

Biblical Sociology. VI

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BIBLICAL SOCIOLOGY. VI

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The method of this investigation, as already stated, provides first for an exhibit of institutions common to ancient Israel and the Semites. We began by analyzing the biblical data, and showing how the structure of ancient Israelite society was in the same class with social structures throughout the Semitic area. This part of our task is provisionally closed. The just preceding instalment opened a further application of method, which provides for synthetic treatment upon the foundation of the analysis. We are attempting to show how Israelite heathenism was transformed into the distinctive religion of Israel through the *stress* of situations in the social process. The religion by which the Bible is distinguished was developed with reference to the idea of Yahweh as opposed to other gods. In order to be intelligible, this idea must be treated primarily from the standpoint of the contact of alien social groups. The traditional opposition of Yahweh to the Baalim was generated in the first instance by the circumstances of the Israelite invasion and settlement of Canaan. The adherents of these contrasted gods came together in the shock of war. They were compelled to accept each other's presence, and were finally fused into a new and larger social mass. A lot of alien social groups were thus brought into a situation whose terms no authority was competent to define. There was nowhere any social machinery by which the general situation could be satisfactorily adjusted, either from the standpoint of politics or religion. This fact can be emphasized, and our inquiry set forward, by a study of Israelite places of worship.

THE SANCTUARIES OF YAHWEH

The books of Deuteronomy and Joshua assume that the social organism of Israel was an abrupt creation. They picture a

number of nomadic, desert clans as being welded suddenly into a nation. The constitution is prescribed by Yahweh, acting through Moses. The sign of the political and religious integrity of the new nation is the *single sanctuary*, which is to be *the one legitimate place of worship*.

In sharp contrast with the Deuteronomic theory, the actual disposition of places of worship, after the settlement in Canaan, shows that the national organism was a gradual development. The worship of Yahweh was conducted at local sanctuaries primarily instituted by the component clans of Israel. There were at first no national authorities. Moreover, the monarchy itself (by the very circumstances of its origin) was unable to control the situation from the standpoint of Deuteronomy. In studying this remarkable contrast, the true point of departure is the sanctuary law said to have been given through Moses on the plains of Moab, just before the Israelites crossed the Jordan:

The Law of the Single Sanctuary

When ye go over the Jordan, and dwell in the land which Yahweh your god causeth you to inherit, and he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety; then it shall come to pass that to the place which Yahweh your god shall choose to cause his name to dwell there, thither shall ye bring all that I command you—your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave-offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto Yahweh. . . . Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest; but in the place which Yahweh shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee (Deut. 12:10-14).

This law is so definite and explicit that it hardly calls for comment. It is well for us to note, however, that before the one legitimate sanctuary can be set up the Israelites must have rest from all their enemies round about, so that they dwell in safety. This condition, according to the book of Joshua, was promptly fulfilled. For we read:

Joshua took the whole land, according to all that Yahweh spake unto Moses. And Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel, according to their divisions by their tribes. *And the land had rest from war* (Josh. 11:23). So Yahweh gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their

fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And Yahweh gave them rest round about, according to all that he swore unto their fathers. And there stood *not a man* of all their enemies before them. Yahweh delivered all their enemies into their hand (21:43, 44; italics ours).

Elsewhere in the same book we read, in harmony with these notices: "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled themselves together at Shiloh, and set up the tent of meeting there. And the land was subdued before them" (18:1; cf. 22:4). According to Joshua, then, the erection of the tent of meeting at Shiloh, in the hill country of Ephraim, was accomplished in strict obedience to the law of the one valid sanctuary. The tent contained the box, or ark, of the covenant, and an altar for sacrifice. No other place for the worship of Yahweh might be found anywhere throughout the length and breadth of the land. The sanctuary at Shiloh was to be the sign of the political and religious integrity of the new nation. Here alone may Israel offer its burnt offerings and sacrifices. Here alone may the rites and ceremonies take place which lawfully express the relations between Israel and its covenant god.

In order to emphasize the legitimacy and uniqueness of the altar in Shiloh, a long and interesting narrative is inserted in the book of Joshua concerning a great altar, named *ED*, which was built by certain clans, the Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassites. These clans "built an altar by the Jordan—a great altar to look upon. . . . And when the children of Israel heard of it, the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up against them to war." According to the view of this narrative, Shiloh was the rallying ground upon such an occasion, since it was the sanctuary of the whole people. Before proceeding to exterminate their brethren for the crime of building this great and imposing altar, the congregation of Israel sent word to them as follows: "What trespass is this that ye have committed against the god of Israel, to turn away this day from following Yahweh in that ye have builded you an altar, to rebel this day against Yahweh? . . . Rebel not against us, in building you an altar besides the

altar of Yahweh our god." The reply to this was that the altar in question was not to be used for worship and sacrifice, but that it was intended simply as a mute "witness" (*ED*) to the fact that Yahweh was the god of Israel. "And the thing pleased the children of Israel. And the children of Israel blessed *elohim*, and spake no more of going up against them to war" (chap. 22).

According to the Book of Samuel, the sanctuary at Shiloh was still in use near the end of the period of the judges. For we read, concerning Elkanah, the father of Samuel: "This man went up out of his city from year to year to worship and to sacrifice unto Yahweh of hosts in Shiloh" (I Sam. 1:3). The same passage refers to the Shiloh sanctuary as the "house (*bayith*) of Yahweh" (vs. 7) and also as the "temple (*hekel*) of Yahweh" (vs. 9). It was at this time in charge of Eli, the Aaronic priest, whose two sons were wicked men. With reference to these men we find another passage bearing upon Shiloh considered as the one legitimate sanctuary:

And there came a man of *elohim* unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith Yahweh, Did I reveal myself unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? And did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings of the children of Israel made by fire? Wherefore trample ye upon my sacrifice, and upon mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation, and honorest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people? (I Sam. 2:27-29).

In this passage the sanctuary of Shiloh is referred to as the "habitation" of Yahweh, where all the offerings of Israel are brought. Here alone can the one legitimate place of worship be found. In the times of Eli and Samuel, the Philistines extended their power into the hill country of Ephraim; and apparently the noted house of worship at Shiloh was destroyed. For after Eli the Shiloh sanctuary drops from view. An important reference to it is found in the prophet Jeremiah, who makes Yahweh say: "But go now unto my place which was in Shiloh *where I caused my name to dwell at the first*, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel"

(Jer. 7:12). In the time of Jeremiah, then, who lived as late as the Babylonian exile, the ruins of the temple of Shiloh could still be seen a short distance to the east of the great north road that led up through the hills of Ephraim.

The destruction of the temple at Shiloh seems to have been coincident with the capture of the ark of Yahweh by the Philistines. The ark had been removed from the Shiloh sanctuary and carried into battle by the Israelites. The battle was lost by Israel; and the ark was taken by the enemy, who carried it away into their own country (I Sam. 4:1 f.). The sacred object remained in foreign hands for twenty years. "And it came to pass, from the day that the ark abode in Kiriath-Jearim, that the time was long, for it was twenty years" (I Sam. 7:2). It will be recalled that Kiriath-Jearim was one of the many *Canaanite* cities which the Israelites were unable to take at the time of the invasion. It was a member of a league of four cities headed by Gibeon. It had remained Canaanite in the time since the invasion; and it was now under suzerainty of the Philistines. The ark lay here, inaccessible to the Israelites, for a long time—twenty years according to the text quoted; and it was not recovered by the Israelites until they had been consolidated under David. After the Philistine power had been shattered by this king, he at once proceeded to remove the ark from Kiriath-Jearim (II Sam. 6:2; cf. I Chron. 13:5, 6). After a short delay, the sacred object was taken into a fort called Zion, or "the city of David." Zion was connected with the Canaanite city of Jerusalem. This ancient and famous place had been previously captured and occupied by David, who held it by means of a garrison. Jerusalem, in fact, remained essentially alien throughout the reign of David, if not for generations after. The ark was not placed in the Canaanite section, but in the Israelite fort of Zion, where it lay in a tent, covered by curtains (II Sam. 6:12).

We have now reached the point where we may intelligently discuss the vital matter of the *one* versus the *many* sanctuaries of Yahweh. We read that after the ark had been set in its place, in the midst of the tent that was pitched for it, "David

offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the face of Yahweh" (II Sam. 6:17).¹ This term, "before the face of Yahweh," is an expression which, here and in most cases, implies the existence of an *altar*. The sacrifices in this case were not offered in or upon the ark, nor merely upon the ground, but upon a raised platform of some kind, either of earth or stone. We have here at Zion, then, a sanctuary of Yahweh. It was a place of worship, consisting of a tent, in which was the chest or ark of the god, and an altar for sacrifice. We now ask a preliminary question, the significance of which may not at first be clear: Did the presence of the ark legitimate the sanctuary at Zion as the one place where Israelites might lawfully worship?

The attitude of David and his contemporaries toward the Zion sanctuary is clearly shown in connection with his son Absalom. We read that "Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto Yahweh in Hebron. For thy servant vowed a vow, while I abode in Geshur in Syria, saying, If Yahweh shall indeed bring me again to Jerusalem, then I will serve Yahweh. And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose and went to Hebron. . . . And Absalom sent for Ahitophel . . . while he offered the sacrifices" (II Sam. 15:7-9, 12). From this passage we find there was a sanctuary of Yahweh at Hebron, a town in southern Judah which had been at one time the headquarters of David. Moreover, the king's son, with the approval of the king himself, went to the sanctuary at that place, and offered sacrifices to Yahweh. The same thing was done by Solomon with reference to another altar. For we read, concerning Solomon after he had been made king: "And the king went to Gibeon, to sacrifice there. For that was the great high place (*bamah*). A thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar" (I Kings 3:4). Still another *bamah*, or high place, was located on the Mount of Olives, a little distance outside the walls of Jerusalem. Con-

¹The words here translated "before the face of Yahweh" are given "before the LORD" by the King James version, and "before Jehovah" by the American Revision. The Hebrew text reads: *li-penae Yahweh*, which means "to [the] face [of] Yahweh." Compare Gen. 32:30, "And Jacob called the name of the place *Peniel*. For, said he, I have seen *elohim* face to face" (*Peni-el*, face [of] el).

cerning this place, we read: "And David went up by the ascent of the Olives. . . . And it came to pass that, when David was come to the top, where he was wont to worship *elohim*, behold Hushai the Archite came to meet him" (II Sam. 15:30, 32).

These cases, to say nothing of others that could be cited, prove that the ark did not legitimate the Zion sanctuary as the only place of worship. The people of Israel worshiped Yahweh at Hebron, Gibeon, and the Mount of Olives, with full knowledge of the fact that a sanctuary containing the ark was at Zion. This being true, it follows that *if* the earlier sanctuary at Shiloh were indeed and in truth regarded as the one lawful sanctuary, its lawfulness was *not* conferred upon it by the *ark* that lay within it when the boy Samuel ministered there "before the face of Yahweh." If the Shiloh sanctuary were indeed the one lawful place of worship, in its time, then its legitimacy must have been due to the simple fact that Yahweh "caused his name to dwell there," as the prophet Jeremiah says (Jer. 7:12). In other words, by the terms of the one-altar law itself, the legitimacy of Shiloh arose out of the fact that Yahweh *chose* that place: "In the place which Yahweh shall *choose*, in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings," etc., as in the law of the single sanctuary quoted above. We are, therefore, carried forward to the general proposition that neither upon the traditional view, nor upon any other view, did the ark have a legitimizing function. Whatever may have been the origin or significance of this object, it gave no exclusive sanctity to the place of its deposit.²

Bearing this proposition in mind, we are now prepared to go back into the period covered by the book of Judges. Our quest here is to discover the attitude of the people at a time when the Shiloh sanctuary was in use. In one passage we read: "Then all the children of Israel, and all the people, went up, and came unto Beth-el; and wept, and sat there *before the face*

²The ark was probably nothing more than a rude wooden box, carried between staves of wood. In the wilderness it must have been in charge of one of the leading clans, perhaps the clan of Joseph. It is clear that the elaborate sanctuary of "the tabernacle in the wilderness" existed only in the minds responsible for the late priestly documents in the Hexateuch.

of *Yahweh*, and fasted that day until even. And they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the face of *Yahweh*" (Judg. 20:26; cf. 21:2-4). The situation contemplated by this passage is wholly at variance with the view that there was one lawful altar at Shiloh. Continuing we read: "And the children of Israel asked of *Yahweh* (for the ark of the covenant of the *elohim* was there in those days; and Phineas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days) saying, Shall I yet again go out to battle?" The note referring to the ark is an awkward insertion in the text. If its purpose be to shed an atmosphere of legitimacy over the altar at Beth-el, the writer should have known that the ark had no such function.³ Nor was the presence of the ark considered necessary to the putting of a question to *Yahweh*. To "inquire of *Yahweh*" was to cast the sacred lot, Urim and Thummim, before the *ephod*, or plated image, carried by a priest of *Yahweh*. According to many Old Testament passages, this was repeatedly done without reference to the ark (I Sam. 10:22 f.; 22:9 f.; 23:9 f.; 30:7 f.; II Sam. 2:1, etc.). This interesting notice of the sanctuary at Beth-el goes directly against the one-altar theory (cf. I Sam. 10:3).⁴

In addition to this case, we find that there was an altar to *Yahweh* at Mizpah in Gilead (Judg. 11:11); another at Mizpah in Ephraim (21:5, 8); and one at Ophrah, built by Gideon, the champion of *Yahweh* (6:24). In addition to these, we find still another established somewhere in the hills of Ephraim by a clan ruled by one Micah. This place of worship was so pleasing to the tribe of Dan that they actually stole it away

³If such be his purpose, a parallel is to be found in the Chronicler, where he seeks to confer an atmosphere of quasi-legality upon the noted high place at Gibeon by putting there the tent of meeting and a brazen altar said to have been used in the wilderness in connection with the ark (II Chron. 1:3 f.). The books of Chronicles are written from the standpoint of the post-exile temple, and represent a very advanced priestly point of view. Their authority, as "sources" for the period between the invasion and the exile, is far below that of the Judges-Samuel-Kings narratives.

⁴The name "Beth-el," in these and other passages, is the name of a city, in the hills of Ephraim, some miles distant from Shiloh. Although its obvious meaning is "house of *elohim*," this passage cannot be made to read, "And all the people came unto the house of *elohim*," leaving it to be inferred that the Shiloh sanctuary is meant. If the latter is intended, a different phraseology is used, thus: All the time the *beth-ha-elohim* was in Shiloh" (Judg. 18:31).

from the clan of Micah, and carried it into the northern part of the land with them (Judg., chaps. 17 and 18). Thus originated the sanctuary of Dan.

These cases all suggest that one lawful place of worship was at first unknown to Israel. They do not prove that there was *no* sanctuary at Shiloh. They merely show that the altar in that city was not regarded as the one place where men might lawfully worship Yahweh. It is now in order to observe that the account of the setting up of the sanctuary at Shiloh after the invasion belongs to the *late* documents of the Hexateuch. So does the striking narrative about the altar *ED*, which clearly found its present position in the interest of emphasis upon the unique legitimacy of Shiloh. The introductory statements about Shiloh in the book of Samuel do not necessarily contemplate that sanctuary from the one-altar point of view. The exclusive theory is found in Samuel in one passage only, i.e., in the long speech, attributed to the nameless man of *elohim*, which closes I Sam., chap 2. This address is easily recognizable as a late priestly insertion, written from the standpoint of Deuteronomy, and having in view the conditions and problems of a later age.⁵ As to the authentication of Shiloh in Jeremiah (7:12), there is no need to argue for the lateness of this passage, inasmuch as Jeremiah lived at the time of the Babylonian exile, and was in partial sympathy with Deuteronomists. Aside from these later documents, which treat Shiloh from the one-altar standpoint, there is nothing whatever against the view that there actually was a place of worship at Shiloh, and that this was one of the many sanctuaries of Yahweh.

After the ark had been captured, we read that Samuel said: "Gather all Israel to Mizpah. . . . And they gathered together at Mizpah, and drew water, and poured it out before the face of Yahweh. . . . And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a whole burnt offering unto Yahweh" (I Sam. 7:5, 6, 9). The sanctuary at Mizpah was already established in the period covered by the book of Judges (*supra*); so that the claim cannot

⁵It is noticeable that the prophets who speak in the late priestly insertions are usually anonymous (cf. Judg. 6:7 f.; I Kings 13:1 f.).

be set up that it was instituted to replace the Shiloh temple. In harmony with this usage, Samuel himself built an altar to Yahweh at Ramah, his own village (I Sam. 7:17). A realistic picture of social life in this place is given in the narrative about the lost asses of Saul's father. In reply to Saul's inquiry concerning Samuel, he is told: "The people have a sacrifice today in the high place (*bamah*). As soon as ye are come into the city ye shall straightway find him before he goeth up to the *bamah* to eat. For the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice. . . . And as they came within the city, behold, Samuel came out toward them to go up to the *bamah*" (I Sam. 9:12, 13, 14). On another occasion Samuel says to Saul: "Go down before me to Gilgal. And, behold, I will come down unto thee to offer burnt offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings" (I Sam. 10:8). The sanctuary at this place must have been quite important, for we read elsewhere: "Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there. And all the people went to Gilgal. And there they made Saul king before the face of Yahweh in Gilgal. And there they offered sacrifices of peace offerings before the face of Yahweh" (I Sam. 11:14, 15).

An instructive sidelight upon the sanctuaries that were set up by single clans is found in one of the accounts of David's relations to Saul, as follows: "And Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem. And he said, Let me go, I pray thee. For our clan (*mishphaha*) hath a sacrifice in the city" (I Sam. 20:29). Earlier in the same chapter, David explains that it is the *yearly* sacrifice for the whole clan (vs. 6). At another time Samuel goes to Bethlehem on a mission to David's family. He meets the elders thus: "I am come to sacrifice unto Yahweh. Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice" (I Sam. 16:5).

A good idea of the sanctuary at Nob is found in the following excerpts: "Then came David to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. . . . And David said to Ahimelech the priest . . .

give me five loaves of bread. . . . So the priest gave him holy bread. For there was no bread there but the showbread that was taken from before the face of Yahweh. . . . Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day detained before the face of Yahweh" (I Sam. 21:1, 2, 3, 6, 7; cf. vs. 9). Here we have a sanctuary with its priestly minister, its altar, its *ephod* image, and other machinery of the cultus. The man who is mentioned as being mysteriously "detained" was in a state of ceremonial "taboo," pending admission to the ritual. The usage is commonly found in primitive religions.

We have seen that when David recovered the ark, he proceeded to establish a place of worship at the fort of Zion. The narratives relating to the transfer of the ark from the tent on Zion to the *house*, or temple, in Jerusalem proper, are among the most interesting material in the Old Testament. They clearly betray the hand of a Deuteronomic editor, who is not only an advocate of the one-altar doctrine, but who has a new theory of his own to exploit. According to his view, the establishment of the one lawful sanctuary turned upon the building of a *house* (*bayith*). David is said to have been troubled because his own residence was better than that of Yahweh: "I dwell in a house of cedar; but the ark of the *elohim* dwelleth within curtains." To this comes the response of Yahweh through the prophet Nathan: "Shalt thou build me a house (*bayith*) to dwell in? For I have not dwelt in a *bayith* since the day that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt even to this day, but have walked in a tent (*ohel*) and in a tabernacle (*mishkan*)" (II Sam. 7:2, 5, 6). The author of this passage either forgot, or knew nothing about, the account of the sanctuary at Shiloh. For the earlier place of worship is explicitly mentioned as a house (*bayith*) of Yahweh. It is also spoken of as the temple (*hekel*) of Yahweh, having *doors* and *door-posts* (I Sam. 1:7, 9; cf. vs. 24, and Judg. 18:31). The reply of Yahweh to David not only ignores the physical structure of that sanctuary; but, more important by far, it may be fairly interpreted as taking for granted that *before* that time there had never been established a single altar which might lawfully monopolize the reli-

gious devotion of Israel. For the reply continues: "In all places wherein I have walked with the children of Israel, spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel . . . saying, Why have ye not built me a house of cedar?" That our construction of this part of the reply is correct is made clear from another passage by the same hand. According to this other passage, the worship at many altars was lawful up to the time that the house of Yahweh was erected at Jerusalem. "The people sacrificed in the *high places* because there was no *house* built for the name of Yahweh" (I Kings 3:2).

The sacred house of Jerusalem was not built by David, but by Solomon. We read that, after the building was completed, "Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the princes of the fathers' houses of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the covenant of Yahweh out of the city of David, which is Zion" (I Kings 8:1). Thus the ark was taken out of the fort of David, and placed in the new temple at Jerusalem. We now have occasion to inquire into the attitude of Israel toward the new place of worship. If the one-altar theory be correct in its application to the Jerusalem sanctuary, there must have been a movement to suppress the many high places throughout the land as soon as the imposing dedication of the temple was completed. If the people had used the local altars as a temporary convenience, merely *because* there was no central sanctuary, then, as soon as the national house of religion was established, they must at once have deserted their ancient altars, and focused their devotion upon Jerusalem. As a matter of fact, nothing of the kind occurred. We have seen that the one-altar theory falls to the ground with reference to the sanctuary at Shiloh. And we shall now see that the same theory, as applied to Jerusalem, collides with equal force against the facts of history.

The high places were not suppressed after the dedication of the temple at Jerusalem. Nor was their suppression even considered by the political or religious authorities, or by the masses of the people. So much is evident upon the face of the narratives of the books of Kings. The only *exception* that was taken to the

high places was by the late writer through whose hands we get our narratives. Thus we read: "Solomon loved Yahweh, walking in the statutes of David his father, *except* that he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place. A thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar. . . . And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, and offered up burnt offerings and offered peace offerings" (I Kings 3:3, 4, 15). Thus it is clear that the Jerusalem temple was not regarded as the only place at which the worship of Yahweh might be conducted.

The remainder of the Kings narrative down to the Babylonian exile is punctuated by frequent editorial mention of the high places. These ancient sanctuaries are spoken of repeatedly in the same spirit that animates the notice of Solomon's practices with regard to them. After the death of Solomon, Israel divided into two kingdoms—Judah, the smaller, in the south; Israel, the larger, in the north. The editor of the narrative occupies the standpoint of Jerusalem, and is out of sympathy with the northern kingdom. He lets us see that the north maintained its *bamoth* from the time of the division down to the time of its destruction by the Assyrians (I Kings 12:31; 13:33; II Kings 17:9, 11, 29, 32). In Judah, the high places were untouched, not only by Solomon, but by his royal successors for many generations. In the reign of his son, Rehoboam, new *bamoth* were built (I Kings 14:23). No change in regard to these places of worship is noted for the next king, Abijam. They remained through the reign of Asa, which followed (I Kings 15:11, 14). In the times of the succeeding king, Jehoshaphat, "the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places" (I Kings 22:43). For the next two kings, Jehoram and Ahaziah, no change is noted. Under the next monarch, Jehoash, "the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places" (II Kings 12:2, 3). For the times of the following ruler, Amaziah, the now familiar notice is repeated, word for word (II Kings 14:3, 4). The next king was Uzziah, for whose reign the old notice is again repeated (II Kings 15:

3, 4). It is reiterated for the next king Jotham (vss. 34, 35). With reference to Ahaz, the succeeding king, we read: "He sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places" (16:4).

In the reign of the next king, Hezekiah, we are told, these numerous, ancient, and popular sanctuaries were for the first time suddenly abolished (18:3, 4, 22). While there is no doubt that such a reformation took place at a later time under king Josiah, the notices about Hezekiah should be received with suspicion, for several reasons. The truth seems to be that the course of history was unfriendly to the *bamoth* during the reign of Hezekiah. For in the sixth year of this king's term, the great Assyrian empire attacked the northern Israelite kingdom and blotted it out of existence (18:10 f.). Five years later the same power again threw its armies upon the Mediterranean seaboard, and took temporary possession of all the fortified cities of Judah *except* Jerusalem, where stood the temple of Yahweh (vs. 13).

Thus, the course of events discredited the sanctuaries outside of the capital, and suggested the contemporary prophet Isaiah's doctrine of the inviolability of the temple at Jerusalem. But Isaiah did not conduct a campaign against the high places. Nor is it claimed that the king's alleged abolition of them was in response to the demands of the Mosaic law, as in the case of Josiah. Moreover, it is very significant that the high places built previously by Solomon, in honor of foreign gods, should have been untouched at this time, and should have stood until the reign of Josiah (II Kings 23:13). For scarcely could these high places, in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem, have escaped the zeal of a king energetic enough to abolish the sanctuaries throughout Judah at large. We may fairly conclude, then, that the credit for the first move against the local sanctuaries of Yahweh should be given to the Assyrians, and not to Hezekiah. Whatever the situation may have been, the high places were again used in the reigns of Manasseh and Amon, the two following kings (II Kings 21:3, 20).

In the reign of the next king, Josiah, a written roll was brought suddenly forward from the temple at Jerusalem by a priest. This is variously referred to as "the book of the law,"

“the book of the covenant,” and “the law of Moses” (II Kings chaps. 22 and 23, *passim*). In compliance with its demands, the king suppressed the high places throughout Judah, and ordered the concentration of worship at Jerusalem. Since Josiah’s program of reform corresponds largely with the demands of our existing book of Deuteronomy, it is plain that the writing brought forward from the temple in his day was deuteronomic in substance. We are at present concerned with the Josian reformation merely in regard to its bearing upon sanctuary practice. After the death of the king, Judah fell under control of foreign powers; and presently the upper classes were carried away into the Babylonian exile. This catastrophe intensified the effect of the Josian reform; and when at length Judah was reconstituted as a dependency of the Persian empire and succeeding powers, the one-altar law became a great factor in shaping the official system of religion.

Thus we see that the assumption of Deuteronomy about the social organism of Israel collides with the situation indicated by Judges-Samuel-Kings. Criticism does not deny the existence of sanctuaries at Shiloh and at Jerusalem. It simply denies a particular theory about them. It admits that both places of worship existed, and that both were prominent sanctuaries of Yahweh. But it denies that they were constructed in obedience to the obligation of a single altar. And it finds that the Deuteronomic law contemplates the history of Israel from the standpoint of an alien theory of religious usage, which was not formulated and put into practice until the national authority was a thing of the past. Instead of a real national authority, existing from the time of the wilderness, and able to define the political and religious terms of the situation, the opposite condition prevailed. Instead of a place of worship at Shiloh, which monopolized the devotion, and expressed the integrity of a *nation*, we find a local shrine of some prominence and of uncertain position and history. Contemporary therewith we find other shrines of equal validity and popularity. The religion of the people, instead of being controlled by authorities of general scope, is controlled primarily by kinship groups, or clans. Sanctuaries of Yahweh are found at

such places as Mizpah, Bethel, Ramah, Dan, Gilgal, Bethlehem, Nob, Hebron, Gibeon, Zion, the Mount of Olives, etc. These places were not only established by local groups early in the history, but they commanded the unwavering devotion of the people and their rulers for hundreds of years after the building of the Jerusalem temple. Indeed the high places were the characteristic sanctuaries of Yahweh in his earlier, pagan character. They were never abolished by the northern kingdom. And they persisted in Judah almost up to the time of its dissolution.

In the next instalment we shall investigate the conditions under which the alien social groups brought into each other's presence by the Israelite invasion of Canaan were transmuted into a social organism of wider scope. We shall find that the circumstances under which the monarchy arose were such as to explain much of the paradoxical and contradictory aspects of the biblical problem.