy (see appendix one for list). The Dtr did not use this expression during or after the reign of Josiah. The expression would be an inaccurate description for some situations after the destruction of Jerusalem; 3. The "annalistic sources"<sup>4</sup> would not have been available to the exilic author; 4. The literary style has an abrupt change after the reign of Josiah; 5. The structure of the material changed in the last chapters; 6. The literary critics showed the possibilities of redactional addition in the materials that have an exilic tone; 7—the subtle change in the promise

<sup>1</sup> The author of this material is called the Deuteronomist and will be defined as either a group or an individual who wrote or edited the historical books into their final form. The abbreviation Dtr was used to refer to the Deuteronomist.

<sup>2</sup> Raymond F. Person, Jr., "II Kings 24,18-25,30 and Jeremiah 52: A Text-Critical Case Study in the Redaction History of the Deuteronomistic History," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 105 (1993): 174-75.

<sup>3</sup> Richard D. Nelson. *The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History*. In *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Series*, 18 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981), 22-3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 25-26. (Book of Jasher, Book of the Acts of Solomon, Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel, Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah.)

given to the Davidic Dynasty from unconditional to conditional; and 8. The theological movement from the grace of God to the judgment of God represents the last factor.<sup>5</sup>

Another factor which must be taken into account is the Book of Deuteronomy. If the Dtr was responsible for the production of the Book of Deuteronomy, how could he have written the last chapter of II Kings? If he was twenty years old in 621 B.C.E. and the last recorded event in II Kings was the release of Jehoiachin in the thirty-seven year of his captivity, the Dtr would be more than eighty years old. The possibility of the author of the Book of Deuteronomy only being twenty is remote at best. The more logical speculation would place him close to forty years of age. This projection would make the Dtr more than one hundred at the last recorded event in the history. This brief analysis gave a minimum foundation for the rationale for selecting the double redaction hypothesis, which will be used in the latter chapters.

One's attempt to determine more than the time in which the Deuteronomist worked would be impossible to accomplish. Some scholars have suggested that Jeremiah or Baruch was the Dtr. This speculation was based upon the similarities of the styles in both the historical books and the book of Jeremiah. However, scholars have not produced concrete evidence which would sustain such a conclusion.

Another issue that would help determine the political agenda of history would be the author's social position. If one could determine the Dtr's status (a wealthy urban dweller, a priest, prophet, or other social factors), one could analyze and draw out the Dtr's biases from the historical accounts. The authors of Semitic literature of this period generally used their works to provide propaganda for their political causes. One can witness this factor in the writings of the Egyptians and the Hittites; each side wrote victorious accounts of the battle of Qadesh.<sup>6</sup> People throughout history attempted to glorify their accomplishments and prestige in a historical setting. One must look beyond the propaganda to see the elements of historical truth.

In conclusion, one can see the possibility for two redactions by either two individuals or two groups of people. They did not produce a work devoid of propaganda. They attempted to influence their time's religious and social conditions by portraying the history in the most favorable way possible. If one can determine the motivations behind the propaganda, one can better understand the writer's identification. This assumption was the basis used in the following chapters to facilitate one's understanding of the history and political motivations.

#### *The "Priest" in the Historical Books*

The Dtr used the words "priest" or "priests" 195 times in Deuteronomy and the historical books. An analysis of these many passages would require more space than allowed for this paper. The author selected some of the more significant passages to analyze and discuss. Then he looked for passages which might reflect the motivations of the Dtr.

The first passage to be considered is Dt. 17:8-13. The Dtr elevated the priests over the people by making judgments concerning legal disputes. The priests could pronounce death against those who disobeyed his decision.

Dt.17:12a<sup>7</sup> אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה בְּדוֹן לְבַלְתִּי שָׁמַע אֶל־הַפֶּהן הַעֲמֹד לְשָׁרָת  
שָׁם אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךָ אוֹ אֶל־הַשֹּׁפֵט וּמַת הָאִישׁ הַהוּא

If the priests could exercise this authority, they could have great power over the citizens. Corrupt priests could pervert this power into political and social power. In verse nine of this passage, the author specifically identified the priest as a Levitical priest.

The Dtr also elevated the position of the priests by connecting them to Moses in the following passage: Dt. 27:9 "Then Moses and the Levitical priests spoke unto all Israel, saying, 'Keep silent and hear, Israel! This day you have become a people for the Yahweh your God.'" The image fostered by the author allowed the Levitical priests to be seen as equals with Moses. This equality subconsciously would equate to authority.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>6</sup> John H. Walton, *Ancient Israelite Literature in its Cultural Context* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989), 114-5.

<sup>7</sup> The person who acts in arrogance in order not to obey the appointed priest to minister there to Yahweh your God or the judge, that person shall die. (All translations are the author's unless noted otherwise.)

In Jos. 3:3, the Levitical priests carried the Ark of the Covenant. This privilege also elevated the authority and stature of the priests. God allowed them to be responsible for the Ark, which contained the Law. The connection of the priest and the Ark allowed them to claim a closer relationship to Yahweh.

After considering all of the passages in the Book of Deuteronomy and Joshua, one can notice that the Levitical priesthood is referenced by name and has a prominent place in the narrative materials. The priesthood appears to be well organized and central to the cultic worship around the Ark of the Covenant. The picture painted in Judges was quite different. The first mention of any priest did not occur until Jg. 17:5. In this pericope, the priest is a wandering Levite looking for work. Micah hired him as a priest for his household. The story portrayed the priest as a "Man of God" who received supernatural insight into the future. Because of this, the tribe of Dan took the Levite priest and all of the graven images and cultic elements. The Dtr made no negative judgment against the priest. He never condemned the priest for allowing the graven image and other cultic items, which the Law prohibited. The blame for these items was placed on Micah as their creator. The priest went with the Danites to the city of Laish. After the conquest, the people called the name of the city Dan; the people set up the idols, and the Levite priest served the tribe of Dan. The Dtr evoked the name of Moses to justify this abomination (Jg. 18:30).

The pericope of Eli's sons in 1 Sam. 2:12-4:10 relates one of the only occurrences which one might be construed as a negative report about the Levitical priests. However, the Dtr portrayed the sons not as priests but as young evil men and only the sons of the priest Eli.

1 Sam. 2:12.<sup>8</sup> וּבְנֵי עֲלִי בְנֵי בְלִיעֵל לֹא יָדְעוּ אֶת־יְהוָה The Dtr implied that they were servants to the priesthood rather than acting priests (1 Sam. 2:15). This factor is negated by the reference in 1 Sam. 1:3 which called the two sons "priests of the Lord": וְשָׁם שְׁנֵי בְנֵי־עֲלִי חָפְנִי וּפְנִחָס פְּהִינִים לַיהוָה: The only criticism leveled against Eli was his inability to control his sons. The Dtr seemed to blame Eli's age as the reason for his failure.

The Dtr also used this pericope of Eli's sons to show that God kept the Levitical line pure by removing the evil priests. This pericope could reinforce the notion that the Levitical lineage maintained holiness by God's cleansing of all who were unworthy to serve Yahweh.

The Dtr mentioned the city of Shiloh in the Eli pericope. Some scholars have suggested that the Dtr was from the Northern Kingdom and, after the defeat of Samaria, brought their traditions and historical records down to Judah.<sup>9</sup> The city of Shiloh and Shechem were significant holy sites in the Northern Kingdom. Rehoboam went to Shechem to receive the blessings of the elders of Israel. Scholars have provided no conclusive evidence to substantiate this hypothesis.

Saul martyred eight-five priests from the town of Nob (1 Sam. 22:18). An amazing factor in this pericope was the deception used by David. David lied to the priests, and they paid with their lives. In a sense, they gave their lives for the future king of Israel, whom God was to bless with an eternal dynasty.

The Dtr attempted to explain the reason for the exaltation of the Zadok lineage over the Abiathar lineage in the ascension pericope of Solomon in 1 Kg. 2:27. This pericope gave the Zadok priesthood claim to the High Priest's role at the Temple. The Dtr continued to bias the credibility of all the priests except the Levitical Zadok lineage.

The priest dedicated the temple of Yahweh in 1 Kg. 8:8-10. In this pericope, the priest carried the Ark of the Covenant to the Holy of Holies. In verse ten, the Dtr remarked that the Ark was still there unto this day. This phrase creates various problems. The first problem concerns the ark being in the Temple after the attack by Shishak.

NAS 1 Kg. 14:25 Now it came about in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, that Shishak the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. 26 And he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house, and he took everything, even taking all the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

Did the Ark remain in the Temple, or did Shishak remove the Ark? If he did remove the ark, did the Dtr quote the expression from an earlier journal. The Ark could not have survived the attack of the Babylonians in 586 B.C.E. This verse was one of the verses which helped give credibility to the two-redactor theory.

The Jeroboam pericope became the standard to measure the sins of the kings. Jeroboam's sin was a rejection of the Levitical control of the religious rituals. He replaced the Levitical priests in the town of Shiloh and Shechem with non-Levite priests (1 Kg. 12:31). The Dtr rejected priests or individuals as unworthy to offer sacrifices when they did not meet the political needs of his thesis. The Dtr rejected Saul for making a sacrifice, but David was not. Samuel was not a Levite; yet, he performed many priestly functions. Samuel also offered sacrifices on high places throughout the kingdom (1 Sam 9:19). Jeroboam seemed to revert to the traditions in the book of Judges and

<sup>8</sup> Now the sons of Eli were worthless sons; they did not know Yahweh.

<sup>9</sup> William J. Doorly, *Obsession with Justice: The Story of the Deuteronomists* (New York: Paulist Press, 1994), 25.



1 Samuel. Each town maintained a high place to worship God in a community setting. Solomon even offered a sacrifice at Gibeon, a famous high place (1 Kg. 3:4). Clearly, the Dtr selected and chose events and interpreted them for his particular spin.

The people readily accepted Jeroboam's places of worship. This event seemed to indicate that the people preferred to worship in the fashion Jeroboam presented. The people resisted change when traditions and religious practices were involved. Jeroboam's worship practices apparently did not offend the common people, only the Levitical priests, whom Jeroboam had laid off from their jobs. They had become unemployed; this factor naturally would bring resentment and hostilities. The prophet, Ahijah, at Shiloh, supported the reign of Jeroboam in his prophecy (1 Kg. 11:29.) The populace also supported Jeroboam. The priests in the Northern Kingdom apparently supported the revolution until they became unemployed. Jeroboam moved his religious sites away from Shechem and Shiloh, which could have indicated the priest's withdrawal of support for Jeroboam.<sup>10</sup> Jeroboam appointed priests from among the common people. NAS 1 Kings 13:33 After this event, Jeroboam did not return from his evil way, but again he made priests of the high places from among all the people; any who would, he ordained, to be priests of the high places.

Jeroboam's tactic resembled a business owner breaking up a union. The union members do not appreciate the actions of the owner or the picket line breakers. The priesthood represented a way of life for the Levites. The more priests in the job market, the less work per person was available. Jeroboam threatened the livelihood of the Levitical priests. He also weakened the religious control of the Levitical priesthood in Jerusalem. The Dtr reflected their anger against Jeroboam.

The man of God pericope of 1 Kings 13 began the link between Josiah's reforms and the justification for the destruction of the high places. The move toward centralization required a justification for the destruction of the sacred places in the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. The prophecy of the man of God worked as the authority from God. The Dtr resented the non-Levite priests in the North. Their anger can be seen by the harsh treatment they were to receive (1 Kg. 13:1-3).

During the beginning of the Assyrian domination of Judah, Ahaz commanded the priest Uriah to build the altar as instructed by the Assyrians (2 Kg. 16:10). The Dtr acknowledged the priest's part in this pericope, but the Dtr implied that the king ordered the priests to comply with his wishes.

וַיִּצְוֵהוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶחָז אֶת־אֲוִרְיָה הַכֹּהֵן לְאֵמֹר עַל  
הַמִּזְבֵּחַ הַגָּדוֹל הַקָּטָן אֶת־עֲלֹת־הַבֶּקֶר וְאֶת־מִנְחַת הָעֶרֶב

The Dtr released Uriah from his wrongdoing because King Ahaz ordered him to build the altar. The Dtr did not condemn Ahaz nor the priest Uriah. What Ahaz did was an abomination to the Temple of Yahweh. Yet, the Dtr does not make the appropriate condemnation.

The high priest Hilkiah found the Book of the Law in 2 Kg. 22:8. This discovery and the spiritual renewal which followed represent a key to the Dtr's grand theme of the historical books. A major theological concern for the Dtr was the connection between "blessings and cursings" with "obedience." This theological issue was discussed in chapter four. The Dtr portrayed the priest as the one who found the Law and revealed to the king what the Law contained. They encouraged king Josiah to enact the reforms. The Dtr allowed the lead of Josiah in the renewal process, but if the priest did not want this reform, they could have neglected to give the book to Josiah. The priesthood strengthened their position with the Book of the Law.

In 2 Kg. 23:4 Josiah ordered the priests to remove all of the idols of the foreign religions.

NAS 2 Kg. 23:4 Then the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest and the priests of the second-order and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel.

The issue raised from this passage considers who put or allowed the placement of the Baal, Asherah, and astrology items for use in the Temple. The possibility of these items being in the temple without the consent of the High Priest seems remote. This factor allows one to suggest that the priests worshiped the foreign gods along with the people. Yet, the Dtr did not condemn the priesthood. Jeroboam built bull altars for the people to worship Yahweh. At least he was attempting to please Yahweh. In this situation, the priest worshiped foreign gods. How could the Dtr not

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 29.

condemn the priests for their failures? Ultimately the Dtr blamed Manasseh for the sins of Judah rather than the priesthood.

The Dtr also related the fortune of the unemployed priests who were prohibited from sacrificing at the high places. The Levitical priests allowed them to have fellowship with the Levitical priests but were prohibited from making spiritual contributions in the Temple. The segregation of the social classes was a common practice for ancient civilizations. Generally, people did not make vertical advances. One can see this practice in the Order of the Community scroll found in the Qumran Caves.

These various pericopae were selected for their potential comparison to the views of Jeremiah and the priest. The pericopae never openly criticized the Levitical priesthood. The Dtr only portrayed Eli's sons as evil priests, but he redeemed the situation by killing the two sons in a battle to maintain purity in the Levitical line. When the opportunity arose, the Dtr did not condemn the priests but shuffled the blame unto the kings.

### *The "Priest" in the Book of Jeremiah*

Jeremiah referred to the priests forty-two times in thirty-nine verses. All of the verses cannot be considered for this analysis. The author selected verses that generally did reflect the prophet's attitude toward the priesthood. The prophet often grouped the priests and prophets together in his prophetic oracles.

Jeremiah only called the priests "Levitical priests" in 33:18, 21, and 22. This factor can cause concern. Was Jeremiah referring to the Levitical priesthood or the foreign priesthood in the other passages? Jeremiah was addressing the Levitical priesthood because generally, the priests were seen in places of leadership, either in public or in the temple. He also referred to the priests by name who represented the king. These factors allow for the possibility that Jeremiah did refer to the Levitical priesthood when he used the generic word "priest."

The first reference in Jeremiah considered is Jer. 2:8a. **אָמְרוּ אִיהָ יְהוָה וְתַפְשִׁי הַחֹרֶה לֹא יִדְעוּנִי** Jeremiah condemned the priests for their failure to keep in touch with Yahweh. Jeremiah's criticism goes to their core values. They performed their duties without involving themselves in a relationship with God. The verb to know (**לֹא יִדְעוּנִי**) included more than intellectual knowledge. "To know' Yahweh was to enter into deep personal commitment to him."<sup>11</sup> The priest did not live by the Law that they were to uphold.

Jeremiah compared the priests with thieves in 2:26. He did not call them thieves but inferred that their shame was equal to that of a thief.<sup>12</sup> The injustices of the priests committed upon the people were a reproach upon the priesthood. Jeremiah continued to blast the priesthood in Jer. 5:31. **וְעַמִּי אֶהְבֵּוּ כֵן וּמִה־תַּעֲשׂוּ לְאַחֲרֵיתָהּ: נְבִאוֹ-בְשָׁקֶר וְהַכֹּהֲנִים יִרְדּוּ עַל-יְרֵדֵיהֶם** Holladay stated that the expression "rule unto their hands"<sup>13</sup> should be understood as a deconsecration. He believed that one should translate the verse as in Jg. 14:9 where Samson scraped the honey from the lion carcass.<sup>14</sup> The phrase presents difficulties to translate because of the unclear connection between the priests and the prophets. The message of Jeremiah was still clear; the priests were corrupt.

In Jer. 6:13, Jeremiah condemned all of the priests and the prophets (**וּמִנְבִיאֵי וְעַד-כֹּהֵן כָּלֹּ עֲשָׂה שָׁקֶר**). He called them all deceptive. One might construe Jeremiah's all-inclusive language as an exaggeration because Jeremiah related the pervasive corruption within the priesthood.

Jeremiah placed the prophets and the priests together in the judgment that was to come in Jer. 14:18. The priests attempted to ply their trade,<sup>15</sup> but the devastation brought great sorrow to their hearts, and tears flowed.

Jeremiah rebuked the priests for defiling the House of the Lord. This rebuke is seen in Jer. 23:11 (**יְהוָה: נָאם** **כִּי-גַם-נְבִיאֵי גַם-פִּהֶן חָנְפוּ גַם-בְּבֵיתִי מִצְאָתִי רַעְתֶּם נָאם**) Jeremiah's rebuke not only condemned the priests but the dwelling place of Yahweh. If the priests defiled the house, Yahweh would have no choice but to destroy the Temple. Jeremiah's indictment of the priesthood provided a reason for Yahweh to destroy the Temple.

<sup>11</sup> J. A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, in *New International Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 169.

<sup>12</sup> ~h,yref ~h,ykel.m; hM'he laer'f.yI tyBe Wvybiho !Ke aceM'yI yKi bN"G: tv,bko Jer 2:26  
~h,yaeybin>W ~h,ynEh]kow>

<sup>13</sup> NAS Jer. 5:31 The prophets prophesy falsely, And the **priests rule on their own authority**; And My people love it so! But what will you do at the end of it? NRS Jer. 5:31 the prophets prophesy falsely, and the **priests rule as the prophets direct**; my people love to have it so, but what will you do when the end comes?

<sup>14</sup> William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, in *Hermeneia* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 201.

<sup>15</sup> Thompson, 284-5.

Jeremiah continued his assault upon the integrity of the priests by stating that they were incapable of receiving an oracle from Yahweh due to their corrupt status in Jer. 23:33. In 23:34, Jeremiah insisted that if a prophet stated that he had an oracle, God was going to punish him for lying.

Jeremiah's tone changed in chapters thirty-one and thirty-three. The prophet Jeremiah prophesied how God's attitude would change toward the priests. They received blessings instead of cursings. In 33:18 and 21, the prophet called the priests "Levitical priests." These two verses are the only references in Jeremiah to Levitical priests. Jeremiah made the reference after the restoration of the cultus. This could be considered a redaction by the Dtr, or Jeremiah was emphasizing the "legitimate priests."<sup>16</sup>

In Jer. 34:19-20, Jeremiah's tone returned to judgment. The priests participated in some form of sacrificial ritual involving a calf. He condemned their actions and pronounced God's judgment upon their lives.

A survey of the significant passages in Jeremiah which referred to the priests demonstrates a negative reaction of Jeremiah toward the priesthood. Only on three occasions did Jeremiah have a positive reaction toward the priesthood. However, the reaction was after the destruction when God was restoring the people of Israel.

### *Comparing Jeremiah and the Deuteronomist's Usage of the Word Priest*

In sections two and three above, one can see a totally different approach to the priests and their spiritual fitness. Jeremiah condemned the priests for their participation in the corruption of Judah. The Dtr avoided any criticism of the Levitical priests, except Eli's sons. Section four considers possible motivations behind the texts. Section one related how history was not a list of facts, but events told for a particular purpose. The author's goal in this section attempts to construct the motivations of the Dtr and Jeremiah.

The final form of the deuteronomistic history was completed after the exile started. The destruction of the Temple and the fall of the Davidic monarchy and "with it the promise and hope that had been attached to it"<sup>17</sup> needed a theological explanation. The historical events disrupted the religious systems of the Jewish people. The cold reality of facts destroyed their philosophical premises. The Davidic monarchy did not reign eternally, and Yahweh did not protect the temple from destruction.

Robert Carroll has suggested that the Cognitive Dissonance Theory<sup>18</sup> helps explain the need to write a history which explains a current condition. People desire knowledge. With new knowledge, conflicts arise within one's intellectual systems. The next step in the mental process is to resolve these conflicts. The Dtr had to resolve conflicts within his theological system. God allowed the temple and the Davidic monarchy to be destroyed, so he set out to write a plausible explanation for this disaster. He reasoned that Manasseh had caused Israel to sin beyond recovery. Josiah's reforms were too little and too late to save Judah. Jeremiah rejected this fatalistic belief in Jer. 7:3 "Thus says the Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Cause to be good your ways and your deeds, and I will completely dwell with you in this place.'" Jeremiah held out hope of avoiding the imminent destruction if repentance occurred.

The Dtr needed an inevitable destruction. This reasoning allowed the Dtr to shift the blame from those present at the time of the destruction to the dead king, Manasseh. The average citizen struggling in the street would naturally blame those in charge of the Temple and the palace. The monarchy was no longer available to absorb the anger of the people. The only group left was the priests. The religious system was in chaos, with no Temple to provide focus and stability. The average person needed to worship God. The only place to worship Yahweh was on the high places. The priests desired to maintain control of the religious system. To accomplish this goal, the Dtr had to condemn the high places and the kings, who allowed these places to operate, as a reason for the destruction of the Temple. The priests no longer had a place of worship to help centralize the citizen's religious needs.

Jeremiah clearly understood that the king, the priests, and the prophets were all guilty. He vigorously preached the need for all three of these groups to repent. Jeremiah desired to see the Temple, Jerusalem, and the people spared from destruction, which was the next step for God's punishment. Jeremiah's motivation for his sermons was for true repentance of the people. The motivation for the Dtr was protecting what remained of the Levitical priesthood.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 602.

<sup>17</sup> Martin Noth, *The Chronicler's History*, in *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series*, 50, trans. by H. B. M. Williamson (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 129.

<sup>18</sup> Robert Carroll, *When Prophecy Failed: Cognitive Dissonance in the Prophetic Traditions of the Old Testament* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1979), 91.

For the Dtr to accomplish this task, he needed to distance the priests from their sins and blame their actions upon the kings. In section two above, one can see a repeated attempt to blame the kings for the actions of the priest. The kings commanded the priests to set up idols. The kings commanded the priests to make sacrifices to the foreign gods. The Dtr painted a picture of a priesthood who desired what was right for the nation but had to obey the king's orders.

The failure of the Dtr to mention the prophets of Jeremiah, Micah, Amos, Hosea, Habakkuk, Nahum, and Zephaniah raises interesting questions.<sup>19</sup> These prophets preached repentance, and most were critical of the priesthood. Did the Dtr avoid mentioning these prophets to diminish their credibility? The Dtr's theme was the disobedience and sin of the kings and the people. The prophets condemned the priests along with the kings and the people. The Dtr did not desire this depiction. He avoided all appearances which might cause the priesthood a negative impression. He illustrated this with the fall of Samaria. When the Dtr blamed the priests in the Northern Kingdom for the fall of Samaria, the Dtr continually reminded the reader that Jeroboam had appointed illegitimate priests who were not of the Levitical line. If the Dtr had applied the same standards of conduct to the Levitical priesthood as he did the non-Levitical priest, he would have no choice but to condemn their actions. This factor was evident in the Dtr's presentation of Josiah's attempt to clean up the Temple. The high priest controlled the activities of the Temple. He could have attempted to get support from the king to reform the religious practices.

The Dtr's historical presentation seems to shield the priests from condemnation. The question which needs to be asked is, "Why?" Jeremiah's motivations were made clear by his blunt criticism of sin and the need for repentance. However, the Dtr motivations are unclear. He needed to preserve the history of the nation, especially after the destruction of Jerusalem. He also needed to explain the conflict in the Jewish theology. What accounts for his failure to include the Levitical priests' role in the fall of Jerusalem and the Temple? With the lack of stability in Judea, the people needed hope. This hope could only come with a return to Yahweh. If the Dtr had condemned the Levitical priests, the people might have rejected their leadership.

The Babylonians boasted that their gods were greater than all the gods of the universe. Yahweh did not protect the city nor his Temple. To explain Yahweh's apparent defeat, the Dtr had to reinterpret the historical events and show the Babylonians as the agent of Yahweh to correct his sinful children. However, if the populace blamed the priests because of their failure to worship Yahweh properly, the support of the people could have turned against them.

Jeremiah preached his messages when hope was still alive. He did not have to protect a fragile religious system on its deathbed. He preached the truth but was rejected by the priesthood and the prophets of his day. This contrast between the Dtr and Jeremiah's messages concerning the priests makes it unlikely that Jeremiah wrote the historical books. The converse statement also would hold true. The Dtr did little or no redactions in the Book of Jeremiah. The only place where this seems probable was in Jer. 33:18 and 21, where God gave restoration to the Levitical priesthood.

### *Conclusion*

The Dtr lived in a time of great turmoil. He attempted to make sense of the greatest tragedy in Jewish history. He was not concerned about historical preciseness, but he was concerned with survival. He needed to reinterpret all of the traditions he had learned and formulate a revitalized religious system. The Dtr felt the pressures of religious extinction. If the people believed that Yahweh was inferior to the Babylonian gods, why would they desire to worship Yahweh? People desire to be associated with a winner. The reinterpretation of Jewish history allowed the people to maintain pride in their God, Yahweh. This reinterpretation also allowed the Levitical priesthood to redeem their positions within the Jewish community. The passage in Jer. 33:18 and 21 revealed the desire of the remnant to serve God as he intended. Jeremiah and the Dtr both had the same goal: the survival of the Jewish nation. Jeremiah was primarily before the exile; the Dtr was after the exile.

### *Appendix*

Location of the word "priests" in the Deuteronomistic history and Jeremiah:

Dt. 17:18, Dt. 18:1, Dt. 19:17, Dt. 21:5, Dt. 24:8, Dt. 27:9, Dt. 31:9, Jos. 3:3, Jos. 3:6, Jos. 3:8, Jos. 3:13, Jos. 3:14, Jos. 3:15, Jos. 3:17, Jos. 4:9, Jos. 4:10, Jos. 4:11, Jos. 4:16, Jos. 4:17, Jos. 4:18, Jos. 6:4, Jos. 6:6, Jos. 6:8, Jos. 6:9,

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<sup>19</sup> Christopher Begg, "The Non-mention of Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk in the Deuteronomistic History." *Bibische Notizen* 38/39 (1987): 19-18. Christopher Begg, "The Non-mention of Amos, Hosea and Micah in the Deuteronomistic History." *Bibische Notizen* 32 (1986):41-53.

Jos. 6:12, Jos. 6:13, Jos. 6:16, Jos. 6:20, Jos. 8:33, Jos. 21:19, Jg. 18:30, 1 Sam. 1:3, 1 Sam. 2:13, 1 Sam. 2:28, 1 Sam. 5:5, 1 Sam. 6:2, 1 Sam. 22:11, 1 Sam. 22:17, 1 Sam. 22:18, 1 Sam. 22:19, 1 Sam. 22:21, 2 Sam. 8:17, 2 Sam. 15:35, 2 Sam. 17:15, 2 Sam. 19:11, 2 Sam. 20:25, 1 Kg. 4:4, 1 Kg. 8:3, 1 Kg. 8:4, 1 Kg. 8:6, 1 Kg. 8:10, 1 Kg. 8:11, 1 Kg. 12:31, 1 Kg. 12:32, 1 Kg. 13:2, 1 Kg. 13:33, 2 Kg. 10:11, 2 Kg. 10:19, 2 Kg. 12:4, 2 Kg. 12:5, 2 Kg. 12:6, 2 Kg. 12:7, 2 Kg. 12:8, 2 Kg. 12:9, 2 Kg. 12:16, 2 Kg. 17:27, 2 Kg. 17:28, 2 Kg. 17:32, 2 Kg. 19:2, 2 Kg. 23:2, 2 Kg. 23:4, 2 Kg. 23:5, 2 Kg. 23:8, 2 Kg. 23:9, 2 Kg. 23:20, Jer. 1:1, Jer. 1:18, Jer. 2:8, Jer. 2:26, Jer. 4:9, Jer. 5:31, Jer. 8:1, Jer. 13:13, Jer. 19:1, Jer. 26:7, Jer. 26:8, Jer. 26:11, Jer. 26:16, Jer. 27:16, Jer. 28:1, Jer. 28:5, Jer. 29:1, Jer. 29:25, Jer. 31:14, Jer. 32:32, Jer. 33:18, Jer. 33:21, Jer. 34:19, Jer. 48:7, Jer. 49:3, Jer. 50:36

Location of the word “priest” in the Deuteronomistic history and Jeremiah:

Dt. 10:6, Dt. 17:9, Dt. 17:12, Dt. 18:3, Dt. 20:2, Dt. 26:3, Dt. 26:4, Jos. 14:1, Jos. 17:4, Jos. 19:51, Jos. 20:6, Jos. 21:1, Jos. 21:4, Jos. 21:13, Jos. 22:13, Jos. 22:30, Jos. 22:31, Jos. 22:32, Jg. 17:5, Jg. 17:10, Jg. 17:12, Jg. 17:13, Jg. 18:4, Jg. 18:6, Jg. 18:17, Jg. 18:18, Jg. 18:19, Jg. 18:24, Jg. 18:27, 1 Sam. 1:9, 1 Sam. 2:11, 1 Sam. 2:14, 1 Sam. 2:15, 1 Sam. 2:35, 1 Sam. 14:3, 1 Sam. 14:19, 1 Sam. 14:36, 1 Sam. 21:1, 1 Sam. 21:2, 1 Sam. 21:4, 1 Sam. 21:5, 1 Sam. 21:6, 1 Sam. 21:9, 1 Sam. 22:11, 1 Sam. 23:9, 1 Sam. 30:7, 2 Sam. 15:27, 2 Sam. 20:26, 1 Kg. 1:7, 1 Kg. 1:8, 1 Kg. 1:19, 1 Kg. 1:25, 1 Kg. 1:26, 1 Kg. 1:32, 1 Kg. 1:34, 1 Kg. 1:38, 1 Kg. 1:39, 1 Kg. 1:42, 1 Kg. 1:44, 1 Kg. 1:45, 1 Kg. 2:22, 1 Kg. 2:26, 1 Kg. 2:27, 1 Kg. 2:35, 1 Kg. 4:2, 1 Kg. 4:5, 2 Kg. 11:9, 2 Kg. 11:10, 2 Kg. 11:15, 2 Kg. 11:18, 2 Kg. 12:2, 2 Kg. 12:7, 2 Kg. 12:9, 2 Kg. 12:10, 2 Kg. 16:10, 2 Kg. 16:11, 2 Kg. 16:15, 2 Kg. 16:16, 2 Kg. 22:4, 2 Kg. 22:8, 2 Kg. 22:10, 2 Kg. 22:12, 2 Kg. 22:14, 2 Kg. 23:4, 2 Kg. 23:24, 2 Kg. 25:18, Jer. 6:13, Jer. 8:10, Jer. 14:18, Jer. 18:18, Jer. 20:1, Jer. 21:1, Jer. 23:11, Jer. 23:33, Jer. 23:34, Jer. 29:25, Jer. 29:26, Jer. 29:29, Jer. 37:3, Jer. 52:24

Location of the word “priesthood” in the Deuteronomistic history and Jeremiah:

Jos. 18:7

Location of the word “Levitical” in the Deuteronomistic history and Jeremiah:

Dt. 17:9, Dt. 17:18, Dt. 18:1, Dt. 24:8, Dt. 27:9, Jos. 3:3, Jos. 8:33, Jer. 33:18, Jer. 33:21

Location of the words “Levite” or “Levites” in the Deuteronomistic history and Jeremiah:

Dt. 12:12, Dt. 12:18, Dt. 12:19, Dt. 14:27, Dt. 14:29, Dt. 16:11, Dt. 16:14, Dt. 18:6, Dt. 18:7, Dt. 26:11, Dt. 26:12, Dt. 26:13, Dt. 27:14, Dt. 31:25, Jos. 14:3, Jos. 14:4, Jos. 18:7, Jos. 21:1, Jos. 21:3, Jos. 21:4, Jos. 21:8, Jos. 21:20, Jos. 21:27, Jos. 21:34, Jos. 21:40, Jos. 21:41, Jg. 17:7, Jg. 17:9, Jg. 17:10, Jg. 17:11, Jg. 17:12, Jg. 17:13, Jg. 18:3, Jg. 18:15, Jg. 19:1, Jg. 20:4, 1 Sam. 6:15, 2 Sam. 15:24, 1 Kg. 8:4, Jer. 33:22

Location of the word “unto this day” in the Deuteronomistic history and Jeremiah:

Dt. 2:22, Dt. 3:14, Dt. 10:8, Dt. 11:4, Dt. 29:3, Dt. 34:6, Jos. 4:9, Jos. 5:9, Jos. 6:25, Jos. 7:26, Jos. 8:28, Jos. 8:29, Jos. 9:27, Jos. 13:13, Jos. 14:14, Jos. 15:63, Jos. 16:10, Jos. 22:3, Jos. 22:17, Jos. 23:8, Jos. 23:9, Jg. 1:21, Jg. 1:26, Jg. 6:24, Jg. 10:4, Jg. 15:19, Jg. 18:12, Jg. 19:30, 1 Sam. 5:5, 1 Sam. 6:18, 1 Sam. 12:2, 1 Sam. 27:6, 1 Sam. 29:3, 1 Sam. 29:6, 1 Sam. 29:8, 1 Sam. 30:25, 2 Sam. 4:3, 2 Sam. 6:8, 2 Sam. 18:18, 1 Kg. 8:8, 1 Kg. 9:13, 1 Kg. 9:21, 1 Kg. 10:12, 1 Kg. 12:19, 2 Kg. 2:22, 2 Kg. 8:22, 2 Kg. 14:7, 2 Kg. 16:6, 2 Kg. 17:23, 2 Kg. 17:34, 2 Kg. 17:41, 2 Kg. 20:17, Jer. 7:25, Jer. 32:20, Jer. 35:14, Jer. 44:10

