Dynamism of Authority and Power in the Socio-Economic Mobility of the Israelites

Abiola Ayodeji Olaniyi, PhD
Old Testament in African Christianity
Department of Religious Studies
Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

Abstract: Every religious group organizes the institutionalization of its various sources of authority (sacred writings, charisma, tradition and bureaucracy) that assist its leadership in helping followers accomplish their shared concern. Ancient Israel and Judah as religious entities engaged certain social dynamics in transforming the administration of their territories through power relations from ancient Aramean/Syrian origin. Existing studies have examined the rise of the Levites into prophetic authority, especially, charismatic leaders like Moses and Samuel. They have also surveyed the transformation of the Judahites into royal status under the Law/Torah. However, the employment of rituals for public legitimacy in both territories needs to be conjectured (the location of the sanctuaries around the *migräš* of Levites, the erection of the tabernacle/temple by kings, and the appointment and remuneration of sacred functionaries from Israelite land provision of the *Sädeh* to kings). Thus, this study employs an integrated hermeneutic of socio-historical exploration of the sacred historiography of ancient Israel and Judah within the literary and theological interpretive dimensions. It examines the rationalization of charismatic abilities of leaders and the organization of rituals and sacred groups for religious differentiations. It raises a conjecture of the struggle for public legitimacy by the bureaucrats of ancient Israel and Judah through the royal formation of communities by kings and the centralization of sacred rites by levitical priests.
Keywords: Authority and power, Socio-economic mobility, `ärîm Hûcôt, the *´ädämâ*, the *Sädeh*, the *migräš*.

--- ------------

I. INTRODUCTION

Every society has its system of leadership and structure of administration with certain procedures of endorsement, portraits of approval or catalogues of institutional authorization. In this vein, leadership is considered, according to Gerald Cole and Phil Kelly, as a dynamic process of striking the right balance between the needs of people and the task or goals of a group/society in a given situation since "there is no one best way of leading."[i] More so, communities of faith create oral traditions which in turn shape them along with their collection of scriptures or creation of holy writings as a social event, a source of authority and a framework for interpreting and influencing their changing circumstances. Communities of faith also evolve new interpretations of the sacred scriptures as their worldview of understanding the origin, meaning and purpose of life. So, the collection of oral traditions as sacred scriptures is one of the procedures of social authorization and approval. Gary Kessler also avers that "communities are quite literally created when people recognize a common source of authority" since different communities recognize different scriptures as sacred after a canon is jointly recognized by representatives of the societies that have the most power. In this sense, stories of conflict, struggles for power, and the creation of communities constitute how the scriptures come to be in religions though the basis of morality, legitimacy and legality is connected to the authority of the sacred scriptures as God's commands or divine law.[ii] This study in this light interrogates the organization of the religious structure of administration and leadership in ancient Israel, through the interpretation of life as stipulated in the Torah/Law and the consensus of the learned community that is widely respected and accepted to legitimize rightness: both the analogical reasoning from the trained interpretation of Levitical priests and the understanding demonstrated in the customs of Mosaic prophets. This conjecture approaches the location of the sacred places and the remuneration of sacred functionaries as mechanisms of gaining public legitimacy in the struggle for power through the organization of rituals.

Institutionalization of Power and Authority

Leadership and administration in this paper involve the dynamic exchange of relationship between power and authority in: (a.) influencing others to agree with what needs to be done and how to do it; (b.)

facilitating individual and collective efforts in accomplishing shared objectives and; (c.) adapting behaviour to meet competing needs of a situation.[iii] Power refers to ability, charisma or exceptional qualities to achieve common or shared goals as norms and roles which members of a group are to perform. For instance, the shared goal of raising a professional army for the Israelites against external aggressions from the Philistines culminated in the emergence of monarchical power (beyond the periodic assumption of judges as leaders) in ancient Israel. Authority also refers to public legitimacy and acceptability to influence members of a group and to receive submission and obedience. So, the traditional and public legitimacy of the Levites as ritual functionaries was employed in ancient Israel by the Levites in turning from scribes to prophets. Ritual was then considered as a purposeful and goal-directed behaviour to create changes or prevent transformation (reactionary and revolutionary) in a sacred or worship activity and contexts of sacred presence.[iv]

An evidence of leadership and administration in ancient Israel through the interpretation of the Torah/Law by the Levitical priests and Mosaic prophets is expressed by Marvin Sweeney when he contends that Deuteronomistic History refers to the priests and the prophets as being present at Josiah's reading of the Torah in 2 Kings 23:2, whereas 2 Chronicles 34:30 identifies them as priests and Levites. Thus, "the Israelite high priests wear the Urim and Thumim as a breast piece, indicating that oracular inquiry is a recognized element of priestly identity" while "revelation of YHWH is characteristic of prophets as well as priests." There is still "the ambiguity of Moses' identity as a Levite in Exodus–Numbers and as a prophet in Deuteronomy."[v] In other words, the Levitical priesthood transformed from managers of ritual resources into intermediaries or prophets of administrative policies (Deuteronomy 17:9-11&18; 18:15-19; 27:9&10; 31:24-26; 1Samuel 2:35).

However, just as the Levites were responsible for religious rites in the tabernacle so also the Judahites were responsible for military defence of Israelite territory with monarchy (Deuteronomy 17:14; 33:7-10; Judges 1:1&2; 1Samuel 8:4&5). Yet, this paper contends how the class of subsistence agrarian economy and status of people in need of help, food and money from charity and tithes of the Israelites included the Levites (Leviticus 25:32-35; Numbers 18:21-31; 35:2-8; Deuteronomy 14:22-29; 16:10&11,14-17; 26:11-13). This paper seeks to know why the Levites as scribes of the Torah, priests and prophets were regarded as a people needing charity and tithes. But, Deuteronomy 8:1 & 2 have unsatisfactorily record that the Levites were beneficiaries of Israelite tithes (like the widows, orphans, strangers and sojourners or destitute) because they did not have landed inheritance initially. Nevertheless, the Levites later possessed hereditary patrimony with additional *migräš* regarded as the open, common or suburb land outside Israelite tribal cities which they employed to translate their socio-economic class into a wealthy social status as prophetic interpreters of the Law (Leviticus 25:32-35; Numbers 35:2-8; Deuteronomy 12:11&12,17-19; 14:22-29; 18:1-8). According to Louis Jonker, the *migräš* as listed among the Levitical cities referred to the "suburban area" or "neighbouring area" taken to be a separating or protecting zone for the Levites (around Israelite cities) having been demarcated as an area outside the wall of inhabited Israelite cities.[vi] This paper questions why the Levites continued to receive tithes after they were allocated the *migräš*. An impression from Nehemiah 10:37-40 presents a tithe of all crops from the towns of industrial labour as a mere due collected by the Levites. Thus, this paper also wonders how the Levites assumed the role of tax collectors, collecting the tithes that people paid as taxes on the products they produced from using the Promised Land. In the same vein, the Judahites had the *Sädeh* as the unfrequented country-field or small land outside of a walled Israelite town which they turned into the *Hûcôt* that is, the outside or street bazaars of small shops. Judahite kings employed the *Sädeh* to translate their socio-economic class into a wealthy social status as royal functionaries of the Law (1Samuel 8:14; 1Kings 20:34). They collected tithes as done by ancient Near Eastern kings. Abraham paid this tithe to the king of Salem (Genesis 14:18-20). So, there is another concern, why did the Judahite King David give new appointments to the Levites (1Chronicles 16:4-6, 37-42; 23:3-6, 24-32; 25:1-8; 2Chronicles 31:2-21)? Why did the administrators of the Jews employ the collection of tithes and other charity offering to pay Levites, singers, priests and gatekeepers of the sanctuary (Nehemiah 9:39; 10:37-39; 12:44-47; 13:4-14) as in the days of King David?

An Integrated Hermeneutic

This conjecture employs an integrated interpretive dimension that combines and assimilates several complementary theories. First, it engages the historical critical approaches. According to Rhonda Bletsch, historical critical methods compare biblical accounts of an event with non-biblical evidence, to determine what actually happens.[vii] They take the historical dimensions of the Bible seriously by focusing attention on the world behind the text, to reconstruct Israelite history and culture.[viii] Second, it involves the literary approaches. Tull avers that the literary approaches foreground the Bible itself, in the form in which it was stabilized canonically, to focus on the textual surface and follow the logic of its narrative.[ix] They analyse the text as literature and deals with the final form of the text today.[x] Third, it considers the social anthropological method which is sometimes considered as comparative sociology. According to Robert R. Wilson, comparative sociology of ancient Israelites in the Old Testament addresses the organization of social roles, groups, structures, and the way ancient Israelite society developed. The interpretive approach is "concerned with social organization rather than with

social customs" of the people. It considers social organization as the integration of interrelated parts or interacting social units which form a social structure (a system of social relations).[xi] Thus, Gene M. Tucker adds that social anthropological study of the Old Testament examines the circumstances that informed social roles and how certain phenomena or social customs functioned in the society.[xii] In a related manner, Gary E. Kessler opines that the organization or institutionalization of a religious group requires the establishment of a social order of perpetuating the religious community. So, the group sets norms of achieving its common goals, converts the norms into roles that members carry out, and sets certain status dimensions and distinctions as bases of recruiting and socializing new members. The preservation of order and stability is sustained by adopting certain codes, rules, laws, structure or system that creates a sense of identity and belonging for its members.[xiii]

So, Max Weber describes the phenomenon of gaining public legitimacy highlighted above as an effort at processing into predictable arrangement the functioning of charisma that gave founders of new religious movements the unique innovative heave of authority and power to command a following (the institutionalization of exceptional qualities into a bureaucracy and repetitive tradition as an administrative order).[xiv] In this case, the institutionalization of religious leadership consists of a merger of the tension and conflict among three types of authority. The first, "traditional authority", is based on the weight of a tradition claimed by a leader and believed by followers who obey the leader. It is due to the belief that there is virtue in the sanctity of age-old rules and powers. The second is the radical dynamism of histrionic revolution known as "charismatic authority." It is based on the process by which a leader that is obeyed gets set apart from ordinary people and is treated as endowed with exceptional qualities that are not accessible to ordinary people but capable of causing personal reorientation and change of the dominant trend. This authority poses a threat to the traditional system. The third is "rational-legal authority" that is based on a belief in the legality of enacted rules, bureaucracy, a hierarchical sphere of competence, technical career or appointment, established administrative system of judgment as precedents: managerial organs of promotions or dismissals and a means of compulsion required to perform certain functions regarded as the rights of a leader elevated to authority. The leader under such an enactment issues commands and receives obedience especially within the sphere of official shrewdness (public astuteness/sagacity of technically trained staff members). This authority as an outside/neutral radical dynamism changes the structures of society and shifts public focus, thoughts and actions.[xv] In this light, religious leadership is engaged by submission to and manipulation of the authority and power that assist leaders in helping followers achieve their common concern in a particular setting. Thus, Sharon Henderson Callahan avers that "leadership—especially religious leadership—is complex, connective, cross-discipline, and cross-cultural."[xvi] In this light, any enquiry about religious leadership needs to consider among other things; (i) the religious contexts of leadership that consist of the local churches, congregations, mosques and temples; (ii) spiritual and religious traditions of people in formal and informal leadership; (iii) various traditions of women in religious leadership; (iv) how leaders have been educated, trained and formed for their leadership responsibilities; (v) common good ideas of religious leaders as agents of social dialogue, action and change; and (vi) how leaders who are compelled to act from their spiritual core are tackling major issues in their contemporary settings since several types of individual leadership styles emerge within the various religious contexts that exist.[xvii]

Joseph Blenkinsopp avows that the procedures of authorization of religious rites and activities used in identifying religious figures, sacred places and religious institutions are informed by their possession of an exceptional quality, their demonstration of a divine mandate and their introduction of innovation for public verification and acknowledgment. Such underlying dynamics garner to legitimate the claims and mission of a religious figure into a social status. In other words, the demonstration of power by a religious figure or the manifestation of power by a sacred place must be interpreted in a positive sense by the public or a segment of the society where certain rites and religious functions take place. But, surveying the phenomena of social authorization of leadership is confronted by a limitation which is, how the presuppositions or beliefs of a segment of the society interpret, legislate, shape, structure and make the leader to conform to them.[xviii] So, religions as a set of social constructs and social institutions have key-concepts like ritual, myth, history and text that are assembled with prophetic oppositions, theological legislation and unquestioned differentiation as tools of analysis in religious studies. The tools of analysis or catalogue of authorization are known to be embedded in the very concept of the belief and assumption that any group of people hold. Hence, Christian Karner avers that the supposition that a group of people holds certain beliefs and historically produces some religious typologies constitutes in turn some concepts and tools or instruments of demographic control and surveillance which the group uses to define and fix a normative subject position for its people. Such instruments delineate in details the standards or rules of behaviour considered as required for promoting the group or its ideology and for excluding silenced voices whose heterodox beliefs are marginalized in the process from the celebrated group. These concepts and tools in religious histories are not only contradictory and pluralistic, but are also documented within existing structures of power and shaped by the exclusion of those regarded as the 'other' within the older classical preoccupation with orders of identity and difference. In this vein, concepts and typologies become tools

of analysis and are regarded as documentations and legislation of any dominant discourse. They are also religious identities which define religious distinctiveness. The eventuality of individualities, thus, affirms that identities are the interrelationships between power and its representation, and the institutional parameters shaping their production. In this light, the knowledge of religious concepts or the documentation of religious identities presupposes and constitutes some power relations. This exists because every power relation possesses the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge.[xix]

Dynamism of Authority and Power in Ancient Israel and Judah

The primary source of investigating Israelite traditions in this paper is the corpus of Hebrew Scriptures called the Old Testament. However, some of the sources of the Old Testament (as a received text) have editorial commentaries that are theological presuppositions of the Deuteronomistic Historical School. For instance, contents of the Book of Deuteronomy are found to be applied by the Deuteronomistic Historical School in the Old Testament as a theological preface to the national history of ancient Israel from the death of Moses to the Babylonian exile (Deuteronomy 4:19&20; 29:26-28). The Deuteronomistic History (DtrH) in the Old Testament, therefore, contains evidences of previously existing definite agenda, curriculum or syllabus, and ideas about certain phenomena in ancient Israel which were laid out in homiletic and legal form. The curriculum (in homiletic and legal form) constitutes an evidence of attempts to impose a prevailing canon, belief, custom and attitude as orthodoxy on the historical account of past Israelite traditions. Hence, the phenomena and traditions of the Israelites mentioned in the Old Testament serve to illustrate the theological syllabus, the dogmatic code and the policy of the Deuteronomistic Historical School (the promotion of Yahwistic doctrine and code of social relations among the Israelites against previous ancestral practices of the Aramean/Syrian origin or nativity).[xx] This curriculum may be interpreted as the code of institutionalization and authorization of Levitical priesthood and Judahite monarchy as authorities to command a following in Israel.

1. Authority and Power between Local Tradition and Urban Institutionalization

The biblical description of the ancient Israelites copiously establishes the historiography of Israelite socio, cultural, economic, political and religious dynamics as an exercise of power and authority from Israelite household identity (tribal descent) to its land tenure systems and vice versa. Every Israelite tribe was identified by its possession of landed property for crop, fruit or grain produce (*Dügäⁿn* or *Pürî* of the *´ádämâ* , the *Sädeh* or the *migräš*) in Palestine. The land referred to as the *´ádämâ* was the inhabited land of abode in ancient Israel. It was the cultivable field or tilled ground yielding its sustenance as a landed property within the abode of a people and serving as a territory or country of a people or tribe.[xxi] It might also mean the cultivated homeland inhabited, inherited and received as a given divine grant upon which humans in sedentary population walked on and worked as agricultural land with abundance of grain, new wine and oil, as commodities representing all agricultural produce.[xxii] But, the land regarded as the *Südô/t* (plural) or the *Sädeh* (singular) was the open field, country-town, pasture-land or small road outside of a courtyard or walled city which was unfrequented by humans and was exposed to violence or serving as the home of wild beasts and hunting-ground that yielded plants and trees. It served as the battle-ground outside of a military camp, an inhabited city, an expanse of a country or a definite portion of ground (private property). It was subject to the control of a city, a territory, a nation, a tribe or a personal estate of a king.[xxiii] It might as well mean the open domain, the exposed area, the uncluttered sphere, uncovered purview or unprotected agricultural terrace on which vineyards were planted. It was meant to be an open wide land or plain field of hill terraced land in contrast to the inhabited ground of a village or city. Hence, it served as a shelter of, a region owned by or a refuge for a tribe that could be sold, bought and returned at the Year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:31), though received by divine grant and regarded as essential to the continued existence of the tribe. Each Israelite was expected from the proper use of this land to provide for their family, provide assistance to fellow Israelites (the poor, needy, fatherless, widowed and Levites collecting the tithes and offerings in the central sanctuary) and provide sustenance for urban dwellers (Leviticus 19:9; 23:22; 25:34; Deuteronomy 24:19). So, it remained unplanted every sabbatical or Jubilee year (Leviticus 25:3-4&12). It was also a gory place for battle and horrendous atrocities carrying with it territorial connotations for many of God's activities.[xxiv] Consequently, the Israelite monarchy strategically engaged the *Sädeh* which was subject to the control of the king in exacting tithes to support their courtier. The Levitical priesthood which doubled as Mosaic prophets also employed the *migräš* in their power relations and administration of control to collect tithes from the Israelites both as a share in the business executed on their *migräš* and as a due for the maintenance of the sanctuary and the effective functioning of sacred functionaries. This phenomenon awakened a radical change of status in Israelite society similar to ancient Near Eastern experience with the institutionalization rituals and the sacred groups that were attached to them. Monarchy became involved in the administration of the tithes and sanctuaries located on their *Sädeh*, as Levites became administrators of tithes exacted from their *migräš*. But, more importantly, the open-country spaces (outside tribal and clan towns) which were regarded as outside towns, urban streets or city abroad spaces (`ärîm Hûcôt) adopted as sacred spaces for

sanctuaries also transformed the public legitimacy of kings and the Levites and priests, who were employed by the king to serve in them. The Israelite kings, through this phenomenon, acted like ancient Near Eastern kings and priests.

Records from the Ugarit, disclose that there was the royal and administrative control of temples, where kings in the Semitic world, also served as priests interceding for their people. In the secular context, the king levied his subjects with the tithe as a tax for the support of his rule (a standard procedure of the monarchical system). In the Akkadian and Babylonian worlds, tithing was also used both as the tax exacted from local regions into the central stores of a royal city, for onward distribution to the courtiers by a local ruler and as a share accrued to him in a business executed on his land or in his domain. In the sacred context, priests collected the tithes for the sanctuary and sacred functionaries. They were also the recipients of the tithe, serving as agents of a theocratic system.[xxv]

Yet, studies into biblical genealogies thus reveal that claims to authority in the Bible are often grounded in the rhetorical shaping of lineage details. The tension between hegemonic priestly misappropriations from the time of Moses to the period of Priest Eli and the egalitarian, hinterland clan values is deducible in the narrative woven in 1 Samuel chapters 1 and 2. The potential for the abuse of power by the priestly class attempting monarchical dynasty could be seen in the close connection of the priestly and royal status with the possibility that sacral authority could be parlayed into royal authority. Yet, the drawing of Levites from the local populations within the egalitarian traditions of hinterland families or clans that were represented at the shared tabernacle sanctuaries by the individuals dedicated to priestly service was intended to keep the priestly faculty accountable to the public authority located in the ancestral house through which Israelite social order was structured (the egalitarian agrarian ethic of early Israel as a matter of socioeconomic survival of Israelite families). It was this structure of traditions regarding ancestors that the family of Priest Eli was possibly using to reify its power.[xxvi]

Consequently, the household identity or tribal descent provides a sense of brotherhood, heritable ancestry and mutual social pedigree of managing the economic and commercial gains of the land-tenure systems of each clan or tribe. However, certain practices exposed the peculiarity and distinctiveness of the Israelites. For instance, reading through the Old Testament as a canon and received text gives an impression that certain practices of Abraham with his exposure to the God of his mission (from Ur of Chaldeans through Haran to Canaan (Genesis 11:27-12:9)) represent an initial power structure and authorization of socio, political and religious customs (Genesis 12:10-26:7; 28:12-22; 31:10-54; 32:24-32; 46:1-28). But, the story of the call of Moses with the mission of getting the Israelites to the Promised Land (Exodus 3:1-4:17) serves as the beginning of the transformation of Abrahamic Aramean/Syrian traditions into an institutionalization of ingenuity of Levitical priestly and prophetic interpretation of the Torah/Law from Moses (Genesis 31:24-35&53; Deuteronomy 4:19; 29:26). This institutionalization of differentiation amidst competing ancient Near Eastern urban traditions was established with the authorizing structure of the Torah/Law and its both Levitical priesthood and Mosaic prophetic standard (Exodus 17:14-16; 19:1-40:38; Leviticus 21:1-22:33; Numbers 1:1-4,17&18,44-2:2; 4:34-49; 8:23-26; Deuteronomy 4:1-14,19; 5:1-5,22-33; <u>12:8-32; 13:1-18; 29:12-29</u>; 33:7-11; Joshua 22:9-34 cp. Genesis 47:18-31; 48:12-22; 49:8-12). The priests and prophets, therefore, assumed the position of authorized interpreters of the Torah/Law among the Israelites. Little wonder that every other form, type or kind of Israelite administration and leadership continually witnessed either the authorization of convergence or polemics of differentiation from either the priests or the prophets of the Torah/Law (Deuteronomy 17:14-20; 29:25-29). The biblical account of the institution of monarchy also adds that Samuel, son of Elkanah, was a Levitical priest (from the descent of Kohath) who transformed to become a prophet like Moses (Exodus 6:16-27; 7:1-7; Numbers 26:57-60; Deuteronomy 18:9-22) to ordain Saul and David as kings among the Israelites (1Chronicles 6:22-28; cp. 1Samuel 8:1-10:27; 16:1-13). In this regard, what Moses did from the Levitical priestly clan to become a prophetic administrator was repeated by Samuel (also from a Levitical priestly clan) to become a prophetic administrator.

Notwithstanding this value driven experience, Joseph Blenkinsopp proposes that one of the rudimentary objectives of "Deuteronomy qua state document was to undermine the established lineage system and the popular religious practices that undergirded it."[xxvii] Many of the traditional religious canons as the prevailing sets of orthodoxy revolved around "the cult of the ancestors and communication with the world of the spirits that the ancestors, still integrated into the clan structure, inhabited."[xxviii] In this regard, the emphasis of Deuteronomy on "the distinctiveness of Israel's religious life and the uniqueness of her institutions" clarifies the proscription of divination, necromancy and other popular aspects of the religious life renowned throughout the entire ancient Near Eastern culture area. The prohibitions, exclusions and interdictions in ancient Israel assumed the indices of approval of socio-institutional agents and the catalogue of authorization of religious figures (Deuteronomy 13:1-18; 16:18-17:7, 14-20; 1Samuel 8:10-18; 1Kings 12:1-24; 2Kings 9:1-37). The religious proscriptions and social banning were then used by the religious figures in changing their social recognition from a rather peripheral location in Israelite society to the status of central spokesmen as well as for Israelite

dominant morality religion (Deuteronomy 4:1-9:6; 18:9-22; Joshua 1:8; 23:6-16; 24:2-31; 1Kings 17:24; 2Kings 17:7-23 cp. 24-29).[xxix]

In another instance, there was the idea of Israelite brotherhood as a tribal identity which encourages social interactions within the group and discouraged social interactions outside it (facilitating the development of "an Israelite endoculture" in order to discourage the prospect of a dangerous exposure to non-Israelites). The relevance of this genetic cohesion to Israelite identity is evident in the variety of laws promoting endogamy among the Israelites but encouraging the exclusion of the Ammonite and the Moabite from its community. In addition, the particularly Israelite mythology of origins in Egypt construed as an expression of the shared Israelite past also contributes to the notion of shared social descent within a genetic descent. The legislation of centralized worship as a phenomenon also underwrote the idea of differentiation of tribal identity. Foremost among the practices of differentiation was the establishment of an exclusively Yahwistic religious structure, with Israel defined in terms of an exclusive relationship with him as a single deity. This differentiation of Israelites from non-Israelites by virtue of their exclusive identification with Yahweh worked to differentiate Israelite practices: by reorganizing the hierarchy of divinatory techniques and by modifying or eliminating some culturally ambiguous officials and practices. These efforts at differentiation were complemented by other efforts at isolating the Israelites from non-Israelites. In this category were also the remarkable limitations placed on the Israelite king, the refusals to incorporate non-Israelites into the community of Israelites and the legislation of differential treatment between the Israelites and non-Israelites. The understanding that Israelite identity was based on the recognition and embodiment of Israelite cultural phenomena was evident in the possibility of the eviction of people from the community of the Israelites for failing to enact key manifestations of Israelite identity, especially exclusive Yahwistic worship. This same view speaks conversely for the possibility of the admission of people into the community of outsiders for existing without the relevant genetic credentials. Therefore, the Israelites (as an ethnic identity) were a conception of brotherhood and a case of direct differentiation to favour a fellow and discriminate against a stranger out of the usual ethos of community exclusiveness. This was because familial perception of ethnic groups conceived group identity in terms of common descent and as an extra degree of responsibility or a certain standard of behaviour (Exodus 22:24–26; Leviticus 25:35–37; Deuteronomy 14:21a; 15:1–3; 23:20–21). The language of common descent is, thus, expressed in the law of the king (Deuteronomy 17:14–17), in the law of the prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15), in the list of those who might be most persuasive in encouraging non-Yahwistic worship (Deuteronomy 13:7), in the law of levirate marriage (Deuteronomy 25:5–8), in the explanation for the admission of the Edomite into the Israelite community (Deuteronomy 23:8–9), in the laws of debt remission (Deuteronomy 15:1–11) and manumission (Deuteronomy 15:12–18), in the law concerning usury (Deuteronomy 23:20–21), in the law mandating the return of lost property (Deuteronomy 22:1–4), in the laws concerning false witness (Deuteronomy 19:16–19), in the law of enslavement (Deuteronomy 24:7), in the law of military exemptions (Deuteronomy 20:5–9) and in the law of fraternal conflicts (Deuteronomy 25:1–3, 11–12). So, differentiation as identity disputes was traceable in these laws as interactions with the persons regarded as foreigners were minimized and the differentiation between the confirmed Israelites and the foreigners was emphasized through some differential treatments.[xxx]

In the light of the above, the traditional villages of ancient Israel and Judah belonging to different tribes and clans initially featured dynamic sacred spaces through the offering of prayers and routine of rites and sacrifices by various household leaders and presiding servants as their priests (Genesis 12:4-9; 15:7-21; 24:1-29; 28:10-22; 31:43-55; 46:1-27; 48:1-49:33; Exodus 12:1-10; Joshua 24:2&3,14&15). There was no strict restriction (religious distinction) between the sacred and the profane spaces in those local households and societies of ancient Israel and Judah. However, noticeable distinction (with restrictions) in the religious spaces were later institutionalized on open-country spaces which were regarded as outside towns, urban streets or city abroad spaces (`ärîm Hûcôt). Some open-country spaces (outside tribal and clan towns) which were bought by the elite or monarchy and seized or fought for in order to occupy as possessions, later served as commercial and economic open countries under the elite and royal court (Genesis 14:1-24; 21:22-34; 23:1-20; 26:12-30; 1Kings 20:1-34; 21:1-18). Some open-country spaces (outside tribal and clan towns) were also adopted as dynamic sacred spaces for the tabernacle from the time of Moses in the wilderness through the bureaucratization of leadership which Jethro suggested and the institutionalization of Levitical priesthood and Mosaic prophetic order (Exodus 18:1-27; 24:1-31:18; 33:7-40:38; Leviticus 8:1-9:24; Numbers 1:1-4:49; 7:1-8:26; 16:1-18:32; 27:12-23; 35:1-5; 36:7-9; Deuteronomy 1:9-25; 3:12-20). These were prior to; (i.) differentiation of Israelite worship from ancestral practices by the establishment of the Law of the Covenant in the Book of Deuteronomy as Yahwistic canon or prevailing orthodoxy for the tribal identities that constituted the Israelites and; (ii.) the centralization of worship of all the Israelites in the temple with certain restrictions and boundaries (Genesis 46:1-27; 49:1-28; Deuteronomy 1:1-14:21; 16:16-20:20; 26:1-34:12; Joshua 22:1-24:27; Judges 20:18,23,26-28; 1Samuel 1:3,7,9,24-28; 2:11; 3:1-4; 4:3-8; 6:13-16,20 & 21; 7:1-4; 1Chronicles 13:1-8; 15:1-3; 16:1-4 cp. Deuteronomy 12:1-13:1-18; 1Kings 6:1-38; 8:1-66; 1Chronicles 21:28-30; 2Chronicles 3:1). Thus, Francesca

Stavrakopoulou avers that ritual and religious activities in the traditional and local societies were deeply embedded in the social lives of the community as "strategic actions", since religious meaning was constructed in the "doing" of activities and not only in the place of activities (by using objects).[xxxi] Consequently, people gathered objects together spatially to form a sacred place of activities whose meaning was derived from both the ritual actions and the objects. In other words, it was through the material manifestation (the objects) and the performance of certain ritual actions that a religious space was constructed and a religious meaning (sacredness) was accomplished in ancient Israel and Judah. In all, the relationships among performance from people, material manifestation of objects and different places and households when taken together and performed together as a dynamic whole created or produced religion (sacredness) in ancient Israel and Judah – just as they did to create the home or household.[xxxii]

In the light of the afore mentioned, the family or household in Israel and Judah was the normative foundation of life, of mundane education, of religious training, of socialization and of legislation of whatever it individually considered as a dominant discourse. In this family or household setting, "survival depended upon the ability to raise crops and animals and to convert them into edible and wearable forms"[xxxiii] though, much of this domestic or household agricultural work was season dependent and variable in terms of its productivity. Much of the household's time, space and physical labour were taken up by its food ways as the paraphernalia of grain processing (having grinding stones, smaller hand mills, sieves, grain pits), baking (clay ovens), beer-making (strainers), wine-making and olive pressing (storage jars with both whole and perforated stoppers). Expectedly, the household food ways of ancient Israel and Judah also included a ritual dimension in their domestic preoccupations causing dynamic sacred spaces and dynamic sacred times. Ritual objects like "specialized libation vessels and ceremonial goblets" were usually assembled and arranged proximate to "fireplaces and cooking pits" in the company of bowls and other objects used for the consumption of food. So, "bowls and spatulas ritual meals formed an important part of household cult."[xxxiv] Food prepared, eaten and shared with gods or ancestors who were credited with sustaining the agrarian productivity and well-being of the social group also belonged to parts of the household cult in ancient Israel and Judah.[xxxv]

In another instance, subsequent to the institutionalization of worship in the tabernacle or temple during monarchical rule, ancient Israelite prophets who were believed to be agents or intermediaries of communication between the human and divine worlds exposed another form of social legislation of the dominant discourse. The Hebrew prophets living on the fringe or margin of the society were known to advocate for social change that would remedy their peripheral status and the social positioning of any group under their charge in a revolutionary manner (1Kings 17:1; 18:1-46; Amos 1:1-9:4). But, ancient Israelite prophets living at the centre or mainstream of power in the society operated to support and maintain the central social systems and structures by still advocating for change in styles that encouraged gradual change rather than plotting a revolution (2Kings 3:11-27; 4:8-13).[xxxvi] Consequently, Prophet Jonah Amittai, from Gath-Hepher, supported King Jeroboam II, son of Jehoash, to successfully rule for forty-one years in Samaria with the syncretism instituted by Jeroboam, son of Nebat; to recover Israelite territories between Lebo-Hamath and the Dead Sea; and to save the Israelites by possessing Damascus and Hamath (2Kings 14:23-29). Hence, Israelite historical account did not include prophetic oracles of condemnation and revolution against the monarchical rule of the time (Amos 1:1; 7:9-11; 9:8&9). In this vein, the perception of a divine revelation, vision, communication or hearing (divine oracle) from God might be influenced by having a divine call: (i.) after being dedicated to the deity; (ii.) after a humbling experience of affliction into submission; (iii.) after training and coaching about identifying and responding to God's call; (iv.) after being possessed by the Spirit; (v.) after a spiritual pilgrimage to the celestial realm in a dream or trance; or (vi.) after personal invocation or provocation of divine revelations in musical songs, ingestion of intoxication, energetic dancing or ecstatic prayers and dreams.[xxxvii]

Consequently, ancient Israelites had their processes of validation of prophecy which gave authority to the prophets and their oracles to make impacts. The processes of validation followed certain stereotypical ideas about prophetic speech, behaviour and formula of oracles of judgment which all prophets were expected to conform to. For instance, authority, legitimacy and acceptability of a prophecy depended on revelations: (1.) that did not advocate the worship of other gods; (2.) that held up the figure and style of function of Moses as their paradigm (Deuteronomy 13:1-7; 18:9-22) and; (3.) that were prophesied from a prophet that had a long history of being correct with messages that achieved visible results in the past (Jeremiah 23:9-40). Every prophetic claim was then validated by determining whether or not the would-be prophet looked, talked and acted like other prophets that the Israelites were familiar with or had previously known. Any prophet who deviated too much from the norm risked rejection from the people. So, prophets seeking accreditation were under subtle pressure to make their actions and words conform to what the people expected, including borrowing the words of earlier prophets who had been judged genuine and truthful. In this light, ancient Israelites were more inclined to give credibility to those prophets whose oracles reinforced beliefs that the Israelites already held. People were then more interested in hearing a prophet proclaiming peace than they were in listening to constant prophetic emphasis on judgment. Priest Amaziah from Bethel drove away Amos, the prophet from Tekoa-Judah to stop

prophesying condemnation against the royal sanctuary of Bethel (Amos 7:12-17). This was because the Israelites who were on the fringes of the society gave credibility to the prophets who urged social revolutionary change, while prophets who had affinity with people who were at the centre of power or in charge of the major social institutions in ancient Israel, such as the palace and the temple, were cautious, distrustful and chary of rapid revolutionary change.[xxxviii] Therefore, prophets on one ground provided motivations on strategies of war and victory to any king who guaranteed security, the safety of the common Israelites and the religious communities that were under the charge of the prophetic court. For example, Prophet Elisha motivated the military overthrow of King Joram of northern Israel by Jehu, a military commander (2Kings 9:1-37). Elisha also provided prophetic oracles establishing the dynasty of Jehu to the fourth generation (2Kings 10:30; 13:1-9, 10-13; 14:8-16, 23-29). Therefore, the prophecies of Amos and Hoshea against the four generations of Jehu were not documented in the Israelite historical account of the Books of Kings. But, on another ground, Israelite prophets raised polemics against the king that allied with a super power who was threatening the total well-being of the poor and less privileged Israelites irrespective of the economic and political values which the international relations promised to offer (1Kings 20). So, dynamism in the religious emphasis of the elite and the peasant in ancient Israel was known to be determined by socio-economic changes in the society which were in turn acclimatized into creating order and destroying chaos during the monarchical rule by certain hybridization called syncretism in the religious sphere.[xxxix]

Along this line, Todd averred that dynamism in ancient Israel (the land-tenure system and its socio-economic mobility) was informed by a shift from traditional symmetric wealth distribution system (relative egalitarian socio-economic relations that were practiced at early settlement of the Israelites in Canaan by confederacy of tribal households as the *nahala* patrimonial system) for an appropriation of stipendiary asymmetric wealth acquisition system (prebendal public service system under high social gentry and the royal court). The egalitarian land inheritance system assisted subsistence agrarian economy and ensured the continuity of ancient protective ethnic and clannish structures for mutual grazing rights called Yahwist socio-economic directory of prestige (wealth, power and social status). The adoption of the unequal and different wealth acquisition system as another social system in which to live, function and excel by the elite and the monarchy then aimed at amassing material wealth and securing certain positions of political power, social cachet and status. But, this advanced urbanization of lands from the open country side as city wide centres of commerce and as sources of revenue eroded the system of inalienability of tribal fortified lands. It shifted the balanced system of wealth distribution by farming from the *nahala* tilled or fortified clan lands into prebendal land tenure system. It also increased the stratification of Israelite society by heavy levy and taxation on factors of production. It culminated in interest-bearing loans, debt-slavery, the transfer of land from the traditional egalitarian inheritance and the eventual loss of land inheritance to the royal system known as Baalist socio-economic index of wealth acquisition for power. This modernization was condemned by the peripheral prophetic school as kings chose royal land retainers to direct a hierarchical and centralized administration of the lands under royal acquisition. The land retainers were also paid fiefs and grants for their loyalty and for keeping peasants as serfs to work the grain and crop produce (*Dügäᵒn* or *Pürî* or *yäräq*) lands and to serve as public servants in serfdom.[xl]

2. Authority and Power between Peripheral Religious Figures (Prophets) and Central Political Figures (Kings)

Deuteronomistic History (DtrH) in this light portrays a prophet of Yahweh as representing a successful presence of the power of Yahweh and as a personality who did not usurp the political superiority of the monarchical institution (by healing without attaching obedience to any ethical or legal code to healing of the Israelites). In this vein, monarchical power was depicted as an institution to be humbled by the prophetic power while the prophetic institution was rendered as also needing to be largely placed in cooperative subordination to monarchical authority. In this sense, DtrH gives priority to Jerusalem Temple as the domain of acceptable cultus and this produces a counter-indication to the assumption that either kingship was the natural setting of legitimacy or prophetic power was the subsidiary nature of public and legal acceptability in ancient Israel. Thus, the ancient struggle between different forms of power reigning in ancient Israel is interpreted in Israelite historical account as a history of political and military endeavours ruptured by the ideology, participation and perspective of its pioneering prophets and servants of Yahweh. In this light, prophetic power and monarchical authority are documented as a relationship of power performance. The dominant ideology of the DtrH also regards religious authority and political authority of leadership in Israel as closely connected and inseparable. Consequently, rituals, festive offerings or cultic activities disclosing religious authority outside Jerusalem (especially religious authority of cultic activities in the royal court of Samaria) are consistently judged as evil since they are described as subverting the supremacy of Jerusalem Temple that was in vogue during the Israelite monarchy. The prophetic power to offer rituals of the first fruits in 2Kings 4:42 is thus used by the DtrH to indicate the challenge which prophetic authority might have posed to Israelite monarchical authority. The

background of Prophet Elijah at Tisbe (outside River Jordan and the borders of Israel) may in this case be used to determine his status as an outsider and his role as a loner, railing conflicts against the pretensions of the monarchical system (1Kings 18:17&21). Yet, 2Kings 4:13 places Prophet Elisha within the domain of monarchical authority. 2Kings 6:13&23 also present Elisha in the company of Samarian elders. The difference of the background of Elisha may in this sense be used to dictate his status as an insider. The role of Elisha thus parallels the difference in his message. The narratives in the Book of Kings domesticate and conscript Elisha into the power structures which surrounded the Israelite monarchy in ancient Israel. They interpret the ability and service of Elisha as representing an alternative avenue within the structures of monarchical authority, to influence the king as a royal friend and not as an alternative system or structure of power (2Kings 8:1-6).[xli]

In this regard, two ideological motifs in the Israelite monarchy exposed the tension or conflict that existed in the ancient Israelite society about its leadership or administrative crisis as indicated in the Book of Kings. The first motif was the assumption that the prophets in the Book of Kings represented a form of social organization with generally positive portrayals as authentic messengers of Yahweh. As representatives of Yahweh, the prophets were, thus, presented as occupying a place of high authority in the realm of the Mosaic Law which was also described as the realm of Yahweh. Hence, prophets were regarded as the legitimate spokespersons of Yahweh. The second motif was the consideration of kingship as the only form of political power that was acceptable to Yahweh. Kings in this light were presented as representing the highest form of power in the land (the political and social structures of Israelite monarchy). The legitimacy of monarchical power was, thus, demonstrated in the realm of the monarchical power that claims to extend over and above all other realms of power, except the realm of the Mosaic Law which was the realm of Yahweh. In this sense, the political authority belonged to kings.[xlii]

It may then be assumed that biblical texts expose a figuration of the conflicts within the Israelite society. The figuration is certainly a historical struggle. It is the struggle over political systems, over economic systems, and over the relationship of a people to Yahweh. So, different ideologies dominate the biblical narratives, and they show the inconsistencies and inadequacies that exist within the ideology that dominates any particular text.[xliii] For instance, the King of Israel attempted to re-establish Israelite control of Moab in a war expedition with the support of the kings of Judah and Edom (2Kings 3:13-20). The coalition of kings sought the possibility of involving Yahweh in their mission when their armies ran out of water by inquiring from Prophet Elisha. The prophets in this account appeared to possess the exclusive right to declare the will of Yahweh. Elisha employed this alternate form of power as subordinate to monarchical power in rescuing the kings out of their difficulty. Elisha instructed them in the methods of conquest by being available when needed which subjugated the prophetic power that was under the realm of and within the limits of monarchical power. However, the King of Israel challenged such a claim by repeatedly declaring the will of Yahweh for himself and the other kings! In another instance, Aramean/Syrian international relations with Israel are narrated between the two kings as a case of finding healing for Naaman (2Kings 5:1-27). The prophetic form of power is described as being invited to be involved in an international political dialogue between Aramean and Israelite kings. The monarchical power is thus characterized as having complete control of any situation within its own sphere of influence as prophetic power is described as coming to the aid of the king and not to usurp royal power. Yet, the possibility of a society based on prophetic leadership is celebrated in the text as prophetic power controls an international challenge and confrontation which reduces any earlier estimation of the monarchical power in ancient Israel. So, monarchical power is described as weak and ineffective, while the prophetic power is painted as successfully creating victory, healing and life. However, the possibility of a political confrontation of royal authority by another form of power is exposed in 2Kings 6:20-7:20. The ineffectiveness of the anxious, weak and indecisive king in dealing with the situation at hand and soliciting for the aid of the prophet whose house is portrayed as the true location of power amidst Israelite elders reveals the superiority of prophetic authority. But, the inability of prophetic authority to ensure Israelite national security away from the Aramean raid over Israel and prior to the miracle at Dothan undermines its effectiveness and its attempt to claim the status of a true alternative to monarchical authority. The ordering of the story paints prophetic power as undermining and embarrassing royal power (though ultimately useful to the monarchy by coming to its aid with its valuable service). The authority to execute capital punishment of death on the guilty is still described as reserved in and residing within the monarchical power.[xliv]

Dynamism in Religious Emphasis about Transforming Human Life

From the above-mentioned, divine revelation or religious experience is known to be very influential and authoritative for religious conviction and devotion. It is reported as a human construct of an awe-inspiring influence and a manifestation of extraordinary powers and beings that are superior to and beyond human control. The extraordinary power is explained as being useful in setting apart spaces and time, in creating order and in destroying chaos. Thus, human existence and welfare are taught as depending upon divine revelation of the sacred power. However, social conditions and status are known to influence religious thought and action.

For instance, the position and wealth of the Israelite kings assisted the construction of the temple and movement of the Ark of the Covenant, symbolizing the presence of God from Shiloh (where the Levites previously had traditional authority) gave the Judahites the upper hand in ancient Israel. The temple, like the crown city at Jerusalem was both; (i.) a new, foreign and unfamiliar institution for ancient Israel and Judah and (ii.) a royal undertaking for autonomous representation and celebration of the king and the God worshipped by the king. So, the temple as a sacred place for rituals at sacred times became a state sanctuary in which even the Levitical priests functioned as royal officials. The king as the builder of the temple, then, became the permanent owner of the sacred place, the one responsible for the upkeep of the temple and its priests, and a reputable influencer of ritual traditions and the religion of Yahweh.[xlv] The struggle over power, wealth, prestige and privilege in the above made religious practices in the society very competitive. Consequently, Israelite religion was confronted with gaining mastery over the imperfections of human life and bringing the world into conformity with the realistic order and strategies of transforming the imperfections of life in glorifying God. In view of the foregoing, dynamism in the religious emphasis about transforming human life to preach the salvation of whole health and deliverance from destructive forces of human existence became prevalent. Spirituality was also reinterpreted as a practical elevation of the physical and psychological conditions of the Israelites in their socio-economic mobility for success: in either manual labour or professional employment, in accretion of surplus prosperity for investment and in ethically decent and honest life (peasants, hardworking public employees and merchants) in glorifying God.[xlvi]

In view of the foregoing, the concepts, typologies and tools of analysis from the Book of Genesis to the Books of Kings are documentations and legislation of the dominant discourse of differentiation against hybridization of socio-economic and political indices in ancient Israel and Judah. The distinctiveness of Israelite identities is thus promoted by certain ethnic negotiation of symmetrical relationship within clan totemic identities as well as certain renegotiation of Israelite egalitarian ethos within asymmetrical or hierarchical relations. This exclusive recognition is staged through acts of differentiation, social classification and social consciousness within social boundaries in ancient Israel like living under tribal standard or emblem (Numbers 1:52; 2:2&34), employing the rite of circumcision (Genesis 17:10-14; Exodus 4:24-26) and avoidance of pork in their food and commerce (Leviticus 11:4-8; Deuteronomy 14:7-21).[xlvii] However, the narratives express the validation that they authorize through the documentation of differentiations that culminated in polemics and are given religious colouring as syncretism, in the transition from tribal confederacy of the Israelites into institutionalized bureaucracy of monarchical rule. The prophetic influence and priestly ministry during Israelite monarchy are also documented as supporting the centralized institutions of the royal rule that promoted Yahwistic precepts and sponsored royal revolts against the royal courts that celebrated religious syncretism. In this vein, the narratives of Prophet Ahijah against King Solomon culminated in raising Jeroboam as king (1Kings 11:1-14:2&31). The stories of Elijah, Elisha and Micaiah ben Imlah against the Ahab-Omri dynastic monarchy which promoted Phoenician religious syncretism in Samaria also culminated in the encouragement of Jehu's revolt (1Kings 16-2Kings 10). Though, Kings Asa and Jehoshaphat are presented as promoting the Yahwistic system and levitical priesthood of Davidic dynasty in Judah, the celebration of similar Baalist religious syncretism by Judean Queen Mother Athaliah (the widow of Jehoram and mother of Ahaziah) is also presented as resisted by the Jerusalem priesthood which sponsored and tutored Jehoash to reinstitute the Yahwistic covenant (2Kings 11).[xlviii] So, the biblical presentation of the history of the Israelite past in Genesis-2Kings offers a religious form of validation and authorization of exclusive worship of Yahweh against inclusive promotion of hybridization of Baal found within the approval of monarchy or the rejection of its centralized bureaucracy (Deuteronomy 17:14-20; 1Samuel 8:15-18; 2Kings 21:10-16; 22:14-20; 25:27-30).[xlix] Scholarship is surprised to still affirm that the relationship between religion and state in Jewish history was often antagonistic… All biblical prophets maintained a critical distance from the power-holders of the day and called first and foremost for better ethics, which alone could guarantee better governance. Biblical and rabbinic Judaism lacks a clear and coherent state tradition, despite various later efforts to extract one from history and scripture. Confusion and weakness of governance had tragic results at the end of the Second Temple period, when Judea slid into its fatal confrontation with Rome without a generally accepted government authority or national leader. The absence of a religiously recommended and realistic state tradition still affects politics in Israel and helps to prevent the increasingly urgent reform of the country's dysfunctional government system.[l]

II. CONCLUSION

Although the ancient Israelites emerged in the Hebrew Scriptures and the Bible as a unification of different clans with separate family totems and a blending of diverse religious identities of firstborns (Numbers 1:18-46&52; 2:2-34 cp. Genesis 49:1-28; Exodus 22:29; 34:20; Numbers 3:13; Deuteronomy 33:1-29), the rationalization of charismatic abilities of tribal leaders culminated in the organization of the ancient Israelites as a sacred community. It raised the struggle for public legitimacy from functional style of leadership into bureaucratic style of leadership in ancient Israel and Judah. So, former Aramean/Syrian households of twelve

different clans amalgamated with other ancient Near Eastern peoples at different periods of challenges of communal pioneering, of subsistence agrarian system, of intertribal invasions and interethnic violence and of religious differentiations in the ancient Near East for worship in Canaan (Deuteronomy 26:5-13). The merger of the different ancient Near Eastern peoples who were confronted with the challenges of communal pioneering, of subsistence agrarian system, of intertribal invasions and interethnic violence and of religious differentiations culminated in the advent of certain characters as leaders and administrators of the ancient Israelites (Genesis 49:8-12; Exodus 3:1-4:31; 6:16-20; Deuteronomy 33:7-11; Judges 1:1&2; 1Samuel 1:1-2:36; 3:11-21; 1Chronicles 2:1&2; 6:1-28; 9:22). The combination of Aramean/Syrian ideologies, the experiences of Midian background, the challenges of Egyptian slavery and the assimilation of the Gibeonites created the development of a competing check and balance in ancient Israel. Levites, as former Aramean/Syrian households and from a mere status of a clan rose to become both the religious functionaries (Numbers 3:40-45; 4:46-49; 8:14-26) and socio-political intermediaries known as prophets in ancient Israel (Exodus 6:16-20; Deuteronomy 18:15-19; 1Samuel 1:1-2:36; 3:11-21; 1Chronicles 2:1&2; 6:1-28; 9:22). Judahites, as former Aramean/Syrian households and from a mere status of a clan rose to become both the territorial defenders (Judges 1:1&2) and socio-religious politicians known as kings in ancient Israel (Genesis 49:8-12; 1Samuel 16:1-23; 17:12; 2Samuel 2:4; 1Chronicles 2:1-15).

The transition from rural (tribal/clan) landed inheritance to urban (socio-economic city) commerce and religious differentiation in both ancient Israel and Judah introduced having Levites as religious functionaries in the gates of the clans/tribes that made up the Israelites without owning any tribal land (Deuteronomy 12:12-19; 14:27-29; 16:11-14; 18:1-8; 26:11-13 cp. Leviticus 25:32-34; Numbers 8:24-26; 18:24; 35:2-8). The transformation and recognition of Levites at the gates of every Israelite tribe beyond a particular landed inheritance took place prior to having a centralised worship centre in the city, later, known as the temple at Jerusalem with its grazing land (Numbers 35:2-8). Likewise, there was an improvement in the system of having Judahites as territorial defenders of every Israelite clan/tribe (Judges 1:1&2) prior to having a centralised socio-political centre, later known as the crown/royal city at Jerusalem with its commercial land (1Samuel 8:14; 1Kings 20:34).

However, the construction of sacred places as sanctuaries afforded the transfer of the authority to control ritual traditions from the Levites to the Judahites in influencing the religion of Yahweh. Quests for authority through the use of power, then, culminated in the royal formation of communities by kings and the centralization of sacred rites at Jerusalem under Levitical priests. So, the Judahites as monarchs had the Levites as lawgivers between their feet as in the days of Shiloh (Genesis 49:10; Deuteronomy 17:18-20; 33:8-11; 1Samuel 2:35). In all, the acquired landed properties of Canaan were employed by the Judahites and Levites in creating and transforming former Arameans/Syrians into the religious identity known as "the Israelites" with religious differentiations.

---

[i] Gerald A. Cole and Phil Kelly, "Leadership Theory and Practice" in *Management Theory and Practice,* (Hampshire, United Kingdom: Cengage Learning Inc., 2011), 70.

[ii] Gary E. Kessler, *Studying Religion* (New York: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2008), 261-264.

[iii] Gerald A. Cole and Phil Kelly, "Leadership Theory and Practice" in *Management Theory and Practice,* (Hampshire, United Kingdom: Cengage Learning Inc., 2011), 69-70.

[iv] Gary E. Kessler, *Studying Religion* (New York: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2008), 93-94.

[v] Marvin A. Sweeney, "Prophets and Priests in the Deuteronomistic History: Elijah and Elisha" in Mignon R. Jacobs and Raymond F. Person Jr Mignon R. Jacobs and Raymond F. Person Jr (eds.), *Israelite Prophecy and The Deuteronomistic History: Portrait, Reality, and the Formation of a History*, (Atlanta, Georgia: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 41-46.

[vi] Louis Jonker, "the *migräš"* in Willem A. VanGemeren (ed.), *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis, Volume 3*, (Michigan: Zondervan, 1997), 1142.

[vii] Rhonda Burnette-Bletsch, *Studying the Old Testament,* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 20.

[viii] P. K. Tull, "Methods of Interpretation" in Bill T. Arnold and H. G. M. Williamson (eds.), *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books*, (England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2005), 684.

[ix] P. K. Tull, "Methods of Interpretation" in Bill T. Arnold and H. G. M. Williamson (eds.), *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books*, (England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2005), 688-689.

[x] Rhonda Burnette-Bletsch, *Studying the Old Testament,* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 21.

[xi] Robert R. Wilson, *Sociological Approaches to the Old Testament,* (Philadelphia: Fortess Press, 1984), 19-20.

[xii] Gene M. Tucker, "Editor's Foreword" in Robert R. Wilson, *Sociological Approaches to the Old Testament,* (Philadelphia: Fortess Press, 1984), vii-viii.

[xiii] Gary E. Kessler, *Studying Religion* (New York: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2008), 240-241.

[xiv] Gary E. Kessler, *Studying Religion* (New York: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2008), 257.

---

xv Max Weber, "Structures of Authority: Rational-Legal Authority, Traditional Authority and Charismatic Authority" in George Ritzer, *Sociological Theory*, (New York: The McGraw-Hill Inc., 2008), 129-136.

xvi Sharon Henderson Callahan (ed.), *Religious Leadership: A Reference Handbook*, (London, United Kingdom: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2013), xiii.

xvii Sharon Henderson Callahan (ed.), *Religious Leadership: A Reference Handbook*, (London, United Kingdom: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2013), xiii-xv.

xviii Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel,* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 116-118, 129.

xix Christian Karner, "Postmodernism and the Study of Religions" in James G. Crossley and Christian Karner, *Writing History, Constructing Religion*, (USA, Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 33-36.

xx Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel,* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 119-120.

xxi The ´ádämâ is taken from WTM morphology and Whittaker's Revised BDB Lexicon entry in BibleWorks 7. Translations are taken from Frances Brown, S.R. Driver and CA. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Walton Street, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 9.

xxii Michael A. Grisanti, "the ´ádämâ" in Willem A. VanGemeren (ed.), New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis, Volume 1, (Michigan: Zondervan, 1997), 269-274.

xxiii The Sädeh is taken from WTM morphology and Whittaker's Revised BDB Lexicon entry in BibleWorks 7. Translations are taken from Frances Brown, S.R. Driver and CA. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Walton Street, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 961.

xxiv Michael A. Grisanti, "the Sädeh" in Willem A. VanGemeren (ed.), *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis, Volume 3*, (Michigan: Zondervan, 1997), 1217-1219.

xxv Richard E. Averbeck, "the ma`aSür" in Willem A. VanGemeren (ed.), *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis, Volume 2*, (Michigan: Zondervan, 1997), 1035-1038.

xxvi Mark Leuchter , "Samuel: A Prophet like Moses or a Priest like Moses?" in Mignon R. Jacobs and Raymond F. Person Jr Mignon R. Jacobs and Raymond F. Person Jr. (eds.), *Israelite Prophecy and The Deuteronomistic History: Portrait, Reality, and the Formation of a History,* (Atlanta, Georgia: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 151-156.

xxvii Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel,* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 128.

xxviii Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*.

xxix Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*.

xxx Carly L. Crouch, *The Making of Israel*, (Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill, 2014), 204-225.

xxxi Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "Religion at Home, The Materiality of Practice" in Susan Niditch (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel,* (West Sussex, UK: JohnWiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 347.

xxxii Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "Religion at Home, The Materiality of Practice" in Susan Niditch (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel,* (West Sussex, UK: JohnWiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 347-352.

xxxiii Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "Religion at Home, The Materiality of Practice" in Susan Niditch (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel,* (West Sussex, UK: JohnWiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 352.

xxxiv Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "Religion at Home, The Materiality of Practice" in Susan Niditch (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel*.

xxxv Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "Religion at Home, The Materiality of Practice" in Susan Niditch (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel*.

xxxvi Robert R. Wilson, "Prophecy" in Susan Niditch (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel,* (West Sussex, UK: JohnWiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 321.

xxxvii Robert R. Wilson, "Prophecy" in Susan Niditch (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel,* 321-324.

xxxviii Robert R. Wilson, "Prophecy" in Susan Niditch (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel,* 324-328.

xxxix Abiola Ayodeji Olaniyi and Bolaji Olukemi Bateye, "Dynamism in Sacred Historiographies and Female Religious Leadership of Ancient Israel and *Apoti-Eri* C&S Churches, Ile-Ife" in *Ife Journal of Religions*, Volume 12, (2016), 130-133.

xl Judith A. Todd, "The Pre-Deuteronomistic Elijah Cycle" in Robert B. Coote (ed), *Elijah and Elisha in Socio-literary Perspective* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1992), 1-11. See also Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel,* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 147-150.

[xli] Wesley J. Bergen, "The Prophetic Alternative: Elisha and the Israelite Monarchy" in Robert B. Coote (ed), *Elijah and Elisha in Socio-literary Perspective,* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1992), 132-135.

[xlii] Wesley J. Bergen, "The Prophetic Alternative: Elisha and the Israelite Monarchy" in Robert B. Coote (ed), *Elijah and Elisha in Socio-literary Perspective,* 127-128.

[xliii] Wesley J. Bergen, "The Prophetic Alternative: Elisha and the Israelite Monarchy" in Robert B. Coote (ed), *Elijah and Elisha in Socio-literary Perspective,* 129.

[xliv] Wesley J. Bergen, "The Prophetic Alternative: Elisha and the Israelite Monarchy" in Robert B. Coote (ed), *Elijah and Elisha in Socio-literary Perspective,* 130-133.

[xlv] Malachy I. Okwueze, The Old Testament as History, Religion and Literature, (Nsukka, Nigeria: AP Express Publishers, 1998), 134-135.

[xlvi] Gary E. Kessler, *Studying Religion*, Third Edition (New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2008), 42-46, 288-293, 301.

[xlvii] Avraham Faust, "The Emergence of Israel and Theories of Ethnogenesis" in Susan Niditch (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel,* (West Sussex, UK: JohnWiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 155-171.

[xlviii] J.J.M. Roberts, "The Divided Monarchy" in Susan Niditch (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel,* (West Sussex, UK: JohnWiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 205-206.

[xlix] Brad E. Kelle "The Early Monarchy and the Stories of Saul, David, and Solomon" in Susan Niditch (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel,* (West Sussex, UK: JohnWiley & Sons Ltd, 2016), 177-192.

[l] Shalom Salomon Wald, *Rise and Decline of Civilizations: Lessons for the Jewish People*, A Project of Jewish People Policy Institute of Jewish Agency for Israel, (Brighton, MA., USA: Academic Studies Press, 2014), 164.