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FROM ONE GENERATION TO ANOTHER: THE PASSOVER AS COLLECTIVE MEMORY

Mark Graham Short

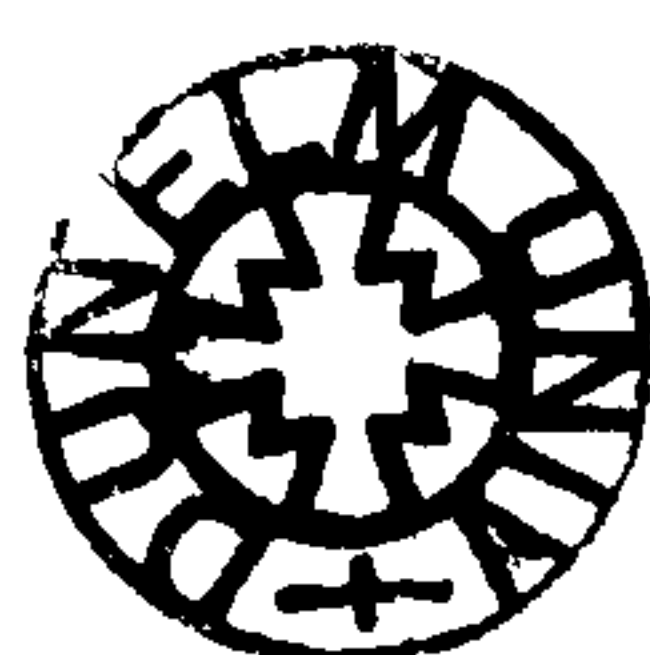
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Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Durham

Department of Theology

2002



- 1 OCT 2003

ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to provide a fresh perspective on the nature and function of the Old Testament Passover by considering how it shaped and transmitted Israel's collective memory. In this context, special attention is paid to the work of Jan Assman, who argues that the Ancient Near East in general and Israel in particular underwent a transition from ritual repetition to textual interpretation as the primary medium of cultural memory. This model is tested by a detailed exegesis of the Passover texts in Exodus 12-13, Deuteronomy 16 and 2 Chronicles 30 and 35.

It is concluded that there is not a general tendency for text to displace rite so far as the Old Testament Passover is concerned. A better framework for understanding the distinctive contribution of each text is the relationship between ritual resemblance (mimesis) and oral or written explanation (catechesis). The thesis explores how these two features of Passover observance interact to shape Israel's memory of her past and her communal identity in the present. Exodus 12-13 portray Israel as a people belonging to YHWH by virtue of the deliverance from Egypt, Deuteronomy 16 recalls the memory of the departure from Egypt as a motivation for Torah observance and Chronicles portrays Israel as an organised cultic community gathered at the temple to petition YHWH to bring an end to national captivity.

If there is a trajectory in Old Testament Passover texts it is found in the textualisation of catechesis. In the first instance the Passover's significance is explained alongside the rite itself. However, over time a developing body of authoritative texts provides an ever-widening canonical context within which the Passover can be practised and interpreted. The thesis concludes by considering how its findings provide the basis for exploring other Old and New Testament themes.

**FROM ONE GENERATION TO ANOTHER:
THE PASSOVER AS COLLECTIVE MEMORY**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The very subject matter of this thesis is a reminder that nothing of value is achieved by isolated individuals apart from a supportive and nurturing network of relationships. This has certainly been my experience during the past three years of study and writing.

Dr Walter Moberly has been a model of judicious and encouraging supervision. His commitment to exploring the significance of the Scriptures for contemporary Christian life and practice was an inspiration as I sought to explore the function of the canon at a somewhat earlier stage.

The trustees of the Lucas Tooth Scholarship Trust provided generous financial support during our time in the United Kingdom. The Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn and the Right Reverend George Browning allowed me leave and many times expressed interest in the course of my studies.

The people and leadership of St Nicholas Church of England provided us with many rich experiences of Christian fellowship, along with the opportunity to minister among people from many backgrounds and nationalities.

Most of all, thanks are due to my wife Monica, and our children Andrew and Matthew. Their love, patience and good humour ensured that our Northern sojourn was a special time together – and that, surely is a memory to treasure.

DECLARATION

No material contained in this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree in this or any other University.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by D.N. Freeman. 6 vols. New York, 1992.
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOTC	Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
BHS	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> . Edited by K. Elliger and W. Rudolph. Stuttgart, 1983.
BTB	Biblical Theology Bulletin
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
EdF	Erträge der Forschung
EvT	Evangelische Theologie
ET	English Translation, where the versification differs from the Masoretic Text
ETR	Etudes théologiques et religieuses
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FOTL	The Forms of the Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
Fs	Festschrift
GKC	<i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i> . Edited by E. Kautzsch. Translated by A.E. Cowley. 2 nd ed. Oxford, 1910.
HALOT	Koehler, L., Baumgartner, W. & Stamm, J. <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Translated and edited under the supervision of M.E.J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden, 1994-1999.
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HeyJ	Heythrop Journal
HKAT	Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual

ICC	International Critical Commentary
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBTh	Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JSOTSS	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series.
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies
MT	Masoretic Text
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
NIB	The New Interpreter's Bible
NIBC	New International Biblical Commentary
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NT	New Testament
OTS	Old Testament Studies
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
RB	Revue biblique
RGG	Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart.
SBAB	Stuttgarter Biblische Aufsatzbände
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature
SEFG	Schriften der Finnischen Exegetischen Gesellschaft
SJFSJ	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
SJOT	Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament
StudBib	Studia Biblica
ThWAT	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i> . Edited by G.J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. Stuttgart, 1970-
TLOT	<i>Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by E. Jenni, with assistance from C. Westermann. Translated by M.E. Biddle. 3 vols. Peabody, 1997.

TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentary
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament.
WOC	B. Waltke & M. O'Connor. <i>An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax</i> . Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990.
WUANT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Alten und Neuen Testament.
ZABR	Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZTK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche

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CHAPTER ONE: THE PASSOVER AND MEMORY IN OLD TESTAMENT SCHOLARSHIP

1.1 The Passover in Old Testament Scholarship

It is not a straightforward matter to justify another Old Testament study on the Passover. Ever since the work of Julius Wellhausen and his nineteenth century contemporaries much scholarship has been concerned with relatively small refinements of a dominant paradigm.

In his *Prolegomena* Wellhausen argued that over the course of time Israel's festivals had developed from relatively unstructured celebrations associated with the cycles of nature to festivals which were associated with specific events in Israel's history and celebrated at fixed points in the liturgical year¹. This meant that in the case of the Passover the association with the exodus from Egypt was only secondary. Following on from Wellhausen much scholarship was concerned to trace the original significance of the Passover and also determine at what stage in Israel's religious history it was first linked with the exodus². This emphasis on historical reconstruction found expression in a diachronic analysis of individual texts, whereby different legal and narrative traditions were separated from one another and placed in chronological order³.

A classic example of this type of work is the study of Laaf⁴, who begins with detailed literary-critical examinations of the relevant Passover texts. Sections of text are assigned to particular traditions, with some attempt to explain the process by which the text reached its

¹ J. Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (Edinburgh: A & C Black, 1885), pp83-113.

² For two recent surveys of modern scholarship on the Passover see B. Bokser 'Unleavened Bread and Passover, Feasts of' *ABD* Vol. VI, pp755-765 and E. Otto 'פסח pasah' *ThWAT* Vol. 6, pp659-682.

³ The manner in which this technique was applied to Exodus 12 and 13 is discussed in Chapter 2.

⁴ P. Laaf, *Die Pascha-Feier Israels: Eine literarkritische und überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studie* (BBB 36; Bonn: Peter Hansen Verlag, 1970).

final form. Laaf ends his study by proposing an origin for the Passover⁵. He concludes that the earliest Passover text in the Old Testament is Exodus 12:21-23, where the ritual is already assumed to be known. The pre-literary Passover tradition had its *Sitz im Leben* in the tribal law code, where the Passover was an apotropaic rite intended to protect the participants against a desert demon. Thus it predated the exodus, and was only associated with it at a later stage, probably in the era of the Deuteronomist. At the same time Passover was combined with the Festival of Unleavened Bread, which was an agricultural celebration taken over from Israel's Canaanite neighbours. Deuteronomy also shifted the celebration of Passover to the central sanctuary. Later the Priestly tradition emphasised the atoning significance of the Passover and returned it to the domestic sphere. The final stage in the evolution of the Old Testament Passover was the presentation of Chronicles, which sought to mediate the understandings of Deuteronomy and the Priestly tradition.

One can engage with this type of study by questioning some of its exegetical conclusions and/or by seeking to provide a more convincing account of the origins of the Passover. However, even if this were carried out successfully it would fail to engage with how the Passover as presented in the texts of the Old Testament actually functioned in the life of Israel when those texts were regarded as authoritative. For example, the association between the Passover and the exodus is pervasive in the Old Testament⁶. While this does not prove that such an association is original it does suggest that any account which minimises this relationship in the interests of historical reconstruction will fail to explain adequately how the Passover texts of the Old Testament, either separately or in combination, contributed to Israel's self-understanding.

While there are a small number of studies that undertake a more synchronic or final form examination of Passover texts they have not entirely broken free from the limitations of the

⁵ Die Pascha-feier Israels, p116ff.

⁶ A possible exception is Chronicles, which will be examined in Chapters Six and Seven below.

prevailing paradigm⁷. The following work seeks to take seriously the final form of the Old Testament text while recognising the diversity of traditions that have contributed to that text. In this sense, it seeks to build on the best insights of the canonical approach associated with Brevard Childs, while providing a more conscious analysis of what constitutes a canon and how it functions in the life of a community.

1.2 Memory in Old Testament Scholarship

The theme of memory provides an excellent basis for examining the Old Testament Passover texts in this light. The reasons for this are both linguistic and conceptual. Exodus 12:14 describes the day of the Passover as a day of remembrance (זִכְרוֹן). The same term is used in Exodus 13:8 for the associated Festival of Unleavened Bread. In Deuteronomy 16:3 the people are directed to eat unleavened bread with the Passover “so that all the days of your life you may remember (הִזְכֵּר) the day of your departure from the land of Egypt.” Even when the language of memory is absent from Passover texts the concept is present. In some manner Passover serves to mediate the events of Israel’s past to her present. Moreover, the diversity of Passover texts and their distribution across a wide range of traditions raises the question of how Israel received and transformed her textual memory, and how text and rite, word and action, functioned in her life and understanding. Before considering the link between Passover and memory in more detail, it is necessary to give a brief overview of some important studies on memory in the Old Testament.

In the early 1960s three studies, by Childs⁸, de Boer⁹ and Schottroff¹⁰ examined the role of memory in the Old Testament. The methodologies of De Boer and Schottroff were quite

⁷ Eg T. Prosc, ‘Passover in Biblical Narratives’ *JSOT* 82 (1999) pp45-55 examines the Old Testament Passover narratives and concludes that they exhibit a common structural pattern whereby the Passover celebration mediates between two stages in Israel’s history. However, this is the prelude to a second article in which she attempts to trace the origins of the pre-Yahwistic Passover. [‘Origins of Passover’ *SJOT* Vol. 13/1 (1999), pp78-94]. Here she concludes that the Passover probably functioned originally in a fertility cult. D. Bergant ‘An Anthropological Approach to Biblical Interpretation: The Passover Supper in Exodus 12:1-20 as a Case Study’ *Semeia* Vol. 67 (1994), pp43-62 focuses more on the function of the text in its final form but, as suggested by her title, her interest is anthropological rather than theological.

⁸ B.S. Childs. *Memory and Tradition in Israel* (London: SCM Press, 1962).

similar. Both concentrated almost exclusively on the use of the זָכַר word group¹¹. Schottroff began with an extensive survey of the root in Semitic languages¹². De Boer's work incorporates a much briefer survey of the זָכַר root in Ugaritic and Semitic, but unlike Schottroff he does survey post-biblical usage, including Qumran and Rabbinic writings.

Schottroff sub-divides the Old Testament occurrences of the זָכַר root along lexical lines, distinguishing for example, between divine and human remembering, the Qal, Hiphil and Niphal forms of the verb and the formation of cognate nouns such as זִכְרוֹן. Each lexical unit is further classified according to the context in which it occurs. So, for example, the use of the Qal form of זָכַר for human remembering is further classified into five categories – remembering past events, recollecting a fact or state of affairs, emotional participation such as a lament over a lost past, remembrance as action and finally remembrance as a term for human-human or human-divine relationships. De Boer's survey of זָכַר in the Old Testament is briefer and proceeds along chronological lines, beginning with the earliest Old Testament traditions. Schottroff and de Boer's conclusions reflect their methodologies. Schottroff concludes that generally there is a link between memory and action, especially when זָכַר relates to an event in the past. Examples include Deuteronomic texts that link the people's present obedience to their memory of the events of salvation-history. The verb זָכַר can also be used with reference to present events or realities, where it has the sense of a serious consideration which should lead to an action or emotional response. Where the Old Testament uses זָכַר for divine remembering this frequently refers to YHWH's saving activity on behalf of his people. However this is not invariably the case. Since divine

⁹ P.A.H. de Boer, Gedenken und Gedächtnis in der Welt des Alten Testament. (Stuttgart : Kohlhammer, 1962).

¹⁰ W. Schottroff, 'Gedenken' im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament (WMANT 15; Neukirchener: Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1964).

¹¹ Both studies make some reference to parallel terms (eg אָרַח, אָרַח), but with the intention of casting light on the meaning of זָכַר rather than constructing a broader concept of memory.

¹² The survey incorporates Akkadian (pp12-42), Canaanite languages (pp43-57), Aramaic (pp58-88) and Southern Semitic languages (pp89-95).

remembering is responsive to human action, it can involve wrath and judgement in response to human evil or disobedience¹³.

De Boer's conclusions are briefer and more general. He argues that the basic meaning of the זכר root is to name or proclaim, from which the meaning 'to remember' is a derivation¹⁴. However, this is preliminary to the main interests of De Boer, which concern the background to the concept of ἀνάμνησις in the New Testament, particularly in the accounts of the Last Supper.

The methodologies employed by Schottroff and de Boer¹⁵ make them vulnerable to the critique of word-studies in general made by James Barr¹⁶. In particular, they give insufficient attention to the concept of memory, and how it is reflected in the texts and practices of Israel. Lexical studies can only be the beginning and not the end in addressing this issue¹⁷.

Brevard Childs' work was explicitly concerned to address these issues, taking into account Barr's critique. Childs organises the lexical material along lines similar to Schottroff. So he distinguishes divine remembrance from human remembrance and also has a separate chapter on nouns derived from זכר. However he goes beyond Schottroff in his consideration of form-critical and theological issues. He locates the original *Sitz im Leben* of the language of divine remembrance in the cult, specifically the complaint psalm and the hymn. The language was then adopted by the prophets to portray divine judgement and

¹³ Schottroff 'Gedenken' im Alten Orient, pp339-41.

¹⁴ de Boer Gedenken und Gedächtnis, pp43-44.

¹⁵ H. Eising's article on זכר in TDOT (IV), pp64-82 proceeds along similar lines. He examines instances of human and divine memory, the usage of various cognate nouns before a brief examination of the role of the cult in memory.

¹⁶ J. Barr The Semantics of Biblical Language (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp206-219.

¹⁷ In the foreword to the second (1967) edition of his work Schottroff refers to Barr's work and concedes in light of it that his work would be strengthened by more thorough attention to form-critical issues. He then refers the reader to Childs' Memory and Tradition in Israel for a further consideration of this issue.

promise, and by the Priestly school to express a theological interpretation of Israel's history¹⁸. In contrast, the language of Israel remembering did not derive from a fixed cultic context but was concerned with the basic human function of recalling a past event¹⁹. This basic meaning was then developed by Deuteronomy to establish a continuity between the decisive events in Israel's tradition and the present of each successive generation.

Theologically, Childs relates memory to the issue of how each generation of Israel was to relate to the great redemptive events of her history. Here memory is equivalent to the process of actualisation (*Vergegenwärtigung*) in which "a past event is contemporised for a generation removed in time and space from the original event."²⁰ Childs is clear that this does not mean that these events were 'timeless'. The foundational events of Israel's history, such as the exodus, had a non-repeatable 'once for all' character. Rather, these events had a dynamic quality that brought about a new state of affairs into which each new generation was challenged to enter. So, through the memory of the exodus each generation participated in the redemptive time initiated by the exodus, and in that sense, participated in the exodus itself.

Childs identifies the cult as the arena in which such memory/actualisation originally took place. "Israel celebrated in her seasonal festivals the great redemptive acts of the past both to renew the tradition and to participate in its power."²¹ In times of crisis the role of cult in forming memory was re-interpreted and transformed. In the case of Deuteronomy the cult was reformed to remove any opportunity for syncretistic influence; and obedience to YHWH's commands became the means of participating in Israel's redemptive history. In the exilic prophecies of Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah memory was intended to produce repentance from evil and a turning to YHWH. Thus even in exile, when the ministrations

¹⁸ Childs, Memory and Tradition in Israel, p44.

¹⁹ Memory and Tradition in Israel, p47.

²⁰ Memory and Tradition in Israel, p85.

²¹ Memory and Tradition in Israel, p75.

of the cult were not accessible, Israel was able to experience the redemptive tradition to which the cult witnessed.

Childs' work is certainly an advance on de Boer and Schottroff. Clearly, any study of Israel's memory must address the issue of how each generation appropriated the redemptive potential of its tradition. However, it requires supplementation in two areas²². First, notwithstanding his later interest in canonical interpretation Childs' form-critical methodology tends to privilege the traditions and experiences which may lie behind the text rather than the text itself. However, we do not have direct access to Israel's cultic experiences, only to texts whose relationships to those experiences may be complex and indirect²³. Furthermore, those texts themselves are an important vehicle of memory. What is required is an approach which acknowledges that both text and cult functioned as vehicles of memory in Israel. Childs himself moves in this direction with his discussion of how exilic prophecy kept memory alive in an environment where the cult was no longer extant. Secondly, Childs gives insufficient attention to the social context of memory. When he speaks of 'Israel' remembering it is not clear whether he is speaking of Israel as a corporate entity, Israel as a collection of individuals or particular groups within Israel. Indeed, it is questionable whether one can speak of a community apart from memory. That is, as memory unites the community to the foundational events in its tradition, it thereby unites members of that community to one another in the present.

²² Childs' subsequent works have not significantly diverged from the understanding of memory advanced in his 1962 publication. Cf his comment on Israel's festivals over twenty years later – "In contrast to the role of the myth in the Babylonian New Year Festival which sought to re-activate the order of the world in ritual representation against the elemental powers of chaos, the Hebrew festivals used their rituals to preserve solidarity with the past and to participate through memory in the great redemptive events which constituted the people of God (Ex. 12.11)." Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context (London: SCM Press, 1985), p162. The later Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments (London: SCM Press, 1992) contains no explicit discussion of the concept of memory, although the idea is implicit in the discussion on the hermeneutical significance of Israel's history on pp97-102.

²³ Cf the analysis of Frank H. Gorman Jr 'Ritualizing, Rite and Pentateuchal Theology' in S.B. Reid (ed) Prophets and Paradigms: Essays in Honor of Gene M. Tucker (JSOTSS 229; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), pp173-186, who identifies the relationship between ritual texts and ritual practice as a key issue in pentateuchal interpretation.

Perhaps in reaction to the methodological weaknesses of these earlier studies more recent works on memory and the Old Testament have moved in two directions. Either the examination has been limited to one section of the Old Testament literature, or the question has been approached from a conceptual rather than lexical perspective.

In particular, there have been a number of studies on the theme of memory in Deuteronomy²⁴, no doubt responding to the prominence of memory-language in that book and its emphasis on the transmission of memory from one generation to another. These studies will be examined in more detail in subsequent chapters. In general, however, what these studies lack is a detailed examination of how the theme of memory in Deuteronomy is both similar to and different from the presentation of memory in other Old Testament traditions.

Studies examining memory across the Old Testament as a whole have tended to move beyond lexical issues to consider the function and formation of memory in the Israelite community. Of particular interest are those studies that look at the memory of the exodus, given its intimate association with the Passover ritual.

Joseph Blenkinsopp begins his work on the construction of the past in Israel by considering the development and preservation of memory in the light of the social and ideological crisis represented by the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BCE²⁵. He argues that such was the social dislocation of this event that memory could not have been preserved by means of oral

²⁴ G Braulik, 'Leidengedächtnisfeier und Freudenfest: Volkliturgie nach dem deuteronomischen Festkalender' in Studien zur Theologie des Deuteronomiums 2 (Stuttgarter Biblische Aufsatzbande Altes Testament; Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Biblwerk, 1988, pp95-121), 'Das Deuteronomium und die Gedächtniskultur Israels Redaktionsgeschichtliche Beobachtungen zur Verwendung von לִמְרָ' in G. Braulik, W. Gross & S. McEvenue (eds) Biblische Theologie und gesellschaftlicher Wandel (Freiburg: Herder, 1993), pp9-31; M.K. Deeley 'Memory and Theology: Ordering the World for the Community of Faith' in D. Ellens *et al* (eds) Reading the Hebrew Bible for a new millennium: form, concept, and theological perspective (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000), pp108-120; N.Lohfink 'Der Glaube und die nächste Generation: Das Gottesvolk der Bibel als Lerngemeinschaft' in Das Jüdische am Christentum (Freiburg: Herder, 1987), pp144-166.

²⁵ J. Blenkinsopp 'Memory, Tradition and the Construction of the Past in Ancient Israel' BTB 27/3 (1997), pp76-82.

tradition alone. Rather, it would need to be supplemented and accompanied by rituals of re-enactment, commemorative ceremonies and bodily gestures. In this context he cites Passover as one rite “which re-collects or gathers up the past and re-connects it with the present.”²⁶ Blenkinsopp also discusses the content of Israel’s memory, particularly the tradition of the exodus from Egypt. Here he suggests that while the tradition pre-dated the fall of Jerusalem the experience of exile and return contributed to the adaptation and selection of existing memories to reflect the contemporary concerns and experiences of the community. The end result of this process was the narratives of the Pentateuch, which reached their present form towards the end of the Persian era.

Blenkinsopp considers, but rejects, the notion that the exodus memory is an invented tradition in the strict sense – that is, a memory constructed out of nothing and designed to serve various instrumental and political ends. This issue is taken up in a series of papers on the exodus delivered to a 1999 conference on religious identity and the invention of tradition.²⁷ Karel van der Toorn argues that the exodus tradition is best understood as a ‘charter myth’, that is a myth which serves to establish a particular political order and pattern of social behaviour. The tradition came into being around the 10th century BCE to legitimate the formation of the Northern Kingdom²⁸. However, while van der Toorn demonstrates the importance of the exodus tradition in the Northern Kingdom his methodology is incapable of demonstrating that the tradition was invented in the 10th

²⁶Blenkinsopp, ‘Memory, Tradition and the Construction of the Past,’ p79.

²⁷ J.W. van Henten & A. Houtepen (eds), Religious Identity and the Invention of Tradition (Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2001). The conference was inspired by the work of Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), The Invention of Traditions (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). The contributors to the latter work give case studies of ostensibly ancient traditions which are in fact of relatively recent origin. These invented traditions typically serve to legitimate a particular social order.

²⁸ K. van der Toorn ‘The Exodus as Charter Myth’ in J.W. van Henten & A. Houtepen (eds) Religious Identity and the Invention of Tradition, pp113-127. To support his conclusions van der Toorn points to the prominence of the exodus theme in the prophecies of Amos and Hosea, both of whom ministered in the Northern Kingdom, as well as the narrative of 1Kings 12:26-32, in which Jeroboam establishes the cult at Bethel by referring to the exodus.

century BCE. Indeed, it is inherently unlikely that a tradition invented *de novo* could provide sufficient justification for the cultic programme of Jeroboam²⁹.

Theodore Mullen considers the entire Pentateuch to be a type of national ‘charter myth’ designed to substantiate the claims of the post-exilic community as the legitimate successor of the pre-exilic Israel³⁰, although he does not wish necessarily to deny the historicity or authenticity of any of the Pentateuchal traditions. He argues that the narrative of Exodus 1-15 has its culmination in the celebration of Passover, a rite that provided an essential bonding element in the concept of ‘Israelite’ ethnicity. Membership in the community of Israel was defined by participation in the ritual actualisation of the events of the firstborn plague and the exodus from Egypt³¹.

Other studies have focussed less on the function of the exodus memory in Israel’s life than on the process by which this memory was constructed, and the extent to which it has any basis in historical reality. This is true to some extent of Albertz, who argues that the exodus tradition preserves an authentic memory of the flight of a group Western Asiatic people from Egypt under the leadership of Moses during the 13th century BCE, although the scope of this flight was much smaller than that narrated in the Old Testament³². More recently, Hendel has suggested a threefold basis for the exodus memory³³. The memory of the escape from Egypt probably reflects the experience of Egyptian oppression and deportation in Canaan during the Late Bronze Age. The fact that the Pharaoh of the exodus

²⁹ Cf the critique of van der Toorn’s position by Rainer Albertz ‘Exodus: Liberation History against Charter Myth’ Religious Identity and the Invention of Tradition, pp128-143, who argues that van der Toorn is unnecessarily pessimistic about the existence of a layer of exodus tradition beside or beneath the official religion of the Northern Kingdom. Albertz believes the use of the tradition as a ‘charter myth’ was limited to its support of the Jeroboam revolt against the house of David.

³⁰ E. Theodore Mullen, Ethnic Myths and Pentateuchal Foundations: A New Approach to the Formulation of the Pentateuch (Atlanta: Scholar’s Press, 1997).

³¹ Mullen, Ethnic Myths and Pentateuchal Foundations, pp187-188.

³² R. Albertz, Exodus: Liberation History against Charter Myth, p131; also A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament: Vol. 1 (tr. J. Bowden; London: SCM Press, 1992), pp40-66.

³³ R. Hendel ‘The Exodus in Biblical Memory’ JBL 112/4 (2001), pp601-622.

is never named may reflect the widespread resonance of a story of deliverance from Egyptian power. Hendel then links the memory of signs and wonders accompanying the deliverance from Egypt to an ancient tradition which associated deadly pestilence with the land of Canaan and the Canaanite gods. In a society which had suffered at the hands of Egypt this tradition was inverted so that what had been the epitome of destruction became a means of deliverance. Hendel next examines the figure of Moses, the person whose life frames the narrative of the exodus. Following Smend, Hendel argues that the aspects of Moses' biography with the best claim to historical authenticity are his name, with its Egyptian associations, and his marriage to a Midianite woman, since neither is likely to have been invented by Israelite tradition. Hendel argues that this picture of a historical figure who occupied an 'in between' status in terms of ethnicity has been expanded in the biblical narrative to present a Moses who mediates a number of spheres – social, political, geographical and theological.

Hendel's work certainly represents an advance on earlier attempts to locate the 'real' events behind the exodus narrative³⁴. However any attempt to illuminate the exodus narrative in this fashion runs up against the problem that the biblical narrative is concerned to portray the exodus as an unprecedented divine action rather than the outcome of historical or sociological regularity. While such 'reading against the grain' of the text is not without value it is unlikely to assist in understanding how the memory of the exodus has functioned within the lives of those communities who regard these texts as authoritative and formative. To do this, it is necessary to examine the way the memory of the exodus has been transformed within those texts themselves, and the way in which those texts and the practices associated with them have shaped and transmitted those memories³⁵. It is here that studies of collective memory provide a way forward.

³⁴ Eg the suggestion of G. Fohrer, *Überlieferung und Geschichte Des Exodus*. (BZAW 91; Berlin: Alfred Töpelman, 1964), p88 that the escape of a number of Israelites from Egypt co-incided with an epidemic which claimed the life of the Pharaoh's son. There have also been numerous other attempts to link the crossing of the Red Sea to volcanic eruptions or other natural phenomena.

³⁵ Towards the end of his article Hendel moves in this direction, noting that "The social function of history is evident in the processes of ethnic self-definition in the story and in the annual festival (Passover) that re-enacts this collective memory." *The Exodus in Biblical Memory*, p621.

1.3 Collective Memory

One can examine memory from a neurological, psychological or philosophical perspective. In such contexts the focus is on the memories of the individual and the processes by which they are formed and recovered³⁶. One can also examine memory as a collective phenomenon from a sociological perspective. Here the focus is on individuals as social beings, whose memories are formed and recalled in the context of their interactions with other people and their social environment. The seminal twentieth century figure in the theory of collective memory is the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1877-1945)³⁷. Halbwachs contended that memory, like language and consciousness, is a social phenomenon. While individuals do the remembering they can only do so within the conceptual and ideological frameworks provided by the groups of which they are a part. The functioning of an individual memory requires the use of words and ideas that we derive from our social milieu. Moreover, social groups provide their members with spatial and temporal markers around which memories are organised³⁸. The social groups that are particularly important for the formation of memory are the family, social classes and religious organisations.

Subsequently, Halbwachs' thought has been developed in two directions. The first concerns the relationship between collective memory and history. According to Halbwachs, the two are to be sharply distinguished. While there are a plurality of collective memories, reflecting the plurality of social groups which form those memories, history is essentially unitary since it is based on the objective succession of events in time

³⁶ For an overview of psychological and philosophical perspectives on memory see J. Fentress & C. Wickham, Social Memory (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp1-40 and the historical survey of D. Draaisma, Metaphors of Memory: A History of Ideas about the Mind (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

³⁷ The key work is M. Halbwachs, La Mémoire Collective. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), originally published posthumously in 1950. See also M. Halbwachs, On Collective Memory: Edited, Translated, and with an Introduction by Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). This latter work includes extracts from two of Halbwachs' monographs, Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire and La topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte: Etude de mémoire collective.

³⁸ La mémoire collective, pp36-37.

and space. One can of course distinguish the history of one country or group from that of another, but these different histories are capable of being merged to form a more all-encompassing history. Moreover, while history may be divided into strictly demarcated epochs collective memory is a more continuous current of thought³⁹. Halbwachs' somewhat positivistic view of history has been challenged by scholars who argue that history has much in common with Halbwachs' understanding of collective memory. History writing is not the product of disinterested observers but reflects the interests and concerns of particular social groups⁴⁰. Rather than replacing collective memory, historical writing is one of the means by which it is preserved. For any individual learning about history is a lived experience which contributes to their own participation in collective memory⁴¹.

Moreover whereas Halbwachs approached the phenomenon of collective memory from the perspective of the individual⁴² and the manner in which his or her memory is shaped by the groups of which they are a part, subsequent scholarship has tended to focus more on the collective institutions and practices themselves. This has been reflected in a terminological shift in that many scholars now refer to social or cultural memory. Greater attention has also been given to the processes by which memories are constructed and transmitted from one generation to another. Connerton, for example, gives an overview of the role of ritual in the formation and transmission of memory.⁴³ Central to the formation of group identity are

³⁹ La mémoire collective, pp68-77.

⁴⁰ P. Burke 'History as Social Memory' in Varieties of Cultural History (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), pp43-59. Burke lists five media for the transmission of social memories – oral traditions, written records, images, actions and the manipulation of space.

⁴¹ Susan A. Crane 'Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory' American Historical Review 102(5), 1997, pp1372-1385. In this work Crane engages with the thesis of Y.H. Yerushalmi Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989), who argues that in the modern era Jewish memory has been largely displaced by historiography. According to Yerushalmi, to the extent that Jewish historiography is modern it must repudiate the two assumptions that were basic to Jewish memory in the past, specifically the role of divine providence in Jewish history and the uniqueness of that history.

⁴² Indeed much of the argument of La Mémoire Collective is presented in the form of a hypothetical first-person narrative. See, for example, his account of a journey to London on pp2ff.

⁴³ P. Connerton, How Societies Remember (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp41-72.

commemorative ceremonies in which a community is reminded of its origins as represented by and told in a master narrative. Another issue that has received attention has been the potential for collective memory to be an arena of social conflict as well as social consensus.⁴⁴ Insofar as a shared memory gives a community a sense of identity it also defines the ‘outsider’ who is excluded from that identity.

1.3.1 *Jan Assmann*

The most detailed application of the theory of collective memory to the Ancient Near East is found in the work of German Egyptologist Jan Assmann⁴⁵. Assmann subdivides collective memory into two categories – communicative memory and cultural memory. The first includes collective memories that are based exclusively on everyday communication. Through a variety of interactions individuals build up a memory that, while being expressed autobiographically, is nevertheless socially mediated. Communicative memory is typically both diffuse and time-limited, normally stretching back no more than three or four generations and is normally recovered through oral history techniques⁴⁶. Cultural memory is by contrast characterised by its separation from everyday experience. It is typically activated and preserved by temporal and spatial markers that are separated from normal experience, the sacred festival being a classic example. The following table, reproduced from *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*⁴⁷, sets out the differences between the two forms of memory in more detail:

⁴⁴ I. Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1994), pp67-86. Irwin-Zarecka cites a number of contemporary examples, such as conflicts in the Balkans, the Middle East and the rise of the neo-Nazi movement in Germany. In each case communal boundaries are identified by competing versions of a shared past. A number of papers in J. Platvoet and K. van der Toorn (eds), *Pluralism and Identity: Studies in Ritual Behaviour* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995) give case studies of rituals which contributed to social differentiation and social resistance.

⁴⁵ See in particular *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*. (München: Beck, 1997) and *Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis* (München: Beck, 2000). A short English summary of Assmann's work on memory is ‘Collective Memory and Cultural Identity’ *New German Critique* Vol. 65 (1995), pp125-133.

⁴⁶ *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, pp50-53.

⁴⁷ *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, p56.

	Communicative Memory	Cultural Memory
Content	Historical experiences in the form of individual biographies	Primeval history, events in an absolute past
Form	Informal or relatively unformed, communicated through everyday interaction	Greater degree of formality, communicated by ceremony and festival
Media	Recollection through organic memory, everyday events and hearsay	Symbolic coding/reproduction in word, picture, dance etc
Temporal Structure	80-100 years, a span of 3-4 generations	Absolute past, a mythical primeval era
Tradents	Non-specialist	Specialist tradition bearers

According to Assmann, a major task for cultural memory is bridging the gap between the period encompassed by communicative memory and important myths⁴⁸ set in the more distant past. These myths are of two types. Foundational myths provide a basis for a current identity or state of affairs. Contra-present myths provide an image of a golden age that serves to critique the *status quo*. In certain instances a contra-present myth may have revolutionary potential⁴⁹.

Assmann distinguishes two fundamental and distinct means of achieving social coherence through cultural memory – ritual and textual coherence. In each instance a society's identity is strengthened through communicating the past. However, ritual coherence is produced through the repetition of actions while textual coherence is produced through the

⁴⁸ Myth for Assmann refers to the function of an event in forming a society's self-understanding and identity, and is not necessarily opposed to historicity.

⁴⁹ Das kulturelle Gedächtnis, p79.

interpretation of canonical texts⁵⁰. Assmann identifies the shift from ritual to textual coherence as one of the most important developments in ancient societies for a number of reasons. First, it allows greater variation and innovation in the development of tradition. This appears counter-intuitive but, as Assmann notes, when tradition is communicated orally and ritually there is no identifiable *Vorlage* against which innovation can be measured. It is only with the existence of written tradition that conscious innovation becomes a possibility⁵¹. Second, the ability to innovate opens up a division between the 'old' and 'new', 'then' and 'now'. Those responsible for transmitting the tradition can also exercise a critical freedom with respect to that tradition⁵². Third, the shift to textual coherence is associated with new social arrangements. It encourages the development of an intellectual elite that possesses the skills and status to transmit and interpret foundational texts. Such an elite can potentially exhibit a degree of independence from other centres of political and economic power⁵³. Assmann also argues that the shift to textual coherence entails a new form of religion – one that tends to emphasise divine transcendence rather than immanence. Insofar as ritual persists it serves to accompany and frame the reading and interpretation of Scripture. Ultimately, however, text tends to displace ritual, as in Rabbinic Judaism, where the role of the Temple was taken over by text⁵⁴.

Central to the construction of textual coherence is the recognition of a canon of authoritative texts. Assmann describes five factors that contribute to the formation of a canon⁵⁵. Much of this discussion refers to the example of Ancient Israel, although Assmann does draw on other ANE cultures. The first stage is the codification of laws (what Assmann terms their 'excarvation') and the construction of a normative past. In Israel

⁵⁰ Das kulturelle Gedächtnis, p89.

⁵¹ Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis, pp138ff.

⁵² Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis, pp140-41.

⁵³ Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis, p58.

⁵⁴ Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis, pp148-164.

⁵⁵ Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis, pp81-100. .

these two factors were intimately linked. Whereas other ANE cultures linked the authority of law to the person of the contemporary monarch; in Israel the law derived its authority from the past, and the Mosaic and exodus traditions in particular. The second factor encouraging canonisation is a social upheaval that results in a break in tradition. Where the social and political arrangements that support ritual coherence are disrupted or overthrown pre-existing texts are examined and re-worked in a search for re-orientation. Here Assmann has in mind the impact of the Babylonian exile on the development of canon-consciousness in Israel. Whereas the first two impulses came ‘from below’ Assmann describes the third impulse ‘from above’. Here he refers to some kind of official sponsorship or composition of a canon, and more specifically the view that during the Second Temple period the Torah was re-introduced into Israel’s life at the instigation of the Persian authorities (the so called ‘Reichsauthorisation’ thesis). The fourth impulse is the development of textual community and the beginning of libraries. At this stage the form of the canonical text begins to be fixed. The final impulse, which Assmann suggests may be unique to the culture of Israel, is the development of an anti-idolatry polemic that privileges the communication of the divine will and presence in text over and against its communication in images.

Assmann’s analysis of the way in which Deuteronomy functions as a piece of ‘Mnemotechnik’ will be considered later in Chapter Four. Here it suffices to say that his analysis of the development of the canon in Israel is suggestive, although it may be questioned at the level of detail⁵⁶. It is particularly valuable in recognising that canonisation is a dynamic process rather than a decision imposed by official fiat at a specific point in time.

⁵⁶ Eg the question of the degree to which the development of the Hebrew canon is the result of the Babylonian exile cannot be separated from the dating of the texts themselves. Moreover, the *Reichsauthorisation* thesis is by no mean uncontested. See for example H-C. Schmitt, ‘Die Suche nach der Identität des Jahweglaubens im nachexilischen Israel: Bemerkungen zur theologischen Intention der Endredaktion des Pentateuch’ in J. Mehlhausen (ed), *Pluralismus und Identität* (Gütersloh: Kaiser Gütersloher, 1995), pp259-278, who argues that moves towards a canonical text in the Second Temple era arose from internal rather than external factors.

It is however questionable whether Assmann's model of a development from ritual to textual coherence adequately describes the process which can be discerned taking place during the period encompassed by the writings of the Old Testament, or indeed the manner in which those writings have subsequently functioned in the life of Israel. Assmann discusses Nehemiah 8, a passage that recounts how the people gathered in the seventh month to hear Ezra read the law, which was then interpreted for them by the Levites⁵⁷. According to Assmann this is the archetypical example of textual coherence, whereby interpretation of a canonical text is the central vehicle of cultural memory. Indeed, it is only after the reading and interpretation of the law that a decision is taken to celebrate the festival of booths (Nehemiah 8:13-18). In that sense text is primary and rite secondary. However, alongside Nehemiah 8 the canon also contains Deuteronomy 31:9-13, which requires the reading of the law during the festival of booths. Here, rite is the occasion for text, rather than vice versa. Moreover, one cannot speak of one perspective displacing the other since Nehemiah 8:18 implicitly recognises the Deuteronomic regulation. For this reason it is best to see textual and ritual coherence as operating simultaneously rather than successively.⁵⁸

Assmann himself suggests a way forward with a distinction between holy texts and cultural texts⁵⁹. With holy texts it is the ritual that is essential, and the actual text is only one part of a larger whole. With cultural texts the actualisation of the text is the essential element and ritual is merely the framework for allowing this happen. Within the context of ritual holy texts function as performative speech acts which do not merely refer to reality but actually modify it. Assmann presumably has in mind liturgical formulae such as curses and

⁵⁷ Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis, pp146-7.

⁵⁸ One can also question Assmann's argument that in Rabbinic Judaism interpretation of text has displaced ritual. While certain Rabbinic sources do equate or even elevate the study of the Torah over temple sacrifice [see M. Halbertal, People of the Book: Canon, Meaning and Authority (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp94-95] one can also speak of ritual being transformed rather than displaced. A case in point is the alignment of daily prayers with the times at which the daily sacrifices were formerly offered (see S. Schreiner 'Wo man Tora lernt, braucht man keinen Tempel. Einige Anmerkungen zum Problem der Tempelsubstitution im rabbinischen Judentum' in B. Ego, A. Lange & P. Pilhofer (ed), Gemeinde ohne Tempel (WUANT 118; Tübingen: JCB Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1999, pp371-394) or the transfer of Passover from the temple environs to the domestic sphere.

⁵⁹ Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis, pp133-8.

blessings. Generally, only religious specialists have access to such texts. Cultural texts tend to have a wider circulation and while they may create a ‘narrative world’ they are not intended to modify reality in the same direct fashion as sacred texts⁶⁰.

1.4 Conclusion and Methodology

Subsequent chapters will examine whether the work of Assmann provides a satisfactory framework for analysing the relationship between text and rite in selected Old Testament Passover texts – Exodus 12:1-13:16, Deuteronomy 16:1-8 and 2 Chronicles 30 and 35. These texts have been selected because of their length and their diversity of literary genre. In each instance the detailed exegesis will be preceded by a more general consideration of the theme of memory, both linguistically and conceptually, in the wider context. In the case of Deuteronomy and Chronicles this will involve an examination of the use of the זכר word group in each work and a consideration of the way in which the work has situated itself in relation to earlier Old Testament traditions. The critical consensus that Exodus 12:1-13:16 contains a number of distinct traditions makes this methodology difficult to apply in this instance. Here the preliminary overview will examine how the distinction between the ‘Passover of Egypt’ and the ‘Passover of Generations’ has been applied to the interpretation of this passage.

The detailed exegesis will provide the basis for summarising each passage’s contribution to Israel’s collective memory in three respects.

Form: Is the passage best understood as contributing to textual or ritual coherence, or some combination of the two? Does the answer differ depending on whether one considers the narrative world of the text itself as opposed to how it might be applied later in Israel’s life?

⁶⁰ Assmann notes that a tension arises in that canons typically incorporate both sacred and cultural texts. He argues that Jewish, Catholic and Protestant communities have adopted different approaches to this dilemma (*Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis*, pp133-145).

Content: What memory is communicated through the text and its application? More specifically how does the text shape and communicate the memory of the exodus in Israel's life, or are other themes equally or more important?

Function: How do these memories contribute to Israel's sense of collective identity? How do they shape and express Israel's sense of community?

The final chapter will draw together the conclusions of earlier chapters and consider the implications for our understanding of the Passover and its contribution to Israel's collective memory.

CHAPTER TWO - MEMORY IN EXODUS 12:1-13:16. THE PASSOVER OF EGYPT AND THE PASSOVER OF GENERATIONS

References to the celebration of Passover are scattered throughout the Pentateuch. Exodus 12:1-13:16 and Deuteronomy 16:1-8 give detailed instructions for the conduct of Passover. Leviticus 23:4-8 lists the Passover as one of the annual festivals, Numbers 28:16-25 lists the sacrificial offerings to accompany the Passover and Numbers 9:1-14 recounts a Passover celebrated in the wilderness a year after the departure from Egypt and gives instructions for the celebration of a 'second' Passover should subsequent generations be unable to celebrate it at the normal time. There is also a brief reference to the Passover at Exodus 34:25, and possibly at Exodus 23:18.

2.1 Overview of Exodus 12:1-13:16

There are good grounds for beginning an examination of the Passover in the Pentateuch with Exodus 12 and 13. Not only is it placed first in the canonical order, but it is also the only text to recount the first Passover observed in Egypt as well as giving instructions for subsequent generations. It has also been a particularly rich mine for scholars interested in the identification of different sources or traditions within the biblical material and thus provides an ideal test case for examining different approaches to reading a biblical text.

Later chapters will prepare for the detailed exegesis of a particular passage by examining the language and concept of memory in the broader literary corpus of which the passage is a part. However, this approach is not feasible in the case of Exodus 12:1-13:16. Certainly, the language of memory is present in the passage. The term 'memorial' (זִכְרוֹן) is used to describe both the celebration of Passover (12:14) and the Festival of Unleavened Bread⁶¹ (13:9). However, whereas the passages discussed in subsequent chapters (Deuteronomy

⁶¹ Throughout the rest of this thesis Unleavened Bread will refer to the festival: unleavened bread to the foodstuff.

16, 2 Chronicles 30 and 35) each reflect a single tradition⁶² this is not necessarily the case in Exodus 12 and 13. It is generally recognised that a number of different traditions have contributed to these chapters. This means that there is not a clearly defined body of literature against which the concept and language of memory can be understood.

For this reason, the following discussion will set the context for the subsequent exegesis of Exodus 12:1-13:16 by examining how different types of scholarship have approached the heterogeneity of this passage. In particular, it will consider whether and how one can legitimately distinguish between those aspects of the passage which apply only to the original narrative context and those which are intended to be binding on subsequent readers and hearers – what have been termed ‘The Passover of Egypt’ and ‘The Passover of Generations.’

A brief overview indicates some of the complexities involved in reading these chapters. The ordering of legal and narrative material shifts from one subject to another and a logical basis for this arrangement is not immediately discernible. There are instructions for the conduct of the Passover rite in 12:1-14, 21-27 and 43-51, and for Unleavened Bread in 12:15-20 and 13:3-7. The status and treatment of the firstborn is discussed in 13:1-2 and 11-16. In the midst of this legal material there is the narrative of the slaying of the Egyptian firstborn and the departure of the Israelites in 12:29-42.

When the different blocks of legal material concerning the same activity are compared with each other significant differences become apparent. So, for example, Moses’ instructions to the elders concerning the Passover in 12:21-23 make no mention of several elements (the requirements concerning the age or blemish-free nature of the animal; the requirement to keep it for four days and the directions for the distribution of the meal between and among households) in the prior speech of YHWH to Moses and Aaron on the same subject.

⁶² ie even when scholars have argued for the existence of more than one redactional level in these passages they have assumed that these levels share an ideological outlook, such that all may be described as ‘Deuteronomic’ or ‘Chronistic’.

There are also tensions between the legal and narrative material in Exodus 12:1-13:16 and the immediate context. Commentators frequently note that in the Passover account the Israelites are instructed to daub their doorposts and lintels with blood to prevent their firstborn being struck down, whereas in 11:7 YHWH has already promised to make a distinction between the Israelites and the Egyptians without referring to any action on the Israelites' part⁶³. Childs lists a series of other apparent discrepancies - in 12:34-36 Israel departs during the night, but in 12:22 they are required to remain in their houses until morning. In 12:23 the 'destroyer' strikes down the firstborn whereas elsewhere in the plague narratives it is YHWH himself who directly executes judgements against the Egyptians (eg 10:23, 10:13, 12:12).⁶⁴

This perceived lack of fit between the Passover and its narrative context is often the starting point for historical reconstructions which seek to go behind the canonical presentation of the Passover's origins. Typically, Loewenstamm argues that if the Passover had in fact developed from the account of the plagues against the Egyptians we could expect the two to cohere more closely. For Loewenstamm, this perceived incoherence between rite and narrative justifies the search for an origin of the Passover material apart from the exodus traditions with which it is now associated⁶⁵.

However, while these tensions have received particular attention during the last one hundred and fifty years they were by no means unknown to earlier generations of scholars and commentators. The following section will examine how these issues have been

⁶³ B.S. Childs, The Book of Exodus (Louisville: The Westminster Press, 1974), p185; W. Johnstone 'The Two Theological Versions of the Passover Pericope in Exodus' in R.P. Carroll (ed), Text as Pretext: Essays in Honour of Robert Davidson (JSOTSS 138; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), p170; J. Van Seters, 'The Place of the Yahwist in the History of Passover and Massot' ZAW 95 (1983), p173.

⁶⁴ Childs, Exodus, pp191-2.

⁶⁵ Samuel E. Loewenstamm, The Evolution of the Exodus Tradition. (tr. Baruch J. Schwartz; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1992), pp191-2. A variation on this theme is the argument that later material in Exodus 12:1-13:16 has sought to tidy up the discrepancies between rite and narrative in earlier traditions. Eg Suzanne Boorer, The Promise of the Land as Oath: A Key to the Formation of the Pentateuch. (BZAW 205; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1992) pp161ff argues the Priestly material in 12:1-20 has integrated rite and narrative more thoroughly than the (chronologically earlier) account in 12:21-27.

approached in three traditions of scholarship – Rabbinic and medieval Jewish exegesis, the so-called historical-critical⁶⁶ methodology of post-enlightenment Old Testament scholarship and those commentators who advocate a ‘canonical’ approach to Old Testament exegesis.

2.2 Rabbinic and Medieval Jewish Scholarship

Given the central place of the Passover in Jewish life it is no surprise that the exegesis of Exodus 12:1-13:16 and its relationship to other legal texts have been prominent concerns of Jewish scholarship. In the post-70 BCE context this scholarship also sought to provide a reading of these texts which would allow their continued appropriation in a setting where the Temple was no longer in existence and where Christians were using those same texts as part of their Scriptures⁶⁷.

2.2.1 Rabbinic and Medieval Roots

Two broad strategies are discernible in Rabbinic and medieval interpretation of Exodus 12-13 – the harmonisation of disparate legal traditions, and the distinction between those aspects of Passover observance which were valid only for the first Passover in Egypt and those which applied to all subsequent celebrations.

The way in which these two principles were applied can be seen in the *Mekhilta According to Rabbi Ishmael*'s⁶⁸ discussion of Exodus 12:5-6 (which directs that the Passover animal

⁶⁶ The adjective ‘so-called’ is used to indicate that the term historical critical is misleading if it is taken to indicate that pre-Enlightenment scholarship was either uncritical in its approach to the text or uninterested in historical questions, even if it did not conceive the issues in the categories characteristic of modernity.

⁶⁷ For a discussion of the ways in which the destruction of the Temple influenced Rabbinic appropriation of the Biblical material see Baruch M. Bokser, *The Origins of the Seder: The Passover Rite and Early Rabbinic Judaism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984). Bokser demonstrates that the *Mishnah* emphasised those aspects of the Passover which could be observed apart from the temple, without eliminating discussion of temple-based ritual. For an examination of the influence of Christianity on the formation of Rabbinic Judaism see J. Neusner, *Judaism in the Matrix of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986).

⁶⁸ This work is generally dated to the end of the fourth century. It is a compilation of midrashic exegesis organised as a running commentary on sections of Exodus. The first and longest of the ten tractates, *Pisha*, deals with Exodus 12:1-13:16.

be a lamb (שֶׁ), that is a sheep or goat taken from the herd), and Deuteronomy 16:2 (which directs that the Passover animal be taken from the flock or the herd (צֶאֱן וּבָקָר)):

R. Josiah says, ‘You shall take it [from the sheep or from the goats]’ – why is this stated? Since Scripture says, ‘You shall sacrifice a Passover-offering to the Lord your God, of the flock or of the herd’ (Dt. 16:2),

the beast from the flock is for the Passover, and the beast from the herd is for the additional festal offering of rejoicing (צֶאֱן לַפֶּסַח וּבָקָר לַחֲגִיגָה).

You take that view. But perhaps the sense is both this one and that are to serve for the Passover offering.

How then shall I interpret the phrase ‘[Your lamb shall be] without blemish, a male, [a year old; you shall take it from the sheep or from the goats]’?

That refers to the Passover-offering prepared in Egypt (פֶּסַח מִצְרַיִם), but as to the Passover-offering presented in coming generations (פֶּסַח דִּוְרָה), that one is to come from both species of beast⁶⁹.

The discussion surveys two options for resolving the difficulty. Either Deuteronomy refers to a broader class of sacrifices than Exodus 12, or the instructions for the selection of the animal in Exodus applied to the Egyptian Passover only while those in Deuteronomy 16 are normative for subsequent generations. *Mekhilta* goes on to reject the second option on the grounds that Exodus 13:5 directs that the provisions observed in Egypt are to be observed in the promised land. In deciding for the harmonistic option *Mekhilta* enunciates a general hermeneutical principle:

This is a trait characteristic of the Torah. If there are two verses of Scripture that form counterparts to one another but contradict one another, they stand in place until a third verse of Scripture makes its appearance to harmonize the difference between them.

⁶⁹ *Pisha IV:II*. The translation and numbering system is from *Mekhilta According to Rabbi Ishmael: An Analytical Translation Vol. 1* (tr. J. Neusner; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988).

However, the intricacy of the discussion in *Mekhilta* shows that such harmonisation was not applied in a facile manner which disregarded the complex issues involved⁷⁰.

Notwithstanding the appeal to Exodus 13:5, there are occasions on which rabbinic exegesis does recognise a difference in observances between the Passovers of Egypt and the generations. Foundational for much subsequent work is the list found in the *Mishnah*:

Wherein does the Passover of Egypt differ from the Passover of the generations? At the Passover of Egypt the lamb was got on the 10th, sprinkling with a bunch of hyssop was required on the lintel and on the two side-posts, and it was eaten in haste and during one night; whereas the Passover of the generations continued throughout seven days⁷¹

According to the *Mishnah*, there are four respects in which the Egyptian Passover was unique – the lamb was selected on the 10th to be slaughtered on the 14th Nisan (cf Exodus 12:3), the blood of the lamb was applied to the doors of the houses (cf Exodus 12:7, 22), the meal was consumed in haste (cf Exodus 12:11), and the festival lasted for one day only. The *Mishnah* contains no discussion of why these elements are singled out. This was however, a concern of much subsequent rabbinic and medieval exegesis. One explanation offered for the four day delay between the selection of the Passover animal and its slaughter was that it would allow the animal to be inspected for blemishes⁷². However, this would not explain why the delay would only be necessary in Egypt.

⁷⁰ The relationship between Exodus 12 and Deuteronomy 16 continued to be a point of discussion amongst medieval Jewish commentators. Eg Ibn Ezra cites the opinion of a Karaite commentator who resolved the discrepancy between Exodus 12 and Deuteronomy 16 by distinguishing between the Passover of Egypt and the Passover of generations, but rejects this in favour of the solution advocated by the *Mekhilta*, citing 2 Chronicles 35:7 as Biblical support. Ibn Ezra, Abraham ben Meir, *Ibn Ezra's Commentary on the Pentateuch*. (tr. H.N. Strickman & A.M. Silver: 1996), p220.

⁷¹ *m. Pesahim* 9:5. The translation is from *The Mishnah: Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes* (tr. H. Danby: Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933).

⁷² Eg in the Babylonian Talmud *b. Pesahim* 96a; *Mek. V:II*.

A more elaborate explanation for the delay which relates it to the particular situation of the Israelites in Egypt is offered in the *Mekhilta*:

On what account did Scripture push up the purchase of the beast for the Passover-offering by four days prior to its slaughter?

R. Mattia b. Heresh would say Lo, Scripture says, ‘Now when I passed by you and look on you, and behold, your time was the time of love’ (Ez. 16:8) –

the time to carry out the oath that the Holy One, blessed be He, had taken to our father Abraham that he would redeem his sons had come, and yet they did not have in hand religious duties (מצוה) to carry out so that they might be redeemed.

For it is said, ‘Your breasts were fashioned and your hair was grown, yet you were naked and bare’ (Ez. 16:8), that is to say, naked of all religious obligations.

Accordingly, the Holy One, blessed be He, assigned to them two religious duties, the religious duty concerning the Passover-offering, and the one concerning circumcision, so that they would carry out these duties and so be redeemed.

For it is said, ‘And when I passed by you and saw you wallowing in your blood, I said to you, “In your blood live”’ (Ez. 16:6); ‘As for you also, because of the blood of your covenant I sent forth your prisoners out of the pit that had no water’ (Zech. 9:11).

That explains why Scripture pushed up the purchase of the beast for the Passover-offering by four days prior to its slaughter, for one receives the reward for doing a deed only when the deed is actually done.⁷³

The exegesis brings Exodus 12 into dialogue with Ezekiel 16 and Zechariah 9:11. The parallel with Ezekiel was no doubted suggested by the mention of blood and the use of the verb עבר⁷⁴ in both passages, while the mention of blood in the context of delivery from captivity in Zechariah 9 would resonate with the situation of Israel in Egypt. The midrash contends that the four day delay was to give the Israelites time to carry out the מצוה of

⁷³ *Pisha V:1*.

⁷⁴ Used with reference to YHWH in Exodus 12 :12, 23 and Ezekiel 16:6,8.

Passover and circumcision⁷⁵ and so merit their deliverance. Why this should necessitate a four day delay is not immediately apparent. It may be that the midrash is drawing an analogy with Joshua 4:19-5:12, where the people cross the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, are circumcised (on the same day?) and then celebrate the Passover on the fourteenth. In any case, with the delivery of the entire Torah and the possession of the land the particular situation in Egypt and the necessity for the four day delay no longer applied.

The restriction of the blood rite to Egypt is approached slightly differently. The Talmud states that there were three altars in Egypt – the lintel and the two doorposts⁷⁶. The *Mekhilta* also refers to this tradition, as well as citing the opinion of R. Ishmael that there were in fact four altars – the threshold, lintel, and two doorposts⁷⁷. This exegesis not only provides a justification for the anomalous manipulation of blood in the Egyptian Passover, but establishes an analogy with later celebrations of the Passover where the blood of the Passover animal was apparently applied to the Temple altar⁷⁸. That is, the blood rite of the Egyptian Passover is not so much abandoned as transferred to another setting in the Passover of generations.

The restriction of eating in haste to the Passover in Egypt arises from the understanding that subsequent Passovers are more a celebration of past redemption than an anticipation of future redemption. The *Mishnah* stipulates that no-one, not even the poorest of Israel, should eat the Passover meal without reclining, that is in a posture which expresses leisure and freedom⁷⁹. Furthermore, each participant must be given at least four cups of wine. This emphasis on the festive nature of the celebration pre-dates the destruction of the

⁷⁵ This interpretation is developed by Rashi, who cites בַּדְּמִיָּךְ in Ezekiel 16:6 MT as a reference to the “bloods” of circumcision and Passover. See Rashi, *Commentary on the Torah*. Vol. 2 – *Shemos/Exodus* (New York: Mesorah Publications, 1994, 1995), p110.

⁷⁶ *b. Pesahim 96a*.

⁷⁷ *Pisha* VI:1 This reflects a broader Rabbinic dispute over whether דָּם אֲשֶׁר בַּסֵּף in Exodus 12:22 refers to blood in a basin, or to blood in a depression in the threshold of the door.

⁷⁸ Cf 2 Chronicles 35:11, *m. Pesahim 5*.

⁷⁹ *m. Pesahim 10.1*

temple, as can be seen in the *Book of Jubilees* which describes the people of Israel “eating the flesh of the Passover and drinking wine and praising and blessing and glorifying YHWH the God of their fathers.”⁸⁰ However, while *Jubilees* has read this festive note back into the Egyptian celebration the *Mishnah* has preserved a stronger distinction between a solemn Passover in Egypt and a joyous Passover of the generations.

The restriction of a one-day Passover to Egypt reflects two elements of the biblical material – the narrative of the Egyptian Passover, which makes it clear that the people departed immediately on the 15th Nisan before any other rites could be observed, and the instructions given in that context for future generations to observe a seven-day celebration (Exodus 12:14-20). Although this celebration concerns the consumption of unleavened bread there is a tendency in other biblical passages to group the seven-day festival under the heading of ‘Passover’⁸¹, and this is reflected in the rabbinic understanding of the Passover of generations.

It is apparent that the rabbinic distinction between the Passover of Egypt and the Passover of generations is quite subtle. There is no attempt to identify one discrete unit of text, say Exodus 12:1-13, with instructions for the Passover in Egypt and another unit, say Deuteronomy 16:1-8, with instructions for the Passover of generations. Nor is there any sign that a particular practice was assigned to one category or another depending on whether it could realistically be observed in a particular context. There is, for example, no obvious practical reason why the four-day delay between the selection and slaughter of the Passover animal could not be observed by subsequent generations⁸².

⁸⁰ *Jub. 49.6*

⁸¹ See Deuteronomy 16:1, where פסח refers to the seven day observances, including the consumption of unleavened bread. In the NT Luke 22:1 identifies Passover and Unleavened Bread.

⁸² Indeed, a straightforward reading of the narrative in Exodus 11:1-13:16 implies it would have been impossible for the Israelites to observe the four day delay in Egypt, since the narrative progression from 11:4-8 to 12:29-39 suggests that Moses’ final appearances before Pharaoh took place on the day before the firstborn plague, in which case the instructions in 12:1-13 would have been delivered on the 14th Nisan and there would have been no time for the people to select an animal on the 10th. The Rabbis argued that the instructions were in fact delivered to Moses on the 1st day of the month and hence gave the Israelites in Egypt sufficient time to observe the delay.

Rather, a particular understanding of how Israelite identity changed with the deliverance from Egypt and the entrance into the land acts as a hermeneutical grid through which individual practices are filtered. The transition of Israel from an enslaved people in a foreign land to a nation with its own land, temple and torah means that not every practice could be, or need be, observed in the same way. Individual rites were either transformed (the application of blood), supplemented (the change from a one day to seven day festival), eliminated altogether (the four day delay) or introduced (the emphasis on rejoicing)⁸³.

2.2.2 *Modern Developments: Jacob, Cassuto and Sarna*

It is interesting to compare the approach outlined above with the work of some twentieth-century Jewish commentators. While these commentators share a religious heritage with their rabbinic and medieval predecessors they are separated from them not only by the passage of time but also by broader intellectual developments. In particular, their work stands in some relationship to Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment biblical scholarship, whether that relationship is one of polemic, appreciation or some combination of the two. In practise, this means that while some traditional distinctions are maintained they tend to be justified along lines which reflect modern interpretative methodologies.

Amongst twentieth-century commentators it is Benno Jacob who makes greatest use of traditional rabbinic harmonisations⁸⁴. He also follows rabbinic exegesis at other points, for example, in explaining the four day delay between the selection and slaughter of the Passover animal as giving the participants time to heal after undergoing circumcision⁸⁵.

⁸³ There is a distinct likelihood that with this reading of Israel's history the *Mishnah* and its successors were establishing the groundwork for the ritual changes necessitated by the destruction of the Temple and a further transition in Israel's history and identity. Now the blood rite would be eliminated altogether, the four day delay would become an irrelevance and alongside the emphasis on rejoicing attention would be drawn to those aspects of the Passover meal (eg the consumption of bitter herbs) which recalled the sojourn in Egypt.

⁸⁴ Eg in his discussion of the methods for cooking the Passover animal in Exodus 12:9 and Deuteronomy 16:7. Jacob, *Exodus*, pp305-7.

⁸⁵ Jacob, *Exodus*, pp299-300.

Jacob follows rabbinic tradition in limiting the blood rite and the four day delay to Egypt, although the reasons he gives are somewhat different. He argues that restricting the application of blood to the doorposts agrees with the spirit of the Torah in that the Israelites in Egypt were under the threat of death from which the blood protected them. This was not the case for later generations – “Such theatrical mimicry would have been inappropriate to Israel’s religious practice. In Egypt, symbol and reality agreed, but later it would have meant effect without inner meaning.”⁸⁶ More generally, Jacob acknowledges that the observance of the Passover changed with the entry into the Promised Land, although the ideal, which was for all Israel to celebrate together in a place chosen by God, was not achieved after the celebration recorded in Joshua 5⁸⁷.

Jacob’s approach can be contrasted with that of the Italian scholar Umberto Cassuto. In the preface to his Exodus commentary Cassuto outlines his intention “to expound the Book of Exodus scientifically, with the help of all the resources that modern scholarship puts at our disposal today. To achieve this purpose, its approach differs considerably from that of the majority of contemporary scientific commentaries.”⁸⁸ Here Cassuto clearly establishes a dialectical relationship with modern ‘scientific’ scholarship that works itself out in the rest of his commentary. He differs from much of this scholarship in that while he acknowledges the likelihood of source material behind the text Cassuto argues that such scholarship has erred by seeking to reconstruct these sources to the neglect of interpreting the final form of the text. However, Cassuto aligns himself with modern scholarship in his concern for uncovering the literal, objective sense of the text. He distinguishes his approach from that of the *Midrashim* in that he concentrates on the natural sense of Scripture (פשוט) rather than homiletic expansions (דרש), while acknowledging that the

⁸⁶ Jacob, *Exodus*, p331.

⁸⁷ Jacob describes the Passover under Josiah as an attempt to approximate the ideal. *Exodus*, p293.

⁸⁸ U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*. (tr. I. Abrahams; Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1967), p1.

latter is not without value⁸⁹. He also differs from his rabbinic and medieval predecessors in concentrating on larger blocks of material rather than individual verses.

In expounding Exodus 12:1-13:16 Cassuto does distinguish between instructions which apply to the observance of the Passover in Egypt, and those which apply to future generations. However, unlike rabbinic and medieval commentators he assigns discrete textual units to each category.

On the basis that 12:1 states explicitly that the following communication took place in Egypt he argues that the directives in 12:2-13 are of a temporary character, being valid only for the Passover in Egypt. Verses 14-20, however, give regulations for the observance of the Passover for all time, although in fact they focus on the Festival of Unleavened Bread rather than the events of the Passover meal. He writes “it is self-understood, and therefore it is not stated here explicitly, that this festival of remembrance will include a re-enactment of the essential elements of the Passover celebration in Egypt, that is, the Passover offering will be slaughtered, roasted and eaten together with unleavened cakes and bitter herbs, and that the time of its incidence shall be the evening of the fifteenth of the first month.”⁹⁰ However, he does not discuss how one might decide which elements of the celebration are essential; and because he does not discuss the application of individual regulations in the manner of the Rabbis, he is not required to consider issues such as the relationship between Exodus 12 and Deuteronomy 16.

A further development can be seen in the work of a third Jewish commentator, Nahum Sarna⁹¹. He describes Exodus 12:1-13:16 as complex composition incorporating several strands of tradition. Some literary units deal with issues relating to the circumstances of the departure from Egypt while others relate to Israel’s future life⁹². Like Cassuto he argues

⁸⁹ Cassuto, Exodus, p2.

⁹⁰ Cassuto, Exodus, pp140-41.

⁹¹ N. Sarna, Exodus. (JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: JPS, 1991).

⁹² Sarna, Exodus, p53.

that the rites in 12:2-13 relate solely to the Passover of Egypt, whereas verses 14-20 are concerned with future observances. He does not discuss in detail the application of the instructions in 12:21-23, although his comment on verse 24 states that future generations were obligated only to observe the slaughter of the Passover offering, not the daubing of the blood.

There are thus continuities and discontinuities between Jacob, Cassuto, Sarna and their rabbinic predecessors. The main continuity is the concern to distinguish those stipulations which apply to Egypt only and those which apply to subsequent generations. However the way in which this distinction is worked out differs considerably. Both the Rabbis and Jacob approach the Torah as a unified whole. Insofar as it may be broken down further it can be sub-divided into individual commandments or regulations, which may then be applied in different ways and at different times. In the case of Exodus 12 and 13 this means that individual regulations may either be adopted, transformed or abandoned by future generations depending on the context in which the regulation is read and the hermeneutical approach adopted. In contrast, both Cassuto and Sarna place more emphasis on the larger units which make up the Torah, whether these units are treated primarily as literary units (Cassuto) or different traditions (Sarna). It then becomes necessary to decide in the case of Exodus 12 and 13 which units pertain to the situation of the Passover in Egypt and which pertain to future generations.

Each approach will generate its own internal tensions. For the rabbinic approach the key issue is explaining how to set aside or transform aspects of a Torah which is held to be perpetually binding on the people of YHWH⁹³. The problem with Cassuto and Sarna's approach is that the one block of material, which they assign either to Egypt or to future generations, has in fact been understood by the believing community to contain both types

⁹³ Eg in the context of whether the Passover animal should be taken from the flock only (Exodus 12) or the flock and the herd (Deuteronomy 16) *Mek. Pisha* IV:II cites Exodus 12:24 ("You shall observe this rite as an ordinance for you and for your sons forever") as a justification for identifying the Passover of Egypt with the Passover of generations. While Exodus 12 and Deuteronomy 16 are subsequently reconciled by means of harmonisation this leaves open the question of how 12:24 is to be interpreted. Indeed, *Mek. Pisha* V:II then argues that Exodus 12:6 is addressed to the generation of Egypt to the exclusion of future generations.

of regulations⁹⁴. This then opens up a gap for the Jewish commentator between their exegesis of the text and the *halakha* of the community of which they are a part. Neither Sarna nor Cassuto discusses this issue in detail⁹⁵.

2.2.3 *Christian Appropriation: Calvin*

Although the distinction between the Passover of Egypt and the Passover of generations was originally developed in Jewish circles it has influenced Christian scholarship up to the modern era, even where that influence is unacknowledged.

One can see this, for example, in John Calvin's commentary on the Pentateuch⁹⁶. Calvin treats separately the narrative and legal material in Exodus. The former is discussed in canonical order; most of the latter is grouped together with laws from Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy under one of the Ten Commandments⁹⁷.

In discussing Exodus 12 and 13 Calvin assigns 12:1-20 to "the perpetual doctrine of the law", grouping it with Exodus 12:43-49, Deuteronomy 16:1-8 and Numbers 9:1-14 under the heading of the first commandment. However, he discusses Exodus 12:21-28 in his narrative exposition, on the basis that "Moses does not merely teach here what God would

⁹⁴ Eg Cassuto argues that all of 12:1-13 addresses the Egyptian generation alone, whereas in practice several regulations in this unit (eg the consumption of bitter herbs, the method of preparing the Passover animal) have been normative for subsequent generations while others (eg the four day delay) have not.

⁹⁵ For a discussion of how the relationship between exegesis and *halakha* has worked itself out in traditional Jewish scholarship see David Weiss Halivni, *Peshat and Derash: Plain and Applied Meaning in Rabbinic Exegesis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp101-125. Among the strategies he identifies is an implicit dichotomy between Torah study for the purpose of intellect and study for the purpose of practice, which allowed a constancy of *halakha* even as exegetical practice changed over time. Halivni's solution to the problem is to argue that aspects of Rabbinic exegesis which appear to violate the natural sense (*peshat*) of the text are in fact restoring the original revelation given to Moses, which was corrupted during the period between Moses and Ezra.

⁹⁶ J. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses Arranged in the Form of a Harmony, Volume First*. (tr. C.W. Bingham; Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1852).

⁹⁷ The Harmony has three other sections: Preface, in which Calvin discusses statements concerning the law in general, Supplements, in which Calvin discusses those ceremonial and "political" regulations which he distinguishes from the "Moral Law" expressed in the Ten Commandments, and The End and Use of the Law, in which he discusses the blessings and curses associated with the law. J. Calvin, *Moses*. pp xv-xviii.

have observed by His people in all ages, but relates what He required on a particular occasion. But my readers are to be reminded that some precepts are temporary, and some perpetual, like that Law itself. Of this we may see a clear and familiar example in the chapter before us. For up to this place, Moses had explained what would be the due observation of the Passover year by year for ever; but now he only relates historically, that, on the night in which the people went forth, they celebrated the Passover according to God's command."⁹⁸ However, Calvin does not explicitly state which precepts are to be treated as temporary, and something of the complexity of the situation is revealed when he also discusses Exodus 12:24-27 in his exposition of the law.

It can be seen that Calvin makes a similar distinction to the rabbis between a Passover observed in Egypt, and a Passover observed by subsequent generations. However, he does not follow them by stating in detail what individual precepts are to be assigned to each observance. No doubt this is because for Calvin the Passover functions as a foreshadowing of Christ and not a regulation to be observed in practice.

2.3 Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century Scholarship

It is always problematic to assume that any given era can be characterised by the exclusive use of one type of biblical interpretation. The previous section has demonstrated how approaches to the biblical text developed in the rabbinic era continued to be influential into the twentieth century. Nevertheless, one can speak of the increasing hegemony in the last 200 years of a particular approach to the biblical text. Rather than focussing on the final form of the text as a resource for faith and the building of community, this approach used the text as a source for the historical reconstruction of Israel's faith. One could describe this approach as 'Christian' in that most of the practitioners of this approach, particularly in its formative period, were confessionally Christian. Moreover, it is often possible to trace the influence of their faith commitments on their work, whether or not this was explicitly

⁹⁸ Calvin, Moses, p220.

acknowledged⁹⁹. However, it was not ‘Christian’ in the same sense that rabbinic scholarship was Jewish. Alongside their commitment to a faith community practitioners generally acknowledged another authority such as ‘reason’ or ‘critical study’. Sometimes it was believed that the demands of faith and criticism could be readily reconciled¹⁰⁰. In other instances criticism and faith were portrayed as competing commitments, with the former threatening or promising to reconstruct the latter.

The same tensions in Exodus 12 and 13 which came to the attention of scholars in the pre-Enlightenment era provided a rich resource for commentators whose interests lay less in explicating the text as a resource for faith and practice than as a source for reconstructing the history of Israelite religious practice. Rather than distinguishing between the Passover of Egypt and the Passover of generations these commentators distinguished between different ways of celebrating the Passover throughout Israel’s history. As the groups responsible for these practices sought to legitimate them by reading them back into the formative period of Israel’s story, they created a composite text. By unpicking the seams which held the composite together and placing the pieces in chronological order it would be possible to trace the way in which the practice and understanding of the Passover had evolved. The next step would be to attempt to work backwards from the earliest account and uncover the antecedents of the Passover in the pre-literary stage of Israel’s history.

2.3.1 Establishing the Paradigm: Wellhausen and Noth

The classic expression of this method of scholarship is found in the work of Julius Wellhausen. In his source analysis of 12:1-13:16 Wellhausen detected the oldest material in 12:29-39, 42 which he attributed to the Jahwistic and Elohist sources (JE). This continued the narrative from 11:4-8 and contained no mention of the Passover – Israel was delivered from the firstborn plague solely by YHWH’s initiative without any ritual action by the people. Wellhausen attributed the material in 12:1-20, 28, 43-51, 13:1-2 to the

⁹⁹ Cf the analysis of J. Levenson, *The Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament and Historical Criticism* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), especially Chapters 1 & 2.

¹⁰⁰ For a statement along these lines see S.R. Driver, *Genesis* (2nd edn; London: Methuen, 1904), pp lxi-lxxiv.

youngest Pentateuchal source P¹⁰¹. He was less certain about the provenance of 12:21-27 and 13:3-16. He describes the former passage as lying somewhere between JE and P, with 13:3-16 being either the work of the redactor of J and E (the so-called Jehovist) or a Deuteronomistic redactor¹⁰².

This source-critical work here and elsewhere provided the basis for Wellhausen's reconstruction of Israel's religious history, and in particular, its sacred feasts¹⁰³. He argued that in JE there were three annual pilgrimage festivals – the Festivals of Unleavened Bread, Harvest and Ingathering (Exodus 23:14,17, Exodus 34:23) each of which was observed at any one of a number of local sanctuaries. In JE the festivals were related to the cycle of the agricultural year and as a result they were observed within particular seasons rather than on fixed dates.

The book of Deuteronomy represented a revolution in the place, timing and significance of the annual festivals. There was a move towards greater precision in the dating of the festivals which were now located at the central sanctuary in Jerusalem. The Passover was also mentioned for the first time in Deuteronomy, and like Unleavened Bread was associated with the exodus from Egypt.

This process continued with the Priestly code. In Deuteronomy only the month of the Passover was specified, but in P the day of the Passover meal was fixed on the 15th Nisan. The link between the Passover and the exodus was strengthened, both by associating details of the Passover observance with the exodus and by placing the institution of the Passover within the exodus narrative. According to Wellhausen there was thus a general trend over time towards the centralisation of the feasts, a strengthening of their association with the

¹⁰¹ Designated Q in Wellhausen's work.

¹⁰² J. Wellhausen, Die Composition Des Hexateuchs und Der Historischen Bücher Des Alten Testament (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1963), pp72-75.

¹⁰³ See Wellhausen, Prolegomena to the History of Israel, pp83-113.

central events of Israel's history and their observance on fixed dates, and this process can be seen in the development of the Passover.

Generally, Wellhausen was more interested in reconstructing the religious practices reflected in the various sources rather than moving behind them to any pre-literary traditions. However, insofar as one could trace a pre-literary origin for the Passover Wellhausen believed it had developed from the broader ANE practice of sacrificing the firstborn in the spring-time. It was this rite that the Israelites intended to celebrate in the wilderness. Because Pharaoh refused to let them do so YHWH demanded his firstborn in retribution.

Wellhausen's work was particularly influential, although it was modified in two directions by those who followed. First, there has been an increased emphasis on the exilic provenance of P as an explanation for the domestic nature of the Passover in Exodus 12:1-20. By portraying a Passover which could be observed in the home without any need for a temple or sacrifice the Priestly writer established a precedent which could be followed by the exiles in Babylon¹⁰⁴. A variation on this theme is to divide P into earlier and later material, the earlier presupposing a domestic Passover in the exile, the later presupposing a centralised Passover after the return to the land¹⁰⁵.

Secondly, Wellhausen's view that the Passover was originally a firstborn sacrifice has been largely replaced by the view that the Passover was an apotropaic rite which originated in Israel's nomadic past, although there is less unanimity concerning the threat from which it protected the participants¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰⁴ See K. Grünwaldt, Exil und Identität. Bescheidung, Passa und Sabbat in der Priesterschrift, (BBB 85; Frankfurt Am Main: Hain, 1992), pp72-89.

¹⁰⁵ Grünwaldt, Exil und Identität, assigns Exodus 12:1, 3aα, b, 6b-8, 12-13 to the earlier material (Pg): the remainder of Exodus 12:1-13 and 12:43-51 to secondary material which is dated to the period after the exile when a centralised Passover was restored.

¹⁰⁶ Amongst the possibilities suggested have been the dangers associated with the *Weidewechsel* ie the change of pasture in the spring, the desert wind personified as a demon or some form of plague. For a survey of the various theories see J. Schreiner 'Exodus 12.21-23 und das israelitische Pascha' in G. Braulik (ed), Studien zum Pentateuch: Fs W. Kornfeld (Wien: Herder & Co., 1977), pp69-90.

A classic example of the application of this critical paradigm to the interpretation of Exodus 12:1-13:16 can be observed in the Exodus commentary of Martin Noth¹⁰⁷. In the introduction to the commentary Noth states that “exegesis of the book is concerned with its final form...such exegesis cannot however be carried out without constant reference to the individual stages of this literary development.”¹⁰⁸ His analysis of Exodus 12:1-13:16 begins with a brief overview of the contents of the chapters before discussing the likely origins of the Passover. He concludes that Passover probably pre-dates the exodus and was originally a nomadic ceremony associated with the departure to summer pastures. It subsequently acquired an historical association with the departure of Israel from Egypt¹⁰⁹. He then surveys the evidence for the composite nature of the chapters, attributing 12:21-23, 27b, 29-39 to J, 12:24-27a and 13:1-16 to deuteronomistic additions to J, and 12:1-20, 28, 40-51 to P. While Noth compares and contrasts the presentations of the various sources there is no detailed discussion of how the various strands have been arranged in the final form of the text and whether this reflects any particular intention on the part of the redactor(s). A case in point is Noth’s decision to exegete 12:28 immediately after 12:1-20, without considering how it might relate to 12:21-27¹¹⁰. Hence, notwithstanding his comments on the importance of interpreting the final form of the text, in practice historical and literary reconstruction serves to obscure such interpretation.

2.3.2 Modifying the Paradigm: Propp and Gertz

In the critical paradigm as established and developed by Wellhausen and Noth there is little place for a distinction between the Passover of Egypt and the Passover of Generations. At

¹⁰⁷ M. Noth, *Exodus: A Commentary*. (London: SCM, 1962).

¹⁰⁸ Noth, *Exodus*, p18.

¹⁰⁹ Noth, *Exodus*, pp88-91.

¹¹⁰ Noth, *Exodus*, p97. This reflects Noth’s view that the redactor of the Pentateuch, who used P as the framework for his work “contributed neither new tradition-material nor new substantive viewpoints to the reworking or interpretation of the materials.” M. Noth *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions* (tr. Bernhard W. Anderson from 1948 original; Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p248.

most it can be regarded as an apologetic device intended to bring some sense of order to a disparate set of traditions brought together by a redactor who was more interested in preserving than reconciling those traditions.

However, a distinction between the two Passovers can potentially be accommodated within the paradigm by modifying one of its assumptions – namely, that the redactor(s) of the various traditions are best understood as passive compilers rather than creative interpreters. An instructive example is the recent Exodus commentary of William Propp¹¹¹. Propp's attribution of 12:1-20, 28, 50-51, 13:1-2 to P follows Noth, but he differs from most commentators in attributing the majority of the pre-Priestly material here and elsewhere in Exodus to E rather than J. He is less certain about the provenance of 12:25-27 and 13:3-16, describing them as 'Deuteronom(ist)ic-like' although he leans towards attributing them to E. Unlike Noth, he does discuss the intention of the redactor responsible for collating, and in some instances supplementing, the P and non-P material. He notes that the sources have been combined to create an orderly account that follows the conventions of Hebrew narrative. The redactor structures the material by inserting five instructions to remember and observe (12:14, 17b, 24, 42, 13:10) and also creates new allusions by the arrangement of sources¹¹². While Propp does discuss the rabbinic distinction between the Passover of Egypt and the Passover of generations and acknowledges that it has a canonical basis in the different Passover regulations in Exodus and Deuteronomy he does not perceive such a distinction within the final form of Exodus 12-13:16 itself¹¹³. He does however believe that the Priestly tradition considered in its own right recognised such a distinction. The compilers of P knew, did but did not approve of, the tradition and practise of a domestic Passover. He therefore restricted such a rite to Egypt (12:1-20), while portraying a centralised Passover as normative for subsequent generations (Leviticus 23:5-8, Numbers 9:1-14, Numbers 28:16-25).

¹¹¹ W.H.C. Propp, Exodus 1-18. (AB Vol. 2; New York, Doubleday, 1999), pp373-380.

¹¹² Eg the P laws on the participation of foreigners in 12:43-49 now follow from the note in 12:38 (E) concerning the mixed multitude which departed Egypt. Propp, Exodus 1-18, p381.

¹¹³ Propp, Exodus 1-18, pp445-451.

The recent work of Gertz¹¹⁴ assigns an even greater role to the redactor and argues for a distinction between the Passovers of Egypt and Generations in the final text of Exodus 12:1-13:16. Gertz assigns Exodus 12:24-27 and 13:1-16 to a redactor responsible for bringing together Priestly and non-Priestly material¹¹⁵. A major goal of the redactor was to reconcile divergent legal traditions so they could be read together as one body of tradition. In the case of the Passover this involved the insertion of the catechetical material in 12:25-27 which identified the future Passover as a sacrifice (זֶבֶחַ) in a manner reminiscent of Deuteronomy 16:1-8 and in doing so located it at the central sanctuary. This addition also relegated the instructions in Exodus 12:1-13 to Egypt only, reversing the intentions of the Priestly source which regarded them as valid for all time. The final redaction does then recognise a distinction between the Passover of Egypt and the Passover of generations¹¹⁶.

More broadly, the Wellhausen/Noth approach to interpreting the Pentateuch has been affected by the breakdown of the source-critical consensus on which that approach was based. In particular, an increasing tendency to date all Pentateuchal traditions to a later date has both led to, and to some extent been driven by, a view that Israel's religious heritage was pluralistic sociologically as well as historically. That is, whereas Wellhausen tended to trace changes in religious practice over time, more recent commentators emphasise the extent to which different forms of religious practice co-existed within Israel¹¹⁷. This

¹¹⁴ J.C. Gertz, Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung: Untersuchungen zur Endredaktion des Pentateuch. (FRLANT 186; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000).

¹¹⁵ Gertz, Tradition und Redaktion, pp393-396.

¹¹⁶ Gertz, Tradition und Redaktion, pp54-55. An obvious difficulty with Gertz's argument is that 12:24-27 appears to establish the domestic blood rite of 12:22, which would be strongly anomalous from the viewpoint of Deuteronomy, as valid for subsequent generations. Gertz argues that the redactor envisaged that the blood rite would continue, albeit in a transformed manner within the temple celebration.

¹¹⁷ This viewpoint is developed in Rainer Albertz's two volume A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period (London: SCM Press, 1992). In this work Albertz accepts the argument outlined in E. Blum, Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch (BZAW 189; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990) that the Pentateuch is an amalgam of two post-exilic compositions, to be identified with Deuteronomistic (K_D) and Priestly (K_P) circles. In a similar vein H.C. Schmitt 'Die Suche nach der Identität des Jahweglaubens im nachexilischen Israel' argues that the Pentateuch represents an attempt to mediate deuteronomistic-prophetic and priestly-theocratic tendencies in the post-exilic community.

suggests a Pentateuch composed of a patchwork of competing religious ideologies, although it still leaves open the question of why the redactor(s) of the Pentateuch allowed this pluralism to remain in the final form of the text, and whether and how they may have sought to bring about some reconciliation between these competing viewpoints.

It is important to recognise that all the approaches outlined in this section represent modifications of the existing paradigm rather than a replacement for it. That is because they share the same approach to reading the Old Testament. They differ only in the source-critical conclusions derived from a common methodology. A more fundamental challenge to the consensus is represented by the canonical approach outlined below.

2.4 The Canonical Approach

2.4.1 Brevard Childs

A third approach to reading biblical texts is the canonical approach particularly associated with Brevard Childs. Defining the distinctive features of the “canonical approach” is not straightforward¹¹⁸. Childs certainly has no intention of denying the gains of modern scholarship and his Exodus commentary gives substantial attention to questions of source, form and tradition criticism. However, Childs argues that “study of the prehistory has its proper function within exegesis only in illuminating the final text.”¹¹⁹ In particular, he is concerned to “understand Exodus as scripture of the church. The exegesis arises as a theological discipline within the context of the canon and is directed toward the community of faith which lives by its confession of Jesus Christ.”¹²⁰ Childs’ approach, then, is less a

¹¹⁸ Part of the difficulty is the diversity of senses in which the term is used. Childs himself states that “the term canon points to the received, collected, and interpreted material of the church and thus establishes the theological context in which the tradition continues to function authoritatively for today.” *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, p71. The canon criticism associated with James Sanders is less concerned with the final form of the text and more concerned with the selection, transmission and elaboration of authoritative traditions at all stages of the canonical process. See J.A. Sanders, *Canon and Community: A Guide to Canonical Criticism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984).

¹¹⁹ Childs, *Exodus*, p xv.

¹²⁰ Childs, *Exodus*, p ix.

distinctive methodology than a particular conception of why and in what context any interpretation of the Old Testament should take place. The end-point of any interpretation should not be a reconstruction of Israelite history, or a new understanding of the text's literary development, but a fresh re-appropriation of the text within the life of the believing community.

In his discussion of Exodus 12:1-13:16¹²¹ Childs begins by addressing source critical issues, adopting a fairly standard division (12:1-20, 28, 40-51, 13:1-2 are P; 12:21-23, 27b, 29-34, 37-39 are J; 12:24-27a, 13:3-16 are D; 12:35-36 may be E). Next he considers the history and traditions of the Passover, concluding that both the Passover and Unleavened Bread developed from pre-Israelite cultic practices, although he doubts that the Passover material could have been transmitted for a long period in Israel apart from some historical associations. He believes the Passover and firstborn plague traditions originally developed independently of each other, were juxtaposed in J and then combined in P. He suggests that P's presentation of the Passover has been influenced by oral tradition and cultic practice and not simply a literary variation on J's presentation.

Childs then moves to discuss the final form of the text under the heading 'Old Testament Context'. At several points he discusses how the various sources and traditions have been arranged to create a coherent whole. Thus, while 12:1-20, 28 and 21-27 arise from different traditions, this being reflected in the divergences between YHWH's speech to Moses and Aaron and Moses' speech to the elders, in the present form of the text 12:21-7 is Moses' transmission of the earlier command, albeit one which stresses those aspects related to the last plague. Likewise, verse 28 has been shifted from its original location after verse 20 to allow an account of Moses' speech before the people's reaction. More broadly, he argues that the redactor has bracketed the exodus event with a preceding and succeeding interpretation, thereby uniting the 'word of God' and the 'act of God'¹²². He also argues

¹²¹ Childs, *Exodus*, pp182-214.

¹²² Childs does not specify which textual units are to be classified as word of God and which as act of God, although presumably 12:1-28 and 12:43-13:16 belong to the former and 12:29-42 to the latter.

that a dialectic between redemption as memory and redemption as hope has shaped the text, specifically in the interplay in 12:1-20 and 12:21-28 between what has happened and what is to come. Childs also has a brief discussion of the rabbinic distinction between the Passover of Egypt and the Passover of generations, and whether any such distinction was intended by the final redactor. He concludes that the theory has some validity as long as it reflects the now/then polarity in the text and is not intended to flatten out the differences between different elements of the biblical tradition.

One senses a degree of tension between Childs' stated aims and the form of the commentary. Notwithstanding his concern to exegete the final form of the text the same number of pages are devoted to reconstructing the sources and traditions behind the text and to interpreting the text in its canonical form¹²³. Moreover, the relationship between sources and traditions and the themes he identifies in the canonical text is never made entirely clear. Is the dialectic between redemption as memory and redemption as hope present in all the sources, or does it only emerge when they are placed side by side by the redactor? More generally, Childs' commentary would benefit from a more detailed discussion of the 'redactor'. In some respects Childs' redactor stands close to Noth's vision of a redactor who was essentially a collector and compiler of pre-existing traditions. In other respects he stands closer to Gertz's vision of a redactor who had a very definite theological agenda, although unlike Gertz this was expressed exclusively by the juxtaposition of pre-existing material. While this combination of theological 'maximalism' and compositional 'minimalism' is not impossible it does require more detailed exploration.

¹²³ Pages 184-195 and 195-206 respectively. It is instructive to compare the methodology adopted in Childs' more recent Isaiah commentary where he eschews a focus on the oral stage of tradition in favour of an examination of the continuing process of re-interpreting the written text. See B.S. Childs, Isaiah: A Commentary (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2001), p2.

2.4.2 Terence Fretheim

Although Terence Fretheim does not explicitly align his Exodus commentary¹²⁴ with the canonical approach of Childs he does share with Childs a desire to explicate the role of the final form of the text in the life of the faith community. Like Childs Fretheim accepts the validity of the historical-critical enterprise and recognises that a complex history of sources and traditions lies behind the final text. However, in comparison to Childs he makes relatively little reference to critical hypotheses and concentrates on the final form in his exegesis¹²⁵.

Fretheim treats Exodus 12:1-13:16 as part of a longer section stretching from 12:1-15:21. He structures the section in terms of the interspersing of story and liturgy. So, 12:1-27a, 12:43-49 and 13:1-16 are classed as liturgy, 12:29-39 is story and the remaining verses are either transition or summary statements. Fretheim argues that the interweaving of story and ritual serves a number of purposes. It makes clear that the exodus is both a historical and a liturgical event, it places the events of the Exodus somewhat outside the flow of the surrounding narrative;¹²⁶ and makes clear that the saving power of the original Exodus event can be appropriated anew by each generation in the context of worship. Thus, Fretheim argues against Childs that the dialectic in the passage is not between the past and the future but between the past and the present.¹²⁷ He does not explicitly discuss the distinction between the Egyptian and subsequent Passovers.

Fretheim's attention to the narrative and ritual aspects of the passage is welcome. However, it is not clear that this issue is best approached by dividing the text in the way that Fretheim does. So, Exodus 12:1-27a is classified as ritual. However it also displays

¹²⁴ T. Fretheim, *Exodus* (Louisville: John Knox, 1991).

¹²⁵ To some extent this reflects the different purposes of the two commentaries. Fretheim's commentary is part of a commentary series directed at preachers and teachers, while Childs' commentary addresses both the pulpit and the academy.

¹²⁶ Fretheim, *Exodus*, p136.

¹²⁷ Fretheim, *Exodus*, p139.

some of the characteristics of narrative – it describes events which took place in a specific time and place and involved specific characters (see 12:1-2 and 21). Thus, Fretheim appears to over-state his case when he argues the events are placed in some sense beyond normal time and space.¹²⁸

Fretheim recognises that the recounting of the Passover in Egypt has been shaped by later celebrations; however he does not examine in detail what aspects of the Passover celebrations are understood as normative for later generations. What, for example, is the nature of the observance that prompts the question of 12:26?

2.5 Conclusion

Notwithstanding the changes in methods of reading biblical texts over the past two millennia the notion of a distinction between the Passover observed in Egypt and the Passover to be observed by subsequent generations as a key to interpreting Exodus 12:1-13:16 has demonstrated remarkable longevity. However, the way in which the distinction is applied has changed. For rabbinic commentators the distinction was a hermeneutical grid which functioned at the level of the individual ordinance. As the situation of Israel moved from one of captivity to freedom individual elements of the Passover observance were variously transformed, supplemented or eliminated altogether.

The distinction was maintained by more modern Jewish commentators and Christian commentators such as Calvin. However, because their method of reading texts differed from that of the rabbinic and medieval commentators their application of the distinction had to change. With modern Jewish commentators such as Sarna and Cassuto the distinction had to be accommodated within the analysis of larger units of text and tradition. For Calvin, his Christian commitments meant he was able to leave the distinction at the level of principle without working it out at the level of individual ordinances.

¹²⁸ Fretheim, *Exodus*, p136.

The distinction largely disappeared in the heyday of post-Enlightenment critical scholarship where it was replaced by an emphasis on the diachronic plurality of the text as a window into historical development. However, in recent years the distinction has been resurrected as a means of interpreting the intentions of those responsible for formulating the final form of the text (so Gertz) or as an aspect of the text's theological impact (so Childs).

The next chapter will seek to provide more clarity on this issue by providing a detailed exegesis of the relevant passage, and reflecting on how it may have functioned within Israel's collective memory.

CHAPTER THREE: THE PASSOVER IN EXODUS 12:1-13:16

This chapter will provide a detailed exegesis of Exodus 12:1-13:16, using the classification of critical perspectives in the previous section as a framework for analysing the contributions of previous scholars. The methodology employed in the exegesis which follows will be broadly canonical, in that the focus will be on the final form of the text, while recognising the diversity of traditions that contribute to that form. Before considering how Exodus 12 and 13 relate to the history of Israel's religious practice it is necessary to read them in their literary and narrative context. This is especially so since a perceived lack of 'fit' between the Passover material in these chapters and its narrative surroundings has been a major justification for seeking an explanation for the origins of the observance other than that given by the Old Testament.

3.1 The Narrative Context of Exodus 12 and 13

There are a number of narrative contexts within which Exodus 12:1-13:16 may be interpreted. One natural unit is Exodus 1:1-14:31 with 15:1-21 being a poetic commentary on the preceding account. However, if we consider a theme central to the Passover – the transmission of tradition from one generation to another – a broader narrative context, stretching from Exodus to Judges, becomes apparent.

3.1.1 *Knowledge of YHWH in Exodus-Judges*

The book of Exodus begins with the sons of Israel going down from Canaan to Egypt; the book of Judges opens with the nation of Israel settled again in Canaan, albeit somewhat tenuously. It is widely recognised that the intervening narrative contains material drawn from a variety of traditions. However, there are indications that a number of texts have been placed at strategic points to organise the narrative around the theme of the transmission of knowledge of YHWH and YHWH's works from one generation to another.

So, the book of Exodus opens with a list of the sons of Jacob/Israel who came to Egypt, followed by a reference in 1:6 to the death of Joseph, his brothers and “all that generation” (וכל הדור ההוא). The significance of this is spelt out in verse 8 – a new king arises (קם) in Egypt who does not know (ידע) Joseph, and consequently perceives the multiplication of the Israelites as a threat rather than a sign of divine blessing¹²⁹ and proceeds to oppress them.

The implications of the death of one generation and the rise of another for the knowledge of YHWH and his purposes are explored again at the end of Moses’ life. In Deuteronomy 34:10 the account of Moses’ death is followed by the comment that no prophet like Moses, who YHWH knew (ידע) face to face, has subsequently arisen (קם) in Israel. In itself, this is not necessarily problematic since provision for transmission of knowledge concerning YHWH is made in the commissioning of Joshua by Moses and the regular reading of the law (Deuteronomy 31:1-13)¹³⁰. These themes recur in Joshua 1:1-9, where Joshua is commissioned by YHWH and directed to make the internalisation of Torah a personal as well as communal responsibility.

The next significant generational transition comes with the death of Joshua. In both accounts of his death the issue of knowledge is broached. Immediately after the note concerning Joshua’s death and burial at Joshua 24:29-30 verse 31 records that all Israel served YHWH all the days of Joshua and the elders who outlived him, “who had known all the work of YHWH which he did for all Israel (ידעו את כל-מעשה יהוה אשר עשה).” At Judges 2:7-8 there is a near identical comment on the obedience of Israel during the lifetime of Joshua and his contemporaries, except that in Judges 2:7 the elders are said to have seen (ראו) rather than known the work of YHWH. After a second notice concerning Joshua’s death and burial in verses 8 and 9 verse 10 narrates the death of the entire generation of Joshua’s contemporaries, and their replacement –

¹²⁹ cf the language of Exodus 1:7, which draws on the blessings in Genesis 1:28 and Genesis 9:1.

¹³⁰ Deuteronomy 31:13 specifically refers to the children of the hearers, who will not have known (ידע) the law.

וַיִּקָּם דּוֹר אַחֵר אַחֲרֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדְעוּ אֶת־יְהוָה וְגַם אֶת־הַמַּעֲשֵׂה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל

There are several points of contact between Judges 2:10 and the passages discussed earlier – the death of a leader or generation and its succession by another, the issue of knowledge, and in the case of Joshua 24, knowledge of YHWH's work. Whether or not there is a direct literary relationship between some or all of these passages,¹³¹ they do testify that the transmission of tradition concerning YHWH's work across generations was a key issue for the framers of Israel's literature.

Moreover, Judges 2:6-10 sets the scene for 2:11-23, with its programmatic description of Israel's apostasy and subsequent deliverance by YHWH, a cycle that recurs several times in the Book of Judges. Judges 2 does not directly attribute apostasy to the failure of the next generation to 'know' the work of YHWH. However, at the very least such lacunae in knowledge create the possibility of apostasy.

Neither Joshua 24 nor Judges 2 precisely identifies the work of YHWH with which Joshua and his contemporaries were acquainted through knowledge and sight, and this invites a search for a wider context for the term. There are only two references in the Pentateuch to seeing the work of YHWH. The most illuminating cross-references are Exodus 34:10 and Deuteronomy 11:7. The former passage is the prelude to the covenant renewal after the golden calf incident. YHWH promises Moses that all the people among whom he lives will

¹³¹ Erhard Blum argues that Exodus 1:6,8 is part of the so-called Deuteronomistic Composition (K^D) and has been deliberately modelled on Judges 2:8,10 to provide an *inclusio* for the epoch of the exodus: Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch. Davies argues that the differences between the two passages are such that any similarities are most likely co-incidental. G.I. Davies. 'K^D in Exodus: An Assessment of E. Blum's Proposal' in M. Vervenne & J. Lust (ed) Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic Literature (BETL CXXXIII; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997), pp407-420. However, there are other indications of redactional links between the Pentateuch and Joshua-Judges, the strongest being the notes concerning the burial of Joseph's bones in Genesis 50:24 and Joshua 24:32. H-C Schmitt has argued that a number of texts in Genesis-2 Kings can be attributed to a redactor who sought to emphasise two themes (i) the importance of belief in YHWH and his word (ii) Israel's place among the nations and the threat this posed to her identity. 'Das spätdeuteronomistische Geschichtswerk Genesis 1 – 2 Regum XXV und seine theologische Intention' in Theologie in Prophetie und Pentateuch: Gesammelte Schriften (BZAW 310; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2001), pp277-294.

see the work of YHWH. The content of such work is not spelt out in detail, although the mention in the following verse of YHWH's driving out nations from Canaan suggests a reference to the conquest and settlement¹³².

The reference in Deuteronomy 11:7 is less ambiguous. Here Moses tells the people at Moab "it is your own eyes that have seen every great work (NRSV "deed") that YHWH did (עֵינֵיכֶם הָרְאָה אֶת-כָּל-מַעֲשֵׂה יְהוָה הַגָּדֹל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה)." Here the work of YHWH encompasses the signs and works directed against Pharaoh in Egypt (verse 3), the destruction of the Egyptian army at the Red Sea (verse 4) as well as the punitive action against Dathan and Abiram and their households (verses 5 and 6). That is, the work of YHWH encompasses his saving and punitive action during the exodus from Egypt and the wilderness wanderings. Moreover, the fact that Judges 2:7 also refers to "every great work that YHWH did" suggests that one passage was written with the other in mind.

In summary, the narrative from Exodus to Judges has been shaped to emphasise the theme of transmission of knowledge of YHWH and his work from one generation to another. The work of YHWH *par excellence* is his saving and judging activity in the exodus, broadly understood. For the generation contemporaneous with these events knowledge is equivalent to sight. However, subsequent generations can no longer see this work in the same way and knowledge of YHWH and his work becomes potentially problematic, as demonstrated by the narrative in Judges 2 where the loss of knowledge is the prelude to national apostasy and disobedience. A potential remedy for this problem is to nurture practices that will keep alive the knowledge of YHWH's work. The rest of this chapter will examine how this works itself out in the case of the Passover.

¹³² The difficulty in interpreting Exodus 34:10 is that Moses is told the work will be done "with you (עִמָּךְ)." This could be a reference to Moses' role as mediator of revelation (cf verses 29-35). However, in subsequent verses Israel is addressed in the second person singular so a corporate reference is equally likely. R.W.L. Moberly argues that Exodus 34:10 probably refers to YHWH's act of covenant renewal with a sinful people. At the Mountain of God: Story and Theology in Exodus 32-34 (JSOTSS 22; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1983), pp93-4.

3.1.2 *Knowledge of YHWH in Exodus 1-14*

More immediately, the Passover narrative is part of a longer account that begins with the oppression of the Israelites and the deliverance of Moses in Exodus 1-2. Once again, the theme of knowledge is prominent.

A key turning point in the narrative comes in 2:23-25. The Israelites cry out from their slavery and their cry rises to God. Four verbs are used to describe God's response. He hears (שמע) their groaning, remembers (זכר) his covenant with their ancestors, looks (ראה) upon them and knows (ידע) them. All these verbs, particularly the last three, play an important role in the subsequent narrative¹³³. Moreover, their occurrence together in these verses establishes an important precedent. Even for the deity, remembrance and knowledge are in some sense a response to what may be seen and heard¹³⁴.

The immediate sign of YHWH's concern for his people is his appearance to Moses and the revelation of the divine name in 3:1-4:17. He declares his intention to deliver the Israelites and bring them into a good land. Once again, in verse 7 verbs of seeing and hearing (ראה, שמע) and knowledge (ידע) are used to describe YHWH's response to the suffering of the people.

YHWH also tells Moses to go to Pharaoh and bring about deliverance for his people (verse 10). A common feature of such call narratives in the Old Testament is an objection by the one called to some aspect of their commission, or a request for further confirmation of YHWH's assistance in the execution of the commission¹³⁵. In the subsequent passage

¹³³ See Charles Isbell Exodus 1-2 in the Context of Exodus 1-14: Story Lines and Key Words in D.J.A. Clines, D.M. Gunn & A.J. Hauser (ed), *Art and Meaning: Rhetoric in Biblical Literature*, (JSOTSS 19; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1982) pp53-55.

¹³⁴ Propp, *Exodus 1-18*, pp179-180.

¹³⁵ Eg Jeremiah 1:6, Judges 6:36-37 (Gideon).

Moses raises four such objections or requests. Each of these objections receives a response from God and in three of the responses some reference is made to a sign (אֹתָהּ) or signs.

Of particular interest is Moses' third objection where he expresses the fear that the Israelites will not believe (הֵאֱמִין) or listen (שָׁמַע) to him (4:1). YHWH's response is to direct Moses to perform three actions – in the first he is to cast his staff on the ground so that it will become a snake; the second involves the appearance and subsequent disappearance of leprosy from his hand; and in the third he is to pour some water from the Nile on the ground and it will become blood. The actions are described as signs (4:8) and their intended outcome is that the people will believe the signs and hear Moses' voice (4:9).

The initial response to Moses' mission is positive. In 4:29 Moses and Aaron assemble the Israelite elders, Aaron speaks the words which YHWH has given Moses and performs signs before the people¹³⁶. Once again, the account incorporates both sensory perception and attitudinal response. The signs are performed before the eyes of the people and they hear (יִשְׁמְעוּ)¹³⁷ that YHWH has given heed to them and seen their misery. In response, they believe, bow down and worship (verse 31).

In 5:1 Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and ask him to let the people go and the response is considerably less positive. Since he does not know YHWH (לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אֶת־יְהוָה) he refuses to send them out. Indeed, he subjects the Israelites to even harsher servitude. The people then turn upon Moses who in turn goes to YHWH and asks him why he sent him and why he has mistreated (הָרַע) the people (5:22). In 5:23 Moses uses the same verb to describe Pharaoh's treatment of the people; this serious challenge to YHWH's integrity and care of his people sets the background to YHWH's address to Moses in 6:2-8.

¹³⁶ This, the most natural reading of 4:30, is somewhat surprising given that at 4:17 YHWH has directed Moses to perform the signs. It may be that we are to understand that Aaron performed the signs at Moses' behest, as is the case several times in the subsequent plague narrative (eg 7:19, 8:16, 9:5).

¹³⁷ The LXX suggests that יִשְׁמְעוּ be amended to יִשְׂמְחוּ – “rejoiced”. While this reads more easily in 4:31 itself the importance of the idea of “hearing” in the surrounding narrative suggests the MT be followed.

This is part of a longer section, 6:2-7:7 that is generally assigned to the Priestly tradition. It contains elements characteristic of P – an interest in genealogies and chronology and the use of stereotypical vocabulary¹³⁸. More specifically, there are several conceptual and verbal links between Exodus 6:2-8 and key P passages in Genesis which serve to interpret the relationship between the patriarchal and Mosaic eras.

The essential continuity between the eras is found in the divine being. In Exodus 6:3 YHWH identifies himself as the one who appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as El Shaddai¹³⁹. However, as well as these elements of continuity Exodus 6:2-8 expresses elements of discontinuity or difference between the eras. The first concerns the mode of divine revelation. In Verse 3 YHWH states that while he appeared to the patriarchs as El Shaddai he not did make himself known (נודעתִי) to them by his name YHWH¹⁴⁰. Clearly, more is at stake than a mere difference in terminology. This is certainly suggested by 6:4-5, which contrasts YHWH's establishing (הקמתִי) his covenant in the patriarchal era and remembering it in the Mosaic era. The mention of covenant establishment clearly recalls the narrative in Genesis 17, where El Shaddai establishes a covenant with Abraham, incorporating promises of land, progeny and relationship. Elsewhere in P covenantal remembrance refers to YHWH's commitment to act in accordance with his promises¹⁴¹.

Ska picks up on this distinction and suggests a promise-fulfillment schema is at work – El Shaddai is God revealed as the one who makes promises, YHWH is God revealed as the

¹³⁸ For a detailed discussion of P's narrative style see S. McEvenue The Narrative Style of the Priestly Writer (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1971).

¹³⁹ cf Genesis 17, 35:11, 48:3.

¹⁴⁰ This verse has played a key role in source criticism of the Pentateuch, where the use of divine names in Genesis is used as one criterion for distinguishing between those traditions which believed that the name YHWH was first revealed to Moses (E, P) and J, which assumed the name was known prior to Moses. For an argument that all Pentateuchal traditions are aware of a distinction between the patriarchal and Mosaic eras, of which the different divine designations are but one expression see R.W.L. Moberly, The Old Testament of the Old Testament: Patriarchal Narratives and Mosaic Yahwism. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992).

¹⁴¹ Eg Genesis 9:15, where God promises that when the sign of the bow is seen in the clouds he will remember his promise never again to destroy the earth and its inhabitants by water.

one who keeps promises¹⁴². A more nuanced understanding would be that the patriarchal era saw the fulfilment of those aspects of the covenantal promises which concerned fertility, whereas the Mosaic era would see the fulfilment of those aspects of the covenant concerning the possession of land and the establishment of the relationship between YHWH his people (hence the explicit mention of these promises in 6:4, 6:7 and 6:8)¹⁴³. Hence, when in verse 7 YHWH declares that his action in freeing his people will result in them knowing him as YHWH (יָדַעְתֶּם כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה): knowledge is not an abstract concept, but recognition of YHWH as the deliverer of his people.

Moses responds to YHWH's disclosure by conveying it to the Israelites. However, 6:9 states that they would not listen to Moses (לֹא שָׁמְעוּ אֶל מֹשֶׁה) because of their broken spirit and cruel slavery. This contrasts starkly with their responsiveness in 4:31 and the intended outcome of the signs in 4:8-9.

The way in which one reads these differences will depend on broader conclusions about the appropriate method for relating Priestly and non-Priestly material in the Pentateuch. Analyses which proceed on the basis that P was originally a self-standing work intended to supplant earlier traditions will be more likely to see the various presentations as being in conflict. Alternatively, if P is believed to be a conscious redaction of earlier tradition the various perspectives are more likely to be read as complementing one another. An example of a reading that draws a sharp distinction between the different traditions is that of Johnstone, who argues that these different responses occur in different traditions and reflect different understandings of the people's relationship with YHWH. He argues that all of 2:23-6:1 should be attributed to a Deuteronomic tradition in which the people respond positively to Moses' initial signs and the subsequent wonders are designed to coerce Pharaoh into letting the people go, rather than convince Israel of YHWH's power. In

¹⁴² J-L Ska. 'Quelques remarques sur Pg et la dernière rédaction du Pentateuque' in A de Pury (ed), Le Pentateuque en Question (Geneva, Labor et Fides, 1989), p123.

¹⁴³ See W. Randall Garr 'The Grammar and Interpretation of Exodus 6:3' JBL 132/3 (1992), pp385-408. "... for P, the Israelite deity had not yet completely fulfilled his covenantal promises in the patriarchal period and, therefore, was not (yet) the object of full covenantal knowledge (p408)."

contrast, the Priestly edition, represented in 6:2-7:7, is more pessimistic about Israel's ability to obey YHWH; – prior to the plagues the people still require to be convinced of Yahweh's power (6:7, 12)¹⁴⁴.

Johnstone implies that those responsible for the formation of the Pentateuch had a somewhat static view of human response to Yahweh, in which people are either believing or unbelieving. However, within the Pentateuch as it now stands belief and unbelief are not so much fixed aspects of human nature as choices which continually confront characters as the narrative unfolds. This is certainly the case in the patriarchal narratives where Abraham's belief in the promise of descendants at Genesis 15:6 is followed by Abraham's expression of doubt when the promise is renewed in Genesis 17:17¹⁴⁵. Moreover, there are indications that Exodus 6:2-7:7 has been shaped to fit in its present context. The use of the recognition formula in 6:7 and 7:5 corresponds to Pharaoh's comment in 5:2 that he does not know YHWH. The Israelites' unwillingness to listen to Moses makes sense in light of their increased oppression in Chapter 5. All this suggests that recognition of YHWH on the part of the Egyptians and a willingness to hear and believe YHWH on the part of Israel will be central to what follows.

This sets the scene for the plague narrative in which the relative strength of YHWH and Pharaoh is a central issue. The account of nine plagues or signs that YHWH directs against Pharaoh and the land of Egypt raises a variety of source-critical and theological questions which will not be considered here¹⁴⁶. Of particular interest in the current context is the

¹⁴⁴ W. Johnstone, 'The Deuteronomic Cycles of "Signs" and "Wonders" in Exodus 1-13 in A. Graeme Auld (ed), Understanding Poets and Prophets. (JSOTSS 152; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), pp166-185.

¹⁴⁵ Blum, Studien zum Komposition des Pentateuch, pp236-7.

¹⁴⁶ Source critical issues are discussed in L. Schmidt, Beobachtungen zu der Plagenerzählung in Exodus VII 14 – XI 10 (StudBib Vol. IV; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1990) and F. Kohata, Jahwist und Priesterschrift in Exodus 3-14 (BZAW 166; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1986). The question of the 'hardening' of Pharaoh's heart is discussed from a variety of perspectives in D.M. Gunn, 'The "Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart": Plot,

prominence of the recognition motif in the narrative. Several times the sending of plagues is linked to recognition by Pharaoh and the Egyptians of YHWH's identity, power and incomparability. At 7:5 YHWH commissions Moses to perform the signs with the promise that "The Egyptians will know that I am YHWH, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring the Israelites out from among them." Five times subsequently the motif occurs, either in Moses' speech to Pharaoh¹⁴⁷, or in a speech which YHWH directs him to deliver to Pharaoh¹⁴⁸. In each instance the motif is prospective – that is, recognition of YHWH is linked to and in some sense co-incidental with a future occurrence. It is not that the sign needs to be interpreted after the event for its significance to become apparent. Moreover, because of Pharaoh's stubbornness he experiences recognition of YHWH as punitive rather than salvific.

There is however, one retrospective use of the recognition motif – that is where recognition of YHWH is linked to a past occurrence. That is in Exodus 10:1b-2, where YHWH tells Moses the purpose of the plagues for the people of Israel:

"Go to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his officials, in order that I may show these signs of mine among them, and that you (sg.) may tell your (sg.) children and grandchildren how I have made fools of the Egyptians and what signs I have done among them – so that you (pl.) may know that I am YHWH."

Character and Theology in Exodus 1-14' in D.J.A. Clines, D.M.Gunn & A.J. Hauser (ed), *Art and Meaning: Rhetoric in Biblical Literature*. (JSOTSS 19; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1982, pp72-96); H.C. Schmitt, 'Tradition der Prophetenbücher in den Schichten der Plagenerzählung: Ex. 7:1 –11:10' in V. Fritz, K-F Pohlmann, and H.C. Schmitt, (ed) *Propheten und Prophetenbuch* (BZAW 185; Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, 1989), pp 196-216; R.R. Wilson, 'The Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart' *CBQ* 41 (1979), pp18-36.

¹⁴⁷ 8:6 [ET 8:10], 8:18 [ET 8:22], 9:29.

¹⁴⁸ 7:17, 9:14.

Here recognition is not identified with the experience of the signs but arises from their being recounted. Those who recognise YHWH through the signs are not just Moses and his contemporaries who see and experience them, but subsequent generations to whom the signs are retold. This is signalled by the shift in address from the second person singular to plural. Moreover, here recognition is not experienced in a punitive context but in the context of YHWH's deliverance and ongoing care of his people.

More generally, a notable feature of the first nine plagues is the absence of any action by the people of Israel themselves. The total obedience of Moses and Aaron is stressed in 7:6 and 7:20, but insofar as the people are protected from the plagues this is attributed solely to YHWH's initiative. This is particularly evident in the seventh plague, where some of the Egyptian slaves and livestock are protected from the hail because their owners take them into shelter (9:20-21), whereas all the Israelites are protected because there is no hail in the land of Goshen where they are living (9:26). Gowan therefore over-simplifies matters when he argues that in these chapters human action plays a minor role compared to the action of YHWH¹⁴⁹. Rather, it is the actions of the Israelites alone that are downplayed. The first nine plagues do not answer the question of whether the revelation of YHWH's power will convince the people to reverse their response of 6:9 and listen to Moses. In particular, the important motif of belief is entirely absent from the plague narrative.

However there may be an implicit warning to Israel in the fivefold note that Pharaoh would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as YHWH had said (לֹא שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר) ¹⁵⁰. That Pharaoh's refusal to listen is in accord with YHWH's prior warning in 7:4 emphasises the divine sovereignty. However, the fact that Pharaoh's refusal to listen is expressed in the same terms as Israel's refusal to listen at 6:9 means that the issue of Israel's response to YHWH remains open.

¹⁴⁹D. E Gowan, *Theology in Exodus: Biblical Theology in the Form of a Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), p136.

¹⁵⁰ 7:13, 7:22, 8:11 [ET 8:15], 8:15 [ET 8:19], 9:12.

It is only with the account of the crossing of the sea in 13:17-14:31 that the belief motif reaches some degree of resolution. Having initially let the Israelites go, Pharaoh then pursues them with his army and chariots. In their fear, the people cry out to YHWH and Moses exhorts them in 14:13-14 “Do not be afraid (אל־תִּירָאוּ), stand firm (הִתְיַצְבוּ) and see the deliverance that YHWH will accomplish for you today.” The sea account ends in 14:30-31 with Israel’s response to YHWH’s destruction of her enemies. Twice the motif of sight occurs – Israel sees the Egyptians dead on the seashore, Israel sees the great act of YHWH and the result is that she fears YHWH and believes (וַיֵּאֱמִינוּ) in YHWH and his servant Moses.

The fact that the belief motif, so important in the earlier narrative, is only resolved with the sea crossing raises the possibility that the Passover and other material in Exodus 12-13 is a secondary addition to a tradition that originally stressed YHWH’s unilateral action in the deliverance from Egypt¹⁵¹.

However, such reconstructions obscure the distinction between the generation contemporaneous with the events narrated and subsequent generations. For the Egyptians and the exodus generation of Israel the fundamental deeds of YHWH may be seen and experienced. Any response to those events, whether described as knowledge or belief is not the result of reflection on those events but arises naturally from the participation in and observation of the event itself.

This creates a potential dilemma for subsequent generations of Israel. As the broader canonical context outlined in Section 3.1.2, and Exodus 10:1-2 make clear, knowledge of the events of the exodus is to be fundamental for subsequent generations. But how are they

¹⁵¹ Cf the thesis of Thomas B. Dozeman, *God at War: Power in the Exodus Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) who argues that in its earliest form the exodus tradition was a cultic celebration of YHWH’s unilateral power, enacted nocturnally as part of the Autumnal New Year festival. The Passover was incorporated into the exodus narrative by deuteronomistic tradents as part of a broader emphasis on the co-operation of human and divine action in the deliverance.

to derive meaning and identity from events that they are unable to see or experience? Presumably two options are for the event to be accorded an enduring quality such that it can be re-experienced by later generations, or for structures to put in place that allow the events to be recounted, so that while they remain in the past their meaning and significance can be discussed and appropriated in the present. It is precisely these issues which are explored in Exodus 12:1-13:16.

3.2 The Structure of Exodus 12:1-13:16

There is no clearly discernible structure in the arrangement of material in Exodus 12:1-13:16. Attempts to provide some structure have either depended on re-arranging the present order¹⁵² or have argued that while elements of structure can be discerned at the level of individual traditions these have been obscured when the various traditions have been combined¹⁵³. An exception is Weimar's suggestion that the passage consists of two corresponding sections, 12:1-36 and 12:37-13:19¹⁵⁴. However, the symmetry between the two sections is not perfect¹⁵⁵ and it seems questionable to divide the narrative material in 12:29-42 in this way.

¹⁵² Ahuis suggests a chiastic arrangement for 11:1-13:16, but it requires displacing the Unleavened Bread material in 13:3-10 so that it follows after 12:39, as well as displacing the despoiling narrative in 12:35ff so that it follows 13:1-16. Ferdinand Ahuis, *Exodus 11:1-13:16 und die Bedeutung der Trägergruppen für das Verstandis des Passa*. (FRLANT 168; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: Göttingen, 1996), p30.

¹⁵³ Boorer argues that the pre-P text 12:29-39, 13:3-16 had a balanced and symmetrical structure. It was subsequently expanded by 12:21-27a to form a narrative of the exodus framed on either side with a speech by Moses. The P account consisted of a narrative enclosed by two speeches of YHWH. However, when this was combined with non-P material it resulted in "lack of symmetry... repetitions and unevenness in detail." *The Promise of the Land as Oath*, p166.

¹⁵⁴ P. Weimar. 'Exodus 12 :24-27a : Ein Zusatz nachdeuteronomistischer Provenienz aus der Hand der Pentateuchredaktion' in M. Vervenne & J. Lust (ed) *Deuteronomy and Deuteronomic Literature* (BETL CXXXIII; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997), pp421-448.

¹⁵⁵ Weimar divides 12:1-36 into A. Speech of YHWH to Moses and Aaron, to be conveyed to Israel (1-20) B. Moses' speech to the elders + implementation by the people (21-28) C. Death of the Egyptian firstborn + departure of Israel (29-36), while 12:37-13:19 has the structure A. Departure of Israel (37-42) B. Speech of YHWH to Moses and Aaron (43-50) C. Remembrance of the Exodus (12:51-13:19). Clearly the two sections are not symmetrical.

A simpler and potentially more valuable way forward in examining the final form of the text is to list the various sections of text, along with the speaker, the subject and (where applicable) the addressee(s) in each.

Section	Speaker	Addressee	Subject
12:1-14	Yahweh	Moses & Aaron	Passover
12:15-20	Yahweh	Moses & Aaron	Unleavened Bread
12:21-27	Moses	Elders	Passover
12:28-42	Narrator		Exodus
12:43-49	Yahweh	Moses & Aaron	Passover
12:50	Narrator		Passover
12:51	Narrator		Exodus
13:1-2	Yahweh	Moses	Firstborn
13:3-10	Moses	People	Unleavened Bread
13:11-16	Moses	People	Firstborn

A certain pattern in the sequence of subject matter can be observed, although it is difficult to know whether this is merely fortuitous especially given the variation in the length of individual segments. In the central section (12:28-12:51) legal and narrative material concerning the Passover is bracketed by the narrative of the exodus. In both outer sections (12:1-27 and 13:1-16) legislation concerning Unleavened Bread is bracketed by legislation dealing with another subject, respectively the Passover and firstborn.

Certain sections may be grouped together on the basis that they share a common speaker/addressee pattern. In three sections (12:1-14, 12:15-20 and 12:43-49) YHWH speaks to Moses and Aaron, in two (13:3-10 and 13:11-16) Moses speaks directly to the people. Two sections which stand by themselves are 12:21-27, where Moses addresses the elders of Israel, and 13:1-2, where YHWH addresses Moses alone. While such a diversity of speaker/addressee patterns may and has been explained source critically, the present arrangement also makes sense in the passage as it stands. In both 12:1-27 and 13:1-16

there is a logical progression. YHWH speaks to Moses and/or Aaron, who then speak to the people or their representatives. The one section that stands outside this progression is 12:43-49, which may signal that it was always understood to apply only to a post-Egypt situation.

3.3 Detailed Exegesis of Exodus 12:1-13:16

The following detailed exegesis will proceed section by section. In each instance the exegesis will be preceded by an analysis of the way in which the particular textual unit has been analysed by the three scholarly approaches outlined in the previous chapter. To simplify what follows, the table below sets out how 12:1-13:16 has been assigned to various traditions by a representative group of commentators.

	Noth	Childs	Gertz	Propp
12:1-20	P	P	P (14-17 R)	P
12:21-23	J	J	non-P or R	E
12:24-27	D	D (27b J)	R	E (24 R)
12:28, 50	P	P	P	P
12:29-39	J	J (35-6 E)	Non-P/P/R	E/R
12:43-49, 51	P	P	P	P
13:1-2	D	P	R	E
13:3-16	D	D	R	E

Note: J = Yahwist
E = Elohist
P = Priestly tradition
D = Deuteronomistic
R = Redactor

Clearly, there is most agreement concerning those texts which are to be assigned to P, with less agreement over the source of the non-Priestly material. Some of the reasons for this disagreement will be surveyed in what follows.

3.3.1 12:1-14

As noted in the previous chapters Rabbinic and medieval Jewish commentators tended to focus on individual regulations rather than larger textual units. Much of the discussion concerns details of *halakhic* practice. For example, Ibn Ezra's commentary contains extensive discussion on chronological matters, such as the appropriate method for establishing a new moon (cf verse 2) and the precise significance of slaughtering the Passover "between the evenings" (verse 6)¹⁵⁶. Where necessary the prescriptions of Exodus 12 are brought into dialogue with other pentateuchal regulations, as in the case of the nature of the Passover animal.

Amongst commentators who adopt a source critical methodology this section is almost universally assigned to P¹⁵⁷. The prevailing assumption in this paradigm is that Deuteronomy preceded P, so that 12:1-13 with its portrayal of a domestic Passover is understood as reaction against the requirement of Deuteronomy 16:1-8 for a centralised celebration. It is also argued that P has also eliminated or downplayed the sacrificial aspects of the Passover because in its conception valid sacrifice could only be made after the delivery of the law at Sinai¹⁵⁸.

The major difference amongst these commentators is whether to treat the material as a whole or sub-divide it into the Priestly narrative (often designated P_g) and one or more secondary legal additions (often designated P_s). One of the grounds given for dividing the material is the different forms of speech employed in 12:1-14. The earliest stratum is identified with verse 1 and some or all of the third person material found in 1, 3, 6b-8 and 14 together with some of the first-person material in verses 12 and 13. It is then assumed this has been expanded by one or more strata formulated in the second person plural that

¹⁵⁶ See Ibn Ezra's Commentary on the Pentateuch, pp203-17 and 221-225.

¹⁵⁷ One exception is Knohl who assigns all of 12:1-20 to the Holiness School. I. Knohl, The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).

¹⁵⁸ Noth, Exodus, pp95-6.

assimilated the Passover to regular sacrificial practice and also provided additional ritual detail and clarification. However there is no consensus on the precise extent of P_g in this passage¹⁵⁹.

To assist resolution of these issues the following table sets out the different speech forms in 12:2-14 (ie omitting the introductory speech frame):

	First Person	Second Person	Third Person
Verse 2		This month shall mark for you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year for you	
Verse 3			Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household.
Verse 4			If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbour in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it.
Verse 5		Your lamb should be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.	
Verse 6		You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the month	then the assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight.
Verse 7			They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.
Verse 8			They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

¹⁵⁹ One can compare the reconstructions of Grünwaldt and Weimar. Grünwaldt, (*Exil und Identität*, p77) attributes 12.1.3aα*.b.6b.7.8.12.13.14aα to P_g; P. Weimar (*Zum Problem der Entstehungsgeschichte von Ex. 12:1-14* *ZAW*, Vol. 107 (1995)), pp1-17 attributes 12.1*.3aα.b.6b.7a.8*.12* to P_g. M. Köckert argues that P_g took up and incorporated an older Passover ritual (12.3b.6b*.7a.8a.11bβ) which was unconnected to the exodus. 'Leben in Gottes Gegenwart: Zum Verständnis des Gesetzes in der priesterlichen Literatur.' *JBTh* (1989), pp27-61.

Verse 9		Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs.	
Verse 10		You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn.	
Verse 11		This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly.	It is the Passover of YHWH.
Verse 12	For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements: I am YHWH.		
Verse 13	The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.		
Verse 14		This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to YHWH; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.	

It could be that the compilers of this text understood that material in the third person applied directly to the generation in Egypt, while second person material was addressed to subsequent generations only. Certainly, material cast in the third person gives a basic outline of the Passover similar to that found in 12:21-23¹⁶⁰ while most of the material in the second person is concerned with ritual elaboration.

¹⁶⁰ There are differences however. For example 12:8 discusses the cooking and eating of the Passover which is not discussed at all in 12:21-23.

The difficulty with this view is that verse 3, which is cast in the third person, describes the taking of the lamb on the tenth day while verse 6 in the second person directs it be eaten on the fourteenth day. Thus, if the Passover in Egypt is understood to have taken place on the normal day either both verses 3 and 6, or verse 6 alone would need to apply in that situation.

A more nuanced explanation is that the material in the third person makes clear the nature of the people to whom the Passover commands are addressed. The first two third person sections (3-4, 6b-8) begin with a designation of Israel as a totality (עַדְתִּי־יִשְׂרָאֵל in verse 3, קֹהֵל עַדְתִּי־יִשְׂרָאֵל in verse 6b) but then move to the household level. By holding together descriptions of Israel gathered as a community for the selection and slaughtering of the Passover animal, and Israel dispersed in its households for the Passover meal the text portrays the Passover as incorporating both the national and domestic spheres of Israel's life. If the text was uniformly in the second person this dual nature of the Passover would not be so evident and it might be understood simply as a domestic celebration, with the 'you' of the text being understood distributively. Within this schema the second person sections either provide further elaboration to commands given in the third person (so 5-6a and 9-11), or serve to emphasise the significance of the Passover for future generations (verse 14).

The opening speech frame in 12:1 identifies the setting for what follows as "in the land of Egypt". At first glance this seems somewhat redundant so it is little surprise that it has received attention from rabbinic, medieval and modern commentators. Rashbam argues the geographical reference is included to differentiate the laws which follow from the other commandments given at Mount Sinai, the Tent of Meeting or in the plains of Moab¹⁶¹. Ironically, this suggestion makes most sense on the modern critical assumption that 12:1 was originally part of a free-standing Priestly document, rather than a more detailed narrative which would make the location of the command clear without further explanation.

¹⁶¹ Rashbam's *Commentary on Exodus: An Annotated Translation* (tr. M. I Lockshin; Florida: Brown University, 1997), p103. The same explanation is offered by Sarna, *Exodus*, p53.

Working from that assumption Weimar¹⁶² suggests this the reference to Egypt is a redactional addition designed to establish a link with similar notices in 6:28 and 11:9-10. Certainly, the parallel with 6:28 is significant, since this refers to the day on which YHWH revealed himself to Moses and declared his intention to deliver his people from slavery and the verbal resonance indicates that the climax of this plan is about to take place. It also prepares the reader for the judgements about to take place in and on the land of Egypt (verse 12).

A speech frame where Moses and/or Aaron are directed by YHWH to convey commands to the people is not unusual in the Pentateuch where it frequently marks a significant transition in subject matter¹⁶³. What is different in Exodus 12 is that verse 2 is placed between the speech frame and the direction to Moses and Aaron, thereby being separated from the instructions which they are to convey to Israel.

Nevertheless, the plural “for you (לכם)” in verse 2 cannot refer to Moses and Aaron alone but must have current and future generations of Israelites in view. The verse states that for the people of Israel “this month” ie the month in which the Passover is observed shall be “for you the beginning of months (לכם ראש חדשים).” The verse actually lacks a form of the verb “to be”, and as Cassuto notes this does mean that it could be read as stating an existing fact rather than bringing about a new state of affairs¹⁶⁴. However, in its narrative context it is best read as a performative utterance whereby YHWH declares that Israel’s year shall begin with the month in which the exodus is remembered through the rituals which follow¹⁶⁵.

¹⁶²Weimar, ‘Zum Problem der Entstehungsgeschichte’, p3.

¹⁶³ Eg the introductions to the regulations concerning clean and unclean foods at Leviticus 11:1 and bodily discharges at 15:1.

¹⁶⁴ Cassuto, Exodus, p137.

¹⁶⁵ Exodus 12:2 and other verses have spawned a considerable body of literature debating whether Israel followed different calendars in pre and post-exilic times, with the former beginning in autumn and the latter in spring. According to these reconstructions, Exodus 12:2 is justifying the later practice by reading it back into the Mosaic era. However, this does little to illuminate the logic of the text as it stands.

The text itself does not specify which month is in view, which suggests that its first readers already knew in which month Passover was celebrated¹⁶⁶. In other words Exodus 12:2 is not intended to provide chronological information but to interpret the significance of the Passover and the events it commemorates. In narrative terms it associates the events of Passover with a new beginning and perhaps a new creation, if the twofold use of ראש is intended to recall the בראשית of Genesis 1:1. Within the Pentateuchal narrative the previous mention of the first month of the year has come in Genesis 8:13; it is on the first day of the month that we are told the waters have dried up from the earth. Once again, this associates this month with re-creation. Exodus 40:1 also recounts that the tabernacle was erected on the first day of the first month. The erection of the tabernacle fulfils YHWH's promise to dwell amongst his people (Exodus 29:45-46). Hence the Passover is placed within a series of events which unite YHWH's purposes for creation and for Israel¹⁶⁷.

Verbally and conceptually 12:2 resembles 12:14:

12:2	החדש הזה לכם ראש חדשים
12:14	והיה היום הזה לכם לזכרון

This parallel may explain the unusual placement of verse 2. The compilers of the text have framed the Passover instructions with statements that interpret its significance for altering the quality of time, both for the generation in Egypt and for subsequent generations.

Verses 3 and 4 give instructions for the selection of the Passover animal. As noted above a major concern of these verses is to establish a link between Israel's collective identity and a rite which is portrayed as essentially taking place in the domestic sphere. This is done in the first instance by directing the instructions to "all the congregation of Israel

¹⁶⁶ Presumably by means of cultic calendars such as that found at Leviticus 23:4ff.

¹⁶⁷ For a discussion of the function of these chronological notes, both in P and the final form of the Pentateuch see Dozeman, *God at War*, pp109ff.

(כל-עדה ישראל).” Elsewhere עדה refers to Israel gathered as an organised cultic and political community. While it is possible that on some occasions עדה could refer to Israel as an ideal or totality rather than a single body gathered in one place¹⁶⁸ the reference in verse 6 to “the whole assembled congregation of Israel (כל קהל עדת-ישראל)” is unambiguous – the writer of this passage understood that the Passover in Egypt required a gathering of all Israel¹⁶⁹. Furthermore within the canonical ordering of the Old Testament, Exodus 12 is the first passage to use עדה and קהל to describe Israel¹⁷⁰. The Passover in Egypt marks the beginning of Israel’s corporate life.

Verse 3 also reflects the domestic aspect of the Passover celebration. A Passover animal is to be selected for each father’s house (לבית-אבת), for each house (לבית). The two terms carry slightly different meanings. The בית אב was a kinship group which identified itself with reference to a particular male ancestor¹⁷¹. If the ancestor was still living the בית אב was akin to an extended family and formed a subset of the clan, or משפחה. However, if the ancestor stretched back a number of generations and/or was not known to those currently living the בית אב would be a larger group more akin to a clan. The stipulation in verse 3 that a small animal be allocated to each בית אב indicates that a smaller group is envisaged here. Based on an archaeological survey of Late Bronze and Early Iron Age settlements in Palestine, Stager concludes that a single בית אב often occupied a multi-family compound, which consisted of a number of adjoining dwellings grouped around a

¹⁶⁸ A case in point is Numbers 15:26, which refers to aliens dwelling among the congregation of Israel (although the aliens are described as dwelling “among them (בתוכם)” rather “among it”). One could also refer to passages such as Exodus 16:22 and Judges 21:16 which refer to leaders of the עדה.

¹⁶⁹ The only other OT collocation of the nouns קהל and עדת is Numbers 14:5. However, on several occasions (eg Exodus 35:1, Numbers 1:18, Numbers 16:19, Joshua 22:12) the verb קהל is used for the gathering of the עדת.

¹⁷⁰ The three uses of קהל in Genesis (28:3, 35:11, 48:4) all refer to Israel in the future, rather than as a present reality.

¹⁷¹ For a discussion of בית אב and its role in Israel’s religious life, see Patrick D. Miller, *The Religion of Ancient Israel* (London: SPCK, 2000), pp62-76.

central courtyard¹⁷². In the current passage בית appears to refer to an individual dwelling given that verse 7 requires the application of blood to the doorposts and lintels of the בתים within which the Passover is eaten.

Verse 4 is a casuistic supplement to verse 3 which aims to ensure the full participation of all Israel in the Passover ritual. If a family is too small to consume an animal it is to join with a neighbour. There is, however, no provision for more than one animal to be consumed by the one household, thereby maintaining the link between the animal and the house established in verse 3.

The ritual supplement in verses 5 to 6a gives additional regulations for the selection and preservation of the Passover animal. Verse 3 has stipulated that it must be a שֶׁה, that is an animal taken from the flock rather than the herd. Verse 5 restates this, and further clarifies that it may be a sheep or a goat. Furthermore, the animal must be without defect (תמים), a one year old male. These stipulations correspond to instructions given elsewhere for the selection of sacrificial animals¹⁷³. Moreover, the instructions in 12:10 to not leave any of the Passover animal until morning are almost identical to those given concerning the thanksgiving offering in Leviticus 22:30. Later at Exodus 12:27 the Passover is explicitly designated a זֶבֶח, the normal term for an animal sacrifice where part of the animal was consumed by the worshipper(s).

However, there are counter-indications in Exodus 12-13 which suggest the compilers of the chapters may not necessarily have regarded the Passover as a sacrifice. The verb used in 12:6 and 12:21 for the slaughter of the Passover animal, שָׁחַט, is a quite general word used elsewhere for the killing of animals and humans in a sacrificial¹⁷⁴ or non-sacrificial¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² L.E. Stager 'The Archaeology of the Family in Ancient Israel' *BASOR* 260 (1985), pp 1-36.

¹⁷³ Eg Leviticus 1:3, 10, 4:23, 22:19. The use of a year old sacrificial animal, without any specification concerning sex, is prescribed at Leviticus 9:3, 12:6, 23:12, 18 and elsewhere.

¹⁷⁴ Exodus 29:11, 16, 20, Leviticus 3:2, 8 and many others.

¹⁷⁵ Genesis 37:11, Numbers 14:16, Judges 12:6 and others.

context. Verse 9 directs the people to roast the Passover animal over fire (צלי-אש) whereas the normal method for preparing sacrifice involves cooking in a container¹⁷⁶. There is also no parallel in other sacrificial regulations for the particular blood rite which accompanies the Passover. Likewise, the involvement of all the people in the killing of the animal and the consumption of the entire animal by the worshippers is unusual. Elsewhere, where a sacrifice is burned in fire, it is burned in its entirety, that is offered to YHWH¹⁷⁷. Where some of the sacrifice is consumed by the worshippers, as in the case of the sacrifice of well-being, the breast and right thigh are reserved for the priest and the fat is burned on the altar as an offering to YHWH¹⁷⁸.

Verse 6 directs that the Passover lamb is to be kept until the 14th day of the month when it is to be slaughtered by the congregation of Israel. The text gives no reason for the four day delay between the selection of the animal and its slaughter¹⁷⁹ and it may be that the significance is less in the delay than in the importance of the 10th and 14th days of the month¹⁸⁰.

¹⁷⁶ That would appear to be the most common meaning of the verb בשל, although it can be used in a more general sense for the process of bringing food to a state fit for human consumption, as in Genesis 40:10 and Joel 3:13. In Exodus 12:9 the people are forbidden to בשל the Passover animal in water, which indicates the more specific meaning, 'boil.' For further discussion on this issue see the exegesis of Deuteronomy 16:7 in Chapter 5.

¹⁷⁷ See the regulations for the עלה in Leviticus 1:1-17.

¹⁷⁸ See the regulations in Leviticus 8:28-38.

¹⁷⁹ Sarna believes the four day delay could have been an act of defiance against the Egyptians, while Jacob, following Rabbinic precedent, suggests the four day delay was to give the participants time to recover from their circumcision on the 10th. Rashi (p109) states it was to give the Israelites time to check the animals for blemishes.

¹⁸⁰ The 10th day of the month could be significant in that it marked the first decade of the lunar month [B.Baentsch, *Exodus-Leviticus-Numeri*. (HKAT; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1903, p93)]. Alternatively, the text could be establishing a link between the Passover, and the Day of Atonement, which took place on the 10th day of the seventh month [eg P. Weimar 'Ex 12,1-14 und die priesterschriftliche Geschichtsdarstellung' *ZAW* 107 (1995), pp196-214]. The evening of the 14th of the month, the night of the full moon, would be a most appropriate time to bring about and celebrate the beginning of a journey such as the exodus from Egypt.

Central to the Passover account in Exodus 12 is the manipulation of the blood of the Passover animal. Verse 7 directs the people to take some of the blood of the slaughtered animal and apply it to the doorposts and lintel of the house in which it is eaten. It has been suggested that this reflects a variety of ancient near-Eastern practices whereby an animal was slaughtered and its blood placed on doorposts. Most often the application of blood was intended to protect the inhabitants of the house from some form of demonic threat. The destroyer would be tricked by the blood into believing that a human death had already occurred and would not enter into the house. Thus, the animal died as a substitute for the inhabitants of the house, particularly the firstborn who were often attacked by the demon because of their association with life and vitality¹⁸¹.

Within the Old Testament blood is used as a means of consecration (eg Exodus 24:6-8) and it has been argued that the blood rite constituted the houses of the Israelites as sacred space suitable for the performance of cultic duties¹⁸². The difficulty with this explanation is that within the Passover account the house is not sacred space where YHWH manifests his presence as at the temple, but a sphere which is deliberately excluded from his (destructive) presence.

The passage's own explanation comes in verse 13 – “the blood shall be a sign for you (וְהַיָּה) (הַדָּם לָכֶם לְאֵן) on the houses where you live: when I see the blood I will pass over you (פָּסַחְתִּי עֲלֵכֶם) and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.” Throughout the Old Testament a number of events and practices are described as signs and commentators have suggested a variety of schemes for classifying the signs according to their nature, function and literary provenance¹⁸³. Of particular interest is Fox's discussion

¹⁸¹ See, amongst others, the discussions in Propp, *Exodus 1-18*, pp434-439; Rainer Schmitt, *Exodus und Passah: Ihr Zusammenhang im Alten Testament* (OBO 7; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975), pp28ff.

¹⁸² Eg Van Seters, *Passover and Massot*, p180.

¹⁸³ See the various classifications in C.A.Keller, *Das Wort Oth als Offenbarungzeichen Gottes* (Basel: Buchdruckerei E. Hoenen, 1946); B. O. Long, *The Problem of Etiological Narrative in the Old Testament* (BZAW 108; Berlin: Verlag Alfred Topelman, 1968); F.E. Wilms, *Wunder im Alten Testament* (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1979); F.J. Helfmeyer 'אֹתוֹ' *TDOT*, Vol. 1, pp167-188.

of Exodus 12:13 and other signs assigned to P¹⁸⁴. Fox argues that with the exception of Exodus 7:3, all the **אוֹת** in P function as cognition signs – that is, they serve to awaken knowledge of something in the observer. More specifically, the blood of the Passover serves to identify the Israelites so that God can act in accordance with his promise to spare them the punishment inflicted upon Egypt. That is, the Passover functions like the sign of the rainbow in Genesis 9, which when seen by YHWH reminds him of his promise never again to destroy the earth by water.

However, this explanation faces the difficulty that the blood is said to be a sign “for you” ie for Israel¹⁸⁵. The closest parallel to Exodus 12:13 is Exodus 13:9, where Moses explains the significance of the Festival of Unleavened Bread:

וְהָיָה לְךָ לְאוֹת עַל־יָדֶיךָ

As Fox himself acknowledges, the Festival of Unleavened Bread is intended to affect Israel’s consciousness not, YHWH’s¹⁸⁶. If Exodus 12:13 is to apply uniquely to the situation in Egypt the use of similar language is puzzling. It may be that the sign of the blood is for the people in that it is for their benefit¹⁸⁷. However, it is more likely that the

¹⁸⁴ M.V Fox. ‘The Sign of the Covenant: Circumcision in the Light of the Priestly ‘ot Etiologies’ *RB* 81 (1974), pp557-596. The other P signs are the heavenly lights in Genesis 1:14, the bow in Genesis 9:8-17, the Sabbath in Exodus 31:12-17, the fringe in Numbers 15:37-40, the altar covering in Numbers 17:1-5 and Aaron’s rod in Numbers 17:25-26.

¹⁸⁵ This problem was already recognised by medieval commentators who sought to explain how the blood could be a sign for Israel. Eg Ibn Ezra (*Commentary on the Pentateuch*, p233) suggested the sign was for the people in that it would strengthen their hearts when they heard the cries of the Egyptian firstborn. In contrast Houtman’s comment that “obviously the blood is not a sign for the Israelites but for YHWH; adequately translating the Hebrew requires a free rendering (*Exodus*, p185)” avoids rather than explains the difficulty.

¹⁸⁶ The same is true if one follows the BHS margin reading of Numbers 15:39 – **וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְאוֹת** rather than **וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְצִיצִת**. Here Moses is explaining the significance of the fringes the Israelites are to wear on the corners of the garments. As verse 39 makes clear, the fringes are intended to affect the people’s consciousness of YHWH’s commands.

¹⁸⁷ ie the so-called *lamed* of interest or advantage (WOC, pp207-8). The closest parallel would be a number of passages which speak of a particular object being a memorial (**זִכָּרוֹן**) for (ל) the people before (לפני) YHWH – see Numbers 28:12, Numbers 10:10, Numbers 31:54. Here the object is clearly intended to affect YHWH’s consciousness, not the people’s. On this basis Jeremias argues the same is true for the Passover in Exodus

passage has in mind the significance of the Passover for future generations as well as the generation in Egypt. This would explain the similarity in the opening words of verses 13 and 14:

Verse 13:

וְהָיָה הַדָּם לָכֶם לֵאמֹר

Verse 14:

וְהָיָה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לָכֶם לְזִכְרוֹן

Elsewhere in the Old Testament זִכְרוֹן is used as a synonym or near-synonym for אֹת¹⁸⁸. Insofar as there is a difference between the words, it is that אֹת focuses on the nature of an event or practice while זִכְרוֹן focuses on its function. Together, verses 13 and 14 establish a subtle relationship between the Passover in Egypt and the Passover celebrated by future generations. The two Passovers are identified in that both are described as a sign/memorial for Israel, even if this terminology fits subsequent Passovers better than the one celebrated in Egypt. In this regard, liturgical practice has shaped the description of the Egyptian Passover. However the two Passovers are also distinguished in that in Egypt the sign/memorial aspect applies particularly to the blood whereas for subsequent generations it applies to the celebration as whole.

It is true that some commentators are unclear whether verse 14 refers to the Passover or to the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the subject matter of verse 15-20¹⁸⁹. The difficulty lies in the description of the celebration as a חַג, a term which is frequently applied elsewhere in the Old Testament to Unleavened Bread, but almost never to the Passover¹⁹⁰.

12:13-14 [J. Jeremias The Eucharistic Words of Jesus (tr from 1960 German edition; Chatham: SCM Press, 1966), pp244-9]. However, Exodus 12:13-14 does not state that the Passover takes place *before* YHWH, so the argument is questionable.

¹⁸⁸ The two words are used inter-changeably in Exodus 13:9 and Joshua 4:6,7. cf the discussion in Keller Das Wort Oth, pp63ff.

¹⁸⁹ Propp Exodus 1-18, p402; Houtman Exodus, pp185-6.

¹⁹⁰ The exception is Exodus 34:25, which gives regulations for חַג הַפֶּסַח. Elsewhere the Passover, which is celebrated on the 14th of the month, is distinguished from the חַג of Unleavened Bread which begins of the 15th – see Leviticus 23:5ff and Numbers 28:16ff.

Nevertheless, the description of the celebration as a ‘this day’ clearly distinguishes it from the seven day celebration of Unleavened Bread. It is most likely that the day is being reckoned from sunset on the evening of the fourteenth¹⁹¹. Furthermore, the use of **ל** for future celebrations of the Passover distinguishes them from the Passover in Egypt, where the pilgrimage normally associated with a **ל** could not be observed¹⁹².

The passage leaves somewhat open the question of what precisely is to be remembered or signified through future celebrations of Passover. There is no occurrence of the recognition formula here or elsewhere in Exodus 12:1-13:16. However, verse 12 does include the similar self-introduction formula “I am YHWH (**יְהוָה** **אֲנִי**)” as a conclusion to YHWH’s promise to execute judgements against the Egyptian gods. Zimmerli notes several other occasions in the Pentateuch where a series of legal statements is concluded with this formula – “this indefatigable repetition of **יְהוָה** **אֲנִי** at the end of individual statements or smaller groups of statements in the legal offerings is not to be understood as thoughtlessly strewn decoration; rather, this repetition pushes these legal statements into the most central position from which the Old Testament can make any statement. Each of these small groups of legal maxims thereby becomes a legal communication out of the heart of the Old Testament revelation of Yahweh.”¹⁹³ The same self-introduction formula brackets YHWH’s speech to Moses in Exodus 6:2-8, which also contains the recognition formula in verse 7. That is, the events of the deliverance from Egypt not only reveal the incomparability of YHWH but also cause his people to recognise that revelation. The self-introduction and recognition formulae are also found together at Exodus 29:46:

וידעו כי אני יהוה אלהיהם אשר הוצאתי אתם
מארץ מצרים לשכני בתוכם אני יהוה אלהיהם

¹⁹¹ Childs *Exodus* p197.

¹⁹² On the **ל** as a pilgrimage festival see B. Keder-Kopfstein & G. J Botterweck ‘**ל**’ *TDOT* (IV), pp201-12 & E. Otto ‘Fest/Feiern: Altes Testament’ *RGG*⁴ Band 3, pp88-89.

¹⁹³ W. Zimmerli, *I am Yahweh* (edited by Walter Brueggemann; Atlanta: John Knox, 1982), p12. The essay from which this quote is taken was originally published in 1953.

“And they shall know that I am YHWH their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them; I am YHWH their God.”

The context is the consecration of the tent of meeting and the altar; it is with the institution of the cult that the themes of YHWH’s self-revelation and recognition by His people reach their fulfilment¹⁹⁴. But while this revelation and recognition occurs in and through the cult it is irreducibly historical – YHWH is revealed and recognised as the one who delivered his people from Egypt. Precisely because the significance of YHWH’s name and nature was first revealed in the context of the exodus any subsequent revelation and recognition of YHWH refers to that event, either implicitly or explicitly. As the particular point at which cultic experience and the exodus tradition intersected the Passover was ideally suited to unite revelation and recognition. Hence there are good reasons to regard the self-introduction formula in 12:12 not simply as an echo of the narrative context in Egypt but also as a reflection of the manifestation of YHWH’s name and character in subsequent celebrations of Passover¹⁹⁵.

3.3.2 12:15-20

Verses 15 to 20 deal with the consumption of unleavened bread. Interestingly the passage makes no reference to a Festival (אָהַר) of Unleavened Bread¹⁹⁶, although the direction in verse 17 to אֲתֵּם הַמִּצּוֹת indicates that a specific observance is in view.

Rabbinic and medieval exegesis was mainly concerned with reconciling the directions in these verses with other Pentateuchal regulations¹⁹⁷. Cassuto regards verses 14-20 as a

¹⁹⁴ On the importance of Exodus 29:45-46 see Köckert *Leben in Gottes Gegenwart*, pp56ff.

¹⁹⁵ On the theme of knowledge of YHWH in Exodus and the final form of the Pentateuch see J-L Ska ‘La structure du Pentateuque dans sa forme canonique’ *ZAW* 113 (2001), pp331-352.

¹⁹⁶ Unleavened Bread is designated a אָהַר at Exodus 23:15, Exodus 34:18 and Deuteronomy 16:16.

¹⁹⁷ The major item for discussion was how the requirement to eat unleavened bread for seven days was to be understood alongside Deuteronomy 16:8, which speaks of six days. See *Mek. VIII:I*, Rashi *Commentary on the Torah*, pp117-8.

summary of the elements to be added to the celebration of the Passover in future generations – the eating of unleavened bread, which originally applied to the night of the Passover only, is now extended for a seven day period¹⁹⁸.

The verses are all formulated in the second person plural and are generally ascribed to P. Nevertheless there is a degree of repetition which has suggested to some that the regulations contain two strata, verses 15-17 and 18-20¹⁹⁹. There are indications, however, that the passage has been shaped as a whole. In 12:15 and 12:19-20 it begins and ends by re-iterating three themes – the consumption of unleavened bread, the removal of leaven and the imposition of the penalty of כרת on anyone who violates the regulations.

The passage gives no rationale for the avoidance of leaven and the consumption of unleavened bread. Exodus 12:8 has already proscribed the consumption of unleavened bread with the Passover animal. At Exodus 12:34 the people's haste in leaving Egypt means they do not have time to leaven their bread. The best way of holding these facts together is to see the non-consumption of leaven as a memorial of the circumstances of the departure from Egypt, notwithstanding the fact that the text portrays Moses' receiving the instructions before the departure has taken place. That is, the placement of 12:15-20 is liturgical, reflecting more the order of subsequent celebrations than the circumstances of the departure from Egypt. Indeed, there are several aspects of 12:15-20 which reflect the perspective of later generations rather than the situation in Egypt. These include the reference to aliens and residents of the land in 12:19 and the direction in 12:16 to hold a מִקְרָא-קֹדֶשׁ on the first day of Unleavened Bread, since these normally took place at the central sanctuary.

¹⁹⁸ Cassuto, *Exodus*, p141.

¹⁹⁹ Eg Gertz attributes Exodus 12:18-20 to the same layer as the secondary material in 12:1-13. Exodus 12:14-17 is a later addition designed to harmonise the prescriptions in Exodus with those in Leviticus 23. *Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung*, p37.

3.3.3 12:21-27

These verses concern the Passover and, with the exception of 27b, are formulated as a speech from Moses to all the elders of Israel (לכל-זקני ישראל). However, they encompass a considerable variety of material. Verses 21-2 give directions for the people's actions in Egypt, verse 23 provides a motive for their action in terms of YHWH's response, verses 24-25 make the observance of Passover binding on future generations and verses 26-27a recount a dialogue between future generations concerning the meaning of the Passover.

The key interpretative issue for commentators in all paradigms has been how to read this material alongside the previous Passover instructions given to Moses and Aaron in verses 2 to 14. As many commentators have noted, there are several differences at the level of detail between the two passages. Several aspects of the earlier passage are not mentioned at all in verses 21 to 27. Moses gives no directions for the celebration of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, there are no directions for the cooking and consumption of the Passover animal and hence there is no repetition of the instructions in 12:11 concerning the clothing to be worn when the meal is eaten. On the other hand, there are some new requirements in the latter passage, including the use of hyssop for the daubing of blood in verse 22 and the direction to the people not to go outside their houses until morning, although the latter instruction is implicit in the statement in the assumption of the earlier passage that the house will be the place of protection from the firstborn plague.

There are also differences between the two passages in the description of YHWH's actions on Passover night. The nature of YHWH's judgement is spelled out in more detail in 12:12-13, where it incorporates the firstborn of humans and animals, the gods of Egypt and the land of Egypt. In 12:23 the strike is simply made against the Egyptians without any further specification. Whereas 12:23 mentions the 'destroyer' (משחית) which will enter homes to strike down inhabitants if the house is not marked with blood, the Passover instructions in verses 12 and 13 make no mention of any other agent than YHWH.

In the *Mekhilta* there is no attempt to explore similarities and differences between the two passages as a whole, although there is a comment that verse 24 indicates the regulations concerning the selection of the Passover animal are binding on future generations²⁰⁰. This theme is picked up by Ibn Ezra who argues that verse 24 refers to the requirement to kill the Passover lamb and not to the placing of the blood on the doorposts²⁰¹.

With Jacob and Cassuto there is an attempt to explain the differences between the instructions given to Moses and Aaron and the instructions passed on to the people. Jacob argues that Moses assembled the people and their leaders in order to emphasise only one item – the daubing of the blood²⁰². Cassuto argues that the compilers of the Pentateuch did in fact intend the reader to understand that Moses communicated to the elders all the instructions conveyed to him. The additional details in verses 21ff were possibly added by Moses to give greater clarity²⁰³.

However, for most scholars operating within a source-critical paradigm, the differences between 12:2-14 and 21-27 are the result of different traditions²⁰⁴. Beyond this the process of assigning the text to different sources is by no means straightforward. The first step is usually to separate 12:21-3, 27b, which deals with the situation in Egypt, from 12:24-27a, which discusses future observances of Passover. For commentators who believe J to be the earliest Pentateuchal source a key issue is whether 12:21-3, 27b was part of J,

²⁰⁰ *Pisha XI:I*.

²⁰¹ *Commentary on the Pentateuch*, pp241-2.

²⁰² *Exodus*, pp323-4.

²⁰³ Cassuto, *Exodus*, p143.

²⁰⁴ Exceptions include Van Seters, 'The Place of the Yahwist in the History of Passover and Massot', who attributes all of 12:1-28 to P as does B.N. Wambacq. 'Les origines de la Pesah israélite'. *Biblica*, Vol 57/1 (1976), pp226-224. A variation on this theme is Shimon Bar-On's argument that 12:22-27a, 28 originally came after the Passover regulations in 12:1-11 ('Zur literarkritischen Analyse von Ex 12,21-27'). The verses were displaced from the original context by an editor who disagreed with a law which enjoined a domestic sacrifice and a 'magical' understanding of the blood ritual. A still later hand placed them in their current position, within two editorial additions (12:21 & 12:27b). The main problem with Bar-On's reconstruction is that it is difficult to envisage how the excised verses could have survived intact before their re-introduction into the text.

especially given that the narrative could pass straight from 11:4-8 to 12:29-39. The options are to assign 12:21-3 to J and attribute any unevenness to the transmission of pre-literary tradition²⁰⁵, to assign it to the redactor of JE (the so-called ‘Jehovist’)²⁰⁶ or to assign it to another pre-Deuteronomic²⁰⁷ source.

In any case the dominant assumption is that 12:1-14 is (chronologically) later than 12:21-23, and that some differences between them can be attributed to literary development. For example, Boorer argues that P “has taken aspects of Exodus 12:21-27, 29-29; 13:3-16 which have been juxtaposed there only loosely and unevenly and woven them into a tight unity, smoothing over and reconciling elements in Exodus 12:21-27, 29-39; 13:3-16 that exist in an uneasy relationship.”²⁰⁸ Boorer cites as an example the fact that the blood of the Passover rite explicitly protects the firstborn in P whereas it does not in Exodus 12:21-23. Other differences are regarded as more theological or ideological in nature. The fact that verses 12-13 speak of YHWH as the agent of judgement whereas 12:23 refers to a “destroyer (הַמַּשְׁחִית)” which YHWH will not allow to enter the homes of the Israelites is frequently explained as a move by P to “de-mythologise” the earlier account which contained remnants of the earlier understanding of the Passover as protection from a destructive demon²⁰⁹.

The origin of 12:24-27a has been even more problematic for source-critical scholarship. The catechetical form of verses 25-27a resembles a number of Deuteronomic or Deuteronomistic passages²¹⁰ and the concern for the transmission of tradition from one

²⁰⁵ eg Childs, *Exodus*, pp189-94.

²⁰⁶ Wellhausen, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs*, p73.

²⁰⁷ Fohrer attributed 12:21-3, 27b along with 4:24-26 to a fifth source, which he named N because of its interest in nomadic themes. G. Fohrer, *Überlieferung und Geschichte Des Exodus*. (BZAW 91; Berlin: Alfred Töpelman, 1964), pp82ff.

²⁰⁸ Boorer, *The Promise of the Land on Oath*, p163.

²⁰⁹ Eg Boorer, *The Promise of the Land on Oath*, p163; Schreiner, ‘Exodus 12,21-23 und das israelitische Pascha’, p83.

²¹⁰ Deuteronomy 6:20ff, Joshua 4:6ff, Joshua 4:21ff.

generation to another is characteristic of Deuteronomy as a whole. However, some of the content of these verses seems distinctly un-Deuteronomic. They apparently make the blood rite, an aspect of the Passover which goes unmentioned in Deuteronomy, binding on future generations. The direction in 12:24 to “observe (שמרתם) this rite as a perpetual ordinance” uses the same terminology as other verses generally assigned to P²¹¹, although the addition of “for you and your children (לך ולבניך)” is more Deuteronomic in style. Other features of these verses are capable of being read in different ways. A case in point is the use of the term *העברה הזאת* in 12:25 with reference to the Passover. When read against other legal texts almost all occurrences of *עברה* to describe cultic activity are found in P²¹². However, if Exodus 12:25 is read against its narrative context, where *עברה* is used to describe Israel’s bondage in Egypt²¹³, it becomes apparent that the word may have been used here to contrast Israel’s forced service in Egypt with her cultic service for YHWH.

This complexity is reflected in the variety of suggestions made for the origin of these verses. They have been described as ‘proto-Deuteronomic’, that is pre-dating the book of Deuteronomy but reflecting its general ideological outlook and style²¹⁴. Other commentators have assigned them to a Deuteronomic redactor who drew on some or all of the Book of Deuteronomy²¹⁵. Still others have assigned them to one of the final redactors of the Pentateuch who drew on both Priestly and Deuteronomic traditions and sought to bring about some degree of reconciliation between them²¹⁶. The situation is no more straightforward for those who adopt a different model of Pentateuchal development.

²¹¹ Exodus 12:14, 17.

²¹² M. Caloz, ‘Exode, XIII, 3-16 et son Rapport au Deutéronome’, *RB* (1968), pp5-62.

²¹³ See Exodus 1:14, 2:23, 5:9, 5:11, 6:6, 6:9. Of these verses 5:9 and 5:11 are generally believed to be pre-P.

²¹⁴ eg Caloz, ‘Exode, XIII, 3-16 et son Rapport au Deutéronome’.

²¹⁵ eg Childs, *Exodus*; Baentsch, *Exodus, Leviticus und Numeri*, p102 (who however assigns 12:24 to J).

²¹⁶ eg Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung*; Ahuis, *Exodus 11:1-13:16 und die Bedeutung der Trägergruppen*; P. Weimar, ‘Exodus 12 :24-27a : Ein Zusatz nachdeuteronomistischer Provenienz aus der Hand der Pentateuchredaktion.’

Erhard Blum assigns 12:21-27 to the Deuteronomic composition K_D , but acknowledges the difficulty in seeing Deuteronomic influence in 12:21-23, since its method of celebrating the Passover is so different to that prescribed in Deuteronomy 16:1-8. He argues that K_D has made use of a pre-existing ritual regulation which it has integrated and expanded by the addition of 12:25-27²¹⁷. However, it is difficult to see how and in what context such a small ritual fragment could have been preserved, especially since Blum acknowledges that it could have not included those aspects of 12:21-3, such as the mention of elders, which have links to the rest of K_D .

Childs seeks to provide a bridge between traditional and source-critical analyses of the relationship between 12:2-14 and 12:21-27²¹⁸. He concedes that if one is examining the historical development of the Passover it is necessary to acknowledge the different levels of tradition in the text. However, when read from a synchronic perspective it is clear that the redactor has understood Moses' speech in 12:21ff as a transmission of the instructions given earlier in the chapter. The difference in the two speeches may be attributed either to typical biblical style or to the redactor's understanding of Moses' interpretative freedom. However, this leaves open the question of precisely how verses 21-27 relate to the earlier instructions. Is either or both portrayed as binding for all generations, or is the situation more complex?

A close examination of the text in its final form may begin to offer a way forward in considering some of these questions. Certainly, the sequence of material in verses 21-24 resembles that in verses 2-14. Verses 21b-22 give instructions for the selection and slaughter of the Passover animal, and the application of blood (cf verses 2-11). There follows in verse 23 a statement concerning YHWH's actions (cf verses 12-13), and in verse 24 there is a statement making the observance of the rite binding on future generations (cf verse 14). However, the inter-generational dialogue in 25-27a has no parallel in the previous instructions. Verse 27b concludes the section by recounting the people's response

²¹⁷ Blum, Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch, pp38-39.

²¹⁸ Childs, Exodus, p199.

to Moses' speech. Together, this suggests that 21-27 is intended to be understood as an application of the earlier instructions but with an additional focus on the nature and significance of future celebrations.

In 12:21 Moses' directions concerning the Passover are given to the elders (זִקְנֵי) of Israel. Ahuis believes that the mention of elders reflects the role of clan leaders who utilised the Passover tradition as a means of resisting royal authority in the pre-exilic era²¹⁹. A less speculative approach is to examine the other references to elders in the narrative context. When this is done it becomes apparent that the reference to elders is one of several points which links this passage to Exodus 4:19-31. In both the elders are addressed, although in the earlier passage it is Aaron who speaks. In neither passage is there any reference to the response of the elders, but it is recorded at Exodus 4:31 and 12:27 that the people bowed down and worshipped. We have here, then, an indication that the people's reluctance to heed Moses has been overcome.

It then becomes apparent that some of the differences between verses 2-14 and 21-27 relate more to vocabulary rather than substantive meaning. So, in 12:21 the elders are instructed to select animals according to their clans (לְמִשְׁפַּחְתֵּיכֶם) rather than to according to their בֵּית or בֵּית־אֲבֹתָ as in 12:3. It is unlikely that the different terms²²⁰ reflect different understandings of the context in which the Passover is celebrated. The mention of clans in verse 21 may be because this is at the level at which elders exercised their authority. Certainly, when it comes to the actual Passover rite verses 22-23 makes it clear that this takes place at the level of the household or בֵּית.

The clearest points of contact between the two passages are the descriptions of YHWH's actions on the Passover night in Exodus 12:12-13 and 12:23. There are several elements in common. Both refer to YHWH passing through (עָבַר) Egypt and "passing over (פָּסַח)" the

²¹⁹ Ahuis, *Exodus 11:1-13:16 und die Bedeutung der Trägergruppen*, pp77ff.

²²⁰ Eg Baentsch, (*Exodus, Leviticus und Numeri*, p101) argues that the מִשְׁפָּחָה is the whole kinship clan (*Sippe*), in contrast to the בֵּית אֲבֹתָ which is the single household under the *paterfamilias*.

people of Israel. Both associate YHWH's passing over with his seeing (ראה) the blood placed on the doorways by the people. Both use the word groups נגף (strike) and שחח (destroy) to describe YHWH's action against the Egyptians. It is true that 12:21-23 makes no explicit mention of YHWH's striking the firstborn. However, YHWH has already declared his intention along these lines in 11:4-8, and the narrative in 12:29ff recounts how this took place. Since both these texts are generally assigned to a source either contemporaneous with or earlier than 12:21-23 readers of the latter passage would naturally have read it as a reference to the firstborn plague. Exodus 12:2-14 may then be more explicit in making some linkages which are only implicit in 12:21-23. But this is not the same as saying that it creates linkages that have not yet been present.

With respect to the distinction between YHWH and the destroyer Childs and other commentators²²¹ rightly point out that the Destroyer is portrayed as acting at YHWH's behest and under his control. In verse 23 itself the same verb (נגף) is used to describe the actions of YHWH and the actions of the destroyer, so even in this section there is no hint of two independent actors. Moreover, it is questionable whether the Old Testament evidences a tendency to 'de-mythologise' the actions of YHWH and his agents in the way commentators sometimes suppose. A case in point is the accounts of the pestilence sent against Israel in the days of David in 2 Samuel 24:10-17 and 1 Chronicles 21:14-17. Both accounts record that the pestilence was sent by YHWH and executed through the agency of the "destroying angel (המלאך המשחית)". In both accounts the pestilence comes to an end when YHWH stays the hand of the angel. That is, in both accounts the actions of YHWH and the מלאך are regarded as complementary and there is no attempt to develop the initiative of one at the expense of the other²²². One can contrast this with the perspective of the two works on who was responsible for inciting David to order the census which brought about the pestilence – in 2 Samuel 24:1 it is YHWH who is responsible, while 1 Chronicles 21:1 attributes it to Satan. Indeed the similarities between the accounts of the

²²¹ Eg Durham, *Exodus*, p165, Sarna, *Exodus*, p60.

²²² It is true that, unlike 2 Samuel, 1 Chronicles 21:15 states that God sent the angel to Jerusalem. However, this is only making explicit what is clearly implicit in the 2 Samuel account.

plague under David and the Passover narrative – the use of the שחַת and נָגַף word groups, the dual agency of YHWH and his angel/destroyer, were further developed in Midrashic exegesis. In *Mekhilta of Rabbi Ishmael* YHWH's seeing the blood on the houses on Passover night and preserving the Israelites is linked to his seeing the blood of the binding of Isaac in Jerusalem and sparing the citizens of the city from the plague under David²²³.

Verses 25 to 27a, which are embedded within Moses' instructions to the Egyptian generation, envisage a dialogue between subsequent generations of Israelites concerning the significance of the Passover. Similar dialogues are found at 13:8-10 (concerning the Feast of Unleavened Bread), 13:14-16 (the redemption of the firstborn), Deuteronomy 6:20-25 (the decrees and ordinances), Joshua 4:6-7 and 4:21-24²²⁴ (the stones at Gilgal). In each case the dialogue concerning an ongoing monument or practice is the occasion for recounting a fundamental event in Israel's history – the deliverance from Egypt or the crossing of the Jordan. In Exodus 13:9, 13:16 and Joshua 4:6 the practice or monument in question is described as a sign or memorial. Although Deuteronomy 6:20-25 makes no reference to a sign the term is used at Deuteronomy 6:8.

The wording of the son's question in verse 26 (מַה הָעֲבֹדָה הַזֹּאת לָכֶם) is similar to other catechetical questions elsewhere in the Old Testament²²⁵. However it also fits well into its present context. The designation of Passover as הָעֲבֹדָה הַזֹּאת picks up the language of verse 25 and לַחֲק־לָךְ וּלְבִנְיָךְ reflects the instruction in verse 24 for it to be kept. The

²²³ *Mek. Pisha* VII:III. The midrash draws on the occurrence of the verb רָאָה in Genesis 22:8, 14, Exodus 12 and 1 Chronicles 21:15. Each time YHWH's "seeing" is associated with his protecting his people from some form of destruction, whether it be the death of Isaac or the plagues of Egypt and Jerusalem.

²²⁴ These texts, together with Joshua 22:24ff, are discussed in J. A. Soggin, 'Kultätologische Sagen und Katechese im Hexateuch' *VT* (1960), pp341-347 and A. de Pury, & T. Römer, 'Mémoire et Catéchisme dans L'Ancien Testament' in *Histoire et Conscience Historique* (Geneva : CCEPOA, 1989), pp81-92; T. Veijola, *Moses Erben: Studien zum Dekalog, zum Deuteronomismus und zum Schriftgelehrtentum* (BWANT 149; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2000), pp222-224. Soggin believes the various texts originally functioned in a liturgical framework with the purpose of explaining important cultic beliefs, rites and places. Both de Pury/Römer and Veijola relate the catechetical texts to the Babylonian exile, which is curious in that they presuppose objects or practices which could only be observed in the land.

²²⁵ See the question concerning the stones in Joshua 4:6 - מַה הָאֲבָנִים הָאֵלֶּה לָכֶם.

question also sets the scene for an interesting sequence of nouns and pronouns in the father's reply. This response begins with a more specific description of the rite itself – זבח-פסח הוא לי-הוה. That is, the rite cannot be understood simply by its relationship to the participants since it is conducted 'for YHWH.' Moreover, the very name of the rite expresses its origins - according to verse 27 it is a פסח because in Egypt YHWH על the houses of the Israelites when he struck the Egyptians²²⁶. However, verse 27 then goes further – in Egypt YHWH “spared our houses (בתינו הציל).” That is, the dialogue begins with the rite being approached from a second person perspective (“you”), then addresses it from a third person perspective (“them”) and ends with it being understood from a first person perspective (“us”)²²⁷. Insofar as the Passover is correctly understood, it is not an external rite, but an expression of communal identity in which the worshipper is intimately involved.

The catechetical dialogue raises two questions. First, why was it understood to be necessary? Second, what does it say about the relationship between the Passover in Egypt and subsequent celebrations?

²²⁶ This raises the question of the ‘original’ meaning of the verb פסח, a question which has occasioned the spilling of much scholarly ink. The main suggestions have been “leap over”, “protect” or “limp”. (For a survey of the options see Eckart Otto. פסח. ThWAT VI, pp659-682, who suggests the translation *stossen/schlagen* – to hit or strike). Where the ‘original’ meaning does not fit the narrative of Exodus 12 it is regarded as a key to recovering the ‘pre-Mosaic’ Passover. Much of the difficulty arises because פסח occurs only seven times in the Old Testament; outside Exodus 12 the only occurrence of the Qal form followed by the preposition על (1 Kings 18:21) is somewhat metaphorical in nature and does not clearly illumine the meaning of the verb in Exodus 12. In any case, if one’s interest lies in understanding the text of Exodus 12 and not what may lie behind it, it is the nature of YHWH’s actions which provides the key to understanding the meaning of the verb. Here, the fact that פסח is accompanied by the preposition על, which most commonly indicates spatial location (C. van der Merwe, J. Naudé and J. Kroeze, A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999) pp291-2) and is contrasted in 12:23 with עבר, a verb of spatial movement, indicates that “passing over” is not an unreasonable translation. The fact that פסח in Isaiah 31:5 appears to carry the meaning “protect” may reflect the influence of Passover traditions whereby YHWH’s “passing over” the Israelites was equated with protecting them from the judgement against the Egyptians.

²²⁷ On the interchange of pronouns in Old Testament catechetical texts see Assmann, Das kulturelle Gedächtnis, pp15-17.

With respect to the first question, rabbinic and medieval Jewish commentators gave a variety of suggestions as to why such a dialogue would be necessary or appropriate within a community where the significance of the Passover was widely known. The main explanations offered were that the question was inappropriate and/or envisaged a situation in which the Torah had been forgotten²²⁸, or that the question arose from the unusual features of the Passover celebration, such as a meal in which the animal was consumed whole, and from which Gentiles were excluded²²⁹. Clearly, such a dialogue would only make sense if it was understood that the significance of the rite would not be self-evident from observation alone²³⁰. The bridge between rite, and past and present significance required (spoken) word as well as action.

This of course, touches on the relationship between the Passover in Egypt and subsequent celebrations. It is noticeable that the relationship between the directions for the Egyptian celebration in verses 21b-23 and the directions for future celebrations in 25-27 are closest at the level of meaning and more tenuous at the level of ritual action. With respect to meaning, both relate the Passover to YHWH's action in passing over the Israelite houses when he struck the Egyptians. However, at the level of ritual action, whereas 21b-23 speak almost exclusively of a blood rite, verse 27 speaks of a **זבח**, which in the wider biblical context would be understood to involve a common meal, and possibly a sacrifice as well. That is, verses 21 to 27 clearly recognise a difference between the two Passovers at the level of action, but not at the level of meaning. It is precisely this desire to maintain continuity in content while allowing for variation in form which necessitates the interpretative word alongside the communal rite.

Moreover, there are indications that 12:25-27a is to be read alongside 12:1-14 as well as 12:21-23 in view. As noted above, all other catechetical dialogues designate the object or

²²⁸ *Mek. Pisha XII:II*.

²²⁹ Rashbam, *Commentary on Exodus*, p115; Ibn Ezra *Commentary on the Pentateuch*, p242.

²³⁰ Cf Joshua 4:6ff, where it is reasonable to expect that a collection of twelve stones would not immediately bring to mind the crossing of the Jordan.

practice in question as a **אֹת**. The absence of any such designation in 25-27a can be explained on the basis that the Passover is already described as a **אֹת** and **זִכְרוֹן** in verses 13 and 14. That is, these verses establish a distinction between the Passover in Egypt and subsequent generations which applies to all the Passover material in Exodus 12 and not just one particular tradition²³¹.

3.3.4 12:28-42

The two summary statements in 12:28 and 12:50 record that the people did “just as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron” (**כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת מֹשֶׁה וְאֶת אַהֲרֹן כֵּן עָשׂוּ**). In their present context these statements cannot be understood to mean that the Israelites in Egypt observed every command related earlier in the chapter, since on their own terms several of these commands could only be observed on entry into the land. Rather, these statements recall the similar comment regarding Moses and Aaron in 7:6²³² and show the people of Israel making the appropriate response of obedience to YHWH which has previously been characteristic of Moses and Aaron only. In this sense, they answer the question raised earlier in the narrative as to whether the people will indeed heed YHWH and his messenger. It is as they do so that their deliverance is ensured.

In verses 29 to 42 the narrator tells the story of the exodus night. What is striking about these verses compared to what precedes and follows is the absence of any speech from YHWH or his people. Even where Egyptian speech invites a response none is given (see verses 31-32, 33).

²³¹ The argument advanced here is not dissimilar to that advanced by Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung*, pp50-56, who agrees that verses 21-27 recognise a distinction between the Passover in Egypt and subsequent celebrations. However, Gertz argues that such a distinction was only created by the (post-Priestly) insertion of verses 24-27 and is not present earlier in the chapter, whereas I have argued that a similar distinction can also be recognised within the Passover material in verses 1-14. The difference in our positions arises because Gertz understands the **חַג לִיהוָה** in 12:14 to refer to the celebration of Unleavened Bread, whereas I have argued that it refers to the Passover.

²³² For an examination of the importance of this command-execution formula in the wider P narrative see J. Blenkinsopp, ‘The Structure of P’ *CBQ* 38 (1976), pp275-292.

There are several connections between these verses and earlier narrative sections, which serve either to emphasise YHWH's control of events or draw a parallel between the Passover night and the Egyptians' treatment of the Israelites. In verses 29-30 the threat of Exodus 4:23 is fulfilled as Yahweh strikes down the firstborn of Egypt. When the Egyptians become aware of the devastation a great cry (קֶעֶץ) goes out from their land. The same word has been used in 3:7 and 3:9 to describe Israel's cry under the bondage of slavery, but this time Yahweh does not hear or respond.

Verse 34 notes that the people left in such haste that they took their dough with them before it was leavened, and verse 39 records that this dough was used to bake unleavened bread. This has frequently been understood as an alternative (and earlier) rationale for the Feast of Unleavened Bread to that given in 12:14-20. Jacob denies this is the case since 12:39 gives no indication that the consumption of the unleavened bread was part of a seven-day Feast²³³. Certainly there is some tension in the narrative if we assume that 12:14-20 commands the observance of Unleavened Bread in Egypt since 12:19 requires the removal of leaven from the people's houses while 12:34 implies it was still present. As a whole, the canonical text allows Unleavened Bread to function both as a remembrance of the Exodus and also a re-enactment of the original deliverance.

As they depart the Israelites ask the Egyptians for valuable items. They are given them and the promise of 3:22 is fulfilled as the Egyptians are plundered²³⁴. The plundering not only emphasises the utter defeat of the Egyptians²³⁵, but also portrays the tenth plague as a military victory won by YHWH on behalf of his people.

²³³ Jacob, Exodus, pp348-349.

²³⁴ Jacob (Exodus, p345) notes that the verb נָצַל often means "to deliver" and suggests that it be read this way here – that is, the Israelites delivered the Egyptians from further disaster by leaving. However, the verb is used elsewhere to refer to plunder (eg 2 Chronicles 20: 25) and, given that the events of Exodus 14 are still to come, any mention of deliverance for Egypt at this point would seem premature.

²³⁵ See Childs, Exodus, p201.

In verses 40-42 the narrator draws back from the events of the night to outline their significance, both for the generation which came out of Egypt and for subsequent generations. For the Egyptian generation their significance lies in the deliverance achieved, for future generations the significance lies in the obligations they create.

By noting that the deliverance occurred on the 430th anniversary of the people's arrival in Egypt the narrator emphasises Yahweh's control of events. Moreover verse 41 describes the departure as taking place on "this very day (בַּעֲצֹם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה)", the same phrase used for the day of the exodus in 12:17 and 12:51. The reference to "this" rather than "that" day might at first glance suggest a certain merging of temporal horizons. However, the use of same phrase elsewhere in the Old Testament suggests it was a particular formula which could be used for events whether or not they were understood to be contemporary with the reader²³⁶.

Of more significance for interpreting the relationship between the events of the exodus and subsequent cultic celebrations is the use of the same word (שִׁמְרִים) in verse 42 to refer to YHWH's actions on the night of the departure and the night on which Israel commemorates that event. According to verse 42a the first was a night of שִׁמְרִים for/by YHWH (לַיהוָה), to bring the people out from Egypt. According to verse 42b "that same night (הוּא-הַלַּיְלָה) (הַזֶּה)" is שִׁמְרִים for/by YHWH, for subsequent generations of Israel. It is most likely that לַיהוָה carries slightly different nuances in the two halves of the verse; on the night of the exodus watch was kept by YHWH over his people; in subsequent celebrations of that event observances are kept for YHWH, ie in his honour²³⁷. We see here a similar pattern to 12:13-14. The same or similar language is used for the events surrounding the exodus and

²³⁶ Eg at Genesis 7:13 Noah and his family enter the ark הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה בַּעֲצֹם; the same phrase is used at Genesis 17:23 for the day on which Abraham circumcised his household.

²³⁷ For a discussion of this question see Houtman, *Exodus*, pp204-5. The alternative is that לַיהוָה means "in honour of YHWH" in both 42a and 42b. Then verse 42a would be saying that Israel celebrated the Passover in Egypt because of YHWH's deliverance, which still lay in the future. However לְהוֹצִיאֵם reads more naturally as a statement of purpose rather than reason.

their subsequent commemoration, even as different circumstances require that it be understood slightly differently in each context.

3.3.5 12:43 to 49

These instructions are given by YHWH to Moses and Aaron as in 12:1, but this time with no indication of the location. Verse 43 describes what follows as “the ordinance for the Passover (חֻקַּת הַפֶּסַח).” This language is reflected in Numbers 9:12 which states that various aspects of the Passover in the wilderness were observed “according to all the ordinance of the Passover (כְּכָל-חֻקַּת הַפֶּסַח).” Here, the reference is not simply to Exodus 12:43-49, but to the Passover regulations more broadly²³⁸.

Interestingly, all strands of scholarship have generally understood the regulations in verses 43 to 49 as applying uniquely to the celebration of the Passover in the land rather than in Egypt. Admittedly the *Mekhilta* discusses the question without coming to a clear conclusion²³⁹, but Ibn Ezra is certain that all that follows concerns the Passover of generations, while not thereby excluding those aspects of earlier regulations which are valid for all time²⁴⁰. Jacob argues that the omission of “in the land of Egypt” indicates that these laws were not obligatory there; the freedom brought about by the exodus demanded a humanitarian attitude towards slaves and sojourners²⁴¹.

Amongst source critics these verses are generally attributed to one of the later strata of P²⁴². Like 12:1-14 the legal material in 12:43-49 contains a mixture of second and third person

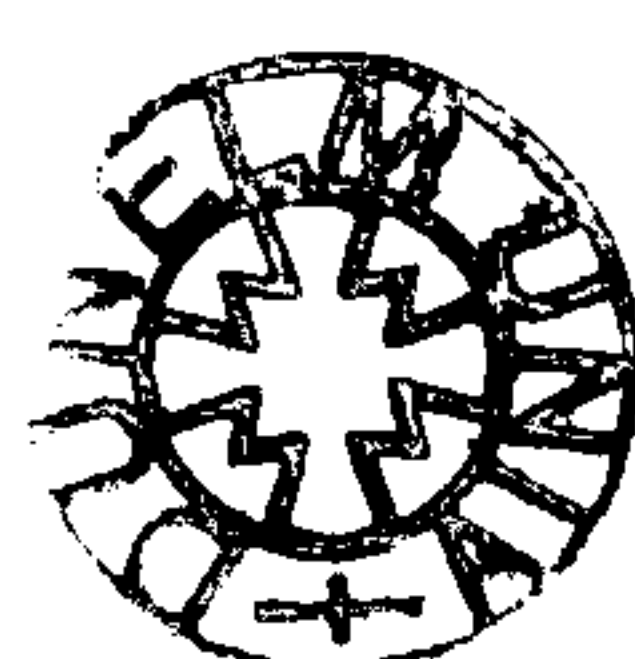
²³⁸ It is true that the immediate context of 9:12 is the command not to break a bone of the Passover animal, which is found only at Exodus 12:46. However, 9:11 also mention matters such as the celebration on the fourteenth day and the consumption of unleavened bread and bitter herbs, which are discussed only in Exodus 12:1-13.

²³⁹ *Pisha XVI:I*

²⁴⁰ *Commentary on the Pentateuch*, p253.

²⁴¹ Jacob, *Exodus*, pp352-3.

²⁴² Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung*, p396; Grünwaldt, *Exil und Identität*, pp96-101.



speech with the added complication that the second person speech is a mixture of singular and plural addresses²⁴³. The use of third person speech reflects the different actors to whom the commands apply – slaves and hired servants in verses 44 and 45, aliens in verse 48 through to whole congregation in verse 47. The rationale for the distinction between second person singular and plural speech is less clear and is somewhat complicated by textual uncertainties²⁴⁴.

Insofar as there is a common theme binding the section together it is the question of who can, must or must not participate in the Passover. The broad principle is stated in verse 47 - “the whole congregation of Israel shall celebrate it (כל-עדה ישראל יעשו אתו).” The participation of the whole of Israel is already presupposed in 12:1-14. However, this earlier section has not made explicit how the community of Israel is constituted. Central to the resolution of this issue is the link established in this section between circumcision and participation in the Passover. The positive prescriptions are framed by two negative commands with near identical wording – no foreigner may eat of it (verse 43), no uncircumcised person may eat of it (verse 48). The intervening verses make it clear who may participate under certain circumstances. The slave purchased with money²⁴⁵ (verse 44) may take part if he has been circumcised, and the resident alien (verse 48) may participate in the Passover if they have been circumcised. It may be that the alien is a more permanent resident in the land²⁴⁶ than the “foreigner” and therefore has the opportunity to demonstrate their identification with God’s people by accepting circumcision.

²⁴³ Interestingly, commentators have been much less likely to use this complexity as a basis for recovering different layers in the text than they have in the case of 12:1-14. Perhaps the reason is that, having already assigned all of 12:43-49 to Ps, to further divide this into three or more layers results in an implausibly large number of layers in P. Grünwaldt, (*Exil und Identität*, p97), tentatively suggests that the 3rd person speech is the earliest.

²⁴⁴ Eg MT reads וכי-יגור אֶחָד in 12:48 but a few manuscripts contain the plural, possibly influenced by ולגר הגר בחוככם in 12:49.

²⁴⁵ The slave born in the household is not mentioned, presumably because he would be circumcised on the 8th day in accordance with the stipulation of Genesis 17:12 (Baentsch, *Exodus, Leviticus und Numeri*, p108).

²⁴⁶ Israel are described as aliens in Egypt in Genesis 15:13, Exodus 22:21 and 23:9.

The requirement for circumcision links Passover with another one of Israel's covenant signs²⁴⁷. Since the Passover enacts and symbolises YHWH's covenant commitment to his people it is appropriate that the people demonstrate their commitment to the covenant by observing circumcision as a pre-requisite for taking part in the Passover.

The regulations in verse 46 which forbid anyone taking the Passover animal outside the house or breaking its bones do not concern the qualifications for taking part of the Passover. However, they do serve to emphasise the unity of the community in the Passover and maintain the one household-one animal link established in 12:3. Keeping the animal within the house means it cannot be shared with other households. The prohibition against breaking the bones of the animal may have a similar purpose in mind – dismembering the body would facilitate its distribution between households²⁴⁸.

Unlike 12:1-14 and 12:21-27, the regulations in 12:43-49 make no distinction between the Passover of Egypt and the Passover of subsequent generations. Indeed, there are several indications that the settlement of Israel in the land is entirely in view. The references to the resident alien and to the native of the land (verse 48) point in this direction, as does the assumption that Israelites are able to purchase and own slaves of their own. Notwithstanding this apparent focus on future celebrations of the Passover, 12:43-49 continues the pattern of centralisation and de-centralisation evident in 12:1-14. It is to be celebrated by all the congregation of Israel²⁴⁹, but the actual consumption of the meal takes place within the household²⁵⁰.

²⁴⁷ Circumcision is described as a sign of the covenant in Genesis 17:11.

²⁴⁸ Various other explanations for the prohibition have been offered including (a) breaking the bones open to eat the marrow would imply a leisurely meal and violate the command of 12:11 to eat the meal in haste (Rashbam, p124). (b) the wholeness of the animal is meant to represent the wholeness of the community and breaking its bones would be tantamount to breaking the unity of the community (Houtman, *Exodus*, p208; Propp, *Exodus 1-18*, p418).

²⁴⁹ It could be that כל קהל עדת ישראל in 12:47 suggests a lesser degree of centralisation than כל קהל עדת ישראל in 12:6. However, this is not clear since 12:43-49 contains no directions for the slaughtering of the Passover animal as found in 12:1-14.

²⁵⁰ Grünwaldt (*Exil und Identität*, p99) discusses whether בית אהרן in 12:46 could refer to the Jerusalem temple. However, this is most unlikely given the household connotations of בית elsewhere in the Passover

Even though the instructions in 12:43-49 appear to presuppose settlement in the land, 12:50 states that they were carried out by the Israelites. The logical difficulties created by this did not escape the attention of medieval commentators²⁵¹. It is best to see this verse as reiterating the point made at 12:28. Israel's deliverance from Egypt incorporates her wholehearted obedience to YHWH's commands regardless of the precise details of that obedience.

3.3.6 13:1-16

With Chapter 13 there is a definite change in emphasis. Moses alone is addressed in 13:1-2 and then addresses the people directly in 13:3-16. However, there is no immediately obvious relationship between the divine address to Moses and what he conveys to the people. While 13:1-2 concerns the consecration of the firstborn Moses' first speech to the people concerns the Festival of Unleavened Bread (verse 3-10) and the treatment of the firstborn is then addressed at 13:11-16.

Rabbinical and medieval commentary on these verses was more concerned with individual items of *halakha* rather than the exploring the rationale for the placement of these sections. Jacob describes these verses as a sermon delivered by Moses at Succoth. He attributes the warm tone of the address to Moses' new role, in which he speaks alone without the assistance of his brother – "Moses wished to begin his new task in a way which would gain acceptance for his words.....Furthermore, he began with a difficult demand, for which there was no equal, upon the people."²⁵² Cassuto describes this section as an appendix, and argues that the first section to the end of verse 10 gives detailed regulations for the future

legislation. Also, it is difficult to envisage the whole of Israel eating the Passover within the confines of the temple.

²⁵¹ Cf Ibn Ezra, *Commentary on the Pentateuch* p256, who discusses whether it refers to the celebration of the Passover in the wilderness a year after the departure from Egypt. He also cites Exodus 16:33, where the Israelites are instructed to place some of the manna before YHWH prior to the construction of the ark, as another example where a command is chronologically out of place.

²⁵² Jacob, *Exodus*, pp359-360.

observance of the Passover, notwithstanding that the Passover as such is not mentioned in this passage²⁵³.

Source-critically, 13:1-2 is almost always assigned to P, and 13:3-16 to the same source as 12:24-27²⁵⁴, whether this is understood as pre-deuteronomistic, deuteronomistic or post-Priestly. However, this means the ordering of material appears somewhat accidental, arising from the juxtaposition of disparate sources.

Writing from a canonical perspective Childs seeks to provide a clearer rationale for the ordering of material. He argues that 13:1-2 is presented as a divine speech which is then interpreted by Moses. “The initial point that God claims the firstborn has been spiritualized. This claim has been extended from the firstborn to all Israel.”²⁵⁵ However, it is difficult to see the relationship between the consecration of the firstborn and the regulations concerning Unleavened Bread in 13:3-10. Nor is it apparent that the principle of consecrating the firstborn has been ‘spiritualised’ and/or extended to all Israel, since 13:11-16 presumes that the firstborn continue to have a special status, and directs that this be reflected in the practice of Israel.

A better explanation for the ordering of the sections is their different subject matter and the way in which each relates to the events of the exodus. It shall be argued below that Exodus 13:1-2 can be understood not as a command to the people to consecrate the firstborn but as a statement of what YHWH has done. In that sense, it is similar to 12:1-2, where an indicative statement precedes and provides the basis for the commands that follow. Now while 13:1-2 make no reference to the exodus as such, their placement immediately after the narrative of the departure in 12:51 provides a sufficient rationale for reading them in light of the events in Egypt.

²⁵³ Cassuto, Exodus, p151.

²⁵⁴ An exception is Noth, who treats all of 13:1-16 as deuteronomistic (Exodus, p101). Propp argues that while 13:1-2 is probably P, it could also be redactional (Exodus 1-18, p378).

²⁵⁵ Childs, Exodus, p204.

The speech of Moses to the people in 13:3-16 is then to be understood not as an interpretation or repetition of 13:1-2. Rather the people are directed how to respond to the new status outlined in these verses through particular practices. In general, 13:3-16 does perform the same function as 12:24-27 in that it gives directions for the observance of certain practices once Israel has entered the land. However, unlike Passover, neither Unleavened Bread nor the setting apart of the firstborn were practised in Egypt. That explains why they are discussed here, after the narration of the exodus and why there is no need to interpret the relationship between how they are to be observed “in Egypt” and “in the generations.” Unleavened Bread is discussed first in 13:3-10 because it re-enacts some of the circumstances of the departure from Egypt and is celebrated at a specific point in time, while the setting apart of the firstborn is an ongoing activity rather than one which takes at a specific point in Israel’s cultic calendar.

The opening two verses of chapter 13 are generally understood as a command from YHWH to Moses to “consecrate to me all the firstborn.” However, this faces the difficulty that nowhere in this chapter is there any indication of how this command is to be obeyed. In verse 12 the people are directed to “set apart” (העברת) their firstborn; verses 13-15 further specify that setting apart may be expressed through sacrifice (in the case of clean animals) or redemption (unclean animals, such as the donkey, and human beings). . However there is no instruction to the people as to how to consecrate the firstborn. Moreover, in Numbers 3:13 and 8:17, two Pentateuchal passages which show some affinities to Exodus 13:1-2²⁵⁶ YHWH declares that it was he who sanctified the Israelite firstborn when he struck down the firstborn of Egypt. For these reasons some commentators suggests the Piel imperative קדש-לי²⁵⁷ in Exodus 13:2 has declarative force²⁵⁸. That is, Moses is instructed to declare the firstborn are consecrated to YHWH whereas it is fact YHWH has does the consecrating.

²⁵⁶ Compare כל-בכור בישׂראל מאדם עד-בהמה לי יהיו in Numbers 3:13 to כל-בכור פטר כל-רחם בבני ישׂראל באדם ובבהמה לי הוא in Exodus 13:2.

²⁵⁷ On the shortening of *sere* to *segol* when a Piel imperative is followed by a *maqep* see GKC 52n.

²⁵⁸ Houtman, *Exodus*, p210; Propp, *Exodus 1-18*, p421.

However, it is doubtful whether the Old Testament perceives any distinction between declaring something to be consecrated and consecrating it²⁵⁹. A more likely alternative is that Exodus 13:2 be emended to read *קֹדֶשׁ לִי* “holy to me,” that is YHWH himself is declaring that the Israelite firstborn are consecrated to him. Certainly, there are a number of instances in the Pentateuch where a consecrated object is designated *קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה*²⁶⁰. One could understand the MT reading 13:2 as an imperative rather than an indicative, given that the following verses contain a series of commands to be obeyed. However, the fact that Numbers 3:13 and 8:17 appear to have interpreted Exodus 13:2 as YHWH’s consecration of the Israelite firstborn provides evidence for an alternative, and perhaps earlier reading.

The special status of male firstborn before YHWH is articulated at many points in the Pentateuch. In Exodus 22:28 (ET 22:29) the people are commanded to give the firstborn of their sons to YHWH. The next verse extends this to include the firstborn of oxen and sheep and specifies that the donation is to take place on the eighth day after birth. Sacrifice appears to have been the normal means of doing this in the case of non-human firstborn.

Interestingly, Genesis 17:12 requires the circumcision of male children on the eighth day after birth, which suggests that circumcision may have been understood as a means of expressing the donation of human firstborn to YHWH when human sacrifice was no longer practised²⁶¹. This transformation of the sacrifice of the human firstborn is expressed in other ways in the Old Testament. In Numbers 3 and 8 the Levites are accepted as substitutes for the Israelite firstborn males. The ritual in Numbers 8:5-13 clearly portrays the Levites in sacrificial terms – the Israelites lay their hands on them and they are then presented as an elevation offering (*תנופה*) before YHWH.

²⁵⁹ Eg the use of the Piel of *קֹדֶשׁ* in Genesis 2:3 for YHWH’s consecrating the seventh day; also in Leviticus 8:10 and 8:12 to describe the consecrating of Aaron, which encompasses a variety of ritual actions and so cannot be reduced to ‘declaring’ him consecrated.

²⁶⁰ Exodus 28:36, 31:15, 39:30.

²⁶¹ See Jon D. Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993) who argues that while child sacrifice was never universally demanded in Israel, there may have been eras when it was regarded as an acceptable, even praiseworthy act of devotion to YHWH.

Hence there is an important witness to Israel's understanding that her firstborn sons only lived through YHWH's provision of a substitute offering. In the exodus narrative this understanding is extended to encompass the people as a whole. So in Exodus 4:21-23 Israel as a whole is described as YHWH's firstborn. It is because Pharaoh refuses to let YHWH's firstborn son go that YHWH will kill Pharaoh's firstborn son. Whether or not Israel's firstborn were redeemed at the cost of the Egyptian firstborn²⁶², or whether the Passover lamb is better understood as a substitute for the Israelite firstborn²⁶³, Israel was to remember that her life had been purchased at a great and terrible cost.

This appears to be the purpose of the regulations concerning Unleavened Bread in 13:3-10 and the setting apart of the firstborn in 13:11-16. The common element in both sections is that a particular practice is grounded in YHWH's bringing his people out from Egypt with a strong hand (בִּיד חֲזָקָה) – see verses 9, 14, 16. This formula is found a number of times, particularly in Deuteronomy²⁶⁴, where it refers to the mighty deeds of YHWH which accompanied and accomplished the deliverance from Egypt. However, whereas the reference in Deuteronomy is quite general²⁶⁵, Exodus 13 links the formula specifically to the death of the Egyptian firstborn²⁶⁶.

The difference between 13:3-10 and 11-16 is that Unleavened Bread involves remembering the day on which YHWH brought his people out from Egypt, whereas setting apart the firstborn expresses the new state of affairs brought about by that action. However, in

²⁶² A possibility discussed by Fretheim, *Exodus*, p149.

²⁶³ Cf the comment of John Calvin on 12:23 "Wherefore, it is again repeated, that they should alone be safe by the blessing of the blood, who should not neglect to sprinkle themselves with it; because faith alone confers upon us the salvation which is obtained by the slaughter of the victim." *Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses*, p222.

²⁶⁴ Deuteronomy 5:15, 6:21, 7:8, 7:19, 9:26, 26:8.

²⁶⁵ On the feature on the exodus formulae in Deuteronomy see B.S.Childs 'Deuteronomistic Formulae of the Exodus Traditions' *VTSup* XVI (1967), pp30-39.

²⁶⁶ Note how the two uses of the formula in verses 14 and 16 enclose a reference to the death of the Egyptian firstborn.

neither case would the link with the deliverance from Egypt and the slaying of the Egyptian firstborn be self evident. Verses 3-10 make no attempt to portray the seven day Festival of Unleavened Bread as a detailed re-enactment of the events of the exodus, and there is reason to believe that special treatment of the firstborn was not unusual in the ancient world, so that the actions described in verses 11-16 would not have necessarily seemed unusual or noteworthy.

For this reason, 13:8-9 and 13:14-16 direct that each practice be accompanied by inter-generational dialogues similar to that found at 12:25-27. As noted earlier, in both cases the parents' reply refers to YHWH's action in slaying the Egyptians and delivering the Israelites. The two responses also describe the particular practice in a particularly concrete manner. In verse 9 the son is told Unleavened Bread will be a sign (אֵימָנָה) on his hand and a memorial (זִכְרוֹן) between his eyes. In verse 16 he is told the setting apart of the firstborn will be a sign on his hand and emblems (טוֹטֵפֹת) between his eyes. There has been a substantial debate in Jewish literature over whether these prescriptions are intended to be obeyed literally – that is whether they provide a basis for the practice of wearing frontlets (*tefillin*) on the forehead²⁶⁷. The combination of a sign on the hand and an emblem on the forehead is also used in Deuteronomy 6:8 and 11:18. In both cases it refers to the words of the Torah – the *Shema* in Deuteronomy 6:8 and the מִצְוָה in Deuteronomy 11:18. However, while it is possible to bind a selection of words on the body it is likely that the author of Exodus 13:9 and 13:16 intends Unleavened Bread and the setting apart of the firstborn as functioning like a visible reminder, in that they too reminded the people of their obligations to observe Torah. Indeed verse 9 explains the purpose of Unleavened Bread along these lines – “so that the teaching of YHWH (תּוֹרַת יְהוָה) may be on your lips”. In Joshua 1:8, as Joshua is commissioned by YHWH to take over leadership from Moses he is commanded not to let the book of Torah depart from his lips; it is only such meditation on and confession of Torah that will sustain the people from one generation to the next. Exodus 13:1-16 provides for two visible reminders intended to bring this about; as the people

²⁶⁷ For an overview of the debate see Jacob, *Exodus*, pp368-9.

celebrate Unleavened Bread and set apart their firstborn they are reminded of the events of the exodus through which YHWH delivered them from Egypt and claimed them as his own. Out of this knowledge flows the obligation and motivation to keep Torah.

3.4 Conclusion

3.4.1 *Law and Narrative In Exodus 12:1-13:16*

The relationship between law and narrative is a key issue in Pentateuchal studies. Watts argues for the existence of a rhetorical pattern in the Pentateuch whereby narrative legitimates the origin and application to Israel of YHWH's laws and the laws are then followed by sanctions for non-observance²⁶⁸. While this pattern is clearly discernible in the major legal collections identified by Watts²⁶⁹ it is not so easily applied to Exodus 12:1-13:16. First, with the exception of 12:15, there are no explicit sanctions in Exodus 12:1-13:16 for the non-observance of the commands, although there are sanctions elsewhere for the non-observance of laws relating to Passover²⁷⁰. This lack of explicit sanction is no doubt because the narrative establishes an implicit sanction – at least in Egypt any Israelite house who did not obey the commands concerning Passover would be struck by YHWH in the firstborn plague.

Second, it is extremely difficult to disentangle law from narrative in Exodus 12:1-13:16. The brief notes in Exodus 12:28 and 12:50 concerning Israel's obedience effectively convert all the preceding legal material in into narrative. And yet, some of those commands could not have been implemented in Egypt and the text clearly envisages that they will only be binding on future generations. Part of the reason for this complexity is, as has been widely recognised, that the nature of future liturgical celebrations has influenced

²⁶⁸ J. W. Watts, *Reading Law: The Rhetorical Shaping of the Pentateuch*. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp49-60.

²⁶⁹ These collections are the Book of the Covenant (Exodus 20:22-23:33); the Priestly legislation in Exodus 25-31, Leviticus and Numbers 1-9; the Deuteronomic legislation in Deuteronomy 12-26.

²⁷⁰ See especially Numbers 9:13.

the way in which the Passover in Egypt has been recounted. However, this liturgical shaping of narrative material has by no means entirely dislocated 12:1-13:16 from its narrative context.

Earlier, the issue of transmitting the knowledge of YHWH's saving acts from one generation to another was identified as a key theme in the broader canonical context. Within this wider context, the key issue in Exodus 1-14 is whether the generation in Egypt will believe the word of deliverance spoken in YHWH's name by Moses and Aaron. The narrative makes it clear that such belief is achieved through sensory perception – it is as the people hear of YHWH's concern (4:31) and see the signs he performs on their behalf (14:31) that they respond in belief.

However, if an appropriate response to YHWH is dependent on sensory perception, subsequent generations, who were not in Egypt, are placed in a dilemma. Exodus 12:1-13:16 is concerned to show how they too may respond appropriately to YHWH. As for the Egyptian generation signs and sensory perception play a key role. But whereas for the generation of Egypt the movement is from signs to belief, for future generations the movement is from signs to remembrance (see 12:13-14; 13:3, 8-10; 13:14-16). Section 4.3 will examine in more detail the nature of remembrance and how it relates subsequent generations to the events of the departure from Egypt. However, even here there is a resonance with the surrounding narrative. Exodus 2:23-25 and Exodus 6:1-8 ground YHWH's deliverance of his people from Egypt in his remembering the covenant he established with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. What is more YHWH's covenant remembrance is linked to sensory perception, both seeing and hearing. When 12:1-13:16 links the remembrance of future generations to sensory perception a parallel is established between their (future) covenant obedience and YHWH's (past) covenant faithfulness. This parallel is made explicit in 12:42 where the same word (שָׁמְרִים), and moreover a word with strong covenantal overtones, is used for YHWH's action in delivering his people from Egypt, and future generations' actions in cultic celebration of that deliverance.

Thus, the interaction between law and narrative has established a complex mimetic relationship between YHWH's action in Egypt, and the actions of Israel in Egypt and in the future.

While Exodus 12:1-13:16 is particularly concerned with future generations, it does also develop themes appropriate to the narrative setting of the generation in Egypt. The brief notes of the Israelites' response to YHWH in 12:28 and 12:50 correspond to the response of Moses and Aaron in 7:6 and 7:20. At 6:9 the people refuse to listen to Moses; in Exodus 12 they do exactly as he commands. Having been largely passive during the execution of the first nine plagues, they now respond to YHWH in such a way that their obedience is incorporated into the execution of the tenth and climactic plague. YHWH's action does not over-ride the response of his people but incorporates it into his wider purposes. Of course, there are various themes from Exodus 1-11, such as belief and knowledge, which are not present in Exodus 12:1-13:16. However, this is not surprising since they are brought to a resolution one chapter later.

3.4.2 *The Passover in Exodus 12:1-13:16*

As noted earlier, various strands of scholarship have adopted different strategies for understanding the complex arrangement of Passover material in these chapters. Rabbinic and medieval Jewish scholarship treated the text as one unified tradition, but accounted for its complexity by developing a distinction between the Passover of Egypt and the Passover of Generations. This hermeneutical tool came to be applied to individual elements of the rite on a case-by-case basis. In more recent times scholars such as Sarna and Cassuto sought to maintain this distinction while applying it to larger blocks of literature.

By contrast, much post-enlightenment critical scholarship understood the complexity of the text as a reflection of the complexity of Israel's religious history. By identifying individual sources and traditions it is possible to reconstruct Israel's religious practices at the time of their composition, and more specifically trace the evolution of the feast. In the classical works of Wellhausen and Noth, and more recent expositions such as Grünwaldt, the Passover is very much a movable feast – a simple domestic rite which is re-located to the temple by Deuteronomy, only to return to the domestic setting in the context of exile and diaspora. The distinction between the Passover of Egypt and the Passover of Generations is replaced with an emphasis on the different, and perhaps mutually exclusive understandings of different times and different traditions.

More recently some scholars, while recognising the multi-layered nature of the text have sought to identify a coherent portrayal of the Passover in its canonical form. This is true of Gertz, who sees himself as operating within the prevailing scholarly paradigm, and Childs, who seeks to provide a modification of, or even an alternative to, that paradigm. According to Gertz, there is a distinction between the Passovers of Egypt and Generations in the text, but it is one introduced by one level of tradition, a post-deuteronomistic and post-priestly redactor, and to some extent works against the intention of earlier traditions. According to Childs, the distinction is best related to wider theological concerns such as the dialectic between redemption as past experience and present hope.

The following table, which draws on the detailed exegesis earlier in the chapter, provides a basis for testing these three approaches. It divides the Passover material in these chapters into its constituent units and examines each unit along two dimensions, temporal and spatial. The temporal dimension distinguishes references to the situation of Israel in Egypt, and references which either refer to or imply the situation of future generations in the land. The spatial dimension distinguishes references which suggest a national or centralised celebration of the Passover from those which suggest a more domestic or family-based celebration.

	Temporal		Spatial	
	Egypt	Future	Domestic	National
12:1-14	Set in context of firstborn plague (v12-13).	Observed in perpetuity (v14).	Household setting in 12:1-13.	Passover slaughtered by קהל עדה (v6); Designated as a חג (v14).
12:21-27	Set in context of firstborn plague (v23).	Observed in perpetuity (v24-25).	Household setting in 12:21-23; intergenerational dialogue (v25-27)	Passover a זבח
12:43-49		References to land in v48, 49.	Passover eaten in one house (v46)	Celebrated by congregation of Israel (v47); Alien draws near (יקרב) to celebrate Passover (v48).

This complexity calls into questions the three ways of understanding the relationship between the Passover of Egypt and the Passover of Generations outlined above. For the rabbinic understanding the most problematic aspect are those references in each block of material which appear to make the observance and its elements binding in perpetuity. For the source-critical approach which seeks to identify individual traditions with distinct understandings of the Passover the most problematic aspects is the similarity in outlook between what is commonly accepted as Priestly (12:1-14, 43-49) and non-Priestly (12:21-27) material. Both describe a Passover celebration which incorporates national and domestic aspects, both recognise that the Passover celebrated in the land will have a different emphasis from that celebrated in Egypt. This also casts doubt on Gertz's

argument that the distinction between the Passover and Egypt and Passover of Generations is a creation of the relatively late tradition represented in 12:24-27. Indeed, if there is a difference between the various traditions found in Exodus 12:1-13:16, it may be less in their understanding of Passover praxis than in their understanding of memory – that is how the authoritative traditions of Israel's past are made manifest in her present.

3.4.3 *Memory in Exodus 12:1-13:16*

The foregoing analysis has demonstrated the importance of memory in these chapters. Linguistically it is present in the term זכרון in 12:14 and 13:9, to describe the celebration of Passover and Unleavened Bread respectively. However, the idea of memory is more pervasive. It can be seen particularly in the inter-generational dialogues in 12:26-27, 13:8-9 and 13:14-16 and the various chronological notes which relate Israel's calendar to the events of the exodus.

When considering the Passover and memory the two significant texts are 12:1-14 and 12:21-27. Both explicate the relationship between the Passover in Egypt and the Passover of Generations whereas 12:43-49 is concerned exclusively with future observance. As noted earlier both passages indicate that the celebration in the land will differ from some ways from the celebration in Egypt. Exodus 12:1-14 portrays the Passover in Egypt as a primarily, but not exclusively, domestic celebration whereas future celebrations are described as a pilgrimage festival (גָּדֹל). Whereas the significance of the Egyptian Passover is related to single element (the blood rite), in future celebrations it is the celebration as a whole which communicates meaning. A similar pattern is found in 12:21-27. The portrayal of the Egyptian Passover focuses on the blood rite, while the description of future celebrations speaks in more general terms of a זֶכֶךְ. Thus, in both cases the Egyptian Passover is described in terms which reflect the particular circumstances of the exodus, while future celebrations are described using terms which have a much more general resonance in Israel's religious life. This, however, raises an obvious issue. If there is a degree of freedom to vary the form of the Passover celebration between Egypt and the land, how can the content, namely, Israel's memory of the exodus, be preserved?

It appears that the traditions represented in 12:1-14 and 12:21-27 have adopted slightly different approaches to this issue. In 12:21-27 the instructions for the Passover in Egypt (21-23) are separated from the instructions for observance in the land (25-27a). Notwithstanding verse 24, which explicitly identifies the Passover in Egypt with the Passover in the land, there is an implicit recognition that future Passovers will differ, at least in emphasis, from the Passover in Egypt. However, in 21-23 and 25-27 it is clear that the content of the Passover - namely the account of YHWH passing over the Israelite houses when he struck the Egyptians – remains constant. This constancy is guaranteed in the case of future generations by a dialogue which explains the significance of a rite which might otherwise remain obscure. A similar strategy is pursued in 13:3-16, except that here there is no Egyptian celebration of the rite or practice in question.

The situation is slightly different in 12:1-14. Here again, there is a clear statement that the Passover will be binding on future generations as well as a recognition that it will differ in some ways from the celebration in Egypt (verse 14). However, there is no attempt to prescribe details of a future celebration apart from instructions given in and for Egypt. Instead, as it has been widely recognised, the Passover in Egypt has been portrayed in such a way that the specific circumstances of Egypt and the details of future celebrations have been merged. The constancy of meaning is achieved through ritual mimesis – future worshippers subjectively enter the exodus experience through ritual actions (eating in haste, clothed ready for a journey) which re-create that experience. Insofar as the Passover is a sign, it communicates its significance immediately without any apparent need for further experience.

One could relate these different presentations to broader canonical features. The understanding that the Passover communicates its significance as it is experienced resonates with a pattern identified in the earlier plague narrative, whereby the meaning of such events, in terms of making YHWH known, is experienced in and through the event itself. It also resonates with the thought of Exodus 29:45-46, whereby knowledge of YHWH is communicated immediately through the cult. On the other hand, the

understanding that the Passover communicates its significance as the event is explained fits in with the discussion of the Egyptian signs in 10:1b-2. There, as in 12:25-27, the knowledge of YHWH is communicated as past events are recounted to future generations.

At first glance, it is tempting to relate the first understanding of the Passover to Assmann's explanation of how memory is shaped by ritual coherence, and the second to textual coherence. However, to the extent this is true it only applies to these units when they are considered apart from their canonical context. When the two units and the understandings they represent are read alongside one another each tends to take on the characteristics of another. Exodus 12:1-14 is placed within a broader narrative context which interprets the significance of the actions prescribed. Exodus 12:21-27 serves to interpret a more detailed rite than is described in these verses alone. As we move into the post-biblical period these two models of communicating memory become more intertwined. So, in the *Mishnah* individual ritual elements in 12:1-14 receive a catechetical explanation along the lines of 12:25-27²⁷¹.

By word and rite a particular view of Israelite identity was shaped and transmitted from one generation to another. It has been shown that in its regulations concerning Passover, Unleavened Bread and the setting apart of the firstborn Exodus 12:1-13:16 contrasted Israel's deliverance with the slaying of the Egyptian firstborn. Through catechesis subsequent generations were to understand that they themselves were caught up in these fundamental events.

²⁷¹ See *M. Pes. X.4*. One can speculate that the reason that some practices, such as the four day delay between selecting and slaughtering the Passover, dropped out of usage was that they could not be explained in terms of the exodus narrative.

CHAPTER FOUR: MEMORY IN DEUTERONOMY

Deuteronomy 16:1-8 represents the most significant Passover legislation in the Pentateuch outside Exodus 12:1-13:16. With its distinctive teaching on the place and method of celebrating the festival the chapter has played a key role in Pentateuchal criticism and reconstructions of the history of Israelite religious practice. While reviewing some of this material, the next two chapters will seek to go beyond these perspectives by examining the role of the passage in its canonical context, noting in particular elements of continuity and discontinuity with other canonical perspectives

4.1 Deuteronomy in Modern Research

Ever since the work of the German scholar De Wette, the book of Deuteronomy has been the Archimedean point of Old Testament criticism²⁷². The narrative in 2 Kings 22-23 records a programme of reform under King Josiah following the discovery of a document described as the “book of the law” (סֵפֶר הַחֹרֶה) or the “book of the covenant” (סֵפֶר בְּרִית). De Wette not only identified Deuteronomy with the book of the law, as had been done by others before him, but placed it within a reconstruction of Israelite faith and worship as it developed over centuries. So Deuteronomy was no longer an exposition by Moses of the law given at Sinai, but a much later composition developed in dependence upon and in distinction from earlier material.

Another major step in research into Deuteronomy came in 1943 with the publication of Martin Noth’s *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*²⁷³. Noth argued that Deuteronomy 1-4:40 and chapters 31-34 were added to the book by an exilic writer or writers who compiled

²⁷² E. Otto ‘Das Deuteronomium als Archimedischer Punkt der Pentateuchkritik auf dem Wege zu einer Neubegründung der De Wette’schen Hypothese’ in M. Vervenne & J. Lust (ed) *Deuteronomy and Deuteronomic Literature: Festschrift C.H.W. Brekelmans* (BETL CXXXIII; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997), pp321-340.

²⁷³ M. Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (JSOTSS 15; Sheffield, 1981). This material was only part of Noth’s original German work; his work on Chronicles is considered in Chapters Six and Seven below.

the so-called Deuteronomistic History stretching from Joshua to 2 Kings. In other words, these chapters were never to be read alongside the rest of Deuteronomy alone but were intended to introduce and interpret the whole of Israel's history up to and including the Babylonian exile.

However, there are least three reasons why the De Wette/Noth reconstruction is now a problematic context for interpreting the meaning and significance of Deuteronomy, either as a whole or in its parts. The first concerns the narrative in 2 Kings 22-23, the second concerns Deuteronomy itself and the third concerns the relationship between Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History.

It is a curious irony of much nineteenth century scholarship that while it was sceptical of the historicity of much of the Old Testament it tended to be extremely positive about using the Former Prophets as a source of information about Israel's pre-exilic religious practice. This is certainly true of the use of 2 Kings 22-23 to discern the circumstances of Deuteronomy's origin, even if the narrative of the re-discovery of an ancient work was re-interpreted as a narrative of the promulgation of a rather more recent production. However, scepticism has its own momentum; and it is no surprise that commentators have found grounds for doubting that 2 Kings 22-23 can be understood as a straightforward narration of historical events. In particular, it has been argued by a number of commentators that at least two sources or redactions have contributed to these chapters. Generally, the chapters are divided into a narrative of the discovery of the book (*Auffindungserzählung*) incorporating 22*-23:1-3, 21-23, an account of Josiah's reform (*Reformerbericht*) incorporating 23:4-20 and an introduction (22:1-2) and summary (23:25-30)²⁷⁴. Significantly, the reform account makes no reference to the book of the law, and this raises the possibility that some or all of

²⁷⁴ The classification comes from E. Eynikel, *The Reform of King Josiah and the Composition of the Deuteronomistic History* (OTS; Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1996), pp341-2. A similar schema is adopted by N. Lohfink 'The Cult Reform of Josiah of Judah: 2 Kings 22-23 as a Source for the History of Israelite Religion' in P.D. Miller, P.D. Hanson & S.D. McBride (eds), *Ancient Israelite Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), pp459-475. W. Dietrich 'Josia und das Gesetzbuch (2 Kön 22)' in *Von David zu den Deuteronomisten: Studien zu den Geschichtsüberlieferungen des Alten Testaments* (BWANT 156; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer), pp199-216 detects several redactional layers in the account, but argues that a reference to the book was present at the earliest stage.

the material in these chapters is relatively late. Now, it should not be assumed that the case against the historicity of 2 Kings 22-23 has been proven. However, the very fact that the question can be posed highlights the inconsistency of using a text as a trustworthy resource for historical reconstruction while exercising considerable reserve about some of its central claims.

More generally, it has been suggested that the portrayal of kingship in Kings differs from that presupposed in Deuteronomy²⁷⁵. Certainly in 2 Kings 23:21 Josiah directs the people to keep the Passover in accordance with the book of covenant, and the subsequent celebration of Passover in Jerusalem is consistent at a broad level with the prescriptions of Deuteronomy 16:1-8. Moreover, 2 Kings 23:25 describes Josiah as one “who turned to YHWH with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might,” reflecting the response demanded of Israel in Deuteronomy 6:5. However, in exercising a variety of cultic prerogatives, including the reading of the law and directing and supervising the reform of worship Josiah appears to go beyond the strictly circumscribed role for the king envisaged in Deuteronomy 17:14-20. Here the only task required of the king is that he should read and observe Torah; the rest of the passage is concerned with placing limitations on the king’s economic and military power. While there are a variety of possible ways of reconciling these different perspectives²⁷⁶, the difference does further highlight the problematic nature of using Kings’ narrative of Josiah’s reform as the primary intertext for interpreting Deuteronomy.

The difficulties inherent in interpreting Deuteronomy primarily against the presumed circumstances of its composition are further highlighted by the lack of consensus

²⁷⁵ See J.G. McConville, ‘King and Messiah in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History’ in J. Day (ed) *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (JSOTSS 270; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), pp271-295; G.N. Knoppers ‘Rethinking the Relationship between Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History: The Case of Kings’ *CBQ* Vol 63/3 (2001), pp393-413.

²⁷⁶ Eg McConville suggests that the Deuteronomistic History may be offering a critique of kingship as it evolved in Israel (although this leaves open the question of whether and how Josiah was able to use Deuteronomy as a basis for his reforms); Knoppers suggests that the Deuteronomist has either subverted the intentions of the law code he has inserted into his history, or had access to an earlier version of Deuteronomy which did not contain the laws on kingship and other civic officials.

concerning the date and extent of the first version of Deuteronomy (the so-called *Urdeuteronomium*). Noth essentially identified the version of Deuteronomy inherited by the Deuteronomic Historian with chapters 4:44-30:20 of the present work²⁷⁷. While he acknowledged that some of the material in these chapters was probably added to Deuteronomy after its incorporation into the Deuteronomistic History he did not examine the composition history of the Deuteronomic law in any depth or consider the provenance of these later additions. There is now a substantial consensus that the first edition of Deuteronomy consisted of some or all of the laws in Chapters 12-26, possibly introduced by a version of the *Shema* (Deuteronomy 6:4-9) and/or the superscription in 4:44-45. Furthermore, where the variation in address between the second person singular and second person plural (the so-called *Numeruswechsel*) is used as a criterion for separating out different layers there is general agreement that some or all of the singular layer represents the earliest material. Even so, the precise extent of the original Deuteronomy remains an open and contested question²⁷⁸. Moreover, commentators have proposed a range of dates for the origin of some or all of Deuteronomy, ranging from the early monarchy²⁷⁹, the reign of Hezekiah²⁸⁰ or Josiah, the period immediately prior to the exile²⁸¹, through to the exilic and post-exilic periods²⁸². While no commentator envisages the composition of Deuteronomy encompassing the whole of this period, individual commentators are willing

²⁷⁷ Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History*, p16.

²⁷⁸ See the survey of various reconstructions in H.D. Preuss *Deuteronomium* (EdF 164; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1982), pp36-42.

²⁷⁹ J.G. McConville, 'Deuteronomy's Unification of Passover and Massot : A Response to Bernard M. Levinson' *JBL* 119/1 (2000), pp47-58.

²⁸⁰ Eg J. Tigay, *Deuteronomy* (Philadelphia : Jewish Publication Society, 1996), ppix-xxiv who dates the bulk of Deuteronomy to the eighth-seventh centuries; M. Weinfeld *Deuteronomy 1-11* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1991), p51 who argues that while the book was discovered during the reign of Josiah its main layout existed during the reign of Hezekiah.

²⁸¹ Eg A.D.H. Mayes, *Deuteronomy* (NCBC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), pp102-3.

²⁸² Eg G. Braulik, 'Weitere Beobachtungen zur Beziehung zwischen dem Heiligkeitgesetz und Deuteronomium 19-25' in T. Veijola (ed) *Das Deuteronomium und seine Querbeziehungen* (Helsinki: Finnische Exegetische Gesellschaft, 1996), pp23-55, who dates most of the laws in Deuteronomy 19-25 to the early post-exilic era.

to suggest a time span of up to 150 years for the growth of the book²⁸³. The question of dating is of more than academic interest, since locating Deuteronomy against different historical backgrounds will affect the way in which it is understood. If Deuteronomy is read primarily against the background of the monarchy it is more likely to be seen as a pragmatic text, intended to provide a basis for a specific program of reform or as the deposit of such a reform. However, if it is regarded as substantially exilic in nature it is more likely to be seen as a somewhat utopian program which may have expressed national aspirations without ever having been put into practice.

The situation is further complicated by the current lack of consensus concerning the compositional history of Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History. Noth concluded that the Deuteronomistic History was the work of a single author who utilised a variety of traditional material and incorporated a pre-existing Deuteronomy into his work. For some years Noth's assumption of a Deuteronomistic History with a single author remained largely unchallenged within Old Testament Scholarship. Subsequently, three alternative models have been proposed²⁸⁴. The first is the multiple edition model associated with Frank Moore Cross and his successors, which posits a first edition of the Deuteronomistic History during the reign of Hezekiah or Josiah which was supplemented to produce a second, exilic, edition²⁸⁵. The second model, originally associated with Rudolf Smend, posits three Deuteronomistic authors – an original deuteronomistic historian (DtrH), an author concerned with the role of prophets (DtrP) and a nomistic author (DtrN) concerned

²⁸³ So E. Nielsen, Deuteronomium (HAT; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1995), p7.

²⁸⁴ The issues are extensively discussed in two recent volumes – T. Römer (ed) The Future of the Deuteronomistic History (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000) and A. de Pury, T. Römer & J.-D. Macchi, Israel Constructs its History: Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research (JSOTSS; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000) and the collection of essays in G.N. Knoppers & J.G. McConville, Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2000).

²⁸⁵ F.M. Cross, 'The Themes of the Book of Kings and the Structure of the Deuteronomistic History' in G.N. Knoppers & J.G. McConville (ed) Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2000), pp79-94 – the essay was first published in 1973; R.D. Nelson The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History (JSOTSS 18; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981).

with the role of the law in Israel's life²⁸⁶. Some commentators working within this paradigm have suggested that the same authors responsible for part of the Deuteronomistic History have also contributed laws and parenetic elements to the book of Deuteronomy²⁸⁷. If this is the case, it becomes a moot point from a purely historical viewpoint whether Deuteronomy should be interpreted in light of the wider narrative or vice versa. Finally, commentators such as Rösel²⁸⁸ and McConville²⁸⁹ have advocated a move away from a focus on the Deuteronomistic History hypothesis to a consideration of the distinctive presentations of individual books.

The various critical uncertainties outlined above provide an incentive, if not a basis, for interpreting Deuteronomy in its own right. That is, in the first instance one should take seriously the canonical presentation of the book, before attempting to locate it within a specific historical context, rather than vice versa. This will necessitate a holistic reading of the book, where any aspect is read in the context of the book, rather than against the context of any smaller legal collection that may have been incorporated in the book's final form. The following section begins this task by looking at the vocabulary and concept of memory in Deuteronomy.

²⁸⁶ R. Smend 'The Law and the Nations: A Contribution to Deuteronomistic Tradition History' in G.N. Knoppers & J.G. McConville (ed) Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2000), pp95-111.

²⁸⁷ of the work of Timo Veijola, who argues that a 'Bundestheologische Redaktion' (DtrB) in Deuteronomy derived from the same school responsible for DtrN in the deuteronomistic history. See 'Das Bekenntnis Israels. Beobachtungen zu Geschichte und Aussage von Dtn 6,4-9' and 'Bundestheologische Redaktion im Deuteronomium' in Moses Erben: Studien zum Dekalog, zum Deuteronomismus und zum Schriftgelehrtum (BWANT 149; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2000), pp76-93 & 153-175. See also Dietrich's list of DtrN passages in Deuteronomy in 'Niedergang und Neuanfang: Die Haltung der Schlussredaktion des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerkes zu den wichtigsten Fragen ihrer Zeit' in Von David zu den Deuteronomisten, pp252-271.

²⁸⁸ H.N. Rösel, Von Josua bis Jojachin: Untersuchungen zu den deuteronomistischen Geschichtsbüchern des Alten Testaments (SVT 75; Leiden: Brill, 1999).

²⁸⁹ '1 Kings 8:46-53 and the Deuteronomic Hope' in G.N. Knoppers & J.G. McConville (ed), Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2000), pp358-369.

4.2 The Vocabulary of Memory

The verb זָכַר occurs fourteen times in the book of Deuteronomy - six times in the parenetic introduction, seven times in the laws and once in the Song of Moses. On twelve occasions the people are commanded to remember. The two exceptions are 9:27, which recalls how after the Golden calf incident Moses appealed to YHWH to remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and 16:3, where the people observe a command in order to remember. The following table lists all the occasions where the people are commanded to remember, together with the content and purpose of memory in each instance.

Verse	Content of Memory	Purpose of Memory
5:15	Slavery and deliverance from Egypt	Observance of Sabbath
7:18	YHWH's action against Egypt	No fear of nations
8:2	YHWH's leading in the wilderness	Keeping YHWH's commandments
8:18	YHWH	Confirmation of covenant
9:7	Provocation of YHWH in wilderness	Not stated, but an implicit call to faithfulness
15:15	Slavery and redemption from Egypt	Generous treatment of redeemed slave
16:12	Slavery in Egypt	Inclusion of marginal groups in festal celebration
24:9	YHWH's action against Miriam	Obedience of commands concerning leprosy
24:18	Slavery and redemption from Egypt	Just treatment of marginal groups
24:22	Slavery in Egypt	Generosity to marginal groups
25:17	Attack by Amalek during journey from Egypt	Destruction of Amalek
32:7	"Days of old"	Not Stated

With two exceptions, the people are commanded to remember one or more of the events surrounding the deliverance from Egypt, whether their circumstances before the deliverance, YHWH's action in freeing them from Egypt or their experiences in the wilderness. The most common purpose of such remembrance is to provide a motivation for obedience to YHWH's commandments, either generally or specifically. On a number of occasions the content of memory is shaped to provide a fitting motivation for a particular course of action – as where Israel's experience of slavery is cited as a basis for generosity towards (potentially) excluded groups.

A slightly different pattern emerges when one considers the language of forgetting (the verb שכח) in Deuteronomy. Once again, with one exception the term is applied to the people rather than YHWH²⁹⁰. It is more common for the people to be commanded not to forget YHWH²⁹¹ or the covenant²⁹² rather than any specific event from their past. Presumably because not forgetting YHWH is seen as important in its own right a number of passages do not provide any specific purpose for so doing. Forgetting YHWH doesn't just lead to disobedience; it can be equated with disobedience²⁹³. Moreover, 26:13 speaks of the people (not) forgetting YHWH's commands; nowhere does Deuteronomy speak of the people remembering his commands.

In summary, Deuteronomy understands memory as central to life of YHWH's people. Through remembering the pivotal events of her history Israel is motivated to observe the commands of YHWH and so choose the way of life in accordance with YHWH's purposes. That is Israel remembers in order to observe, rather than *vice versa*²⁹⁴. The one exception to this pattern is 16:1-3 where Israel is commanded to observe (verse 1) in order that they may remember (verse 3). This passage, of course, concerns the observance of Passover/Unleavened Bread, and it will be examined in more detail in the following chapter.

²⁹⁰ The exception is 4:31 where YHWH promises the people will not forget the covenant he swore to their ancestors.

²⁹¹ 6:12, 8:11, 8:14, 8:19

²⁹² 4:23.

²⁹³ See 8:11. "Take care that you do not forget YHWH your God, by failing to keep (לבלח) his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes..."

²⁹⁴ Contra Childs (Memory and Tradition in Israel, pp53-54) who argues that according to Deuteronomy 5:15 Israel observes the Sabbath in order to remember the events of her redemption, thereby participating again in the Exodus event. Childs argues that the contrary explanation (ie that Israel's memory of her own slavery is a motivation for allowing slaves to share in the Sabbath) fails to explain the 'therefore' (על-כן) of verse 15b. "The 'therefore' clause does not result from a previous indicative statement; rather v. 15 clearly carries an imperative force followed by an object clause." However, the mention in 15a of YHWH's deliverance from slavery does provide an implied indicative, even if its syntactical form is imperative.

4.3 The Concept of Memory

Even where the language of memory is absent, the concept of memory is pervasive in Deuteronomy. Clements relates this emphasis to a sense of crisis at the time at which the law was promulgated - “Deuteronomy’s strong demand that Israel should remember Yahweh was an outcome of this sense of crisis, and an attempt to ensure that through the reading, teaching, and proclamation of the torah Israel should identify itself once again as the people of Yahweh. Through the knowledge of the past Israel would remember its own election, and so would be made continually aware of its privileged status, and its continuing debt of gratitude to God.”²⁹⁵ Von Rad relates this dynamic to the interplay between the narrative setting of Deuteronomy in the Mosaic era and the ‘actual’ context for the book – the late monarchic era – “If Israel is envisaged as addressing through the imaginary audience of his contemporaries the actual Israel of the period of the kings, then this signifies that this recent Israel should understand itself as being still between the promise and the fulfilment, but yet already very near to the fulfilment.”²⁹⁶ Von Rad relates fulfilment to the Deuteronomic promise of rest in the land (eg 12:9, 25:19). However, if Deuteronomy is read within a monarchic context rest would appear to be the precondition for obedience rather a promise which remains to be fulfilled. According to 12:8-12 rest provides the context for worshipping YHWH at the chosen place; 2 Samuel 7:1 speaks of rest being a reality as early as the reign of David and the subsequent establishment of the temple during the reign of Solomon would provide the means for 12:8-12 to be implemented.

A better approach is to consider the role of memory in Deuteronomy in its narrative context. Here, it becomes apparent that the different parts of the work make their own distinct contributions. In 1:6-3:29 the focus is on Israel’s experience in the wilderness after the departure from Horeb. The speech emphasises two themes – the people’s failure,

²⁹⁵ R.E. Clements, God’s Chosen People: A Theological Interpretation of the Book of Deuteronomy (London: SCM Press, 1968), p86.

²⁹⁶ G. von Rad, Deuteronomy (London: SCM Press, 1966), p29.

exemplified by the refusal to enter the land, and YHWH's warfare on behalf of his people, exemplified by the defeats of Kings Og and Sihon²⁹⁷. The continuation of Moses' speech in 4:1-40 is then presented as an application of the preceding history.²⁹⁸ However, the chapter also refers to additional narrative traditions, such as the rebellion at Baal-Peor, the assembly at Horeb²⁹⁹ and the departure from Egypt. Verses 39 and 40 make clear the significance of such memory - it demonstrates the incomparability of YHWH and hence the importance of observing his statutes and commandments.

Moses' second speech begins at 5:1, and until 12:1 further explores the nature of YHWH's claim upon the people. Chapter 5 recounts the ten words spoken at Horeb, and 6:1ff expounds the מצוה, YHWH's basic demand for loyalty from his people³⁰⁰. There is a particular emphasis on those traditions concerning YHWH's election of his people in accordance with the oath sworn to their ancestors³⁰¹. YHWH's past and present fidelity is thus used as a motivation for reciprocal loyalty from his people. These chapters also give instructions for preserving and communicating memory. An inter-generational dialogue in 6:20-25 concerns the meaning of the decrees, statutes and ordinances which YHWH has given to his people. The reply refers to a variety of narrative traditions – the signs and wonders in Egypt, the deliverance from slavery, the gift of the land in accordance with the oath to the ancestors – which are elsewhere used as a motivation for obedience. In other words Deuteronomy seeks to establish a 'virtuous cycle' – memory is the basis for obedience, which is in turn the basis for recounting and nurturing memory.

²⁹⁷ McConville and Millar describe the two themes of this the section as "places of failure" and the "road to success." J.G. McConville and J.G. Millar, *Time and Place in Deuteronomy* (JSOTSS 179; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994, p23.

²⁹⁸ Note the introductory ועתה in 4:1. cf the comment of Brueggemann – "The narrative memory serves as a matrix out of which Moses may address Israel in a compelling and didactic way." *Deuteronomy* (AOTC; Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), p25.

²⁹⁹ There are brief references to Horeb at 1:6 and 1:19, but these are a prelude to what follows.

³⁰⁰ Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1-11*, pp326-7.

³⁰¹ See 6:10, 23, 7:7-8, 8:1, 9:5.

There are relatively fewer references to narrative memory in the legal material in Chapters 12-25, apart from the references to the slavery and exodus traditions outlined in the previous section³⁰². The primary context for understanding and applying the law is the imminent entry into the land. However, the concluding section, 26:1-15, has several references to narrative memory. The forms of words to be spoken by the worshipper at the presentation of the firstfruits and tithes refer to the patriarchal traditions, the oath to the ancestors, the deliverance from Egypt and the entry into the land. The placement of the section here is curious since tithes and firstfruits have already been discussed at 14:22-29; it is best explained on the assumption that it is intended to expound the significance of all the laws which have preceded it³⁰³. That is, all of the laws concern Israel's response to YHWH's redemption from Egypt and gift of the land.

In the remainder of the book there is a particular concern for preserving the memory of Deuteronomy's traditions. Sometimes this involves visible media. At 27:6 the Israelites are directed to write the words of the law on stones on Mount Ebal. There is also a particular emphasis on the written nature of the law, with several references to its preservation in book-form³⁰⁴. This preservation allows the deuteronomic traditions to function as a witness³⁰⁵, that is a permanent record which will vindicate the future actions of YHWH when he sends judgements on his people in response to their rebellion. These chapters also give directions for the septennial reading of the law during the festival of

³⁰² The exceptions are 17:16, where the king is directed not to return the people to Egypt, 18:16, which recalls the assembly at Horeb in the context of expounding Moses' prophetic role, the brief reference to the oath to the ancestors at 19:8, and the references to the wilderness and exodus experiences in 23:3-7 as a justification for the treatment of Ammonites, Moabites and Egyptians.

³⁰³ Neither of the alternative explanations offered by Tigay (the ceremonies are to be performed after settlement, like the preceding law in 25:17-19; it exhibits a structural similarity between Deuteronomy and the Book of the Covenant, which also concludes with instructions concerning firstfruits) is convincing. *Deuteronomy*, p459. In Braulik's study of the influence of the Decalogue on the order of the laws in Deuteronomy, Chapter 26 is excluded from the analysis and described as a conclusion to the legal corpus. 'Die Abfolge der Gesetze in Deuteronomium 12-26 und der Dekalog' in *Studien zur Theologie des Deuteronomiums* (SBAB 2; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1988), pp231-256.

³⁰⁴ The book (ספר) of the law is referred to at 28:51, 61, 29:20, 21, 27, 30:10, 31:24, 26. There is only a single reference (17:18) to a book in the body of the laws themselves.

³⁰⁵ 31:26 and 32:46.

booths (31:10-13). The reading of law was to be synchronised with the year of remission of debts; just as she had done at Horeb the whole of Israel, newly redeemed, would assemble to hear YHWH's declaration of his will³⁰⁶. The final verses of Deuteronomy, 34:10-12, are also concerned with the preservation of memory in that they establish the unique authority of the Mosaic voice contained in the book and bring it into dialogue with other authoritative traditions.

This material is synthesised by Assmann, who describes Deuteronomy as a '*Paradigma kultureller Mnemotechnik*' and reads it against the context of the loss of king, temple and land in the Babylonian exile³⁰⁷. These three instruments of memory are now transformed to produce a 'spiritual' Israel grouped around the study of a holy text. This ensures the survival of cultural memory outside the land – Deuteronomy in effect becomes a portable fatherland. Leaving aside the issue of historicity, Assmann argues that the narrative of Josiah's reform establishes the authority of Deuteronomy and presents its revolutionary ideas as a return to forgotten origins.

The previous section has discussed the difficulties in determining a precise historical context for understanding Deuteronomy once its own self-presentation is set aside. In particular, Assmann's contention that Deuteronomy was intended to serve as a mnemonic device for a community absent from the land faces the difficulty that some of its methods for preserving and communicating memory (celebration of a centralised Passover, inscriptions on stones) actually pre-suppose possession of that land. Assmann's model best suits chapters 29-34, where as noted above there is a particular emphasis on Deuteronomy as a written deposit of tradition. However, even here, 31:10-13 dictates that the regular reading of the law should take place at a national celebration which according to Deuteronomic law must be held at YHWH's chosen place in the promised land. If

³⁰⁶ Lohfink, 'Der Glaube und die nächste Generation', pp158-9.

³⁰⁷ Das kulturelle Gedächtnis, pp212-228.

subsequent generations have read Deuteronomy as a ‘portable fatherland’ that only testifies to the extent to which their experience falls short of the ideal set out within its pages³⁰⁸.

4.4 The Laws of Deuteronomy in Canonical Perspective

The opening verses of Deuteronomy are particularly concerned to explain the significance of the laws which follow and their relationship to other legal traditions. Verse 3 – “Moses spoke to the Israelites just as YHWH had commanded him to speak to them” indicates that while the book is presented as the speech of Moses a prior revelation by YHWH to Moses stands behind the material. Verse 5 describes Moses’ activity in terms of “expounding (בִּאֵר) this law.” While this verb originally meant “to write down” or “inscribe” in later Hebrew it developed the meaning of explaining or expounding a discourse³⁰⁹. That is, Deuteronomy is presented as commentary as much as text³¹⁰. Finally, at 1:18 Moses recalls how in the context of Horeb he commanded the people “everything which you are to do” (כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשׂוּן). While the immediate context of 1:18 is the appointment of judicial officers, the mention of דְּבָרִים echoes the opening words of the book (אֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר מֹשֶׁה). This suggests a more extensive Horeb tradition is in view, and that Deuteronomy understands itself as being in continuity with this material, expounding its significance for the generation about enter the land. .

However, Deuteronomy 1 is generally held to be one of the later additions to the book, dating from the period time when the laws of Deuteronomy were being incorporated into a broader narrative and canonical context³¹¹. It remains to be seen whether its picture of continuity with other legal traditions is found elsewhere in the book.

³⁰⁸ Assmann in fact moves in this direction when he describes Deuteronomy as ‘kontrapräsentisch’ ie a presentation of an ideal distinct from present reality which maintains a living hope for the reader. *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, p227.

³⁰⁹ Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1-11*, pp128-9.

³¹⁰ Ska, ‘La structure du Pentateuque’, p351.

³¹¹ Preuss, *Deuteronomium*, pp75-84 ; Nielsen, *Deuteronomium*, pp25-26.

The natural starting point for examining this question is the relationship between Deuteronomy and the so-called Covenant Code of Exodus (20:22-23:33). The Covenant Code is widely held to contain some of the earliest Israelite legal traditions in written form. There is still a widespread consensus that the bulk of the legal material predates Deuteronomy, even if the framework of the Code shows sign of deuteronomistic influence³¹². Moreover, if one leaves questions of relative dating aside the canonical placement of the two legal collections requires that one be interpreted in relation to the other. Moreover, the shaping and contents of the Deuteronomistic legal material suggest some relationship with the Covenant Code, either in terms of direct dependence or mutual dependence on a common tradition. The structural parallels with the Covenant Code are most evident in that section of the Deuteronomistic laws known as the *Privilegrecht*, or law of YHWH's privileges (Deuteronomy 12:1-16:17). Both legal collections begin with regulations concerning the place of cultic worship, and regulations concerning the annual festivals are placed at or near the end of both collections³¹³. Most of the subjects discussed in the Covenant Code are also covered in Deuteronomy³¹⁴. In some cases the wording of laws is identical, while in other cases there are considerable differences between the two codes both in wording and substance.

The question then arises as to how the author(s) of Deuteronomy, both in its original and canonical forms, understood its relation to earlier legal collections. Several possibilities suggest themselves. Deuteronomy may have intended to replace those other collections, to

³¹² For example, Schwienhorst-Schönberger acknowledges the difficulty in providing an exact date for the Covenant Code material. He suggests the earliest layer, which he identifies substantially with the casuistic laws in 21:18-22:26, was written down in the 8th or 9th century BCE. Das Bundesbuch: Studien zu seiner Entstehung und Theologie (BZAW 188; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990), pp415-417. E. Otto identifies the pre-deuteronomistic Covenant Code with 20:24-26, 21:2-22:29, 23:1-8, 10-12. 'Vom Bundesbuch zum Deuteronomium: Die deuteronomische Redaktion in Dtn 12-26' in G. Braulik, W. Gross & S. McEvenue Biblische Theologie und gesellschaftlicher Wandel (Freiburg: Herder, 1993), pp260-278.

³¹³ The covenant code concludes with a parenthetic section (23:20-33). This is widely regarded as a secondary addition to the original code (eg Childs, Exodus, p454).

³¹⁴ The main exceptions are those elements of Exodus 22:1 ff which set out amounts for restitution for various offences. The relationship between Deuteronomy and other legal codes is set out in tabular form in S.R. Driver, Deuteronomy (3rd edn.; ICC; Edinburgh : 1902), pp iv – vii.

supplement and interpret them, or the different legal collections may have developed independently amongst different groups of scribes or scholars³¹⁵.

There are two ways of addressing this question. It can be answered deductively, by examining the statements made in the parenetic material in Deuteronomy concerning the relationship between laws delivered by Moses at Moab and other laws delivered at Sinai/Horeb. It can also be answered inductively by examining the legal sections in Deuteronomy and the way in which they make use of and modify other legal collections.

Deductively, the key Deuteronomic statement concerning the relationship between the Sinai and Moab laws is 4:44-6:3. In the final form of Deuteronomy, 4:44-5:1a is the third person introduction to the second speech of Moses. The content of the speech is described as *תורה* (verse 44), *עדות*, *חקים* and *משפטים* (verse 45). That is, the subsequent material can be conceived both as a unity, and as a plurality of individual laws and regulations. The place of the address is identified, both in reference to the departure from Egypt and the subsequent events during the wilderness wanderings. In 5:1a the addressees are identified as all Israel (*כל-ישראל*), the same term used at the beginning of the book (1:1).

Moses' address begins with a summons to the people to listen, learn and keep the statutes and ordinances he is addressing to them. There follows in verse 2 and 3 a first person section which Moses refers to a covenant made at Horeb, "not with our ancestors (*אבותינו*)" but "with us, who are all of us here alive today." Weinfeld describes these verses as an explanatory gloss, designed to explain why the generation at Moab are obliged to keep the Sinai covenant, in spite of the fact that they were not present at Horeb and the Exodus generation had died out during the forty years of wandering in the desert. More broadly, this emphasis on the timeless nature of the Sinai covenant is a literary fiction whereby the real audience of the book (the Israel of Josiah's day) can be addressed as the Israelites of

³¹⁵ These possibilities are discussed in more detail in N. Lohfink, 'Fortschreibung? Zur Technik von Rechtsrevisionen in deuteronomischen Bereich, erörtert an Deuteronomium 12, Ex 21,2-11 und Dtn 15,12-18' in T. Veijola (ed) *Das Deuteronomium und seine Querbeziehungen*. (Schriften der Finnischen Exegetischen Gesellschaft 62; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), pp127-171.

the Mosaic period³¹⁶. Von Rad sees here a sign of Deuteronomy's cultic origins – “Here the immediacy of the event is still more evident. The divine revelation on Sinai is not something in the past, a matter of history so far as the present generation to whom it is addressed is concerned.....In a literary presentation of the matter it would be meaningless so to discount the passage of time; such a procedure would carry no conviction with a post-Mosaic generation. But within the framework of the cultus, where past, present, and future acts of God coalesce in the one tremendous actuality of the faith, such a treatment is altogether possible and indeed essential.”³¹⁷ Otto sees here a reflection of the exilic origins of some of the material in Deuteronomy – “Die promulgation wird am Gottesberg Horeb verortet, und jede Generation, die Adressat des dtr Deuteronomium ist, wird nach der Fabel des Deuteronomiums mit der Horebgeneration nach dem Abfall von Gott and vor dem Einzug in das zugesagte Land identifiziert.”³¹⁸

The problem with these explanations is twofold. First, they assume, either explicitly or implicitly, that אֲבוֹתֵינוּ refers to the generation that came out of Egypt. However, there is no other instance in Deuteronomy where it is used this way. It either refers to the ancestors of the Israelites in a general sense, or more specifically to the patriarchs to whom YHWH made the promise of the land³¹⁹. Thus the contrast in Deuteronomy 5:2-3 is not between the Sinai and Moab generations, but between the generations of the exodus (ie the Sinai and

³¹⁶ M. Weinfeld, Deuteronomy 1-11 (AB 5; New York: Doubleday, 1991), pp237-9. Brueggemann similarly sees an allusion to the seventh century addressees of Deuteronomy – “the covenant is *here and now*, not *there and then*.” Deuteronomy, p65.

³¹⁷ G. Von Rad, The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1966), p29.

³¹⁸ E. Otto, Das Deuteronomium im Pentateuch und Hexateuch. (FAT 30; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), p122.

³¹⁹ Eg Deuteronomy 1:8, 6:10, 8:18, 9:5. T. Römer has argued that in the earlier versions of Deuteronomy (of which 5:3 was a part) ‘the fathers’ are not the patriarchs but the ancestors of Israel in Egypt or at the exodus. He acknowledges that 1:8 leads the reader to identify the fathers with the patriarchs, but minimises its significance on the ground that it is post-deuteronomistic. (‘The Book of Deuteronomy’ in S.L.McKenzie & M.P. Graham (ed) The History of Israel's Traditions: The Heritage of Martin Noth (JSOTSS 182; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), pp178-212. However, if one is take the current shape of Deuteronomy seriously such a key verse cannot be dismissed so easily.

Moab generations together) and the patriarchal generations³²⁰. The most likely reason for the contrast drawn between the exodus and patriarchal generations is the understanding that the commandments and statutes in the Sinai covenant can only be fulfilled by a people in possession of the land, and not by the patriarchs who only experienced the land in the form of promise. Also, the ten words presuppose a community in a way that the patriarchs were not.

Second, notwithstanding frequent statements to the contrary, it is not true that Deuteronomy understands that all those present at Sinai actually died out in the wilderness. According to 2:14-16 it was “the entire generation of warriors (כל־הדור אנשי המלחמה)” who perished during the wanderings. These were those adults of military age who failed to take the land in accordance with YHWH’s promise. There is no suggestion that their children, who were alive during the departure from Egypt, also died. Indeed, 11:1-7 states that those present at Moab had seen the works and signs performed by YHWH in Egypt. Hence, 5:2-3 can be read as a straightforward statement of historical reality without any need to appeal to a timeless cultic experience.

Nevertheless, those who were alive at Moab were children when they saw YHWH’s great acts of deliverance and, according to the thought-world of Deuteronomy, they needed to have the meaning of these events explained to them along the lines of 6:20-25. Since however, the preceding generation has died out Moses must perform the task for the entire community. In that sense, Moses’ hearers will perform for the next generation the function that he performs for them – just as Moses undertakes to teach (למד) the law to the Moab generation (4:1, 5, 14, 5:31, 6:1) they are to teach the law to their children (4:10, 11:19) who will in turn do so for the next generation. Hence, in Deuteronomy 5:2-3 and elsewhere in the book we are dealing not with a ‘literary fiction’ but a fundamental expression of Deuteronomy’s worldview which is comprehensible within its narrative setting.

³²⁰ Weinfeld refers to this interpretation as a possibility, but does not discuss why he rejects it. Deuteronomy 1-11, p239.

Deuteronomy 5:6-21 then recounts the ten words which YHWH spoke at Horeb. Although there are differences between this Decalogue and the Decalogue as recorded in the Book of Exodus 20:1-17 both passages agree that the words were spoken directly by YHWH, although neither denies some kind of mediatory role to Moses³²¹.

Verse 22 concludes the Decalogue by stating that after he spoke the words YHWH “added no more” (ולא יסף). Levinson cites this verse as a polemic against the Covenant Code which is designed to refute its claim to its Sinaitic pedigree³²². In a similar vein Weinfeld argues that it “appears to exclude the possibility of other laws revealed to Israel at Sinai besides the Decalogue.”³²³

However, subsequent verses make it clear that the real significance of 5:22 is to establish a distinction between the Decalogue, which was spoken directly by YHWH, and subsequent ordinances which were mediated through Moses. This picture is not dissimilar from that in Exodus 20:18-21, which also describes a transition from direct divine speech to revelation mediated through Moses after the delivery of the Decalogue. The subsequent Covenant Code is then given as direct divine speech, but addressed to Moses alone.

Once again, this is not inconsistent with Deuteronomy 5:27-28, where the people are directed to return to their tents while Moses draws near to receive divine instruction in the form of commandment, statutes and ordinances (כל-המצוה והחקים והמשפטים) which he is to subsequently teach the people. The logic of the narrative demands that these further instructions were received by Moses at Horeb. However, Exodus and Deuteronomy appear

³²¹ In Exodus 20:1 YHWH speaks the words. In 20:18-21 the people are aware of the phenomena surrounding the divine speech, but there is no indication that they heard and understood the words. Indeed, they ask that all subsequent divine speech be mediated through Moses. A similar pattern is found in Deuteronomy 5:4-5. YHWH speaks the words face to face with the people, but Mosaic mediation is both required for the transmission of the Decalogue (verse 5) and requested by the people (verse 27).

³²² B.M. Levinson, Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p152.

³²³ Deuteronomy 1-11, p323.

to differ on the question of when the legal material conveyed to Moses at Sinai/Horeb was transmitted to the people. Exodus 24:3-8 indicates that all the material revealed to Moses was spoken by him to the people during the covenant ceremony at Sinai³²⁴, whereas Deuteronomy places the transmission of material received by Moses at Sinai in the plains of Moab. This is clear from 6:1, which picks up the language of 5:29 and thereby identifies the subsequent material in Deuteronomy with the revelation delivered to Moses at Horeb.

This does not necessarily mean that Deuteronomy intends to suppress or deny the legitimacy of other accounts of law revealed to Moses at Sinai, such as the Covenant Code. Indeed, there are elements of Deuteronomy which point in the other direction.

Significantly, both the commands concerning parents and Sabbath in Deuteronomy are supplemented by the third person addition *כִּי־כַאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ* “just as the Lord your God commanded you”. The importance of this formula, regardless of its exact referent³²⁵, is that it recognises the existence of prior commandments given to the people, which while containing material similar to the Decalogue were not identical with it. Neither does the rest of Deuteronomy indicate that this prior revelation is now contained exclusively within the Deuteronomic legal corpus. Specifically, Deuteronomy 12-26 contains no command concerning Sabbath observance. Hence, the citation must refer to some other prior divine command outside Deuteronomy, with Horeb being the most likely locale at which such

³²⁴ This is especially clear from Exodus 24:3 where Moses tells the people *כָּל־דְּבָרֵי יְהוָה וְאֵת כָּל־מִשְׁפָּטֵים*, where the first noun refers to the Decalogue, the second to the Covenant Code (see 21:1) and the two-fold use of ‘all’ emphasizes the faithfulness of Moses in transmitting the material.

³²⁵ Weinfeld argues that the citation formula in the Sabbath command refers to Exodus 31:14, 35:2, Leviticus 19:3, 19:30 and 26:2 and the citation in the command concerning parents refers to Leviticus 19:3 (*Deuteronomy 1-11*, pp304, 311). Eckart Otto argues that the command concerning parents reformulates the apodictic regulations in Exodus 21:15, 17 while the Sabbath command reflects material found in Exodus 34:12-26 and 23:12. Eckart Otto, ‘Der Dekalog als Brennspeigel israelitischer Rechtsgeschichte’ in J. Hausmann & H-J Zobel (eds) *Alttestamentlicher Glaube und Biblische Theologie* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1992), pp59-68. Neither position is without its difficulties. Weinfeld assumes the priority of P over D, which while not impossible, is very much a minority position in Old Testament scholarship. If Deuteronomy 5:16 is citing Exodus 21:15,17 it has exhibited considerable freedom in using earlier material. Moreover, Otto’s contention that the connection between Deuteronomy 5 and earlier material is tradition-historical rather than literary is questionable given that citation formulas in the Old Testament generally refer from one text to another.

revelation would be understood to have taken place. Thus, at least at this point Deuteronomy recognises the legitimacy of other divine revelation given at Horeb alongside the Decalogue and most probably affirms its continued existence in a publicly accessible form.

It is not immediately apparent whether the legal material in Deuteronomy is compatible with such an understanding, since the same phenomena are capable of being read in more than one way. Most commentators accept that the legal material in Deuteronomy is related in some way to the Covenant Code. However, while there are links in terms of vocabulary and subject matter, the substantive provisions in the two legal codes are sometimes quite different. Morrow argues that the large numbers of citations show that the writer of Deuteronomy wanted his readers to identify his work as one in continuity with previous venerable institutions³²⁶. In contrast, Levinson describes Deuteronomy's use of the Covenant Code as dialectic. The authors of Deuteronomy used the Covenant Code as a textual resource for their own, quite different priorities. Even while drawing on earlier material they subverted it by subjecting it to the exigencies of a thorough-going cultic centralisation. Deuteronomy intended to abrogate the Covenant Code, and the eventual inclusion of both legal collections in the Old Testament canon is a major irony of literary history³²⁷.

The question of the relationship between the Passover legislation in Deuteronomy and the Covenant Code will be considered in more detail below. However, it may be that modern scholarship has exaggerated the differences between the two legal collections because they have been treated as windows into the history of Israelite religion. This has led to a tendency to concentrate on issues which may have been of secondary importance to the compilers of the documents themselves, notwithstanding their potential value for historical reconstructions.

³²⁶ William S. Morrow, Scribing the Center: Organization and Redaction in Deuteronomy 14:1-17:13 (Atlanta Press: Scholar's Press, 1995), pp17-18.

³²⁷ Levinson, Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation, pp144-153.

A case in point is the legislation concerning cultic worship in Deuteronomy and the Covenant Code and in particular the question of the number of sites at which sacrifice can be offered to YHWH. This is usually characterised as a contrast between the Covenant Code's provision for a multiplicity of altars and Deuteronomy's insistence that all sacrifice be offered at one central sanctuary.

Certainly, Exodus 20:24, which gives instructions for the construction of an earthen altar is compatible with the existence of more than one such altar³²⁸. However, it is misleading to describe Exodus 20:24 as providing for a plurality of altars if this is taken to mean that an unlimited number of altars could be built in any place at the initiative of the worshipper. Rather, YHWH specifies that altars shall be built "in every place where I cause my name to be remembered" (בכל-המקום אשר אזכיר את-שמי). Elsewhere in the Old Testament the Hiphil of זכר is used for the invocation or proclamation of the name of a deity, often in a cultic context³²⁹. However, this is the only instance where an agent causes his name to be remembered. That is, by applying to himself a verb which usually refers to the activities of the worshippers, YHWH is emphatically claiming the right to determine the place at which such worship shall be offered. The passage does not make it clear how YHWH will cause his name to be remembered. On the analogy of Genesis 12:7-8, theophany may be the means by which he legitimises the construction of an altar at a particular site³³⁰.

The link between the place and mode of worship and the sovereignty of YHWH is strengthened by the context of the Exodus altar law. It is placed immediately after an exposition of the second commandment, which is cast in such a way as to emphasise the

³²⁸ The fact that 20:24 refers to an altar בכל-המקום does not mean that only one altar is in view, since the definite article can be used in a distributive sense as at Genesis 20:13. See also Childs, *Exodus*, p447.

³²⁹ Eg Exodus 23:13, Joshua 23:7, Isaiah 26:13. The verb can also be used to refer to extolling the name or reputation of a human figure, as at Psalm 45:18.

³³⁰ In the context of his discussion of Exodus 20:24 Mettinger draws attention to the theophany in Exodus 33:18-23, in the context of which YHWH proclaims his name (ויקרא בשם יהוה – 34:5), a formula which elsewhere is used with reference to a human subject. T.N.D. Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1982), pp125-126.

contrast between the behaviour prohibited and that which is prescribed. Thus, in 20:23 the twofold prohibition of the making of idols – “you shall not make (לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה) gods of silver....you shall not make (לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה) gods of gold” contrasts with the command in 20:24 to make an earthen altar (מִזְבֵּחַ אֲדָמָה תַעֲשֶׂה)³³¹. There is also a contrast between the gods which are made for yourselves (לָכֶם) and the altar which is made “for me” (לִי) ie YHWH.

Thus, while 20:22 grounds the prohibition of images in the speech from heaven, 20:24 suggests a further reason for their avoidance – their use is incompatible with an appropriate regard for the sovereignty of YHWH in the establishment and conduct of worship. The issue which is emphasised in Exodus 20:22-26 is not the number of legitimate altars, but the reflection of YHWH’s holiness and sovereignty in the conduct of cultic worship³³².

Within Deuteronomy the altar regulations are found in 12:1-31. This chapter contains a degree of repetition and there is also variation in the number of address - 12:1 are a mixture of singular and plural, 12:2-12 are plural, 12:13-31 is singular. This may indicate composite authorship although the precise relationship between the *Numeruswechsel* in Deuteronomy and any redactional layers remains an open question in scholarship.

At several points in this chapter there is reference to the place which YHWH will choose. The shortest of the so-called centralisation formulas (הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר יְהוָה) is found at 12:14, 18 and 26, while the two longer formulas with either לְשֹׁם שְׁמוֹ or לְשֹׁכֵן שְׁמוֹ are found at 12:5, 12:11 and 12:21. An examination of the distribution of the three formulas in Deuteronomy 12 and the rest of the book indicates no clear relationship between the use of

³³¹ “The redactor of this pericope has deliberately contrasted the gold and silver idols in 20:23 with the simplicity of the earthen altar which could be built everywhere....the simple call to God is the only requisite for His response and blessing.” P. Heger, *The Three Biblical Altar Laws: Developments in the Sacrificial Cult in Practice and Theology* (BZAW 279; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999), pp28-29.

³³² This conclusion holds true even if, as many commentators argue, Exodus 20:22-26 is a composite text. For example, Ludger Schwienhorst posits at least three layers in the text. The earliest layer, verses 24-26, is part of a proto-deuteronomic redaction of the Covenant Code. This in turn was supplemented by deuteronomic (verse 23) and priestly (the reference to the Decalogue in 22aβb) redactions. *Das Bundesbuch: Studien zu seiner Entstehung und Theologie*, pp287-298. In this case, the later redactions have developed a theme which was already present in the earlier material.

a particular formula and subject matter or redactional layers³³³. Deuteronomy makes it clear that all sacrifices are to be brought and offered at this location, although provision is made for the non-sacrificial slaughter and consumption of meat away from the chosen place.

Ever since the work of de Wette Deuteronomy's emphasis on the single legitimate place of sacrifice has been contrasted with the toleration of multiple altars evident at earlier stages in Israelite history. Deuteronomy is thus a work of cult centralisation, intended to bring about a revolution in Israelite practice under the aegis of Mosaic authority.

However, Deuteronomy does not present itself as bringing about a centralisation of a dispersed cult. Throughout chapter 12 the alternative to worship at the chosen place is portrayed in a number of ways. In 12:2-4 the contrast is with the worship of the original inhabitants, which is objectionable not primarily because of its dispersed nature but because it involves the service of other deities. Thus, the command to go the place where YHWH will put his name (verse 5) is the counterpart of the command to blot out the name of other gods from the place where they are worshipped (verse 3).

In verse 8 the contrast is with the practice of the Israelites on the plains of Moab prior to their entry into the Promised Land in that each person was doing what was right in their eyes (אִישׁ כִּלְ-הָיֹשֶׁר בְּעֵינָיו). Elsewhere in Deuteronomy doing what is right in YHWH's eyes means obeying his commands and statutes³³⁴. Hence, worship at the chosen place is simply grounded in YHWH's will and nothing else.

³³³ Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth*, pp53-56 argues that the short form alone seems to have been used in the original law code. However, the fact that both short and long formulas are found in the festival material 16:1-17, where it is extremely difficult to identify different redactional layers, tells against this thesis.

³³⁴ See Deuteronomy 6:18, 12:25, 12:28, 13:18 and 21:9. Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, p122 argues that verse 8 refers more specifically to sacrificial practice, implying that at the time of Moses' address individual Israelites could sacrifice where they wished. However there is no indication elsewhere that Deuteronomy believed any kind of sacrifice took place in the wilderness period, and it seems best to retain a more general reference.

In verse 13 the alternative to sacrifice at the chosen place is offering sacrifice “at any place which you will see (בכל-מקום אשר חראה)”. Here, once again the contrast is between a mode of worship in which human initiative is the determining factor and one in which the worshippers are committed to doing כל אשר אנכי מצוך (verse 14).

The link between the chosen place and the divine initiative in worship is expressed elsewhere in Chapter 12. In 12:5 the people are required to seek (תדרשו) the chosen place and go there. Elsewhere in Deuteronomy the verb דרש is used for the quest for information, either in a religious³³⁵ or judicial³³⁶ context. Its use here suggests that the location of the chosen place will not be immediately self-evident. Its identity will require commitment and involvement on the part of the people and, most likely, some type of disclosure by YHWH³³⁷.

At 12:10 worship at the chosen place is located temporally – it will occur when they live in the land and when YHWH gives them rest from their enemies (והניח לכם מכל-איביכם). While the Deuteronomic ideal would be that residence in the land and rest from enemies

³³⁵ At 12:30 the people are warned against seeking other gods. In context, this involves enquiring after the manner in which those gods are worshipped. At 18:11 the verb is used of those who seek oracles from the dead. Elsewhere in the OT the verb can be used for those inquiring of YHWH (eg Genesis 25:22, Exodus 18:22).

³³⁶ See 13:4, 17:4, 17:9, 19:18.

³³⁷ Both Tigay (*Deuteronomy*, p120) and Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, p223 argue that דרש is a general term for visiting a sanctuary or making a pilgrimage for a religious purpose. However none of the Old Testament passages they cite (Genesis 25:22, Deuteronomy 18:11, 1 Samuel 9:9, Amos 5:5, 2 Chronicles 1:5) support this view. Genesis 25:22 and 1 Samuel 9:9 both refer to enquiries directed to YHWH, probably by oracular means or the casting of lots, and make no mention of a pilgrimage or sanctuary. The context of Deuteronomy 18:11 is the prohibition of Canaanite religious practices but makes no specific mention of pilgrimages or sanctuaries. 2 Chronicles 1:5 does use דרש for the gathering of Solomon and the people before the tabernacle. However, there is good reason to believe that the verb refers to a process of discerning YHWH's will rather than gathering as such. At 1 Chronicles 28:8-9 David charges Solomon to seek (דרש) YHWH and his commandments. 2 Chronicles 1:5 narrates Solomon's obedience to the charge and is followed immediately by YHWH's appearance to Solomon. Tigay and Mayes' case is strongest with reference to Amos 5:5, where “do not seek (דרש) Bethel” is parallel to “do not enter (בוא) Gilgal” and “do not cross over (עבר) to Beer-sheba”. However, it is likely that דרש is used here to draw a contrast with the commands in 5:4 and 5:6 to “seek (דרש) YHWH.” That is, even in these instances דרש refers to a process of seeking and discerning YHWH's will, and when it is used for gathering at a sanctuary that is because the gathering had this particular purpose in mind.

should be coterminous, there are indications within Israel's broader canonical history³³⁸ and the book of Deuteronomy itself³³⁹ that this would not always be the case.

Thus, within the narrative horizon of Deuteronomy the identity of the chosen place is tied both spatially and temporally to the will of YHWH. From the people's side, worship at the chosen place is an expression of their willingness to engage with and submit to this will, and not be led astray to the worship of other gods. In that sense, the same theological dynamic is at work in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 12, notwithstanding their slightly different emphases on the number of locations at which cultic worship can be offered. This suggests a canonical dynamic whereby both traditions have been shaped so that they do not simply side by side in awkward contradiction, but rather the one can be seen as a further application and outworking of the former. Seen in this light Deuteronomy's use of material from earlier legal collections can be seen as reflecting both continuity and discontinuity – continuity at the level of the fundamental relationship between YHWH and his people, but some degree of discontinuity in the way in which that relationship is to be expressed. This is not inconsistent with the exposition of Deuteronomy's nature and purpose outlined in the first chapter of the book.

4.5 Conclusion

The material surveyed above has shown the importance of memory in Deuteronomy. Recalling the actions of YHWH in Israel's past was vitally important for her ongoing life as YHWH's people. As one generation narrated the deeds of YHWH next this provided the motivation for observing YHWH's commands. As these commands were observed further opportunities arose for recalling the deeds of YHWH. The final section argued that this

³³⁸ Joshua 21:44 and 23:1 note that Israel experienced rest from its enemies at the end of the Conquest under Joshua. 2 Samuel 7:10-11 indicates that the state of rest was lost from the time of the judges until the Davidic-Solomonic era. The speech of Solomon at 1 Kings 8:56 echoes the assessment of Joshua 21 and 23 and bases the dedication of the temple in the renewed state of rest.

³³⁹ At Deuteronomy 25:17-19 the people are instructed to destroy Amalek when they are given rest from their enemies. The fact that the instructions are framed by a reminder to remember (זָכַר) and not forget would suggest the possibility of some period of time passing before the command would be able to be obeyed.

model of one generation explaining the significance of YHWH's actions and commands to the next also explains the role of Moses in his book and the dialectic between Deuteronomy and other legal traditions. The next chapter will examine how this pattern works itself out in the case of the Passover.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE PASSOVER IN DEUTERONOMY

This chapter will examine the nature and function of the Deuteronomic Passover in light of the analysis in the previous chapter. It will begin with an examination of the nature of festivals in Deuteronomy, followed by a survey of modern scholarship on Deuteronomy 16:1-8 and a detailed exegesis of these verses.

5.1 The Festivals in Deuteronomy

Within Deuteronomy the major regulations concerning the annual festivals are found in 16:1-17. This passage may be further sub-divided as follows:

Verses 1-8	Passover and Unleavened Bread
Verses 9-12	Festival of Weeks
Verses 13-15	Festival of Booths
Verses 16-17	Summary of Festivals

The ordering of the festivals in Deuteronomy reflects their temporal ordering during the year. Several motifs link the first three sub-sections. These include the number seven³⁴⁰, the importance of the chosen place³⁴¹ and the call to keep (עָשָׂה) a festival³⁴². Other motifs – the call to rejoice, the participation of potentially marginalized groups and the importance of YHWH's blessing – are found only in the instructions concerning the Festival of Weeks and Booths, while Israel's sojourn in and departure from Egypt is mentioned only in the context of Passover/Unleavened Bread and Weeks. However, whereas the celebration of Passover is related to the circumstances of the sojourn and departure in the case of Weeks the memory of slavery is used as a basis for generous

³⁴⁰ Verses 3, 4, 8, 9, 13, 15.

³⁴¹ The short form of the centralisation formula is used at verses 7, 15 and 16; the formula with לִשְׁכֵּן is used at verses 2, 6 and 11.

³⁴² Verses 1, 10, 13.

treatment of marginal groups, a motif that is found elsewhere in a non-festal context. The greater concentration on historical association in the case of Passover is contrasted with the association between the timing of the festival and the agricultural year in the case of Weeks and Booths³⁴³.

All this makes it problematic to speak of a deuteronomic festal ideology that applies equally and uniformly to every celebration. Both Braulik³⁴⁴ and Willis³⁴⁵ emphasise the importance of joyful celebration in Deuteronomy's understanding of worship. However, as noted above this theme is absent from 16:1-8, probably because it was associated with the theme of agricultural blessing. Wright argues that "the sabbatical themes of rest, remembrance, and concern for the poor are all woven into Deuteronomy's summary of the three major annual festivals"³⁴⁶ and Brueggemann states that "the festival is to assure that there is continuity into the next generation of the Exodus memory and the Exodus vision that gives force and authority to the statutes and ordinances that intend a self-conscious ethic of covenantal neighbourliness."³⁴⁷ However, these are amalgams of themes present in some of the festival regulations rather than a common understanding that is explicitly present in all three. This highlights the importance of examining Deuteronomy's presentation of Passover/Unleavened Bread in its own right.

³⁴³ Verse 9 dates Weeks to seven weeks from the beginning of harvest, verse 13 dates Booths after the storage of processed grain and grapes. There may be an agricultural reference in the case of Passover/Unleavened Bread in that חֹדֶשׁ אֲבִיב in verse 1 literally means "the month of new ears of grain." Even so, the agricultural theme is much less prominent than in the case of Weeks and Booths.

³⁴⁴ G. Braulik, 'Die Freude des Festes: Das Kultverständnis des Deuteronomium – die älteste biblische Festtheorie' in *Studien zur Theologie des Deuteronomiums* (SBAB 2; Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Biblwerk, 1988, pp161-218).

³⁴⁵ T.M. Willis, 'Eat and Rejoice before the Lord: The Optimism of Worship in the Deuteronomic Code' in Graham, M.P., Marrs, R.R. & McKenzie, S.L. (ed) *Worship and the Hebrew Bible* (JSOTSS 284; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp276-294.

³⁴⁶ C. Wright, *Deuteronomy* (NIBC; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996), p198.

³⁴⁷ Brueggemann, *Deuteronomy*, p174.

5.2 Deuteronomy 16:1-8 in Recent Research

This same pattern of continuity and discontinuity with other legal traditions apparent in Deuteronomy as a whole is evident from a cursory examination of Passover and Unleavened Bread in 16:1-8. Most commentators believe that Deuteronomy makes use of earlier literary traditions concerning Passover and Unleavened Bread. The most common assumption is that pre-deuteronomic Passover traditions are found in Exodus 12:21-23 and those concerning Unleavened Bread in Exodus 23:14-15, and possibly Exodus 13:3-10³⁴⁸. There are exceptions to this consensus however. If Exodus 12:21-23 is regarded as post-deuteronomic then Deuteronomy 16:1-8 becomes the earliest Old Testament reference to the Passover³⁴⁹; Otto argues that Exodus 23:15 was not part of the pre-deuteronomic Covenant Code and that Deuteronomy has drawn on the legal traditions found in Exodus 34:18-26, minus 34:25b which is a later addition³⁵⁰.

Modern scholarship has also been concerned to explicate the way in which Deuteronomy has drawn upon earlier tradition, and whether there are signs of diachronic development in verses 1-8. The starting point for these considerations is a series of stylistic and logical issues in these verses.

Syntactically, the placement of לַיְלָה 'by night' at the end of verse 1 appears somewhat awkward. A common explanation is that an injunction originally concerned with the observance of Unleavened Bread has been modified so that it now refers to the observance of Passover. This has been done by replacing the reference to Unleavened Bread with a reference to Passover and by altering the exodus formula so that it now mentions that the

³⁴⁸ For a recent exposition along these lines see Levinson, Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation, pp53-97.

³⁴⁹ So Van Seters, 'The Place of the Yahwist in the History of Passover and Massot'.

³⁵⁰ E. Otto, Das Deuteronomium: Politische Theologie und Rechtsreform in Juda und Assyrien. (BZAW 284; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999), pp324-340.

departure from Egypt occurred at night, that is at the time at which the Passover was celebrated³⁵¹.

The prohibition in verse 3 of eating leaven “with it” (עִלֵּיוֹ) for seven days and the command in the same verse to eat unleavened bread with it for seven days is curious, given that the most likely antecedent is the Passover animal, which is only to be eaten for one night³⁵². The organization of material in the chapter also appears somewhat haphazard. Instructions concerning the Passover are broken up by the insertion of material concerning Massot in verses 3b-4a. The directions for the preparation of the Passover animal are not found until verse 7, after the instructions in verse 4 concerning the correct means of disposing of the cooked animal. Some commentators also perceive a contradiction between verses 3 and 8³⁵³. Verse 3 prescribes the eating of unleavened bread for seven days whereas verse 8 speaks of six days of eating unleavened bread followed by a solemn assembly (עֲצֵרָה).

The standard explanation for these textual difficulties is that they reflect the process whereby Passover and Unleavened Bread traditions have been combined with one another. Most commonly, commentators argue that a text which dealt with Unleavened Bread has been expanded and modified to incorporate material dealing with the Passover. Moreover, the traditions have been combined in such a way as to emphasise the unity of these two observances which had hitherto been observed at different times and in different places³⁵⁴.

³⁵¹ As argued by Peter Weimar, ‘Pascha und Massot: Anmerkungen zu Dtn 16:1-8’ in S. Beyerle (ed) Recht und Ethos im Alten Testament – Gestalt und Wirkung (Fs Horst Seebass; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1999), pp67-68; Mayes (Deuteronomy, pp257-258), agrees that the references to Passover and night are interpolations but suggests the command originally referred to the observance of Abib generally, rather than Unleavened Bread in particular.

³⁵² Among the many commentators who draw attention to this point are Weimar, ‘Pascha und Massot’, pp65-66, T. Veijola, ‘The History of the Passover in the Light of Deuteronomy 16:1-8’ ZABR Vol. 2 (1996), pp53-75.

³⁵³ Eg Mayes, Deuteronomy, p259.

³⁵⁴ Commentators who adopt this viewpoint include Mayes; J. Halbe, ‘Passa-Massot im deuteronomischen Festkalender: Komposition, Entstehung und Programm von Dtn 16:1-8’ ZAW 87 (1975), pp147-168; G. Braulik, ‘Leidengedächtnisfeier und Freudenfest: Volkliturgie nach dem deuteronomischen Festkalender’ in Studien zur Theologie des Deuteronomiums 2 (Stuttgarter Biblische Aufsatzbande Altes Testament; Stuttgart:

Other commentators argue for the priority of the Passover material in the formation of Deuteronomy 16³⁵⁵. A compromise solution is advocated by Otto, who argues that the question of priority depends on whether a diachronic or synchronic perspective is being adopted. Diachronically, the Unleavened Bread material is earlier, but in the formation of Deuteronomy 16:1-8 the Passover material has provided the framework around which the passage has been organised³⁵⁶.

However, some of the difficulties remain even if one eliminates either the Passover or Unleavened Bread material entirely – for example the apparent discrepancy between verses 3 and 8 occurs within the legislation concerning Unleavened Bread. Consequently, some commentators have developed more elaborate reconstructions involving multiple strata. For example, Veijola detects three layers of material – the earliest two dealing with Passover only and the third, which shows signs of Priestly influence, combining the celebration of Passover and Unleavened Bread³⁵⁷.

A slightly different approach to the relationship between Deuteronomy 16:1-8 and tradition is that formulated by Bernard Levinson, who argues that the peculiar features of Deuteronomy 16:1-8 reflect the manner in which Deuteronomy both draws upon and replaces earlier legal material³⁵⁸. In Levinson's conception the framers of Deuteronomy were faced with a difficult hermeneutical task – how could they bring about a radical transformation of Israel's cultic practices, particularly given the existence of written traditions which gave these practices the sanction of divine authority? Levinson argues that the framers solved this dilemma by framing their innovations as if they derived from pre-

Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1988), pp95-121; J.C. Gertz, 'Die Passa-Massot-Ordnung im deuteronomischen Festkalender' in T. Veijola (ed) Das Deuteronomium und seine Querbeziehungen (SEFG 62; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), pp56-80.

³⁵⁵ These include E. Kutsch, 'Erwägungen zur Geschichte der Passafeier und des Massotfestes' ZTK 55 (1958), pp1-35; Rainer Schmitt, Exodus und Passah, p65-69; Veijola, 'The History of Passover'.

³⁵⁶ E. Otto, article פסח, ThWAT VI (1989), 659-682.

³⁵⁷ 'The History of the Passover', pp74-5.

³⁵⁸ Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation, pp53-97.

existing authoritative texts. More specifically, the writers of Deuteronomy drew on the Covenant Code of Exodus 20:22-23:33, but with the intention of supplanting, rather than supplementing the earlier code³⁵⁹.

With respect to Deuteronomy 16, Levinson criticises other scholars for under-estimating the revolutionary nature of the chapter. Rather than a passive reflection of historical developments the chapter is a carefully formed charter for transforming the observance of Passover and Unleavened Bread to bring it into line with the overall Deuteronomic reform program of cultic centralisation. As such, Levinson argues that the quest for uncovering the priority of Passover or Unleavened Bread is misplaced, since both were part of the chapter from the beginning.

Levinson follows the lead of many scholars in arguing that the pre-deuteronomic Passover was an apotropaic rite originating in nomadic circles and observed within the context of the family. It was unconnected with the festival of Unleavened Bread, which was one of three annual pilgrimage festivals observed at local sanctuaries. The Deuteronomic reform program required a double transformation of these two observances. In the case of the Passover a family based ritual was transferred to the central sanctuary and reformed to reflect the standard sacrificial protocol. In the case of Unleavened Bread a festival which involved a pilgrimage to local sanctuaries (which were abolished by Deuteronomy) was 'secularised' by being transferred to the domestic sphere.

The authors of Deuteronomy sought to accord legitimacy to their innovations by placing them in the mouth of Moses and by drawing on earlier legal texts³⁶⁰. Levinson argues that

³⁵⁹ cf his conclusion on p146 "The absence of precedent-of legal and textual justification for their new composition from the very literary corpus that they simultaneously displaced – is striking."

³⁶⁰ In the case of Passover and Unleavened Bread, Levinson argues that these earlier texts are Exodus 12:21-23, 24-27a (proto-Deuteronomic), Exodus 13:3-10 (where he argues that the legal material is pre-Deuteronomic even if the parenthetic framework is later) and Exodus 23:14-19 (J). He sets aside Exodus 34:18-26, arguing that it is best seen as a post-Deuteronomic redactional composition (*Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation*, p70).

many of the perceived infelicities in Deuteronomy 16 arise from this combination of innovation and dependency on earlier texts.

Levinson's treatment of Deuteronomy 16 is stimulating and thorough; but it is not without its difficulties. The first relates to his broader conception of the relation between Deuteronomy and earlier tradition. Levinson argues that Deuteronomy sought to displace earlier legal material such as the Covenant Code. And yet, Deuteronomy drew upon those same legal collections to anchor its innovations in Israelite tradition. That is, Deuteronomy sought to displace those very texts which to some extent constituted its authority.

This argument appears somewhat inconsistent. It is difficult to see how the various textual links which Levinson detects in Deuteronomy 16 could provide any basis for the authority for the latter chapter if the legal collections which were the source for those lemmas were no longer in existence. That is, Levinson's argument makes more sense if Deuteronomy was intended to supplement rather than replace earlier material, or if Deuteronomy's use of this material was for reasons of convention or convenience, rather than as part of a strategy for establishing its legitimacy.

Levinson concentrates almost exclusively on the legal material within Deuteronomy. He certainly places Deuteronomy 16 within the broader context of the reforms brought about by surrounding legal material, but tends to ignore the parenetic framework except insofar as it serves to legitimise the 'Mosaic' voice of the Deuteronomic legislators. However, this leaves aside the question of whether there are more specific links between Deuteronomy 16 and the rest of the book which may provide clues as to how it relates to other legal and narrative material in the Pentateuch.

This latter question has been taken up by Gordon McConville, beginning with his work *Law and Theology in Deuteronomy*³⁶¹. In his introduction, McConville describes the purpose of the book as being "to examine the relation of Deuteronomy's laws to the

³⁶¹ (JSOTSS 33; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1984).

theology of the book as a whole.”³⁶² A subsidiary aim is to reconsider the relationship between Deuteronomy and the other legal codes in the Pentateuch, and in particular to re-examine the scholarly consensus that associates the origins of Deuteronomy with the reformation under Josiah. In general McConville is somewhat sceptical about the value and possibility of establishing an historical *Sitz im Leben* for Deuteronomy’s laws³⁶³.

In this light, McConville examines several aspects of Deuteronomy’s laws, including the altar law, sacrifices, the tithe, firstlings and the feasts. It is within the context of the last category that he examines Deuteronomy 16. He begins by tracing the history of research into the origins of Passover and Unleavened Bread, beginning with Wellhausen, before examining the non-Deuteronomic festival legislation within the Pentateuch. In the course of this examination he challenges several aspects of the scholarly consensus, including the contention that Passover and Unleavened Bread were not combined prior to Deuteronomy and that Passover was celebrated as a domestic rite prior to the Deuteronomic reforms.³⁶⁴

When he comes to a detailed exegesis of Deuteronomy 16:1-8 McConville argues that the particular features of the passage owe more to Deuteronomy’s theological intention to emphasise Israel’s enjoyment of the blessings of Canaan than to any desire to change the form of the festival³⁶⁵. So for example, McConville argues that the permission granted in Deuteronomy 16 for animals to be taken from either the flock or the herd (צאן ובקר) is not due to a desire to transform the Passover from a domestic rite into a standard sacrifice. Rather, it reflects Deuteronomy’s emphasis on the flock and the herd as part of the divine

³⁶² *Law and Theology in Deuteronomy*, pxi.

³⁶³ Cf the comment on p7, “we shall be more reticent about the possibilities of establishing the historical background of any particular text than students of Deuteronomy have traditionally been.”

³⁶⁴ McConville argues for the pre-Deuteronomic unity of Passover and Unleavened Bread on the basis of Exodus 23:15 and 34:18, both of which he assigns to JE. However as noted above, a number of commentators assign the latter verse to a post-Deuteronomic redactor.

³⁶⁵ *Law and Theology*, p114.

blessing to be enjoyed in the land of Canaan³⁶⁶. More generally, McConville detects in Deuteronomy 16 a deliberate fusion of Passover and Unleavened Bread. Rather than attributing it to any innovation in the actual practice of the festivals, he attributes this to Deuteronomy's theological purpose of bringing together the themes of exodus and settlement³⁶⁷.

Notwithstanding their shared view that Deuteronomy 16 should be interpreted as a carefully crafted and intentional composition rather than a poorly integrated amalgam of pre-existing tradition, McConville and Levinson have engaged in a spirited debate concerning the merits of their respective approaches³⁶⁸.

Levinson criticises McConville for harmonising inconsistent laws and not engaging the arguments which support a Neo-Assyrian dating for the treaty material in Deuteronomy³⁶⁹. More broadly, Levinson argues that McConville is inconsistent in his approach to history. He either allows the theology of Deuteronomy to sit light to history, thereby divorcing the text from any context against which it may be understood, or when he does suggest an historical setting for the text he does so with insufficient reason³⁷⁰.

³⁶⁶ McConville refers to Deuteronomy 7:12ff. It is unclear whether McConville believes that Deuteronomy envisages that animals from the herd could be offered as the Passover sacrifice. He refers to the view of Keil and others that Deuteronomy allocated animals from the flock to the Passover sacrifice and animals from the herd to the accompanying sacrifice, but rejects it on the basis that "the law does not make such distinctions." (p117). However, he then goes on to state that the combination of **צאן ובקר** arises from the fusion of Passover and Unleavened Bread and "the sacrificial feasting which belongs properly to the Massot element of the feast is thus made to belong to the feast as a single entity."

³⁶⁷ *Law and Theology*, p117.

³⁶⁸ Besides references to McConville's work in *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation*, see B.M. Levinson, 'McConville's *Law and Theology in Deuteronomy*,' *JQR* 80 (1990), pp396-404; J.G. McConville 'Deuteronomy's Unification of Passover and Massot: A Response to Bernard M. Levinson' *JBL* 119/1 (2000), pp47-58; B.M. Levinson, 'The Hermeneutics of Tradition in Deuteronomy: A Reply to J.G. McConville' *JBL* 119/2 (2000), pp269-286.

³⁶⁹ *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation*, pp10-11.

³⁷⁰ Levinson is especially critical of McConville's argument that Deuteronomy is a charter for the rejection of autocratic kingship which may plausibly be dated to the early monarchic era, arguing that McConville provides no evidence for an anti-monarchic group in this era which could be responsible for the promulgation of Deuteronomy. See 'A Reply to J.G. McConville', pp274-6.

In his reply to Levinson, McConville continues to develop his project of placing Deuteronomy 16:1-8 within the theology of the whole book. In particular, he argues the location of the Passover at the chosen place rather than in the homes of Israel, the representation of the festivals as a single entity and the relationship of the combined celebration to the rest of Israelite territory must be understood against these wider concerns.

The dispute between Levinson and McConville cannot simply be reduced to a contrast between synchronic and diachronic approaches to the interpretation of texts, since both authors draw on each to some extent. So while synchronic concerns predominate in McConville, he does address diachronic issues to some extent in that he discusses a possible historical setting for the book of Deuteronomy and also discusses the question of priority between Deuteronomy and other legal codes in the Pentateuch³⁷¹. And while Levinson is particularly concerned with diachronic issues he also discusses the synchronic relationship between Deuteronomy 16 and other elements of the Deuteronomic legal code.

However, in common with most treatments of Deuteronomy 16, neither Levinson nor McConville locate Deuteronomy 16 in its canonical context. Because he regards the Deuteronomic legislation as an attempt to abrogate other legal collections Levinson is unable to give a satisfactory explanation for how it functions as part of a broader Pentateuch. At best, the existence of various legal and narrative traditions in the Pentateuch must be regarded as an irony of history whereby the intentions of those who compiled the final text were actually diametrically opposed to those who produced those traditions. McConville in turn is inclined to harmonise the various legal traditions throughout the Pentateuch to the extent that their distinctive elements are muted. A canonical approach should respect these distinctives, while also explaining how they co-exist in the one scripture which is authoritative for the faith and practice of a particular community.

³⁷¹ In particular, McConville argues at several points that there are good reasons to believe that legislation in P preceded Deuteronomy.

5.3 Exegesis of Deuteronomy 16:1-8

The following section seeks to provide a fresh approach to the exegesis of these verses, not only in the context of Deuteronomy but also alongside other passages dealing with the observance of Passover and Unleavened Bread.

5.3.1 Structure

There have been a number of proposals concerning the literary structure of Deuteronomy 16:1-8. One such approach, suggested by Halbe, and followed by McConville is as follows:

A	v.1	Passover-time (Abib)
B	v.2	Passover-place (sanctuary)
C	v.3	Passover-rite (no leavened bread to be eaten with Passover)
D	v.3a	Unleavened Bread-7 days
E	v. 3aβ, end b	Salvation History
D ²	v. 4a	Unleavened Bread-7 days
C ²	v.4b	Passover-rite (no flesh to remain till morning)
B ²	vv. 5,6a	Passover-place (sanctuary)
A ²	vv.6aβb, 7b	Passover-time (evening-morning) ³⁷²

However, this structure omits the selection of the Passover animal in 2a and its method of preparation in verse 7a, both of which are attributed by Halbe to a secondary addition, and verse 8. A slightly different schema, which also makes use of the concepts of time and place, but is able to encompass all the material in these verses is that suggested by Weimar³⁷³:

³⁷² Halbe, Passa-Massot im deuteronomischen Festkalender, p155; McConville, Law and Theology in Deuteronomy, p113.

³⁷³ Weimar, 'Pascha und Massot', p63.

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| A | Prescriptive Regulation (v.1,2): Unleavened Bread and Passover | |
| | Time + Place | <i>Centralisation</i> |
| B | Prohibition + Command (v.3): Unleavened Bread | |
| | Exodus from Egypt | |
| C. | Prescriptive Regulation (v.4): Unleavened Bread and Passover | |
| B2 | Prohibition + Command (v.5,6): Passover | |
| | Exodus from Egypt | |
| A2 | Prescriptive Regulation (v.7,8): Passover and Unleavened Bread | |
| | Place + Time | <i>Centralisation</i> |

Beyond highlighting the importance of the exodus theme and the way in which Passover and Unleavened Bread are combined within the passage it is doubtful either formulation contributes significantly to understanding the passage. Indeed, neither Halbe, McConville nor Weimar draw extensively on their structural conclusions in their exegesis of the passage. Nor do the structures provide any definitive conclusions on the literary history of the passage³⁷⁴. Whereas McConville argues for an original unity of Deuteronomy 16, both Halbe and Weimar believe they can recover different layers of tradition within the text. All this suggests the need for a less elaborate structural analysis of 16:1-8 which nevertheless gives greater insights into the logic of the text.

There are good reasons for regarding 16:1 as a heading or summary for the material which follows. Syntactically, the use of the unbound infinitive absolute of שָׁמֹר sets off the verse from what precedes and follows³⁷⁵.

³⁷⁴ cf. the judicious comment of Levinson – “Even if a ring-pattern or chiasm, for example, can be legitimately identified in a text, it does not follow automatically that the whole text represents the original composition of a single author. After all, that an editor has obscured textual seams does not mean that there are no seams, no matter how adroitly the disparate material may have been integrated through the use of redactional bridges.” Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation, p27.

³⁷⁵ The clearest parallel to 16:1 is Deuteronomy 27:1, where the MT uses the unbound infinitive absolute of שָׁמַר. The verse is a general injunction to follow a command, the details of which are spelt out in detail in 27:2-8. Admittedly, a number of the versions (Samaritan Pentateuch, Targums) read an imperative rather

Following on from verse one there are two sets of instruction concerning the Passover, the first beginning at verse 2 and ending with verse 4, the second beginning at verse 5 and ending at verse 7. Both sets of instruction begin by stipulating the place at which the Passover is to be observed and conclude with instructions concerning the morning after the Passover.

Material concerning Unleavened Bread has been placed within both sets of instructions³⁷⁶, but the manner in which this has been done is quite different. In verses 2 to 4 all the material concerning Unleavened Bread has been placed within the Passover material. This tends to obscure the distinction between the two celebrations but emphasises their shared association with the exodus tradition. In the second set of instructions, in verses 5 to 8, Passover and Unleavened Bread have been dealt with separately, such that the temporal succession between the two feasts is made clear. This means that 16:1-8 concludes with a note concerning the climax of the Festival of Unleavened Bread.

The different ways in which Passover and Unleavened Bread are combined in verses 2-4 and 5-8 means that each section acts as a commentary on the other, clarifying any ambiguity which might exist if one is read in isolation from the other. So, for example, whereas verse 3 by itself would suggest that the Passover is to be consumed over seven days, verse 7 makes it clear that the Passover was consumed on one evening only.

than an infinitive absolute. However, given the relative rarity of the infinitive absolute as a word of command, and the tendency of the Samaritan Pentateuch to replace this form by the infinitive (WOC, p593), there are good reasons for retaining the infinitive absolute as the more difficult reading. The infinitive absolute of שִׁמְרָה is also found at 5:12, where it refers to the observance of Sabbath.

³⁷⁶ By saying 'placed within' I am making a synchronic observation rather than implying any judgement on the temporal priority of the two traditions.

5.3.2 Detailed Exegesis

5.3.2.1 16:1

The chapter begins with an injunction to the people to “observe (שמור)”. This verb occurs a number of times in Deuteronomy, both in reference to the observance of YHWH’s commands in general³⁷⁷ and the self-vigilance necessary for such obedience³⁷⁸. However, here and at 5:12 the infinitive absolute is used with reference to a specific command. Interestingly, in both cases the command concerns prescribed activities within a certain period of time. At 5:12 the command is to “observe the Sabbath day” and subsequent verses make clear what this means in practice. Likewise, 16:1-8 concerns the way in which **אֶת־חַדֵּשׁ הָאֲבִיב** is to be observed.

There is a certain ambiguity in the verse in that **חַדֵּשׁ הָאֲבִיב** could mean “the month of Abib” or the “new moon of Abib”, namely the first day of the month³⁷⁹. It is sometimes suggested that the mention of night in verse 1 and the use of **חַדֵּשׁ הָאֲבִיב** at Exodus 13:4, where it follows the command in verse 13:3 to “remember this day”, indicates that a specific day is in view³⁸⁰. If this is the case, the command to celebrate Passover on the new moon conflicts with the injunction in Exodus 12:1-20 to celebrate Passover on the night of the fourteenth day of the month, that is, at full moon³⁸¹. However, at Exodus 23:15 where **חַדֵּשׁ הָאֲבִיב** is used in connection with the Festival of Unleavened Bread it must refer to a period of more than one day since the people are directed to eat unleavened bread for

³⁷⁷ Eg 4:2, 4:6, 12:1, 12:28 and several others.

³⁷⁸ Eg 4:9, 4:15, 12:13 and several others.

³⁷⁹ In many passages the two translations would be functionally equivalent. That is, a period encompassing three “new moons” would be equivalent to a period of three months.

³⁸⁰ So Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, p153.

³⁸¹ Goldstein and Cooper argue that **חַדֵּשׁ** means ‘New Moon’ in those calendars deriving from a Northern provenance, ie Deuteronomistic and Elohistic material in the Pentateuch, whereas in Judah, and hence in J and P, it meant ‘month’. See B.R. Goldstein and A. Cooper, ‘The Festivals of Israel and Judah and the Literary History of the Pentateuch’ *JAOS* 110/1 (1990), pp19-31.

seven days **למועד חרש האביב**. Moreover the translation ‘month’ certainly makes sense at 13:4 even if the other reading is possible. In light of this, and the fact that the only other use of **חרש** in Deuteronomy certainly refers to a month³⁸² it is best to translate 16:1 along these lines. If the reference is to the month only it may be because the actual date of Passover was already known or because a specific date was not set at the time of Deuteronomy. However, it is unlikely that a centralised Passover such as that envisaged by Deuteronomy could be celebrated without some agreement on the actual date.

The nature of observing Abib is spelt out in verse 1. The people are instructed to keep³⁸³ Passover (**עשית פסח**), an idiom found in a number of other Old Testament narrative and legal contexts. Passover is to be kept **ליהוה אלהיך**. Passover is kept to YHWH, that is, in his honour.

The second half of the verse, a motive clause beginning with **כי**, provides the basis for the observance of the command in the first half of the verse. Such motive clauses are common in the Deuteronomic legal corpus, although the grounds for obedience differ considerably. In some cases the motive for obedience is the experience of YHWH’s blessings in the future (eg 12:28), the people’s status before YHWH (eg 14:21) or simply YHWH’s view of the practice in question. Here, the motive clause relates the command to YHWH’s action in bringing the people out of Egypt. The connection between the people’s action in the present and YHWH’s action in the past is established by the repetition of certain elements in each half of the verse:

³⁸² See Deuteronomy 1:3. It is true that this verse is usually dated later than Chapter 16. Even if this is the case, however, it does provide evidence for how those groups responsible for preserving and transmitting the traditions of Deuteronomy understood the word.

³⁸³ Levinson (*Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation*, pp78-79) argues that **עשית פסח** should be translated “offer the Passover.” It is true that **עשה** is used at Deuteronomy 12:27 to refer to sacrificial activity. However, elsewhere in Deuteronomy the verb is used to describe the general performance of YHWH’s requirements (eg 12:1, 4, 14, 25, 15:5) or the performance of specific cultic (16:21) or non-cultic (15:17) activities. That is, insofar as the verb **עשה** describes sacrificial activity this is apparent from the broader context and not the use of the verb itself. Hence it should be translated by a more general term such as “keep”.

	16:1a	16:1b
Divine designation	יהוה אלהיך	יהוה אלהיך
Time indicator	חדש האביב	חדש האביב
Action	עשית פסח	הוציאך ממצרים

The one aspect of verse 1 that does not fit easily into this scheme is the adverb “by night” (לילה), which is somewhat isolated syntactically at the end of the verse. Moreover, the note that YHWH brought out his people from Egypt by night is not matched by any command in the first half of the verse to observe the Passover at night. For this reason, as already noted, many commentators have argued that לילה is a secondary addition resulting from the combination of legislation concerning Passover and Unleavened Bread³⁸⁴.

However, the placement of לילה is not as awkward as is sometimes suggested. The subject of adverbs is a complex and underdeveloped aspect of Hebrew grammar study³⁸⁵ and there is great variation in their syntactical placement. There are certainly other instances apart from Deuteronomy 16:1 where לילה is used adverbally and is placed at the end of a clause, some distance from the verb it modifies³⁸⁶. The nocturnal departure from Egypt is referred to again at 16:6, where it provides the basis for offering the Passover in the evening. This indicates the timing of the Passover was of particular interest to the author(s) of Deuteronomy and this may explain why it was mentioned in the opening verse.

³⁸⁴ Eg Weimar, ‘Pascha und Massot’, p66; Veijola, ‘The History of the Passover’, p54; Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, p258; Halbe, *Passa-Massot*, p155.

³⁸⁵ See the discussion in WOC, pp655-673.

³⁸⁶ See, for example Judges 9:34 – “So Abimelech and all the troops with him got up by night (ויקם אבימלך) (וכל־העם אשר־עמו לילה).”

5.3.2.2 16:2-4

As noted earlier, in verses 2-4 the observance of Unleavened Bread is considered within the framework of Passover. The way in which the two observances have been combined serves to emphasise the exodus theme:

- A Passover – consumption (v. 2)
- B Leaven – consumption (v. 3a)
- C departure from Egypt (v. 3b)
- B' Leaven – removal (v. 4a)
- A Passover – removal (v. 4b)

The opening command of verse 2, וּזְבַחַת פֶּסַח לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, is identical in form and syntax to the command in verse 1 to keep the Passover. However, in verse 2 פֶּסַח refers specifically to the animal to be offered rather than the Passover in general. The use of the verb זָבַח with respect to the Passover is frequently cited as one of the grounds for assuming that Deuteronomy has modified the Passover to assimilate it to the standard sacrificial protocol³⁸⁷. A similar conclusion is drawn from the stipulation that the Passover is to be brought from the flock and from the herd (צֹאן וּבָקָר), rather than from the flock alone as is the case in Exodus 12:21, and from the direction that the Passover be observed only in the place at which YHWH will choose to put his name (בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה לְשֹׁכֵן שְׁמוֹ)

שם) - the so-called centralisation formula. However, none of the grounds adduced for regarding the Deuteronomic Passover as a sacrifice is entirely straightforward. Thus, while in Deuteronomy the noun זָבַח always refers to a sacrifice to be offered at the central sanctuary³⁸⁸ the verb is not used exclusively for sacrifice. Specifically, at 12:15 and 12:21 it refers to the 'secular' slaughter of animals away from the central sanctuary. Levinson

³⁸⁷ Eg von Rad, *Deuteronomy*, pp111-12; Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation*, p72.

³⁸⁸ More specifically, the זָבַח is a sacrifice, part or all of which is consumed by the worshipper, as opposed to the עֹלָה, which is burned in its entirety (cf Deuteronomy 12:27). See Bergman, Ringgren & Lang 'זָבַח' *TDOT* (IV), pp8-29.

argues that זָבַח is used in these two instances because Deuteronomy is both drawing upon and transforming Exodus 20:24, a text which countenances a multiplicity of altars, to support its program of cult centralisation. In the Exodus passage the people are instructed to build an earthen altar and sacrifice upon it (וַיִּזְבַּחַתָּהּ עָלָיו) their burnt offerings and peace offerings. In its Deuteronomic context the verb now refers to secular slaughter, but this use is anomalous and it should be understood in its usual sense of ‘sacrifice’ in other OT instances, including those in Deuteronomy³⁸⁹. However, an examination of the terminology of Deuteronomy gives a slightly different picture. There are six occasions in Deuteronomy 12 where instructions are given for the killing of meat. Four of these (12:6-7, 12:11-12, 12:13-14, 12:26-7) relate to killing at the central sanctuary, two to killing away from the sanctuary (12:15-16, 12:21-24). The following table lists the instructions given in each case classified by the actions of the people concerning the animal, the terms used to describe the animal, and the actions of the people after the killing:

³⁸⁹ Levinson, Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation, p38.

Passage	Actions of people	Descriptions of animal(s)
12:6-7	Going (באה) and bringing (הבאתם), eating (אכלתם) and rejoicing (שמחתם)	עלתיכם וזבחיכם
12:11-12	Bringing	עלתיכם וזבחיכם
12:13-14	Offering (תעלה)	עלתיך
12:15-16	Slaughtering (תזבח), eating, pouring out blood	בשר
12:21-24	Slaughtering (זבחת), eating, pouring out blood	בשר
12:26-27	Making offerings (עלתיך), eating, pouring out blood of זבחים.	זבחיך עלתיך בשר

There is a discernible pattern in the use and non-use of various terms, depending on whether the action takes at or away from the chosen place. The verb זבח is used only for the slaughter of animals away from the chosen place; where the animal is killed at the central sanctuary other verbs are used to describe the action of the worshippers. The situation is slightly different with the noun זבח, which is used only with reference to the animal killed at the chosen place. However, זבח never stands alone as a description of the sacrifices to be offered at the chosen place. It is either paired with עלה, or the latter noun is used by itself, as at 12:13-14. The other distinctive aspect of the slaughter of animals at the chosen place is the rejoicing to accompany the consumption of the animal (12:7)³⁹⁰.

³⁹⁰ As noted previously, the emphasis on rejoicing is a keynote of the cultic legislation of Deuteronomy (see eg 16:11, 14, 28:47). Braulik argues that it incorporates a polemic against Canaanite nature religion, where cultic rejoicing was a means of gaining the blessings of fertility. In contrast, rejoicing in Deuteronomy is a response to the blessings of YHWH. See G. Braulik, 'Die Freude des Festes'. Levinson suggests that the emphasis on joy may be an attempt by Deuteronomy to compensate for the loss of divine immediacy experienced at the local sanctuaries (*Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation*, pp4-5). Even if this was the effect of Deuteronomy's emphasis, it is impossible to prove whether this was its intent.

Nevertheless, there are a number of common elements in the slaughter of animals at and away from the chosen place. In both cases directions are given for the disposal of the blood, and in both cases there is an emphasis on the consumption of the **בשר** of the animal. However, consumption of meat at the chosen place is said to take place before YHWH (לפני יהוה – 12:7), whereas consumption away from the sanctuary does not.

It then becomes apparent that the Passover in Deuteronomy 16 does not correspond precisely to either type of killing and consumption of meat described in Deuteronomy 12. It certainly takes place at the chosen place. However, the note of rejoicing is absent and there is no indication that the killing or consumption of the Passover takes place before YHWH. Nor is there any explicit direction to the worshippers to bring the Passover animals to the central sanctuary, although this may simply be presupposed. Like the killing and consumption of animals away from the chosen place the Passover is described using the verb **זבח**. However, it is distinct from both types of killing in that no directions are given for the disposal of the blood³⁹¹.

This ambiguity suggests that the question of whether or not the Passover is to be regarded as a sacrifice is not at the heart of Deuteronomy's concerns. Indeed, the one element that would appear unambiguously to identify the Passover as a sacrifice in the light of Deuteronomy 12 - its designation as a **זבח** – is absent from Deuteronomy 16. Throughout this chapter the only terms used to describe the Passover feast or animal are **פסח** or **בשר**. In other words, it seems best to regard the Deuteronomic Passover as a cultic observance *sui generis*, similar to the wider sacrificial system in some respects but distinct from it in others.

³⁹¹ This is particularly surprising if Deuteronomy's Passover legislation is to be conceived primarily as a polemic against a pre-Deuteronomic Passover which involved the manipulation of blood as part of an apotropaic rite. How likely is it that Deuteronomy would omit to proscribe this action, which was allegedly one of the aspects of the de-centralised Passover it found most offensive (as argued by Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation*, p64)? Levinson argues that the silence of Deuteronomy 16 on the issue of blood is a deliberate strategy designed to minimise the threat posed by the uncontrolled manipulation of blood. A more plausible explanation is that the real interests of Deuteronomy lay elsewhere.

Similar comments apply to the direction in 16:2 that the Passover animal may be taken from the flock or the herd (צאן ובקר) as opposed to Exodus 12:21, where the animal is taken from the flock alone. According to those commentators who regard Deuteronomy as a revision of earlier codes the inclusion of animals from the flock and the herd as part of the Passover serves a twofold purpose. It assimilates the Passover to other sacrificial practice³⁹² and it facilitates the transformation from a family-based to a national celebration³⁹³.

Classical Christian and Jewish commentators frequently explained this discrepancy by taking 16:2 either in whole or in part as a reference to the sacrifices accompanying the Passover rather than the Passover itself³⁹⁴. Driver rightly responds that it is inherently unlikely that the writer would give detailed directions for the selection of sacrifices accompanying the Passover, and either fail to include any directions for the selection of the Passover animal itself or frame his instructions in such a way as to confuse the two³⁹⁵.

McConville relates the instructions in Deuteronomy 16:2 to the broader theological concerns of the book. Elsewhere צאן ובקר are an important element of the divine blessings to be enjoyed in the land and their inclusion in the present context serves to unite the themes of exodus and rejoicing in the blessings of the land. As part of this fusion the sacrificial feasting which properly belongs to the Unleavened Bread element of the feast is made to belong to the feast as a single entity³⁹⁶. This argument is critiqued by Levinson,

³⁹² Eg Von Rad, *Deuteronomy*, p112.

³⁹³ Eg Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, p153.

³⁹⁴ Both Rashi, and Keil and Delitzsch argue that צאן is a reference to the Passover and בקר a reference to the חגיגה, the festival offering sacrificed in addition to the Passover (*Pentateuch with Targum Onkelos, Haphtaroth and Rashi's Commentary* (tr. M. Rosenbaum & A.M. Silberman; New York: Hebrew Publishing, n.d.), p83. Keil, C.F & Delitzsch, F. *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol III – The Pentateuch* (tr. J. Martin; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1867), pp374-5.

³⁹⁵ Driver, *Deuteronomy*, p191.

³⁹⁶ McConville, *Law and Theology*, p117.

who responds that Deuteronomy's association of the flock and the herd with YHWH's blessings, and with cultic actions at the central sanctuary, cannot be decontextualised and then elevated into a general interest in flocks and herds as such³⁹⁷.

The starting point for the resolution of this debate must be the generally overlooked observation that צֶאֱן וּבָקָר is never used within the Deuteronomic legal corpus as a general designation for sacrificial animals³⁹⁸. It is either used with reference to firstlings (12:6, 17, 14:23, 14:26, 15:19) or to the slaughter and consumption of animals away from the central sanctuary (12:21). Now Deuteronomy certainly directs that the firstlings be consumed at the central sanctuary and this would no doubt involve their cultic slaughter at the same location³⁹⁹. However, they should be seen as a subset of sacrifice rather than an identical category.

This conclusion is strengthened when it is noted that the two passages in Deuteronomy which give general directions for the animals to be offered in sacrifice use different terminology. Deuteronomy 17:1 refers to ox and sheep (שׁוֹר וְשֶׂה); at Deuteronomy 18:3 the order is reversed (אֶם־שׁוֹר אֶם־שֶׂה). This suggests that insofar as Deuteronomy 16:2 wishes to draw an analogy between the Passover and sacrifice, the link is with the sacrifice of firstlings rather than sacrifice in general. This may explain why the Passover regulations in Deuteronomy 16:1-8 follow on from the regulations concerning firstborn in 15:19-23. It could also lie behind other passages, frequently attributed to Deuteronomic redactors, which suggest a link between the sacrifice or consecration of firstlings and the Feast of

³⁹⁷ Levinson, 'The Hermeneutics of Tradition in Deuteronomy: A Reply to J.G. McConville', p278.

³⁹⁸ Levinson cites Deuteronomy 12:21, Exodus 20:24 and Numbers 22:40 as instances where צֶאֱן וּבָקָר is a standard designation for sacrificial animals. See 'The Hermeneutics of Tradition in Deuteronomy: A Reply to J.G. McConville', p279. However, Deuteronomy 12:21 refers to slaughter away from the central sanctuary, and it is curious that usage outside Deuteronomy, rather than within the work itself, should be determinative for the meaning of 16:2.

³⁹⁹ This would appear to be presupposed at 15:21-22, which require that any of the firstlings to be slaughtered at the central sanctuary should be without any serious defect.

Unleavened Bread⁴⁰⁰. There is no evidence within the Old Testament that the Passover animal was required to be a firstling. However, the firstborn theme is linked to the Passover and exodus at so many levels that it is not surprising echoes of the theme are found in Deuteronomy 16.

The opening prohibition in verse 3a α concerning the consumption of leaven (לא־תאכל על־חמץ דם) is similar in form to the prohibitions in Exodus 23:18a (לא־תזבח על־חמץ דם) and Exodus 34:25a (לא־תשחט על־חמץ דם־זבחי) which forbid the offering of leaven together with blood. Whether or not these prohibitions refer to the Passover as such⁴⁰¹, they suggest a process by which regulations concerning the prohibition of offering leaven in a more general sacrificial context have been applied specifically to the Passover.

Verse 3a β also concerns leaven, but prescribes the consumption of unleavened bread for seven days. Directions concerning the consumption of Unleavened Bread over a seven day period are found in a number of other legal texts, including those widely believed to predate Deuteronomy⁴⁰². However, in Deuteronomy 16:3 unleavened bread is to be consumed for seven days “with it” (עליו)⁴⁰³. The most obvious antecedent of “it” is the Passover animal in verse 2, which is however consumed during one evening only.

⁴⁰⁰ The passages in question are Exodus 13:3-10 and Exodus 34:18-20. In the former passage instructions concerning Unleavened Bread are placed between two blocks of material concerning the consecration of the firstborn. A comparison of Exodus 34:18-20 with Exodus 23:15 suggests that material concerning the redemption of the firstborn has been inserted into legislation dealing with Unleavened Bread.

⁴⁰¹ The context of Exodus 23:18 suggests the reference is to sacrifices accompanying the three annual pilgrimage festivals (חגים), but the context of 34:25a is less clear, although the explicit mention of the Passover in the second half of Exodus 34:25 may point in this direction. Part of the difficulty in interpreting the two Exodus passages is the notion of slaughtering or sacrificing blood. Elsewhere, the normal OT practice is for the blood of sacrificial animals to be poured on the ground or sprinkled on or towards the altar. This suggests that rather than prohibiting the addition of leaven to an otherwise unproblematic ritual, Exodus 23:18 and Exodus 34:25a were directed against some other kind of ritual act, the exact nature of which is unclear from the texts as they stand.

⁴⁰² These texts include Exodus 23:15 (JE), Exodus 12:14-20 (P) and Exodus 34:18, which is variously ascribed to JE or a Deuteronomistic redaction.

⁴⁰³ Craigie, following Dahood, suggests that עליו could be translated in his (ie YHWH's) presence (Deuteronomy, p242). However, he cites no parallels and the suggestion has not won the support of other

The most common explanation for the discrepancy is that it has arisen through the combination of regulations concerning Passover and Unleavened Bread. Mayes argues that 3aβ is an Unleavened Bread regulation which has been inserted here because the idea of leaven is already present in 3aα, from where the word עליו has been secondarily inserted.⁴⁰⁴ However, this sits uneasily with Mayes' contention that in 16:1-8 the Unleavened Bread regulations are primary, and that Passover material has been inserted into this framework. A more consistent argument which assumes the priority of the Unleavened Bread tradition is that of Gertz, who argues that the Unleavened Bread regulation originally taken over by the Deuteronomic legislator consisted of most of verse 1 (which originally referred to Massot rather than Passover) and 3aβ. Hence, the intended antecedent of עליו was the seven day festival of Unleavened Bread, and it is only the combination of this pre-existing Unleavened Bread regulation with Passover material which has given rise to the present difficulties⁴⁰⁵.

Veijola, who argues that the earliest version of Deuteronomy 16 dealt with Passover only, attributes 3aα and 3aβ to successive layers of redaction. Moreover, he recommends translating עליו differently in the two clauses. In 3aα it means "with it", while in 3aβ it carries the temporal meaning "thereafter"⁴⁰⁶. However, it is intrinsically unlikely that the same word should be translated differently in the same verse, especially given that Veijola cites no other instances from Biblical Hebrew where the temporal meaning applies.

commentators. In any case, Deuteronomy's usual idiom for undertaking an activity in YHWH's presence is לפני יהוה.

⁴⁰⁴ Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, p258.

⁴⁰⁵ Gertz, 'Die Passa-Massot-Ordnung', pp75-79. The problem with Gertz's argument is that it is difficult to see why the preposition עליו was necessary within his reconstructed original text. That is, if the text dealt only with Unleavened Bread, there was no need to specify that the consumption of unleavened bread for seven days should be "with it": cf Exodus 13:6 מצה האכל ימים שבעה.

⁴⁰⁶ 'The History of the Passover', p68.

A slightly different explanation is given by Levinson. He argues that in 3aα a coda which was originally concerned with festival sacrifices has been re-specified to govern the paschal slaughter. Since עֶלֶל was found in the original coda (ie Exodus 23:18) it is reproduced in Deuteronomy 16:3aα. However, 3aβ draws on texts dealing with the Festival of Unleavened Bread. In the combination of the two traditions עֶלֶלִי has been inserted in 3aβ to create a lexical analogy between the leaven upon which the Passover offering is not to be sacrificed and the leaven that the community is prohibited from eating⁴⁰⁷. However, this leaves open the question of why the author felt it appropriate or necessary to draw such an analogy.

The answer to this question must be sought in the particular theological interests of the Deuteronomic author. In *Law and Theology in Deuteronomy*, McConville argues that the language of 16:1-8 represents a deliberate fusion of the celebration of Passover and Unleavened Bread and the theological themes associated with each observance, respectively the deliverance from Egypt and the enjoyment of the blessings of the land. However, Deuteronomy 16 makes no explicit link between the Festival of Unleavened Bread and the enjoyment of the land's blessings. McConville anticipates this objection, and responds that (i) the link between Unleavened Bread and the blessings of the land is found in Exodus 13:5, a tradition "which may be supposed to have been widely known" and (ii) the extension of the Passover sacrifice to the herd establishes a link with the blessings of the land⁴⁰⁸. However, even if the extension of the Passover sacrifice to incorporate animals from the herd reflects a Deuteronomic emphasis on the blessings of the land it is not clear how this proves that such a link already existed between blessings and the consumption of unleavened bread. Even so, the most telling objection against McConville's argument is that Deuteronomy 16 actually provides an alternative rationale for the consumption of unleavened bread. In a later publication McConville argues that the presentation of Passover-Unleavened Bread as a unity should be related to centralising and

⁴⁰⁷ Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation*, pp86-89.

⁴⁰⁸ *Law and Theology*, pp115-6.

de-centralising tendencies within 16:1-8. Thus, while the people are required to gather at the “chosen place” to celebrate the Passover, verse 4 requires the removal of leaven throughout the territory for a seven day period. This dialectic between gathering and dispersion establishes a parallel between the people’s gathering at Horeb and their gathering before YHWH at the chosen place⁴⁰⁹. However, he does not discuss in detail how this contributes to our understanding of textual difficulties such as 3a.

The best explanation of the peculiarities of this half verse is that it is intended to emphasise the fact that both the Passover and the consumption of unleavened bread commemorate the departure from Egypt. As outlined earlier, the departure from Egypt is mentioned in each of the three sections identified in 16:1-8, and it actually stands at the centre of the section of which verse 3a is a part. More specifically, 16:1-8 is particularly concerned with the time of day at which the departure from Egypt took place and the manner in which this is reflected in the time at which the Passover is observed. By specifying that the consumption of unleavened bread is to occur “with” the Passover the author makes clear that it commemorates the same event as the Passover, notwithstanding its different period of ritual observance⁴¹⁰. Interestingly, this same relationship between the ritual time of the observance of Unleavened Bread and the time of the event it commemorates is found at Exodus 12:17-20. Here the people are directed to celebrate a seven day Festival, because it was on “this very day” (בַּעֲצֹם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה) that they came out from Egypt. One could also envisage a certain imprecision of expression – the “with it” only specifying that part of the seven days during which Passover is eaten. A more precise, but more cumbersome expression can be avoided because the context makes the one day of Passover and the seven day duration of Unleavened Bread sufficiently clear.

⁴⁰⁹ McConville, ‘Deuteronomy’s Unification of Passover and Massot: A Response to Bernard M. Levinson’, pp54-6.

⁴¹⁰ A similar case is made by Tigay – “By saying literally ‘You shall not eat anything leavened with it; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it,’ it relates both prohibitions to the sacrifice and then explains, in the last part of the verse, that both commemorate the haste of the Exodus. This implies that the prohibition of eating leaven with the original pesah sacrifice was a foreshadowing of the next day’s hasty departure.” *Deuteronomy*, p154.

Verse 3 further describes unleavened bread as the “bread of affliction” (לחם עני). Elsewhere עני is used to describe the suffering of the people during their time in Egypt⁴¹¹. While Deuteronomy is certainly aware of Israel’s servitude in Egypt, the verse goes on to relate the consumption of Unleavened Bread to the circumstances of their departure. This is done by means of two clauses, introduced by כי and למען respectively. It seems best to regard these two clauses as being parallel rather than the second being dependent on the first⁴¹². That is, they provide two different, but related, rationales for the observance of the Festival of Unleavened Bread.

The first clause relates the consumption of unleavened bread to the circumstances of the departure from Egypt – the people came out in “fearful haste”⁴¹³ (בחפזון). The other occurrences of this noun in the Old Testament are also found within an exodus context. In Exodus 12:11 it refers to the manner in which the Israelites are to consume the Passover in Egypt, and in Isaiah 52:12 the people are told that their departure from exile will not be in haste (כי לא בחפזון תצאו). In light of the ‘New Exodus’ theme in Isaiah 40-55 this usage establishes both a parallel and a distinction between the two events. However, it is Exodus 12:39 which provides the narrative basis for the relationship between the hasty departure from Egypt and the consumption of unleavened bread. Here is stated that the people baked unleavened bread because the speed of their departure from Egypt meant they were unable to add leaven to the dough.

The second clause states that the purpose of consuming unleavened bread is to remember the day of Israel’s departure from Egypt (למען תזכר את־יום צאתך מארץ מצרים). As

⁴¹¹ Exodus 3:7, 3:17, 4:31 and Deuteronomy 26:7.

⁴¹² So Morrow, *Scribing the Center*, p135, who cites other instances of double motivations from Deuteronomy, although in these instances the למען clause precedes the כי clause. It is certainly possible that in 16:3 the second clause is dependent on the first, in which case the circumstances of the departure from Egypt result in its being remembered by subsequent generations. However, given that the passage is concerned with cultic observance, it is more likely that both clauses relate directly to the consumption of Unleavened Bread.

⁴¹³ The noun has overtones of anxiety as well as haste (Driver, *Deuteronomy*, p193). This is apparent from the cognate verb, which is used in Deuteronomy 20:3 to describe an army fleeing from its enemies.

outlined in the previous chapter, in Deuteronomy the people are frequently directed to remember the circumstances of their sojourn in Egypt and YHWH's deliverance and leading through the wilderness. In Chapter 16, however, the people are not commanded to remember, but to observe Passover/Unleavened Bread in order that they may remember. Moreover, the content of memory is not the experience of slavery in Egypt or the wanderings in Egypt, but the departure from Egypt⁴¹⁴. This particular association is strengthened by ritual mimesis, whereby the observation is shaped to reflect the circumstances of the departure – the consumption of unleavened bread reflecting the haste of the departure and the slaughter of the Passover in the evening reflecting the timing⁴¹⁵. It further needs to be considered how such mimesis relates to memory – are the two to be equated, or are they to be treated as cause and effect? Braulik argues for the former; namely that remembrance is the cultic actualisation (*Vergegenwärtigung*) of the exodus event so that the participant in the Festival of Unleavened Bread was incorporated into its salvific effect⁴¹⁶. The alternative, namely that ritual observance is not equivalent with memory but leads to it is presented by Schottroff – “das Gedenken ist gar nicht das Erleben einer Kulthandlung, sondern resultiert aus ihr.”⁴¹⁷

The fact that according to verse 3 the remembrance of the exodus is to endure “all the days of your life” (כל ימי חיך) supports the second interpretation. Elsewhere in Deuteronomy this phrase is used with reference to a life-long commitment to the commandments of YHWH, either by the people (4:9, 6:2) or the king (17:19). In other words, the exodus memory is not equivalent to an annual ritual experience but is a year-long state of mind. This still leaves open the question of precisely how the observance of Passover\Unleavened

⁴¹⁴ G. Braulik, ‘Leidengedächtnisfeier und Freudenfest’, p106.

⁴¹⁵ On the importance of mimesis in Deuteronomy see N. Lohfink, ‘Opferzentralisation, Säkularisierungstheorie und mimetische Theorie’ in *Studien zum Deuteronomium und zur deuteronomistischen Literatur* (SBAB; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1995), pp219-260.

⁴¹⁶ “Die Erinnerung an die Bedrängnis beim nächtlichen Auszug wird zwar kultdramatisch vergegenwärtigt.” ‘Leidengedächtnisfeier und Freudenfest’ p106; in the context of discussing Deuteronomy 16 Schmitt quotes with approval the comment of Blair – “If one remembers in the biblical sense, the past is brought into the present with compelling force... Memory meant activity.” Rainer Schmitt, *Exodus und Passah*, p72.

⁴¹⁷ *Gedenken im Alten Testament*, p126.

Bread contributes to such a state of consciousness. It is unlikely that this question can be answered unless Deuteronomy is considered within a broader canonical context. Certainly, the fact that the content of the exodus memory in Deuteronomy 16 differs in emphasis from that presupposed elsewhere in the book points in this direction. Indeed, the closest parallel to Deuteronomy 16:3 is found not in Deuteronomy but at Exodus 13:3. Both verses describe the significance of Unleavened Bread; both speak of remembering the day of the peoples' departure (אֲזָכָר). However Exodus 13:3ff then sets the observance within a broader catechetical context where the significance of the rite can be explained to subsequent generations. Moreover Exodus 13:9 states that the result of such observance and explanation will be that YHWH's Torah will be on the lips of his people; within the Deuteronomic worldview discussing the Torah is fundamental to the people's identity⁴¹⁸. Thus, when Deuteronomy 16:3 and Exodus 13:3ff are read alongside each other it becomes apparent how ritual practice shapes memory. The practice of Passover\Unleavened Bread forms part of a 'virtuous circle' whereby observance leads to memory which leads to discussion of Torah, which then sustains further observance and so on.

Verse four consists of two prohibitions, both ending with a time reference. Both concern the exclusion of a specific item from a particular place during or before a specified time. The first concerns the removal of leaven⁴¹⁹ for a seven day period. The people are instructed that leaven shall not be seen in their possession⁴²⁰ throughout the whole territory. The wording of the prohibition is identical to Exodus 13:7bβ. Similar instructions are also found at Exodus 12:15 and 12:19, although here the leaven is to be removed from houses rather than the territory as a whole.

⁴¹⁸ Deuteronomy 6:7, 11:19.

⁴¹⁹ The term used here, שֶׁאֵר, normally refers to leaven itself, as opposed to חֶמֶץ, which normally refers to leavened bread (hence its association with eating, as in Deuteronomy 16:3). However, the use of the two terms in Leviticus 2:11 suggests the distinction is not absolute.

⁴²⁰ Reading לְ as indicating possession. Some commentators (eg Morrow) translate the verse "shall be seen by you". However, where the niphal of רָאָה is used in this sense the normal preposition is לְ.

The second prohibition requires that none of the Passover animal be allowed to remain until the next morning. Similar directions are give at Exodus 12:10 concerning the Passover in Egypt. However the closest linguistic parallel is Exodus 23:18b which concerns the fat of the festival sacrifice (ולא-ילין חלב-חגי עד-בקר), although there are differences⁴²¹. As noted earlier, the first half of this verse appears to have influenced Deuteronomy 16:3aα. Levinson argues that prior to the insertion of Unleavened Bread material Deuteronomy 16:3aα and 4b were continuous⁴²². However, given that Levinson eschews any attempt to reconstruct redactional layers with Deuteronomy 16, it is difficult to see how he can speak of an ‘original’ text into which other material was interpolated. It is more likely that while Deuteronomy has drawn on earlier material, it has done so to demonstrate its continuity with the earlier material, and the arrangement of the material reflects the scheme outlined earlier.

5.3.2.3 16:5-8

Verses 5 to 8 also deal with the observance of Passover and Unleavened Bread. However, in contrast to verses 2 to 4 the arrangement of the material is chronological rather than thematic.

Syntactically, the absence of a *waw* at the commencement of verse 5 marks a new section. Verses 5 and 6 form a unit which gives directions concerning the time and place at which the Passover animal is to be slaughtered:

לא תוכל לזבח את-הפסח	Passover
באחד שערך אשר-יהיה אלהיך נתן לך	Place: prohibited
כי אם-אל-המקום אשר-יבחר יהיה אלהיך לשכן שמו שם	Place: permitted
תזבח את-הפסח	Passover

⁴²¹ Specifically, the Exodus passage uses the preposition עד while Deuteronomy uses the preposition ל.

⁴²² Levinson Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation, p86.

The emphasis on celebrating the Passover at the place chosen by YHWH rather than in the towns (literally “gates”) reflects one of the key themes of Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy 16 is frequently understood as a polemic against the pre-Deuteronomic Passover, which was observed in a decentralised domestic setting. However, this is not explicit in the text, which grounds the need for a centralised Passover in the will of YHWH. Indeed, Deuteronomy 16:5-6 affirms that both the ‘gates’ and the chosen place are part of YHWH’s purpose for his people. The former have been given to them and the latter is the place where he has chosen to have his name dwell. But only the chosen place is a legitimate location for the Deuteronomic Passover.

Like verse 1, verse 6 is concerned to relate the time of the Passover observance to the time of the departure from Egypt. Here, it is stated that the departure took place at sunset, whereas verse one speaks of a departure taking place at night. This indicates that Deuteronomy is comfortable with a certain amount of temporal imprecision and warns against any attempt to contrast nocturnal and daylight exodus traditions⁴²³. Indeed, the closest parallel to verse 5 is Exodus 12:6, where it is the slaughtering of the Passover lamb, and not the departure from Egypt, which takes place at or around sunset.

Verse seven then gives directions for the preparation and consumption of the Passover. Much discussion has concerned the use of the verb **בשל** for the preparation of the Passover, since this method of preparation is apparently forbidden in Exodus 12:9

(אל-תאכלו ממנו נא ובשל מבשל במים). The most frequent explanation is that **בשל** means ‘boil’ and that Deuteronomy has chosen this method because it is the usual way of

⁴²³ Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* p77, points to texts such as Numbers 33:3 (P) and Exodus 12:22 (J) which indicate the departure took place in daylight. However, as Levinson acknowledges, another J text (Exodus 12:30-31) suggests a nocturnal departure. This suggests that the compilers of these texts either did not perceive a discrepancy, or did not feel that any discrepancy was sufficiently serious as to require ‘smoothing out.’

cooking sacrifices. Insofar as the Priestly directions resurrect older practices, Deuteronomy 16:7 can also be understood as a polemic against the pre-Deuteronomic Passover⁴²⁴.

However, a number of commentators, not all of whom can be characterised as ‘harmonisers’, argue that **בשל** may carry a more general meaning such as ‘cook’ and there is no necessary conflict between Deuteronomy 16 and Exodus 12⁴²⁵. An examination of the rest of the Old Testament indicates that **בשל** can be used for the ripening of fruit (Genesis 40:10, Joel 3:13) which suggests a general meaning such as ‘to bring to a state fit for human consumption.’ However, when **בשל** refers to the preparation of food by a human agent, it carries a narrower range of meaning than ‘cook’. This is apparent from 1 Sam 2:15, where **בשר מבשל** is contrasted with **בשר לצלות**, the latter being the verb used for the preparation of the Passover in Exodus 12. However, ‘boil’ unnecessarily narrows the meaning of **בשל**. In Exodus 16:23 and Numbers 11:18 it is used for the cooking of the manna, which appears to have been baked rather than boiled. The best explanation for the data is that the normal meaning of **בשל** is ‘to cook something in a container’, whether or not that cooking involved baking or boiling in some form of liquid⁴²⁶. In contrast **צלה** involves roasting meat directly over the fire.

This would indicate that the directions for cooking the Passover animal in Deuteronomy 16 are different from those in Exodus 12. Nevertheless, this does not require the conclusion that the motivation for the change is to accommodate a nomadic method of food

⁴²⁴ So Levinson, who describes the absence of instructions for the cooking and consumption of the Passover in pre-deuteronomic texts as a puzzle.

⁴²⁵ Jacob, *Exodus*, p307; McConville, *Law and Theology*, pp117-118; and more tentatively Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, p155; Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, p259 and Driver, *Deuteronomy*, p194.

⁴²⁶ As argued by Morrow, *Scribing the Center*, p132. A problem for this reconstruction is 2 Chronicles 35:13, which says of the Passover under Josiah **באש הכסה ובשלו**, while the accompanying holy offerings are cooked in various containers. Levinson describes this verse as an example of inner-biblical exegesis which attempts to reconcile divergent legal traditions. *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation*, p73. Alternatively, this verse could indicate that **בשל** could refer to roasting when modified by **באש**, but not when it stood by itself.

preparation to the standard sacrificial method of food preparation⁴²⁷. First, it cannot be presumed that roasting food was exclusive to or particularly characteristic of nomadic populations⁴²⁸. And while **בשל** is used in sacrificial contexts, it is also used for food preparation in other settings.

A better explanation is that the different methods of food preparation reflect the nature of the respective Passovers. Exodus 12 stresses the family-based nature of the celebration in the selection of the animal, which is chosen on the basis of one animal for each household. In such a setting it makes sense to select a small animal since all of the meat is to be consumed before the next morning. There is also a concern that the animal be prepared in such a way to reflect this – it is to be cooked as a whole, eaten in one house and none of its bones are to be broken. Since cooking in a pot would necessitate breaking up the animal, roasting is an appropriate method of preparation.

The Passover of Deuteronomy 16 is more concerned to stress the national aspect of the celebration. As such it is not surprising that larger animals would be chosen and that the method of cooking chosen would be appropriate to such animals. That is, the different prescriptions in Exodus 12 and Deuteronomy 16 have the same purpose – of expressing the people's unity and participation in the Passover observance. This common intention should not be obscured by attempts to use the texts to reconstruct a history of Israelite cultic practice.

According to verse 7 the people are to return to their tents in the morning after the Passover is consumed. Within the Deuteronomistic History **אֶהְיֶה לָהֶם** can be used for permanent dwellings, and it could have this meaning here. That is, the people are simply directed to return to their homes on the morning after the Passover⁴²⁹. However, this does not explain

⁴²⁷ As argued by Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation*, p72.

⁴²⁸ Apart from Exodus 12, the only other use of **בשל** in the Old Testament is Isaiah 44:16, where the cook is an artisan rather than a nomad.

⁴²⁹ As argued by Tigay, *Deuteronomy* p155; Driver, *Deuteronomy* p194; Braulik, 'Leidegedächtnisfeier und Freudenfest', p107.

why 16:7 does not use בְּתִים, the normal word in Deuteronomy and elsewhere for a permanent dwelling.

Alternatively, 16:7 could refer to the tents in which pilgrims camped in and around Jerusalem during the observance of Passover and Unleavened Bread. Although this is certainly compatible with later Jewish practice it is not clear that this is what Deuteronomy 16 has in mind, since the only activity which is explicitly declared to take place at the chosen place is the Passover ritual on the first evening.

Within the Former Prophets the language of people returning to their tents occurs frequently in a military context, where it refers to the dispersal of an army after victory or defeat⁴³⁰. It also used in Joshua 22, with reference to the dispersion of the Eastern tribes after their gathering before Joshua. Since this occurs during the conquest of the land it may well have military overtones. At 1 Kings 8:66 it describes the dispersion of the people of Israel after the festival at the dedication of the temple. In some of these contexts, as in the case of a temporary military encampment, actual tents may be in view. More generally, the language of returning to אֱהָלִים is used in the context of a military and/or cultic gathering involving the people or their representatives. McConville suggests a further parallel within the book of Deuteronomy. Noting that Deuteronomy 5:30 describes the people camped in tents at Horeb, he argues that the language of 16:7 is part of a broader linkage between Horeb and the chosen place, linked by the concept of Israel standing in YHWH's presence. This serves to assert a continuity between the gathering before YHWH and the regular life of the people. This means the exact nature of the אֱהָלִים remains open within the terms of Deuteronomy 16⁴³¹.

⁴³⁰ Eg Judges 20:8, I Samuel 4:10, 13:2, 2 Samuel 18:17, 19:8, 20:1, 20:2.

⁴³¹ McConville, 'Deuteronomy's Unification of Passover and Massot: A Response to Bernard M. Levinson', pp54-55. See also Morrow, *Scribing the Center*, p145 – "I conclude that 16:7b is ambiguous. Its range of meaning is commensurate both with the supposition that the worshippers are to return to their real home territory or to some temporary dwelling in the vicinity of the shrine YHWH has chosen."

All this suggests that אֱהָלִים is used here because of what it says about the nature of the people's gathering, not what it says about the nature of their dwellings. It would strengthen the associations between the Passover and Exodus and emphasise the corporate and national aspects of the Feast. In this light, the later association between Passover and hopes for the deliverance from foreign rule is not surprising.

Verse 8 deals with the observance of Unleavened Bread subsequent to the Passover. The verse does not specify the location at which Unleavened Bread was to be eaten. Those writers who believe that verse 7 mandates a return home generally assume that Unleavened Bread was eaten during the journey home and/or in the domestic setting⁴³². However this view faces two serious objections. Firstly, the degree of integration between Passover and Unleavened Bread evident in verses 2 to 4 would be difficult to achieve if the observances took place in different locations. Secondly, Deuteronomy 16:16 describes Unleavened Bread as a מִן and designates it as one of the three occasions each year during which all the males are to appear before YHWH at the chosen place. Levinson argues that the description of Unleavened Bread as a מִן is due to Deuteronomy's citation of the festival calendar in Exodus 23:15-17 and does not necessarily reflect actual practice⁴³³. The problem with this argument is that Deuteronomy 16:16 does not merely cite the Exodus passage but supplements it with a version of the 'centralisation formula', which would not be appropriate if one of the three Feasts mentioned was not to be observed at the chosen place.

A further difficulty in envisaging a de-centralised observance of Unleavened Bread is verse 8, which enjoins a "solemn assembly" (עֲצֵרָה) and the cessation of work on the seventh day. On the two other occasions in the Old Testament when a עֲצֵרָה is prescribed together

⁴³² The consumption of unleavened bread during the journey home is stressed by Braulik, who sees it as a means of re-enacting the departure from Egypt and the wandering in the wilderness and incorporating the participant within those events, 'Leidengedächtnisfeier und Freudenfest' pp103-5. Levinson argues that just as Deuteronomy diverted Passover from the domestic sphere to the central sanctuary, so it diverted the observance of Unleavened Bread from the local sanctuaries to the domestic sphere.

⁴³³ Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation, p89.

with the cessation of work, one gathering for the whole of the people, rather than a series of local gatherings is clearly in view⁴³⁴. Further support for this understanding may be found in Exodus 13:6, which refers to a מִסֵּב on the seventh day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread. Whether or not this passage depends on Deuteronomy 16 or vice versa it does witness to a common tradition of a national gathering at the end of the festival. It may be that the cessation of work meant that those Israelites who did not take part in the gathering were still caught up in the celebration.

This still leaves open the question of whether worshippers remained at or around the chosen place during the period of time between the Passover and the solemn assembly. The idea of two pilgrimages within one week does seem somewhat unlikely, although Gertz argues that even in the context of territorial expansion in late pre-exilic Judah the demand for a second assembly at the central sanctuary would not be unreasonable⁴³⁵. It could be that there was some difference between the groups undertaking the two pilgrimages. In any case, the provisions concerning Unleavened Bread are concerned not just with worship at the chosen place, but with how the memory of the Exodus can be reflected in worship throughout the land.

5.4 Conclusion

The threefold structure of Deuteronomy 16:1-8 not only places the observance of Passover and Unleavened Bread within Deuteronomic theology. It also establishes a relationship between Deuteronomy 16 and other canonical accounts of the festivals, both as they were observed in Egypt and as they are to be observed by future generations.

⁴³⁴ Leviticus 23:26 and Numbers 29:35, both of which are in the context of legislation concerning the Festival of Booths. Isaiah 1:13 and Amos 5:21 may use עֲצֵרָה to refer to de-centralised assemblies, although this conclusion would depend on a particular reconstruction of Israel's cultic history rather than any explicit indication in the text themselves.

⁴³⁵ Gertz, 'Die Passa-Massot-Ordnung', p65.

Verses 2 to 4, through their combination of Passover and Unleavened Bread and the centring of the combined festival around the exodus theme resonate with those traditions, typically found in Exodus 12:1-13:16, where the emphasis is on the remembrance of the departure from Egypt and temporal and logical boundaries are blurred to achieve this end. Verses 5 to 8, where the festivals are considered separately in chronological order resonate with traditions such as Leviticus 23:5-8, where the purpose is to provide a 'running order' for cultic practice and there is a minimum of references to the circumstances of the departure from Egypt or the circumstances in which the festivals were instituted. Verse 1 unites both perspectives by placing both under the rubric of observance, a concept with strong resonances in Deuteronomy and other legal traditions.

It is now possible to make some remarks concerning the relationship between the Deuteronomic Passover and the themes of exodus, community and memory.

5.4.1 Passover and Exodus

The tradition of Israel's departure from Egypt plays an important role in Deuteronomy 16:1-8. As outlined above, the exodus reference is the centre of the thematic overview in verses 2-4. There are also references to the departure from Egypt in the introduction in verse 1 and in the chronological summary in verses 5 to 8.

Kreuzer identifies three aspects of the exodus tradition in Deuteronomy 16⁴³⁶. The first is the association of the exodus with Unleavened Bread, which is drawn from older traditions. The second is the alignment of individual elements of the combined Passover-Unleavened Bread celebration with aspects of the exodus experience. This represents a historicizing of both observances. The third is the use of the exodus motif, and the memory of slavery in particular, as an ethical motivation. However, in Deuteronomy 16, the third use is found explicitly only with reference to the Festival of Weeks.

⁴³⁶ Kreuzer, 'Die Exodustradition im Deuteronomium', pp84-87.

Kreuzer's conclusions are not dissimilar from other commentators, who argue that in Deuteronomy the remembrance of the exodus has replaced the protection of the family group as the purpose of the Passover. This change of focus was achieved by uniting the Passover with the Festival of Unleavened Bread, which already had strong exodus associations⁴³⁷. This process was aided by the fact that the pre-Deuteronomic Passover and Festival of Unleavened Bread occurred at the same time of year, although it is only in Deuteronomy that they are brought into such a close relationship. On this reconstruction Deuteronomy represents the first stage in the historicisation of the Passover, a process which is further developed in later legislation when individual elements of the Passover celebration are related to elements of the exodus narrative⁴³⁸.

It is important in evaluating this reconstruction to examine in detail the use of the exodus tradition in Deuteronomy 16:1-8. Where the exodus is related to Passover as such, it is the time of the Passover, rather than the place of its celebration, which is emphasised. In verses 1 and 6 the nocturnal departure from Egypt is the justification for the nocturnal slaughter of the Passover. This is the only place in Deuteronomy which mentions that the departure from Egypt took place at night, which suggests that the celebration of the Passover at night was part of pre-Deuteronomic tradition. This still leaves open the question of whether the Passover was already linked with the exodus, since it is possible that nocturnal celebration of the rite could be attributed to reasons other than the exodus association⁴³⁹. However, the idea that Deuteronomy was prepared to be radically innovative in the location of the Passover, while remaining bound to the time of the celebration for no other reason than custom and practice, is somewhat improbable. A more

⁴³⁷ See Otto, article פסח, p676; Braulik. 'Leidengedächtnisfeier und Freudenfest', p105 who also argues that Deuteronomy has transformed Unleavened Bread traditions in that the exodus is no longer described exclusively as the departure of Israel (as in verse 3), but also as the action of YHWH (as in verse 1).

⁴³⁸ cf the comment of Wellhausen, "From this it follows that the elaboration of the historical motive of the Passover is not earlier than Deuteronomy, although perhaps a certain inclination to that way of explaining it appears before then ..." *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, p88.

⁴³⁹ Eg some commentators have suggested that the Passover may have been celebrated at night prior to its association with the exodus since this was the normal time for nomads to eat their meals.

plausible explanation is that Deuteronomy recognises an established connection between the Passover and the circumstances of the departure from Egypt.

Such a conclusion is strengthened if, as most commentators believe, the account of the Passover in Exodus 12:21-23 is pre-Deuteronomic. It is true that these verses do not explicitly relate future celebrations of the Passover to the departure from the Egypt, but the narrative association between the institution of the Passover and the circumstances surrounding the exodus would ensure that these associations were evoked by any subsequent celebration.

In this light, it is unlikely that Deuteronomy represents a thoroughgoing historicisation of either Passover or Unleavened Bread. Certainly, there is no attempt to link details of the celebration with details of the exodus, with the exception of the mention of affliction and haste in verse 3. Once again, these are elements of the exodus tradition which are not stressed elsewhere in Deuteronomy. In Exodus 12 they are associated with the consumption of Unleavened Bread, as indeed they are in Deuteronomy 16. Hence, Deuteronomy is conservative rather than innovative in this regard.

5.4.2 *Passover and Community*

A canonical perspective also calls into question the contention that Deuteronomy represents a change in the focus of the Passover from the clan or family to the nation as a whole.

The comment of Levinson is not untypical – “This emphasis on the clan is widely recognized as owing to the Passover’s origin in the nomadic culture of the pre-Settlement period. In sociological terms, the family setting points to the origin of the stipulations in *Gemeinschaft* rather than a complex, national *Gesellschaft*.”⁴⁴⁰ The family origin of the Passover is reconstructed on the basis of other Pentateuchal traditions and parallel customs in the Ancient Near East. Deuteronomy’s stipulation that the Passover not be celebrated

⁴⁴⁰ Levinson, Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation, pp57-58.

within any of the Israelite towns (16:5) is usually taken as a veiled polemic against prior practice.

However, there is no account of the Passover in the Old Testament which portrays it as a purely family celebration with no reference to the wider Israelite community. It is true that the account of the Egyptian Passover uses family or clan based terminology⁴⁴¹. However, previous chapters have outlined the community-wide perspective in the narrative of the Egyptian Passover. Naturally given the narrative setting of the first Passover it could not take place at the chosen place in the land as required by Deuteronomy. The unity of the community in the Passover was not so much spatial but temporal and experiential – they were united by performing the various rituals at the same time and through sharing the experience of protection from the firstborn plague and following this, the departure from Egypt.

This is not dissimilar to Deuteronomy 16:1-8. While the passage is clearly interested in the spatial location of the Passover, it is the temporal and experiential aspects of the celebration which are arguably even more important. As outlined above the passage is concerned to establish a link between the time of the departure from Egypt and the time at which the Passover animals are slaughtered. Structurally, verses 2 to 4 place the national experience of departure from Egypt at the heart of the combined Passover/Unleavened Bread celebration.

It is also possible that this emphasis on the temporal and experiential unity expressed in the Passover resulted in some relaxation of the spatial prescriptions found elsewhere in Deuteronomy. It is notable that 16:1-8 contains no directions to the worshippers to eat or rejoice before YHWH (לפני יהוה) similar to those found in the context of general

⁴⁴¹ Eg 12:3 (P) indicates that a lamb is to be selected for each **בֵּית־אָב**. This term is used in the patriarchal narratives to refer to the clan or extended household (eg Genesis 12:1, 20:3, 24:7, 24:40). In the exodus and wilderness traditions it can be used for a broader entity such one of the twelve tribes (eg Numbers 1:2 and following). At 12:21 (JE) the elders are instructed to take a lamb for their families (**למשפחותיכם**) and in 12:24-27 the instruction concerning the significance of the Passover takes place within a family context.

sacrifices (12:7, 18), tithes (14:23), the firstling of livestock (15:20) and the festival of weeks (16:11). In all these instances **לפני יהוה** occurs in addition to a version of the centralisation formula. The best explanation of this pattern is that **לפני יהוה** has a narrower meaning than the centralisation formula. While the latter can refer to the central sanctuary or the area in which it is located (ie Jerusalem in a broader canonical context) **לפני יהוה** indicates immediate proximity to the sanctuary itself⁴⁴². This is apparent from passages such as Deuteronomy 18:6-7, where the Levites come to the chosen place to minister before YHWH, and Deuteronomy 26:1-10, where the worshipper is directed to take the first-fruits of the harvest to the chosen place and set it before YHWH, ie before his altar (verse 4).

The absence of the phrase in Deuteronomy 16:1-8 may indicate that it envisaged the Passover being eaten anywhere in the city, rather than before the altar. This may be due to reason of practicalities – if it was important for the community to slaughter and consume the meal at the same time some degree of dispersion would be necessary. In the case of other cultic observances, where it was not so important for all the community to engage in the same activity at the same time on the same day, it would be possible for individual families to bring their offerings to the altar and consume them there.

The emphasis on time rather than place is even stronger in the case of the Unleavened Bread material in Deuteronomy 16. There is no explicit link made between Unleavened Bread and the chosen place, although verse 3 indicates that the consumption of unleavened bread accompanies the Passover meal, which is eaten at a central location. However verses 4 and 7-8 suggest that the removal of leaven and the consumption of unleavened bread is to be observed throughout the whole land until the communal gathering on the final day of the festival. The synchronisation of the cultic observances means that whether the people are gathered or dispersed they are united in remembering the exodus which establishes their identity as the people of YHWH.

⁴⁴² On **לפני יהוה** as a reference to the localised presence of YHWH at the chosen place see Ian Wilson, Out of the Midst of the Fire: Divine Presence in Deuteronomy (SBLDS 151; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995).

5.4.3 *Passover and Memory*

Chapter One outlined Assmann's distinction between textual and ritual coherence as strategies for the preservation and communication of collective memory. In this context Assmann argues that the difference between oral and written societies is not the media for storing cultural memories, but the means employed for the retrieval of those memories. In primarily oral cultures those memories may be stored in a written form but it is only a small literate elite who can access those memories at any time. For the illiterate majority, these memories are only retrieved periodically when the text forms part of a festival or ritual. In this context, the national festival performs the function of a library or bookmarket. So, notwithstanding the existence of written texts, ritual coherence is the *modus operandi*⁴⁴³.

With the move from ritual to textual coherence, the most significant change is not necessarily the existence of written texts, but the methods employed for retrieving the memories stored within them. In place of rite and festival societies employ the methods of reading, memory, internalisation and interpretation to retrieve and communicate formative memory. This means such memories can be accessed continuously rather than periodically. There also develops a distinctive worldview in which the divine revelation in the text is opposed to alternative sources of revelation, which are discredited as idolatrous⁴⁴⁴.

It is noteworthy that Deuteronomy, and more specifically the deuteronomic Passover, does not fit easily into either category. While the latter chapters of the book portray it as a key artefact of collective memory, the only provision for the reading of the entire work places it within a festal context, and a septennial one at that (31:9-13). Moreover, the only command whose observance is a means to rather than the result of memory concerns the Festival of Passover/Unleavened Bread. This would suggest that Deuteronomy functions within a framework of ritual coherence, whereby central collective memories are retrieved periodically at national festal occasions.

⁴⁴³ *Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis*, pp128-131.

⁴⁴⁴ *Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis*, p164.

However, Deuteronomy also presupposes that the traditions and laws it contains will be the subject of everyday conversation (6:7, 11:19). When it comes to the Passover, it envisages that the memories it communicates will be constant rather than periodic – through the observance of Passover/Unleavened Bread the people are to remember their departure from Egypt all the days of their life (16:3). This is more characteristic of a society characterised by textual coherence in Assmann's terms, where the ongoing interaction with and interpretation of texts is the central cultural activity.

Assmann certainly regards Deuteronomy as an important marker in Israel's transition from ritual to textual coherence. It created a narrative world, a portable homeland which could sustain Israel's identity when she was separated from the traditional markers of land, temple and monarchy. However, the fact that the only activity which is expressly said to nurture memory – the observance of Passover/Unleavened Bread – must take place within the land at the chosen place tells against the thesis.

It seems better to assume that Deuteronomy contributes both to textual and ritual coherence, with the Passover being a paradigm of this process. The act of Passover/Unleavened Bread nurtures memory both by mimesis – by reflecting in rite certain aspects of the exodus experience – and by catechesis, by providing the opportunity for one generation to recount to another the fundamental events in Israel's past. Previous chapters have suggested that the process of mimesis predominates in Exodus 12:1-14, while catechesis predominates in Exodus 12:21-27. One can certainly observe aspects of mimesis in Deuteronomy 16:1-8 – for example, the timing of Passover to co-incide with the departure from Egypt, and the consumption of Unleavened Bread to mirror the haste of the departure. However, there is no provision for catechesis in this passage. There is no inter-generational dialogue analogous to that found in Exodus 12:25-27. It was suggested above that the element of catechesis only becomes apparent when Deuteronomy 16 is read in a broader canonical context. The linguistic and conceptual links between Deuteronomy 16:1-8 and Exodus 13:3-10 – the common concern to remember the day of the departure from Egypt – allow the inter-generational dialogue in Exodus 13:8-10 to become the means

by which the annual rite described in Deuteronomy 16 can contribute to a year- and life-long devotion to YHWH and his law. Once again, it becomes apparent that the development of canon does not necessarily elevate text over rite as a vehicle of collective memory but brings the two into a creative and subtle relationship.

CHAPTER SIX: MEMORY IN CHRONICLES

In view of the importance of the Passover in post-biblical Judaism, and the number of times it is mentioned within the Pentateuch, the paucity of references to the Passover in the historical books of the Old Testament is initially something of a surprise. There are only two brief descriptions of Passover celebrations in the Former Prophets. Joshua 5:10-12 describes a celebration of Passover by the Israelites at Gilgal on their entry into the land and 2 Kings 23:21-23 describes a Passover celebrated in Jerusalem in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign. Neither account gives many details of how the Passover was celebrated, although in both cases a national rather than purely domestic celebration is in view⁴⁴⁵. Within the Writings, Ezra 6:19-22 records a Passover celebrated by the returned exiles, and also refers to the festival of Unleavened Bread⁴⁴⁶.

By far the most detailed accounts of Passover celebrations after the departure from Egypt are found in the books of Chronicles. The first Passover, celebrated under Hezekiah, is recorded in 2 Chronicles 30 and has no parallel in Samuel-Kings. The second Passover, celebrated under Josiah, is recorded in 2 Chronicles 35, and is parallel to the account in 2 Kings 23, although there are a number of differences between the two accounts. Chapter Seven will examine these passages in detail. Before doing so, it is necessary to set them within the context of the books as a whole.

6.1 The Books of Chronicles

Several debates surround the books of Chronicles. Three in particular are worthy of discussion:

⁴⁴⁵ Nevertheless, this 'national' aspect is expressed slightly differently in the two accounts. The Passover under Josiah reflects the stipulations of Deuteronomy 16 in that the people intentionally gather in one place. In Joshua 5 the people's gathering in one place is inevitable in that they are in the process of journeying together to the promised land. In this respect it reflects the situation in Exodus 12.

⁴⁴⁶ On this passage see J. Fleishman, 'An Echo of Optimism in Ezra 6:19-22' *HUCA* (1999), pp15-29, who argues that the festival concludes the period of national destruction beginning with the Assyrian invasion.

- the date of the books' composition
- the relationship of the books of Chronicles to the books of Samuel, Kings, Ezra and Nehemiah
- the genre of Chronicles.

Of course these three issues, and the first two in particular, are intertwined. Nevertheless, it is appropriate to consider them in turn.

6.1.1 *Date of Composition*

A variety of dates have been suggested for the composition of Chronicles, from the late sixth century BCE⁴⁴⁷ down to the Maccabean era.⁴⁴⁸ An early dating would connect the writing with the reconstruction and re-establishment of the temple in the era of Haggai, Zechariah and Zerubbabel. Those who date the book to the Maccabean era relate it to the author's desire to protect Jewish worship from Hellenistic influence⁴⁴⁹, or argue that Chronicles marks the end of the formation of the Hebrew canon⁴⁵⁰.

There are problems, however, with both dates. Dating the books in the early post-exilic era requires that some or all of the genealogical material in 1 Chronicles 1-9 is secondary, given that 1 Chronicles 3:17-24 traces the descendants of Zerubbabel for at least two generations. However, far from being incidental to Chronicles, the first nine chapters anticipate several themes that are important to the work as a whole, including the place of

⁴⁴⁷ W. M. Schniedewind, 'The Chronicler as an Interpreter of Scripture' in M. Patrick Graham & Steven L. McKenzie (eds) *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (JSOTSS 263; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp158-180.

⁴⁴⁸ G. Steins, 'Zur Datierung der Chronik: Ein neuer methodischer Ansatz' *ZAW* 105/1 (1993), pp84-92; J. Kegler 'Prophetengestalten im Deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk und in den Chronikbüchern: Ein Beitrag zur Kompositions- und Redaktionsgeschichte der Chronikbücher' *ZAW* 105/2 (1993), pp481-497.

⁴⁴⁹ So Kegler.

⁴⁵⁰ So Steins.

Israel at the centre of YHWH's purposes for the world, and within Israel the importance of the tribes of Judah and Levi and the city of Jerusalem⁴⁵¹.

There is nothing in the books of Chronicles that would specifically place them in the Maccabean era. A concern for the purity of Israel's life and worship could be characteristic of much, if not all, of the post-exilic era, as witnessed by the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. And while Chronicles certainly refers to and interprets many earlier canonical works there is no evidence that the work is concerned with the closure of the canon as such⁴⁵².

For these and other reasons most commentators date the composition of Chronicles somewhere between the two extremes, with the fourth century BCE being the most common choice⁴⁵³.

6.1.2 Literary Relationships

There is no doubt that Chronicles stands towards the end of the complex process that formed the literature of the Old Testament. However, in the history of interpretation two issues of literary dependence and influence have recurred. The first concerns whether Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah were written by the same author. The second concerns

⁴⁵¹ See M. Oeming, *Das Wahre Israel: Die genealogische Vorhalle 1 Chronik 1-9* (BWANT 128; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1990), especially pp206-218. From a narratological perspective Wright argues that 1 Chronicles 1-9 incorporates the fabula (ie the narrated events and associated characters reconstructed in their chronological order) of the entire work. See J.W. Wright 'The Fabula of the Book of Chronicles' in M. Patrick Graham & Steven L. McKenzie (eds) *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (JSOTSS 263; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp136-157.

⁴⁵² So Z. Talshir 'Several Canon-Related Concepts Originating in Chronicles', *ZAW* 113/3 (2001), pp386-403. It is noteworthy that Chapman, who finds evidence of 'canon-conscious appendices' in the Law (Deuteronomy 34:1-12) and the Prophets (Malachi 3:23-24 [ET 4:5-6]) does not find a similar conclusion to the Writings. S.B. Chapman *The Law and the Prophets* (FAT 27; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000).

⁴⁵³ Eg I. Kalimi ('Die Abfassungszeit der Chronik – Forschungsstand und Perspektiven' *ZAW* 105/2 (1993), pp223-233) dates Chronicles to the first quarter of the fourth century BCE; H.G.M. Williamson (*1 and 2 Chronicles*. NCBC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) p16 favours a date around the middle of the fourth century, at the end of the Persian era; S. Japhet (*I & II Chronicles*. London: SCM Press, 1993), pp27-28 places it at the end of the fourth century, at the beginning of the Hellenistic era.

whether and how Chronicles used Samuel-Kings as a source in the construction of its narrative.

Following the work of Zunz in the early nineteenth century the assumption of most scholarship in the next one hundred and fifty years was that Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah were the work of a single author, or at least reflected the same traditions and ideology. However in the last generation this consensus has been challenged by the work of Japhet and Williamson. In a 1968 article⁴⁵⁴ and her larger work *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought*⁴⁵⁵ Japhet has listed several differences between the language and thought-worlds of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah. These include the importance of the exodus and conquest traditions and the significance of the exile.

Japhet's arguments for a distinctive authorship for Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah were supported and expanded by H.G.M. Williamson in his 1977 work *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*⁴⁵⁶. As the title of the work suggests, it is concerned with Chronicles' understanding of Israel's identity. He argues that Ezra-Nehemiah has an exclusive understanding of Israelite identity. Israel consists only of those members of Judah and Babylon returned from exile, together with every person who joined them. In both books there is a strong polemic against mixed marriages and other developments that the author saw as diluting the ethnic and religious identity of Israel. In contrast, Chronicles has a more inclusive view of Israel. For example, far from being condemned, examples of mixed marriages are included at several points in the genealogical material. Williamson also notes Chronicles' marked emphasis on Jacob compared to Ezra-Nehemiah's stress on the

⁴⁵⁴ S. Japhet, 'The Supposed Common Authorship of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah Investigated Anew' *VT* 18 (1968), pp332-72.

⁴⁵⁵ *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1989). This work is substantially a translation of Japhet's dissertation which was published in Hebrew in 1977.

⁴⁵⁶ H.G.M. Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), especially pp60-70.

election of Abraham and the importance of the doctrine of immediate retribution in Chronicles compared to its complete absence in Ezra-Nehemiah.

While the position of Japhet and Williamson has been adopted by most subsequent commentators there are some dissenters⁴⁵⁷. For the sake of simplicity this and the following chapter will assume that Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah were written by different author(s). Hence any reference to 'the Chronicler' will cover the books of Chronicles only.

The books of Chronicles cover much of the same ground as Samuel-Kings although there are significant differences between the two works. For example, Samuel-Kings dwells at much greater length on the period before David's reign and on the rise and fall of the Northern Kingdom, while Chronicles contains much greater detail on the organisation of the temple service. Scholarship has sought to find the model of literary relationship that best explains this pattern of similarity and difference. More specifically, what sources has the Chronicler used in the construction of his work and was Samuel-Kings amongst them?

Peltonen has surveyed the history of research into the sources utilised by the author or authors of Chronicles⁴⁵⁸. He notes the existence of three schools of thought in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The first school of thought argued that the Chronicler made use of unknown sources – that is documents unknown to us and not recoverable from elsewhere in the Old Testament. Sometimes this reconstruction was associated with apologetic intentions, as in the case of Keil who defended Chronicles' historical reliability by arguing that it and Samuel-Kings were independent extracts from a common source. The second school of thought held that Chronicles utilised both known and unknown sources. A prominent representative of this view was F.C. Movers, who argued that Chronicles made use of two main sources – the canonical books of Samuel-Kings and a

⁴⁵⁷ Eg J. Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah* (London: SCM Press, 1989), pp47-54.

⁴⁵⁸ K. Peltonen, 'Function, Explanation and Literary Phenomena: Aspects of Source Criticism as Theory and Method in the History of Chronicles Research' in M.P. Graham & S.L. McKenzie (eds) *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (JSOTSS 263; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp18-69.

postexilic Midrash on the book of Kings. Nevertheless, he was positive about Chronicles' historical reliability. The third school of thought was that only known sources of Chronicles, which in practice meant the books of Samuel-Kings and some Pentateuchal traditions, were relevant to the work of the commentator. The exemplar and to a large extent the originator of this approach was W.M.L de Wette, who argued that Chronicles had modified and distorted Samuel-Kings' portrayal of Israel's pre-exilic history in order to provide a justification for various aspects of Pentateuchal legislation. While it was theoretically possible that the author of Chronicles did have access to sources other than Samuel-Kings, such sources were entirely hypothetical and as such their existence could not be used to bolster the historical reliability of Chronicles.

For much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the last two views have prevailed. That is, most commentators have accepted that the author of Chronicles made use of Samuel-Kings but have differed over whether the Chronicler had access to other sources and to what extent the Chronicler provides a historically accurate picture of pre-exilic Israel, particularly where his narrative diverges from that of Samuel-Kings. Wellhausen was particularly scathing about the Chronicler's re-working of Samuel-Kings⁴⁵⁹. One can contrast the approaches of three commentators from the second half of the twentieth century, all of whom regard Samuel-Kings as a major source for Chronicles. Rudolph argues that Chronicles has in fact had access to an expanded version of Samuel-Kings⁴⁶⁰. When it comes to historical reliability Rudolph admits that Chronicles has schematised history in order to make clear the relationship between human conduct and divine blessing or judgement. Nevertheless, he states that in many instances Chronicles has enriched our knowledge of the history of the Judean kings, although particular items such as the numbers of soldiers or sacrifices in particular narratives owe more to homiletic intent than historical

⁴⁵⁹ Cf the comment on p200 of his *Prolegomena* – “Chronicles reaps the fruits of its perversions of 2 Kings xii in its reproduction of the nearly related and closely connected section 2 Kings xxii 3-10”; and on p209 “the triumphs given by the Chronicler to his favourites have none of them any historical effect, but merely serve to add a momentary splendour to their reigns.”

⁴⁶⁰ W. Rudolph. *Chronikbücher*. (HAT; Tübingen: JCB Mohr, 1955), ppXI-XII.

reality⁴⁶¹. Williamson regards it as very likely that the author of Chronicles had access to additional sources for the history of the pre-exilic period. He speculates that commonalities in subject matter suggest that some of these sources may have been longer documents, such as military censuses or reports. He is cautious about making global statements concerning Chronicles' value for reconstructing pre-exilic history; such assessments are best made on a case-by-case basis⁴⁶². Japhet believes it is likely that the Chronicler has made use of extra-biblical sources but she concludes that "they do not seem to display any comprehensive unity – of literary method, historical presuppositions or theology – which would justify their ascription to one work, analogous to the Deuteronomistic history."⁴⁶³ Like Williamson she assesses the reliability of the Chronicler's sources on a case by case basis.

Another trend in Chronicles' research, which reflects developments in Old Testament research as a whole, has been an increasing number of studies that examine the literary and/or theological aspects of the work while 'bracketing out' questions of historical reliability⁴⁶⁴. Insofar as Chronicles is brought into the dialogue with history this is the history of the period in which it was composed, rather than the history of the events it purports to describe⁴⁶⁵.

⁴⁶¹ Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, ppXVII-XVIII.

⁴⁶² Williamson *1 and 2 Chronicles*, pp19-21.

⁴⁶³ Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, p23.

⁴⁶⁴ Recent studies which focus on literary aspects of Chronicles include R.K. Duke, *The Persuasive Appeal of the Chronicler: A Rhetorical Analysis* (JSOTSS 88; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1990) and 'A Rhetorical Approach to Appreciating the Books of Chronicles' in M.P. Graham & S.L.McKenzie (eds) *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (JSOTSS 263; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp100-135; J.W. Wright 'The Fabula of the Book of Chronicles'. Recent works which focus on theological or ideological aspects of the work include John W. Kleinig, *The Lord's Song: The Basis, Function and Significance of Choral Music in Chronicles* (JSOTSS 156; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993) and Brian E. Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles* (JSOTSS 211; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996). Generally speaking, such studies do not deny the historiographical intent of Chronicles but their interests lie primarily in expounding the text of Chronicles rather than examining how it corresponds to extra-textual reality.

⁴⁶⁵ An example is J.E. Dyck, *The Theocratic Ideology of the Chronicler*. (Leiden: Brill, 1998) which relates the motives and intentions of the Chronicler to the social context of the post-exilic community. Chronicles furthers the interest of the temple hierarchy by showing how in the past Israel's identity was assured by the people's loyalty to the temple.

As outlined above, the consensus position in the twentieth century has been that Chronicles made use of Samuel-Kings as its sole or major source. In recent years this position has been challenged by Graeme Auld, who argues that Samuel-Kings and Chronicles are independent redactions of a common source⁴⁶⁶. In some ways this is analogous to the position of Keil in the nineteenth century. However, whereas Keil used his reconstruction to support the historical reliability of Chronicles, Auld questions the reliability of both Samuel-Kings and Chronicles. That is, the contrast is not between Samuel-Kings, which is essentially ‘objective’ and historically reliable, and Chronicles which is a tendentious modification of the earlier work. Rather, both Samuel-Kings and Chronicles have modified an earlier source in accordance with their own interests, and neither should be regarded as an unbiased account of the pre-exilic era.

Auld’s thesis still needs to be worked out in detail, as he himself admits⁴⁶⁷. Even if it is valid, it makes little difference to the interpretation of the Passover texts in Chronicles. There is no account of Hezekiah’s Passover in either Samuel-Kings or in Auld’s common source. In either case, the author of Chronicles has fashioned a narrative which had no precedent in his major source. Auld’s thesis may have some minor implications for the narrative of Josiah’s Passover⁴⁶⁸ but in any case the hypothesis that the Chronicler knew

⁴⁶⁶ A. Graeme Auld, *Kings Without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible’s Kings* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994); ‘What was the Main Source of the Books of Chronicles?’ in M.P. Graham & S.L. McKenzie (eds) *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (JSOTSS 263; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp91-99. Auld calls the shared source the Book of Two Houses, because of its interest in the house (dynasty) of David and the house (temple) of YHWH in Jerusalem.

⁴⁶⁷ See ‘What was the Main Source of the Books of Chronicles?’ in which he responds to a series of criticisms raised by S.L. McKenzie in ‘The Chronicler as Redactor’ in M.P. Graham & S.L. McKenzie (eds) *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (JSOTSS 263; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp70-90. McKenzie lists eight examples which he believes tell against Auld’s thesis. Auld responds that six of the eight can reasonably be accommodated within his theory, but that in the case of two (the reference in 2 Chronicles 10:15 to the fulfilment of an oracle of Ahijah, which Chronicles has not reported, and the peculiar placement of the narrative of Jehoshaphat, the king of Israel and Micaiah son of Imlah) further study is required.

⁴⁶⁸ Specifically, the question is whether the part of 2 Kings 23:21 in italics – “The king commanded all the people, “Keep the Passover *as prescribed in this book of the covenant*” is absent from Auld’s common source. These words are not common to Kings and Chronicles, but Auld speculates that they may have been in the common source and provided the basis for the mention of Moses in 2 Chronicles 35:6 and 12 (*Kings Without Privilege*, p125).

and utilised Samuel-Kings remains the dominant assumption in scholarship and it will be adopted in the following discussion.

6.1.3 Genre

The relationship of Chronicles to Samuel-Kings is of interest not only in its own right but because commentators' understanding of this relationship shapes their understanding of the genre and intention of Chronicles.

Wellhausen described Chronicles as a *Midrash* of the Book of Kings⁴⁶⁹ where *Midrash* is defined as “the consequence of the conservation of all the relics of antiquity, a wholly peculiar artificial reawakening of dry bones, especially by literary means, as is shown by the preference for lists of names and numbers. Like ivy it overspreads the dead trunk with extraneous life, blending old and new in a strange combination. It is a high estimate of tradition that leads to its being thus modernised; but in the process it is twisted and perverted, and set off with foreign accretions in a most arbitrary way.” For practical purposes Wellhausen's definition is both too general in that the modernising of tradition to allow its appropriation in the present could be said to be a characteristic of most, if not all, biblical writings. Moreover, as the preceding quote shows, Wellhausen's assessment of Chronicles' genre is strongly pejorative and as such provides little insight into the Chronicler's own understanding of his purpose. The enormous amount of work done on midrash since Wellhausen's time also means that his understanding of the genre as a whole must be treated with caution.

For Willi, the Chronicler's relationship to Samuel-Kings exemplifies its genre as a work of interpretation⁴⁷⁰. He argues that the Chronicler regarded Samuel-Kings as an authoritative portrayal of Israel's history, and never intended that his own work should displace it. Somewhat paradoxically, Chronicles' high regard for Samuel-Kings is seen most clearly in

⁴⁶⁹ Prolegomena to the History of Israel, p227.

⁴⁷⁰ T. Willi, Die Chronist als Auslegung (FRLANT 106; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972).

those instances where Chronicles alters its *Vorlage* in order to adapt its message for the present. The Chronicler understood himself as an interpreter of the authoritative prophetic traditions of Israel's pre-exilic history, applying and updating them to address the needs of the present.⁴⁷¹

Willi's classification has been critiqued by Kalimi, who argues that it does not deal adequately with the non-Synoptic aspects of Chronicles' work (its *Sondergut*)⁴⁷². He believes that while the Pentateuch was canonical for the Chronicler, Samuel-Kings was not. Rather than being an exegete of the earlier work, the Chronicler is best regarded as a historian who both used and modified his sources. Thus, rather than supplementing or interpreting Samuel-Kings the Chronicler intended his own work to displace it as the authoritative portrayal of Israel's pre-exilic reality. In a longer work Kalimi provides a detailed inventory of the Chronicler's historiographical techniques⁴⁷³.

A central issue in assessing the genre and purpose of Chronicles is the way in which the work relates to the Chronicler's 'past' and the Chronicler's 'present', and how this relationship is intended to shape Israel's self-understanding. The issues have been well set out in a recent article by Kratz⁴⁷⁴. Kratz argues that central to all Old Testament literature is the search for collective identity – that is the appropriation by each generation of the relationship with YHWH which is central to Israel's self-understanding. He notes that the

⁴⁷¹ *Die Chronist als Auslegung*, pp233-241. Here Willi refers to Chronicles' source citations, which identify the traditions with the writings of various pre-exilic prophets.

⁴⁷² I. Kalimi, 'Was the Chronicler a Historian?' in M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund & Steven L. McKenzie (eds) *The Chronicler as Historian* (JSOTSS 238; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp73-89.

⁴⁷³ I. Kalimi, *Zur Geschichtsschreibung des Chronisten: Literarisch-historiographische Abweichungen der Chronik von ihren Paralleltexten in den Samuel- und Königsbüchern* (BZAW 226; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995).

⁴⁷⁴ R.G. Kratz, 'Die Suche nach Identität in der nachexilischen Theologiegeschichte: Zur Hermeneutik des chronistischen Geschichtswerkes und ihrer Bedeutung für das Verständnis des Alten Testaments' in J. Mehlhausen (ed) *Pluralismus und Identität*. (Gütersloh: Kaiser Gütersloher, 1995), pp279-303.

issue of identity is related to whether the Chronicler⁴⁷⁵ is best regarded as an interpreter or author, whether his work is best seen as an interpretation of Samuel-Kings reflecting its concerns, or a creative composition reflecting the concerns and interests of the post-exilic era. Kratz argues that the Chronicler's work incorporates both perspectives, but the real question is how these two aspects of the work are combined. In answering this question he suggests the work incorporates three aspects of identity – textual identity, temporal identity and prophetic identity. Textual identity refers to the Chronicler's utilisation and combination of texts from Samuel-Kings, the Pentateuch and former prophets, that is the Chronicler's 'past'. As these texts are correlated with one another they form the Chronicler's normative portrayal of Israel's history. Temporal identity refers to the interests of the Chronicler and his contemporaries and his own theological position, that is, the Chronicler's 'present'. In particular, the Chronicler's portrayal of Israel's pre-exilic history is shaped by his experience of the post-exilic cult and community. This serves to establish a link between the pre- and post-exilic communities; just as the latter derives its identity from the former so the former finds its fulfilment in the latter. Prophetic identity refers to the Chronicler's self-understanding, and more specifically his belief that he was inspired by the same spirit who inspired the prophets who were responsible for writing his sources. In summary, Kratz relates textual identity to the Chronicler's method, temporal identity to his motive and intention and prophetic identity to his presuppositions and self-understanding. In all three instances identity is associated with the construction of unity and continuity from a multiplicity of sources and historical experience. Here Kratz brings his work into dialogue with Assmann's understanding of cultural memory, arguing that the Chronicler's has combined and enscriptured various aspects of Israel's tradition, in order to provide a collective memory for his contemporaries.

Kratz has rightly observed that the Chronicler's access to Israel's pre-exilic past is primarily or exclusively mediated through various documents. That is, insofar as Chronicles transforms and applies Israel's memory it is a textual memory. Of course, in

⁴⁷⁵ Kratz works on the basis that Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah are the work of the same author ('Die Suche nach Identität', p281).

Israel collective memory was preserved and transmitted by means of ceremony and rite as well as text. Previous chapters have shown how this was true in the case of the Passover. However, before examining the Passover texts in Chronicles it is necessary to place them within the broader context of the purpose and character of Chronicles, and in particular the role of memory within the work.

6.2 Chronicles and Memory

As in previous chapters, the following section will examine the language and concept of memory in Chronicles, including its use and transformation of other Old Testament traditions.

6.2.1 *The Vocabulary of Memory*

The obvious place to begin an examination of the role of memory in Chronicles is a survey of the use of the זָכַר word group. The verb זָכַר occurs just seven times in 1 and 2 Chronicles. At 1 Chronicles 18:15 and 2 Chronicles 34:8 the Hiphil participle is used for the occupants of a particular office, probably concerned with the collation and maintenance of official records. The Hiphil form is also used at 1 Chronicles 16:4 to describe one of the tasks of the Levites. The context suggests some form of cultic praise is in view. 2 Chronicles 24:22 states that King Joash did not remember the kindness (הַחֲסֵד) that Jehoiada had done for him but killed his son. Here, the sense is not simply that Joash forgot the actions of Jehoiada⁴⁷⁶ but that he failed to act appropriately.

The most theologically significant uses of זָכַר are 1 Chronicles 16:12, 15 and 2 Chronicles 6:42. The first two instances are part of the psalm sung when the ark was brought into Jerusalem⁴⁷⁷. The introduction to the Psalm at 1 Chronicles 16:7 states it was on this day

⁴⁷⁶ So Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, p850.

⁴⁷⁷ On this psalm see in particular John W. Kleinig, *The Lord's Song*, pp134-148; Howard N. Wallace, 'What Chronicles Has to Say about Psalms' in M. Patrick Graham & Steven L. McKenzie (eds) *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (JSOTSS 263; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp267-293.

that David appointed the Asaphite levites to sing praises to YHWH, which suggests it is significant not only its own right but as an exemplar of the Chronicler's understanding of the nature and significance of cultic praise. The Psalm itself is a combination of texts found elsewhere in the Old Testament. Verses 8 to 22 are drawn from Psalm 105:1-15, verses 23 to 33 are drawn from Psalm 96 and verses 34 to 36 are drawn from the opening and closing verses of Psalm 106. While Chronicles largely retains the wording of its sources there are some significant changes. So, in both 1 Chronicles 16:12 and Psalm 105:5 the people are exhorted to remember the works of YHWH. However, while the MT of Psalm 105:8 refers to YHWH remembering (זָכַר) his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob the equivalent verse in 1 Chronicles 16:15 is an exhortation to the people to remember (זָכְרוּ) that same covenant. That is, while Psalm 105 balances human and divine remembrance of the covenant in 1 Chronicles 16 the stress is entirely on human remembrance. This change is consistent with the manner in which 1 Chronicles 16:8-36 has transformed other Psalm texts. So, in its entirety Psalm 105 is an act of corporate praise structured as a recitation of Israel's history, beginning with the covenant with the patriarchs and ending with the departure from Egypt and the entry into the promised land. However, the Chronicler's citation of the Psalm ends immediately before the account of Joseph's sojourn in Egypt and the subsequent slavery and deliverance of the people of Israel. The omission of the exodus tradition matches the change from the indicative in Psalm 105:8 to the imperative in 1 Chronicles 16:15, since the identification of the exodus with YHWH's remembering his covenant is attested elsewhere in the Old Testament⁴⁷⁸.

The Chronicles' psalm concludes with a plea for salvation drawn from the closing verses of Psalm 106. Chronicles has made two changes to strengthen the emphasis on salvation. The divine address has been changed from "YHWH our God" (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ) in Psalm 106:47 to "God of our salvation" (אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ) in 1 Chronicles 16:35 and the following petition has been expanded from "gather us from among the nations" to "gather and rescue (וְהַצִּילֵנוּ) us from among the nations."

⁴⁷⁸ Exodus 2:24, 6:5.

Thus, Chronicles has drawn on Psalmic material which praises YHWH for his past deliverance to create a new composition in which praise is the prelude to an appeal for future deliverance, and more specifically deliverance from being scattered among the nations. In the process, the idea of human remembering of divine actions is retained, while the idea of divine remembrance is downplayed, probably because the decisive act of deliverance is now understood to lie in the future rather than the past. This reflects the perspective of the Chronicler's own day as much as, if not more than, the narrative setting within the reign of David⁴⁷⁹.

The other instance of זכר in Chronicles occurs in 2 Chronicles 6:41-42 where the Chronicler concludes Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple with a short section which is absent from his *Vorlage*:

(41) "Now rise up, O Lord God, and go to your resting place,
you and the ark of your might.
Let your priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation,
And let your faithful rejoice in your goodness.

(42) O Lord God, do not reject your anointed one.

Remember the steadfast love of/for your servant David (זכרה לחסדי דוד עבדך)

Here the issue is whether the appeal is to David's faithful deeds for YHWH⁴⁸⁰ or to YHWH's covenant faithfulness to David⁴⁸¹ or whether the reference is deliberately ambiguous⁴⁸².

⁴⁷⁹ So Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, p130. The importance of deliverance from captivity in the Chronicler's thought will be outlined later in this chapter.

⁴⁸⁰ So R.B. Dillard, *2 Chronicles* (WBC; Waco: Word, 1987), p51; Japhet, *1 & II Chronicles*, pp604-5.

⁴⁸¹ So H.G.M. Williamson, "The Sure Mercies of David": Subjective or Objective Genitive?" *JSS* 23 (1978), pp68-90; Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles*, p145.

The phrase חסדי דויד is not found elsewhere in Chronicles, although it does occur in Isaiah 55:3 where it appears to be in synonymous parallelism with the “everlasting covenant (ברית עולם)” YHWH will make with his people. However, the meaning of the phrase there is disputed and even if the Chronicler has drawn on the Isaiah passage that is no guarantee that the phrase means the same in both passages.

A surer guide to the meaning of חסדי דויד is the Chronicler’s use of חסד in the immediate context. Significantly, the refrain “For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever (כי לעולם חסדו)” occurs both at 2 Chronicles 5:13 and 2 Chronicles 7:3. In the first instance the singing of the refrain by the levitical singers precedes the manifestation of YHWH’s glory after the ark has been brought into the temple. In the second instance the refrain is spoken by the people after YHWH has responded to Solomon’s prayer by sending fire from heaven to consume the burnt offerings and sacrifices, and by filling the temple with his glory⁴⁸³. In context then, 2 Chronicles brings Solomon’s dedication prayer to a climax with a plea for YHWH to manifest his presence in the temple. The appeal to חסדי דויד refers to the dynastic oracle delivered by Nathan in 1 Chronicles 17:4-14, and more specifically the promise in verse 12 that one of David’s sons would build a house for YHWH. The context of 2 Chronicles 6 and 7 would suggest that the Chronicler understood that his readers continued to experience the fulfilment of this promise in their experience of cultic worship.

The most noteworthy aspect of the Chronicler’s use of the זכר word-group is the connection between remembrance and the temple cult. The cult is the place where YHWH’s past actions are remembered and where his people gather to call on him to act in

⁴⁸² K.D. Sakenfeld, *The Meaning of Heseḏ in the Hebrew Bible: A New Inquiry* (HSM 17; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1978), pp156-8.

⁴⁸³ The parallels between 2 Chronicles 7:1 and Exodus 40:34 suggest the Chronicler intends to draw an analogy between the dedication of the temple under Solomon and the erection of the tabernacle in the wilderness. See R. Mosis, *Untersuchungen zur Theologie des chronistischen Geschichtswerkes*. (Freiburg: Herder, 1973), p147.

their present and future. Moreover, YHWH's remembrance of his covenant faithfulness to David sustains the cult and ensures that his people experience his presence through its ministrations. There is, however, no explicit linkage between the idea of remembrance and the deliverance from Egypt. This raises the question of how the Chronicler understood the celebration of Passover and Unleavened Bread, given the way in which other Old Testament texts relate these celebrations to remembrance of the exodus events. However, before considering the Passover texts in 2 Chronicles 30 and 35 it is necessary to survey the way in which Chronicles has utilised and transformed those aspects of Israel's collective memory contained in her legal and narrative texts.

6.2.2 *Chronicles and textual memory*

It is widely recognised that Chronicles shares with other post-exilic writings an interest in the utilisation and interpretation of earlier written materials⁴⁸⁴. This can take a number of different forms – from the use of Samuel-Kings as a source, through to the citation of other written traditions and the allusion to other written traditions without any explicit citation formula. The following section surveys the way in which Chronicles has combined and transformed aspects of Israel's textual inheritance to create a new synthesis that addressed the situation of his contemporaries.

6.2.2.1 *Legal Traditions*

A much discussed issue is the relationship of Chronicles to the legal texts and traditions which make up the Pentateuch. Commentators differ over which legal traditions were available to the Chronicler, the degree of authority he ascribed to those traditions and how he sought to reconcile any discrepancies between the legal traditions available to him. Before addressing these specific issues, it is necessary to survey the legal terminology used

⁴⁸⁴ See among others P. Ackroyd, 'The Chronicler as Exegete' in *The Chronicler in His Age* (JSOTSS 101; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), pp311-343; Schniedewind, 'The Chronicler as an Interpreter of Scripture'.

in Chronicles and what this reveals about the author's understanding of law and legal authority.

Certainly, the issue of law and legal authority is a central concern of the Chronicler. There are nineteen references to Torah in 1 and 2 Chronicles compared to eleven in Samuel-Kings. However, when it is noted that Chronicles has not picked up five references to Torah in its *Vorlage*⁴⁸⁵ the importance of the Torah theme in the Chronicler's *Sondergut* becomes apparent. Of the nineteen references fourteen refer to the Torah or obedience to Torah in general terms. There is one reference, taken from the *Vorlage*, to Amaziah's obedience to the deuteronomic precept that children not be put to death for the sins of their parents (2 Chronicles 25:4). The other four references to specific Torah precepts concern the institution of regular burnt offerings by David (1 Chronicles 16:40), the role of the Levites in sacrificial service (2 Chronicles 23:18), the role of the priests and Levites in the Passover under Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 30:16) and the restoration of sacrificial service under the same King (2 Chronicles 31:3). This contrasts with Samuel-Kings, where the Passover under Josiah is the only cultic action that is linked to a specific Torah precept.

Chronicles also differs from Samuel-Kings in that it gives a written Torah a role in the narrative prior to the Josianic reforms⁴⁸⁶. At 2 Chronicles 17:9 Jehoshaphat's Levites and officials take with them the "book of YHWH's Torah (סֵפֶר תּוֹרַת יְהוָה)" when they teach through Judah. The same form of words is used at 2 Chronicles 34:14 and 15 for the book found in the temple during Josiah's reign. Thus, the Chronicler's language makes it clear

⁴⁸⁵ Three of these references occur in 2 Kings 17 in the evaluation of the downfall of the Northern Kingdom and in the report of the customs of the peoples settled by Assyria in their place. The omission of these passages reflects the Chronicler's concentration on the fate of the Southern Kingdom. The Chronicler has no parallel to the note in 2 Kings 23:24 which links Josiah's cultic reforms to the book of the Torah found in the temple. This is because in the Chronicler's account these reforms precede the discovery of the book. The Chronicler has replaced Kings' ringing endorsement of Josiah's faithfulness to the Torah in verse 25 with the more muted evaluation of 2 Chronicles 35:26. This is in keeping with the immediately preceding narrative of Josiah's failure to listen to the divine message delivered by Neco and his consequent death in battle.

⁴⁸⁶ Within the Former Prophets there are several references to a written Torah in the book of Joshua (eg Joshua 8:30-35, Joshua 23:6, Joshua 24:26). From then on the Torah as a book disappears until its rediscovery under Josiah. At 1 Kings 2:3 David charges Solomon to follow what is written in the Torah of Moses, and 2 Kings 14:6 recounts a specific instance in which Amaziah's action was in accordance with what is written in the Torah. However a written book plays no role in the narrative until Josiah.

that the discovery of the law-book is the recovery of a work that has already exerted its influence within the history of Judah.

There are other statements which, while not using the language of Torah, ascribe particular actions to Mosaic authority. At 1 Chronicles 15:15 the Chronicler recounts how when the ark was returned to Jerusalem it was carried on the shoulders of the Levites “as Moses had commanded according to the word of YHWH (כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה מֹשֶׁה כְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה).” At 2 Chronicles 35:6 the people are instructed to make preparations for the Passover “according to the word of YHWH by Moses (כְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה).” At 2 Chronicles 8:12-13 Solomon offers sacrifices “according to the command of Moses (כַּמִּצְוֶה מֹשֶׁה).” At 2 Chronicles 24:6,9 there is a reference to the tax levied by Moses on the congregation in the wilderness for the tabernacle. While this is apparently a reference to Exodus 30:11-16 the Chronicler refers to the historical precedent as such rather than its preservation in writing.

While Torah is only associated by the Chronicler with Moses and/or YHWH, other human actors in the narrative are responsible for authoritative commands or regulations. At 1 Chronicles 11:3 David is anointed as king in accordance with the word of YHWH spoken by Samuel. A particularly detailed rationale forms the basis for Hezekiah’s stationing of the Levites in the temple in 2 Chronicles 29:25 – “according to the commandment of David (בַּמִּצְוָה דָּוִד) and of Gad the king’s seer and of the prophet Nathan, for the commandment was from YHWH through his prophets (כִּי בְיַד יְהוָה הַמִּצְוָה בְּיַד נְבִיאָיו).” Generally, Chronicles associates written authority exclusively with Moses, while other actors exercise authority by virtue of their office or by means of inspired speech. However at 2 Chronicles 35:4 Josiah directs the Levites to arrange themselves by their ancestral houses following the written directions of David and Solomon. This is most likely a reference to regulations now found in 1 Chronicles 23-27⁴⁸⁷. This is consistent with a broader emphasis in Chronicles on the textualisation of authoritative traditions, as seen in the appearance of a prophecy by Elijah in the form of a letter (2 Chronicles 21:12-15)⁴⁸⁸. Nevertheless, it does

⁴⁸⁷Williamson, 1 and 2 Chronicles, p405.

⁴⁸⁸Chapman, The Law and the Prophets, p227.

not represent an attempt by the Chronicler to exalt David's authority at the expense of Moses⁴⁸⁹. Rather, it testifies to the development of a body of authoritative writings alongside the Mosaic torah.

A further complexity in the Chronicler's understanding of authority and precedent is the concept of **משפט**. In the books of Chronicles **משפטים** is one of the terms used as a designation for the Torah⁴⁹⁰. Kings are also commended for exercising their authority according to the standard of **משפט**⁴⁹¹. Here the reference is most probably to a general standard of justice and equity rather than any particular regulation or body of law. In 2 Chronicles 19:4-7 Jehoshaphat appoints judges (**שפטים**) throughout Judah and assures them of YHWH's assistance in the task of doing **משפט**.

Of particular interest are a series of passages where the Chronicler states that a particular practice was done **כמשפט** – “in accordance with *mishpat*.” In each case the context is some aspect of temple furnishing or service. Five times the formula occurs alone, sometimes with the addition of the third person plural pronomial suffix⁴⁹². There are two instances where a particular individual is named as the source of the **משפט**. At 1 Chronicles 24:19 the priests are appointed by David to their service **כמשפטם ביד אהרן אביהם** and at 2 Chronicles 8:14 Solomon appoints the temple personnel **כמשפט דוד אביו**. Here **משפט** is

⁴⁸⁹ Simon J. De Vries ‘Moses and David as Cult Founders in Chronicles’ *JBL* 107/4 (1989), pp619-639 argues that a central aim of the Chronicler is to advance the claims of the Levites in the post-exilic cult over against the priests. Since the priests had Moses and Aaron to substantiate their claims the Chronicler was required to use Davidic authority as a vehicle for advancing levitical claims. “Even though Moses and the Mosaic tradition would continue in honor; it is the David who ordained the Levites to their office who brought the worship of YHWH to its highest perfection and its true fulfilment (p639).” However, the matter is not so straightforward – for example at 1 Chronicles 16:39-40 David is responsible for implementing the Mosaic regulations concerning the role of the priests; at 2 Chronicles 35:3-6 the role of the Levites in the Josianic Passover is grounded in both Mosaic and Davidic authority.

⁴⁹⁰ Eg 1 Chronicles 22:13, 28:7.

⁴⁹¹ 1 Chronicles 18:14 records that David did **משפט וצדקה**. The same pair of terms occurs in the Queen of Sheba's evaluation of Solomon's reign at 2 Chronicles 9:8.

⁴⁹² The instances are 1 Chronicles 6:17 [ET 6:32]; 23:31; 2 Chronicles 4:7; 4:20; 35:13.

an authoritative tradition established by a seminal figure which is binding on subsequent generations. The use of the term does not establish whether the tradition exists in writing or some other form. Finally, at 2 Chronicles 30:16 the roles of the priests and the levites in the Hezekian Passover is given a double justification – their actions are **כמשפטם כחורת משה**.

The formula **כמשפט** occurs a number of times in texts outside Chronicles. Sometimes it appears to indicate merely that an action was conducted in accord with established custom and practice without ascribing any intrinsic authority to such practice⁴⁹³. However, particularly in legal texts it functions as a cross-referencing formula which refers the reader to other authoritative texts⁴⁹⁴. This diversity suggests that the Chronicler's use of the formula should be evaluated on a case by case basis. However given that the formula is always used in the area of cultic activity, a matter of considerable interest for the Chronicler, it is probable that it always carries some nuance of authority that goes beyond mere custom and practice. Precisely how the Chronicler understood such authority to be established – by particular figures and/or texts associated with them – is the issue to be established in each instance⁴⁹⁵.

In summary, then, the Chronicler's understanding of law and authority is complex and multi-faceted. Several trends are apparent. First, Chronicles testifies to a growing interest in the textualisation of law and the role of a written Torah in Israel's history. Second, the Chronicler clearly regarded Moses as the law-giver *sui generis*. No other figure is

⁴⁹³ Eg 2 Kings 11:14, which records how the king was standing beside the temple pillars **כמשפט** following his coronation. There is no indication in the text that the author regarded this custom as necessary from his point of view. 2 Kings 17:33 records how the people resettled in Samaria worshipped **כמשפט** of the nations from which they were taken – which clearly does not meet with the author's approval.

⁴⁹⁴ Eg Leviticus 5:10 and 9:16 which specify that the burnt offering is to be performed **כמשפט**, that is in accordance with the ritual specifications in Leviticus 4:13-17. See M. Fishbane Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp209-213.

⁴⁹⁵ Eg Japhet argues that in 2 Chronicles 30:16 “the Chronicler did not refer to the written word as it stands, but rather to the way it was understood and interpreted, either by him or at his time.” I & II Chronicles, p950. However, it is a moot point whether the Chronicler would have distinguished between the meaning of a text and his interpretation of it, regardless of the usefulness of that distinction for a modern interpreter.

associated with the giving of Torah. Third, the Chronicler recognises that YHWH may give authoritative directions to his people through other mediators including prophets and kings. While such directions are initially delivered orally the Chronicler also recognises that some of them may be preserved in writing. Fourth, the Chronicler has a particular interest in the authority of **משפט**. While this term involves more than custom and practice the particular nuances it carries need to be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Another concern of scholarship has been determining which pentateuchal legal traditions have influenced the Chronicler. Broadly speaking there are four positions that have been adopted, either exclusively or in combination with one another. The first position is that Chronicles advanced the interests of one particular pentateuchal legal tradition. The second is that Chronicles sought to achieve a degree of reconciliation between different pentateuchal traditions. The third is that while the Chronicler did draw on various legal traditions found in the Pentateuch he did not regard the Pentateuch as normative and so felt able to commend practices at variance with Pentateuch. The fourth position is that the Chronicler's interest lay in legitimating the actual practice of the post-exilic community, and that he appealed to pentateuchal traditions where they legitimised this practice and ignored them where they do not.

Amongst those writers who trace the influence of one legal tradition on Chronicles the work of Julius Wellhausen has been particularly influential. While assuming that the Chronicler was acquainted with the Pentateuch in much the form that we know it, Wellhausen attributed the difference in spirit and content between Samuel-Kings and Chronicles almost entirely to the influence of the Priestly code, which according to his analysis came into existence in the period between the composition of the two works⁴⁹⁶. This resulted in a radical re-shaping of Israel's historical traditions whereby Israel's pre-exilic existence was made to conform to the cultic prescriptions of the Pentateuch⁴⁹⁷.

⁴⁹⁶ Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, p171.

⁴⁹⁷ "Chronicles....not only takes the Law-the Pentateuchal Law as a whole, but more particularly the Priestly Code therein preponderating-as its rule of judgment on the past, but also idealises the facts in accordance with that norm, and figures to itself the old Hebrew people as in exact conformity with the pattern of the later

According to Wellhausen, the influence of P is seen particularly in the greater role for the Priests, Levites and other cultic officials and the more elaborate sacrificial system evident in Chronicles in comparison with the earlier work. Moreover, kings and people are judged according their faithfulness in establishing and maintaining the cult, in accordance with what Wellhausen termed “the stencil pattern, just as the law is faithfully fulfilled or neglected.”⁴⁹⁸

In contrast to Wellhausen, Gerhard von Rad argued in his work *Das Geschichtsbild des Chronistischen Werkes*⁴⁹⁹ that the influence of Deuteronomy on the Chronicler was more important than P. Moreover, deuteronomic influence was not confined to those sections of Chronicles based on Samuel-Kings. Von Rad noted in particular the use of deuteronomic legal terminology in Chronicles⁵⁰⁰. In the case of the Passover the influence of Deuteronomy is seen in Chronicles’ presentation of a centralised, national feast rather than the domestic celebration envisaged by P. Von Rad concluded that for the Chronicler the entire Pentateuch was normative, with the proviso that some of the Chronicler’s cultic regulations had no parallel in the Pentateuch. This suggested to von Rad that he regarded the ordinances of David, particularly those concerning the service of the Levites, to be just as authoritative as the Pentateuch. In general, he cautioned against categorising Chronicles as a piece of nomistic writing whose sole or main intention was to provide an historical

Jewish community, - as a monarchically graded hierocracy with a strictly centralised cultus of rigidly prescribed form at the holy place of Jerusalem.” *Prolegomena*, pp189-90.

⁴⁹⁸ *Prolegomena*, p203. Wellhausen continues “never does sin miss its punishment, and never where misfortune occurs is guilt wanting.” The Chronicler’s doctrine of immediate retribution is widely recognised. Eg Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, pp76-81; Japhet *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought*, pp165-175. Kelly argues convincingly that any understanding of Chronicles’ idea of retribution must be nuanced by its placement within a broader understanding within the covenant relationship between YHWH and his people, a relationship which holds out the promise of restoration and forgiveness where repentance is present. *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles*, pp64-110.

⁴⁹⁹ G. von Rad, *Das Geschichtsbild des Chronistischen Werkes*. (BWANT IV/3; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1930).

⁵⁰⁰ Examples include the term *מצוה* to refer to single commandment, a usage attested only once in P but twelve times in Deuteronomy (pp42-43). Von Rad also points to the frequent use of *קהל* in Chronicles as a designation for the community of Israel, whether in a secular or cultic context. He argues this differs from its usage in P where it is a *terminus technicus* for the cultic gathering. Also, the important P term *עדה* is absent from Chronicles.

justification for a particular pattern of cultic observance. Instead, he discerns a significant eschatological interest focussed on an ideal Davidic figure who would rule over YHWH's kingdom⁵⁰¹.

Martin Noth agreed with von Rad that Chronicles' overall outlook is not so closely related to P as to Deuteronomy⁵⁰². Noth differs from von Rad in his description of the purpose of Chronicles – the central purpose of the work being to demonstrate the legitimacy of the Davidic dynasty and of Jerusalem temple over and against the claims of the Samaritans⁵⁰³.

A second possibility is that the Chronicler sought to reconcile different and perhaps divergent legal traditions rather than favouring one over the other. In his *History of Israelite Religion of the Old Testament Period* Rainer Albertz argues that the post-exilic era saw the development and promulgation of different legal traditions amongst different social groups⁵⁰⁴. When these traditions were combined in the canonical Pentateuch it became necessary for them to be interpreted in such a way as to provide a coherent guide for the life of the community. Moreover there was a need to respond to the claims of Samaritans and others who opposed the legitimacy of the Jerusalem temple community. To do this the Chronicler adopted the emphasis of the Deuteronomistic History on the Jerusalem temple and the Davidic monarchy and sought to demonstrate that both were consistent with the law, provided that both law and history were interpreted correctly. Moreover, the Chronicler sought to reconcile divergent regulations in Priestly and Deuteronomic traditions. This is seen, for example, in his account of Josiah's Passover in 2 Chronicles 35 where the Passover is portrayed as a pilgrimage festival at the central sanctuary which also

⁵⁰¹ von Rad, *Das Geschichtsbild des Chronistischen Werkes*, pp122-26. Von Rad argues that "so wird man hier ohne Gefahr von einer messianischen Vorstellung reden dürfen."

⁵⁰² M. Noth, *The Chronicler's History* (tr. H.G.M. Williamson; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), p99.

⁵⁰³ *The Chronicler's History*, pp100-106.

⁵⁰⁴ Albertz hypothesizes that a pre-priestly composition, which incorporated the deuteronomic law, was developed and promulgated in lay theological circles. This was later combined with a priestly composition which advanced the interests of the temple cult and placed YHWH's special relationship with Israel in the context of his purposes for all creation. See Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period: Volume 2 – From the Exile to the Maccabees*, pp471-492.

incorporates elements of the domestic celebration ordained by the Priestly tradition in Exodus 12⁵⁰⁵.

In his work on the Passover in Chronicles, Eves also sees a reconciling role for the work, although he does not adopt the same reconstruction of Israel's post-exilic history⁵⁰⁶. He argues that the two Passover narratives in Chronicles draw on different legal traditions – the account of the Passover under Hezekiah in 2 Chronicles 30 draws primarily on Priestly traditions while the Passover under Josiah in 2 Chronicles 35 is modelled more on deuteronomic regulations. By setting these two portrayals side by side the Chronicler affirmed the orthodoxy of two reforming kings who both sought YHWH, albeit in slightly different ways. These different practices reflected diverse interpretations and practices in his own post-exilic community. Hence, by including both in his work the Chronicler sought to bring about reconciliation between these different groups, even at the expense of achieving full reconciliation between different legal traditions⁵⁰⁷.

Both the positions outlined above assume that some or all of the Pentateuch exercised canonical authority for the Chronicler. This assumption is rejected in Shaver's detailed examination of the role of the law in Chronicles⁵⁰⁸. He does acknowledge that the Chronicler has drawn on each of the legal traditions which make up the extant Pentateuch. He argues that P has exerted the most influence, although in some instances where the requirements of the Chronicler's book of law correspond only to texts which are supplementary to P it may be that these texts were added to the Pentateuch after the composition of Chronicles. Shaver also draws attention to instances where Chronicles attributes to the Torah legislation not found in the Pentateuch or elsewhere in the Old

⁵⁰⁵ A History of Israelite Religion, pp546-9.

⁵⁰⁶ T.L. Eves, The Role of Passover in the Book of Chronicles: A Study of 2 Chronicles 30 and 35 (PhD Thesis: Annenberg Research Institute, 1992).

⁵⁰⁷ The Role of Passover in the Books of Chronicles, p320.

⁵⁰⁸ J. R. Shaver, Torah and the Chronicler's History Work: An Inquiry into the Chronicler's References to Laws, Festivals, and Cultic Institutions in Relationship to Pentateuchal Legislation. (Brown Judaic Studies 196; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989).

Testament⁵⁰⁹. He concludes from this that for the Chronicler, the torah appears to be more than the Pentateuch, in which case, at least for the Chronicler the canonization of the Torah had not yet occurred⁵¹⁰.

A fourth position is that the main aim of the Chronicler lay in legitimising the practices and interests of the temple hierarchy in his own day, and that he drew on earlier legal traditions when and where they contributed to this broader aim. This is essentially the position of Dyck in his work *The Theocratic Ideology of the Chronicler*. Dyck argues that in contrast to Ezra-Nehemiah the Chronicler has an inclusive understanding of ethnic identity according to which ‘all Israel’ experienced the exile and the subsequent restoration. However alongside this inclusive ethnic ideology is an exclusive cultic ideology which legitimates Jerusalem’s role as the sole centre of Israel in the Chronicler’s day and thereby furthers the interests of the social hierarchy supported by such arrangements⁵¹¹. The Chronicles narrative of pre-exilic Israel shows how the temple cult was founded and how king and people are judged according to their faithfulness to that cult. The Chronicler seeks to convince his contemporaries that, just as in pre-exilic days, their welfare depends on YHWH’s steadfast love (חסד), and this חסד is realised when Israel is loyal to YHWH, predominantly through the temple cult⁵¹². It is the legitimisation of this cult in its contemporary expression rather than any concern for ancient legal traditions as such which forms the heart of his purpose.

None of the positions outlined above is without its difficulties. The view that Chronicles was written primarily to legitimate a particular legal tradition faces the difficulty that the

⁵⁰⁹ *Torah and the Chronicler’s History*, p127. Most of Shaver’s examples are drawn from Ezra and Nehemiah (Shaver assumes common authorship for Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles). The only examples he cites from Chronicles are the roles of the Levites in the Passover celebrations in 2 Chronicles 30 and 35.

⁵¹⁰ *Torah and the Chronicler’s History*, p129.

⁵¹¹ Here Dyck explores the role of the post-exilic “house of the fathers” (בית אבות). He believes these were kinship groups which served as a vehicle for social discrimination within the community. Moreover, the heads of such groups were able to assert their economic dominance. *Ideology*, pp188-203.

⁵¹² *Ideology*, pp224-26.

narratives in the books cannot easily be made to correspond to the regulations and emphases of any one tradition. This is well demonstrated by Rendtorff's examination of the complexity in the Chronicler's use of Priestly cultic terminology and concepts⁵¹³. Where the Chronicler is following material derived from Samuel-Kings he often supplements his source with Priestly material, in the process creating a composite which is not entirely consistent with the Priestly tradition considered in isolation. A case in point is 2 Chronicles 8:12ff. Here the Chronicler is drawing on the description of Solomon's cultic activity in 1 Kings 9:25, which refers to the offering of **עֹלֹת וּשְׁלָמִים** on the temple altar three times a year. The Chronicler has expanded this report by stating that **עֹלֹת** were made on a daily basis and on the sabbaths, new moons and annual festivals (**מוֹעֲדוֹת**). The triad of Sabbaths, new moons and festivals is well attested in Priestly cultic texts such as Numbers 28 and 29, where it includes the Festivals of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement. However, the Chronicler differs from P in that he follows the Kings account in only mentioning three annual festivals, which in accordance with deuteronomic tradition he specifies as the festivals of unleavened bread, weeks and booths. Another difference between P and Chronicles is in the relative prominence given to the so-called "sin offering" (**חַטָּאת**) and the burnt offering (**עֹלָה**). Each is mentioned over fifty times in the book of Leviticus, but whereas the burnt offering is mentioned thirty-five times in Chronicles the sin offering is mentioned only three times, all in the account of the restoration of temple worship under Hezekiah⁵¹⁴. This is initially surprising given that issues of sin and forgiveness play an important role in the narrative. Likewise, there is no mention in Chronicles of the important Priestly celebration of the Day of Atonement⁵¹⁵.

⁵¹³ R.Rendtorff 'Chronicles and the Priestly Torah' in M.V. Fox, V.A.Hurwitz, A. Hurvitz, M.L.Klein, B.J. Schwartz & N. Shupak (eds) Texts, Temples and Traditions: A Tribute to Menahem Haran. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996), pp259-266.

⁵¹⁴ 2 Chronicles 29:21, 23, 24.

⁵¹⁵ Kalimi notes the Chronicler's description of the celebrations at the dedication of the temple in 2 Chronicles 7:8-10 indicates they lasted from the 8th to the 14th day of the seventh month, followed by the Festival of Booths. However, according to P the Day of Atonement falls on the 10th day of the seventh month, and moreover, this was a day on which feasting and celebration were forbidden. This discrepancy between the narrative and legal requirements had already been noted by rabbinic commentators. Kalimi, Zur Geschichtsschreibung des Chronisten, pp331-2.

Shaver's position has been criticised by Chapman⁵¹⁶, who rightly notes that his view that there was no canonization of the Torah for Chronicler confuses the idea of canonization with the absolute fixity and de-limitation of canonical texts. It is quite possible that various texts were authoritative for the Chronicler even if the outer boundaries of these texts remained a somewhat open question. Indeed, Chapman suggests that some prophetic Scriptures may have been authoritative for the Chronicler. For example, the warrant for levitical participation in the Passover as recorded in 2 Chronicles 30 could have come from Ezekiel 44:10-16.

There is no doubt that the Chronicler sought to influence the practices and priorities of his own day. It cannot, however, be assumed that his portrayal of the pre-exilic era can be used as a blueprint for reconstructing the cultic practices of his own day. Mosis points out that certain aspects of the pre-exilic cult as portrayed by the Chronicler – particularly the role of the ark – could not be replicated in the post-exilic era⁵¹⁷. This means that when the Chronicler describes a ritual element not attested elsewhere it cannot be assumed that he is seeking to legitimate the practice of his own day by associating it with an earlier time. It may be that he is setting out an ideal yet to be realised in Israel's experience. Or he may have had good reasons for believing the practice genuinely belonged to the pre-exilic era.

The way forward is to move beyond asking which legal traditions the Chronicler may have utilised in his work, to considering how those traditions were transformed and combined to construct a narrative which furthered the Chronicler's theological interests.

⁵¹⁶ Chapman, *The Law and the Prophets*, pp228-230.

⁵¹⁷ *Untersuchungen zur Theologie des chronistischen Geschichtswerkes*, p127. Mosis also notes that the description of Solomon's temple in Chronicles owes at least as much to the description of the Tent of Meeting in the wilderness as to the realities of the Second Temple.

The work of William Johnstone is a move in this direction⁵¹⁸. Johnstone argues that the themes of guilt and atonement are central to the Chronicler's purpose. In particular he points to the pivotal role of the concept of unfaithfulness (מַעַל) in the narrative⁵¹⁹. Johnstone cites Leviticus 5:14-26 (ET 5:14 - 6:7) as an important source for the Chronicler's thought. Here מַעַל is remedied by the sacrifice of a guilt offering (אֲשָׁם) and, where appropriate, by restitution of any amount defrauded plus an added fifth. Hence, the inauguration of an appropriate cult was vital for the continued life of Israel. It is in this context that he examines the narrative of 1 Chronicles 21. This chapter tells how YHWH sent a destructive plague against Israel after David conducted an illegitimate census⁵²⁰. Further destruction is only averted when David builds an altar and offers sacrifices upon it. The temple thus becomes the place at which מַעַל can be atoned and sin forgiven. On a wider scale the Chronicler is influenced by the thought of Leviticus 26:34-39 where corporate and persistent מַעַל results of the loss of the land by Israel. However, at this point the Chronicler is required to move beyond his inherited tradition as the Israel of his day faces the problem of continued 'exile', even after the return to the land. He "is forced to look beyond the limits of his theological category, not to the destruction of Israel....but to its restoration through an act of the free grace of God already implied in the אֲשָׁם for individual, inadvertent guilt."⁵²¹

Johnstone's work is certainly suggestive, but his argument has a number of weak points. The first is an issue of vocabulary. Johnstone states that atonement is one of the two key

⁵¹⁸ W. Johnstone 'Guilt and Atonement: The Theme of 1 and 2 Chronicles' 'The Use of Leviticus in Chronicles' and 'Prospective Atonement: The Use of Exodus 30:11-16 in 1 Chronicles 21' in Chronicles and Exodus: An Analogy and its Application (JSOTSS 275; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), pp90-114, 115-127 & 128-141.

⁵¹⁹ Johnstone notes that Saul is judged for מַעַל in 1 Chronicles 10:13-14. The term is absent from the account of the reigns of David and Solomon before recurring at 2 Chronicles 12:2 following the division of the kingdoms. 2 Chronicles 36:14 and other passages make it clear that the מַעַל of Israel's leaders and people resulted in the exile. Johnstone, 'Guilt and Atonement', pp97-99.

⁵²⁰ Johnstone argues, with good reason, that the Chronicler understands David's error to be a failure to observe the payment of a half shekel registration tax along the lines of Exodus 30:11-16.

⁵²¹ Guilt and Atonement, p106.

concepts in Chronicles. However, the root **כפר** only occurs three times in the books of Chronicles. Two of these occurrences link atonement to the cult⁵²²; but in the third instance atonement apparently takes place without any cultic activity whatsoever⁵²³. This is not to deny that the Chronicler has a considerable interest in a broader concept of atonement, where atonement is understood to incorporate any means of dealing with sin and restoring the relationship between YHWH and his people. But it cannot be assumed that his idea of atonement and the importance placed on it simply reproduce that of his legal sources. It is not that the Chronicler denies an atoning role to sacrifice. Rather, the sin offering and the atonement it affected was preliminary to that part of the sacrificial ritual which had most interest for the Chronicler – the presentation of the burnt offering and the accompanying prayer and praise⁵²⁴.

Likewise, it is difficult to believe that Leviticus 5:14-26 plays an unqualified or especially significant role in the Chronicler's thought, when the main subject of those verses, the guilt offering (**אשם**), is never mentioned in the book of Chronicles. Certainly, the account of David's census does refer to his bringing guilt (**אשמה**) upon Israel⁵²⁵. However, the effects of David's action are only averted when he builds an altar, and offers not guilt offerings, but burnt offerings and offerings of well-being (**שלמים**)⁵²⁶ accompanied by prayer.

⁵²² At 1 Chronicles 6:34 (ET 6:49) Aaron and his sons make atonement for Israel upon the altars of burnt offering and incense, and at 2 Chronicles 29:24 a corporate sin offering is made to atone for the sins of Israel.

⁵²³ At 2 Chronicles 30:18 Hezekiah prays to YHWH, asking him to **כפר** the people who ate the Passover in a state of uncleanness. YHWH heals Hezekiah and heals the people. Rendtorff comments on this verse "I must confess that I do not understand what the Chronicler means, but in any case this use of **כפר** is incompatible with any priestly theology." 'Chronicles and the Priestly Torah', p265.

⁵²⁴ See especially Kleinig, *The Lord's Song*, pp100-131, who points to the sequence of the account of the temple restoration under Hezekiah in 2 Chronicles 29:20-35. Here the corporate sin offering in verse 24 is followed by burnt offerings and choral service in verses 25 to 30.

⁵²⁵ 1 Chronicles 21:3.

⁵²⁶ 1 Chronicles 21:26.

The key to understanding the Chronicler's use and transformation of legal traditions is to be found in the inter-textual relationships between three passages:

“But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their ancestors, in that they committed treachery against me (במעלם אשר מעל-בִּי) and, moreover that they continued hostile to me – so that I, in turn, continued hostile to them and brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled (כנע) and they make amends (רצוה) for their iniquity (עוונם), then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; I will also remember my covenant with Isaac and also my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land. For the land shall be deserted by them, and enjoy its Sabbath years by lying desolate without them, while they shall make amends for their iniquity, because they dared to spurn my ordinances, and they abhorred my statutes.”

Leviticus 26:40-43

“Then YHWH appeared to Solomon in the night and said to him: ‘I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice. When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, if my people who are called by my name humble (כנע) themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal (רפא) their land.’”

2 Chronicles 7:12-14

“Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. He did what was evil in the sight of YHWH his God. He did not humble (כנע) himself before the prophet Jeremiah who spoke from the mouth of YHWH.....
All the leading priests and the people also were exceedingly unfaithful (למעול-מעל), following all the abominations of the nations; and they polluted the house of YHWH that he had consecrated in Jerusalem. YHWH, the God of their ancestors, sent persistently to

them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place; but they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words, and scoffing at the prophets, until the wrath of YHWH became so great that there was no remedy (מרפא). He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, to fulfil the word of YHWH by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had made up for its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfil seventy years.”

2 Chronicles 36:12,14-16, 20-21

Leviticus 26:14-45 envisages a situation whereby Israel’s continued disobedience of YHWH’s commands has resulted in the devastation of the land and the exile of her people. While this exile is clearly a punitive experience for the people, it does have positive consequences for the land, which can now enjoy the Sabbath years of which it was deprived.

With Israel removed far away from land and temple any remedy for the exile must move outside the cultic categories established earlier in the book. In verses 26:40-43 the reasons for Israel’s exile and the hope of a future beyond exile are described in terms that pick up cultic language but apply it to a non-cultic situation. This is true in the first instance of the description of Israel’s sin, where the idea of מעל, which is elsewhere used for the case of inadvertent sin, is now used in a global fashion to describe the whole scope of Israel’s disobedience of YHWH. A similar transformation is also evident in some of the terminology used to describe Israel’s response to exile. A case in point is the idea of confession (יָדָה). At Leviticus 5:5 confession of sin by the worshipper is the prelude to the sin offering. Here, it is the offering itself rather than the confession itself that atones for the sin, as verse 6 makes clear. Likewise at 16:21, Aaron confesses the sins of the nation over the goat that is sent away into the wilderness on the Day of Atonement. Once again, confession is the prelude to a cultic activity. However, in Leviticus 26:40 confession of sin stands by itself, since there is now no access to the temple cult. A similar process is apparent in the use of the verb צָהַר. Earlier in Leviticus the Niphal form of this verb is

used for the acceptability of animals in a sacrificial context⁵²⁷. Now in Leviticus 26:41 the Qal form of the verb is used for Israel's acceptance of her guilt in exile⁵²⁸.

Leviticus 26 also draws on language and concepts from outside the cultic sphere. This is true of the idea of self-humbling. The idea of YHWH's deliverance in terms of remembering the covenant with the patriarchs has no precedent in the earlier sections of Leviticus, although it does have parallels in P passages such as Exodus 2:23-25 and 6:5 where it is associated with the deliverance from Egypt.

Chronicles represents a further stage in this transformation of cultic language, where this language and imagery of Israel's response to YHWH in exile is re-integrated into a cultic context, not through the construction of new legal texts but in a narrative description of the pre-exilic cult.

Such a transformation was not without precedent in Israel's literature. It can be seen in Solomon's temple dedication prayer at 1 Kings 8:22-53, where the language of Deuteronomy 4 and 30, and in particular the vocabulary of turning (שׁוּב), is taken from the narrative context of Israel's future exile and used to interpret the function of the pre-exilic cult⁵²⁹. Here the temple is portrayed less as a house of sacrifice than as a house of prayer, or in the latter sections as a house towards which prayer may be made. This means it can

⁵²⁷ Leviticus 1:4, 7:18, 19:7, 22:23, 22:25, 22:27.

⁵²⁸ The exact meaning of נָצַח in this verse is a matter of some debate. If the meaning of the niphal elsewhere in Leviticus is taken as a guide the sense would be that Israel has accepted her iniquity ie by expressing remorse and penitence. G.J. Wenham, *Leviticus* (NICOT; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1979), p332. However, other commentators argue it reflects a second root נָצַח which means to pay or redeem (HALOT Vol. 3, p1282) – hence the NRSV translation “make amends for”. Gerleman (TLOT Vol. 3, pp1259-1261) argues convincingly that the few instances where נָצַח is believed to reflect a second root can be subsumed under the basic meaning ‘accept’, with the distinction that a negative or indefinite, rather than positive connotation is in view.

⁵²⁹ There are several other narrative and conceptual linkages between Deuteronomy 4 and 30 and 1 Kings 8:22-53. See R.A. Werline, *Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism: The Development of a Religious Institution* (SBLEJL; Atlanta: Scholars Press, Atlanta, 1998), pp11-28.

function as a focus for Israel's hopes and aspirations, even when she is separate from the land.

This process evident in Kings is taken further by the Chronicler. Solomon's prayer of dedication is largely reproduced in 2 Chronicles 6:12-42, with the exception of the appeal to the exodus in 1 Kings 8:51-53. However, YHWH's subsequent appearance and revelation to Solomon in 1 Kings 9:2-9 is expanded by the addition of 2 Chronicles 7:12b-15. Here YHWH declares that he has chosen the temple as a "house of sacrifice" (לְבֵית זֶבֶח). That this supplements, rather than replaces, the role of the temple in prayer is made clear by the following verses, where the importance of prayer is stressed. Moreover, in 2 Chronicles 7:12-14 the exilic requirement of humbling is established as the norm for the Chronicler's narrative of pre-exilic Israel⁵³⁰. The difference is that the prelude to humbling is not exile as such, but national misfortunes such as drought, plague or pestilence which assume that Israel is in the land.

In the subsequent narrative God's people and their leaders are commended for humbling themselves in response to YHWH's will, whether this is revealed through the events of history or the prophetic word⁵³¹. Humbling can be expressed by prayer and repentance alone, as in the case of Manasseh. However, it can also be expressed by participation in the temple cult, as in the case of the Northerners who agree to participate in the Passover under Hezekiah.

That is, the Chronicler picks up the norms for Israel's 'inward' response to YHWH in exile and shows how they may be expressed 'outwardly' through worship at the Jerusalem temple. It is no surprise then, that while not denying the role of the cult in achieving atonement he chooses to emphasize those aspects of the cult which best express human

⁵³⁰ The link between Leviticus 26 and 2 Chronicles 7:12-14 are noted by Kelly, Retribution and Eschatology, pp55-6.

⁵³¹ Eg the people's response to the prophet Shemaiah's message in 2 Chronicles 12:6, 7 or Manasseh's response to his exile in 2 Chronicles 33:12.

response to YHWH, such as the regular burnt offerings⁵³² and the praise of the temple singers. In a real sense, the Chronicler understands the whole of the temple cult to function as an enacted prayer⁵³³.

However, the Chronicler is clear that pre-exilic Israel failed to avail herself of the opportunities for repentance and restoration available through the temple cult. As noted above 2 Chronicles 36 picks up the language of Leviticus 26 to explain the exile. Israel's continued *מַעַל*, expressed particularly in her disobedience to the prophetic word, meant there was no longer any opportunity for the healing which 2 Chronicles 7:12-14 envisaged. All that remained was for the people to go into exile and for the land to enjoy its Sabbaths as promised in Leviticus.

There is thus no evidence that the Chronicler woodenly replicated the interests or emphases of the legal traditions available to him. Rather he has creatively reworked those traditions and placed them within a particular narrative setting. In particular he has drawn on those aspects of Israel's legal inheritance that set out the normative response of Israel to a situation of exile, and portrayed how that response was made in the framework of the pre-exilic temple cult. While not denying the role of the cult in achieving atonement he focuses on those aspects of cultic worship that express Israel's response to YHWH. In his conception the whole activity of temple worship comes to have the nature of an enacted prayer.

This raises the question of the extent to which the Chronicler understood this portrayal of the cult to be normative for his own day. If the worship of his own day was to be understood as an enacted prayer, what was its purpose, given that Israel was no longer in

⁵³² P does attribute an atoning function to the burnt offering (see Leviticus 1:4). However, other texts such as 1 Samuel 13:12 and Jeremiah 14:12 associate the burnt offering with prayer and entreaty. Milgrom suggests that over time the occasion for the burnt offering shifted from sinfulness to rejoicing. (J. Milgrom *Leviticus 1-16* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1991), pp172-177.

⁵³³ Japhet comes close to this understanding when she states that "Portraying the Temple as a place of ritual sacrifice complements its description as a house of prayer. The Chronicler views prayer and sacrifice as two sides of the same coin." *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles*, p80.

exile? The answer to this question requires a consideration of the Chronicler's use of narrative traditions, particularly those relating to the exodus from Egypt and the exile.

6.2.2.2 Narrative Traditions

As the Chronicler draws on and modifies earlier narrative texts he chooses either to emphasise or downplay various motifs and themes present in his sources. There are a number of themes which appear in both Samuel-Kings and Chronicles – the Davidic dynasty and its future, the role of the prophetic word, the outworking of divine retribution in Israel's history. However two narrative themes in particular are important for understanding the Chronicler's transformation of tradition – the exodus from Egypt and the exile.

A number of commentators have noted the relative neglect of the exodus in the books of Chronicles.⁵³⁴ Certainly, there are only six explicit references to the exodus in Chronicles⁵³⁵ compared to eighteen in Samuel-Kings. However, a number of the omissions have come about because the Chronicler has passed over large blocks of material in Samuel-Kings which happen to contain exodus references.

Of more interest are those instances where Chronicles has picked up a narrative unit from its *Vorlage*, and either omitted or modified a reference to the exodus, as in the account of the dedication of the temple under Solomon. There are five references to the exodus in 1 Kings 8:1-53, while the corresponding passage in 2 Chronicles 5:2-6:42 has only two. The reference in 1 Kings 8:21 to the covenant which YHWH made with Israel's ancestors when he brought them out of Egypt has been changed in 2 Chronicles 6:12 to refer to the covenant made with the people of Israel at some unspecified time. Both the references to the exodus in the conclusion of Solomon's prayer (1 Kings 8:51, 53) have been omitted by

⁵³⁴ See Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, pp62-5; Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles*, pp379-93; J. Kegler 'Das Zurücktreten der Exodustradition in den Chronikbüchern' in R. Albertz (ed) *Schöpfung und Befreiung: Fs C. Westermann* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1989), pp54-68.

⁵³⁵ 1 Chronicles 17:5; 17:21; 2 Chronicles 5:10; 6:5, 7:22, 20:10.

the Chronicler and replaced by an appeal to YHWH's faithfulness to David (2 Chronicles 6:41-42).

A variety of explanations have been given for the apparent downplaying of such a central aspect of Israel's experience. Noth attributes it to the supposed anti-Samaritan polemic of the Chronicler. He omitted those traditions, such as the exodus, which were common to the Jerusalem and Samaritan communities and focussed on traditions that supported the exclusive claims of the Jerusalem temple⁵³⁶. However, Noth's description of Chronicles as an anti-Samaritan work has not won widespread support⁵³⁷ and it is a weak basis on which to assess its *Tendenz*. Japhet attributes the downplaying to the Chronicler's particular understanding of the bond between Israel and the land. The Chronicler understands possession of the land not as an historical event achieved at a specific point in time, such as the conquest, but as a goal to be achieved by each generation through obedience to YHWH's commandments. Consequently, those aspects of Israel's tradition that indicate change in the relationship between Israel and the land, specifically the exile and the conquest, are de-emphasised. The bond cannot be associated with a particular moment in history, because it has existed in the beginning of time⁵³⁸.

Williamson relates the Chronicler's downplaying of the Exodus and Sinai traditions to the importance of the Davidic dynasty in his work. Up until the establishment of the dynasty, the exodus and conquest are fundamental for Israel's self-understanding. Subsequently the covenantal basis of Israel's relationship with YHWH shifts from the exodus to YHWH's

⁵³⁶ Noth, *The Chronicler's History*, p101. On p99 he offers a slightly different explanation for the Chronicler's silence on the conquest and Sinai traditions – "The reason why he did not speak about these things is rather that at this point there was quite simply no problem either for him or, apparently, for those to whom his work was addressed. In his view, rather, this was a relationship whose validity was quite without precondition and which therefore needed no historical justification."

⁵³⁷ Recent scholarship has tended to place the date of the Samaritan schism later than any plausible dating for the Chronicler's work. See R.J. Coggins 'Theology and Hermeneutics in Chronicles' in E. Ball (ed) *In Search of True Wisdom: Essays in Old Testament Interpretation in Honour of Ronald E. Clements* (JSOTSS 300; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp263-278.

⁵³⁸ Japhet *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles*, p386.

promises to David and his descendants⁵³⁹. A similar explanation is offered by Kegler. The reason for the downplaying of the exodus tradition is the double election of Jerusalem as the place of the sanctuary and David as the basis of an eternal dynasty. The place of the exodus tradition is taken over by the temple and the circumstances of its establishment⁵⁴⁰.

Certainly there is little doubt that in Solomon's temple dedication prayer the Chronicler has shifted the emphasis in Samuel-Kings somewhat away from the exodus to the importance of the Davidic monarchy, even if the exact significance of this is a matter of dispute⁵⁴¹. However, Japhet's argument that the Chronicler regarded the bond between Israel and the land as timeless and without historical development requires some modification, particularly with respect to the significance of the exile.

In line with her view that the Chronicler understands Israel's bond with the land to be timeless Japhet argues that the significance and impact of the exile is minimised in his work. She notes that Kings devotes fifty seven verses to the last kings of Judah and the events of the Babylonian conquest, whereas Chronicles discusses them in twenty three verses, which include Cyrus' proclamation. Moreover, the impact of the conquest and exile is largely confined to the city of Jerusalem and the temple rather than the land as a whole.⁵⁴² However, even if, as Japhet argues, the Chronicler has focussed on the impact of the conquest on Jerusalem this could be regarded as maximising its importance, given the key role of Jerusalem and the temple in the wider narrative. Moreover, earlier

⁵³⁹ Williamson 1 and 2 Chronicles, pp27-28.

⁵⁴⁰ Kegler 'Das Zurücktreten der Exodustradition in den Chronikbüchern', p64.

⁵⁴¹ Broadly speaking the two major positions on the Davidic monarchy in Chronicles are (a) that the Chronicler hoped for a restoration of the Davidic monarchy in some form (b) that the Chronicler saw the establishment of the temple cult as the key achievement of the Davidic monarchy, and with the cult in place there was no need for a restoration of the monarchy. For the first view see Kelly, Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles. For the second view see W.Riley, King and Cultus in Chronicles: Worship and the Reinterpretation of History (JSOTSS 160; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993); Donald F. Murray 'Dynasty, People, and the Future: The Message of Chronicles' JSOT 58 (1993), pp71-92.

⁵⁴² Japhet The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles, pp365-6.

foreshadowings of the exile at 1 Chronicles 6:15 and 9:1 make it clear that the Chronicler regarded the exile as Judah-wide in extent⁵⁴³.

A close analysis of the Chronicler's work suggests he has retained his sources' emphasis on the exile, but supplemented it with the concept of captivity. In Solomon's temple dedication prayer in both 1 Kings 8:46-50 and 2 Chronicles 6:36-39 being taken captive (שבה) to the land of their enemies is YHWH's ultimate judgement on the sins of his people. The prayer also leaves open the hope that in their state of captivity the people will pray to YHWH who will in turn forgive their sins. In neither Kings nor Chronicles is there any explicit statement that such forgiveness will involve a return to the land.

In Kings there is no reference to a significant national captivity following Solomon's prayer⁵⁴⁴. The most natural explanation is that the author(s) understood 1 Kings 8:46-50 to apply uniquely to the situation of the Babylonian exile. The situation is quite different in Chronicles. Here there are a number of references to captivity prior to the exile. At 2 Chronicles 21:17, a *Sondergut* passage, the Philistines and Arabs take the sons and wives of King Jehoram into exile. There are a number of references to captivity in the account of Ahaz's reign in 2 Chronicles 28. The Chronicler attributes Judah's military defeats under Ahaz to his disobedience, particularly in the cultic sphere. The upshot of defeat is the captivity of large numbers of Judah's people by Aram (verse 5), Israel (verse 8) and Edom (verse 17). Only the captivity by Israel is reversed, through the intervention of the prophet Oded.

⁵⁴³ 1 Chronicles 9:1 describes how "Judah was taken into exile in Babylon because of their faithlessness." In her commentary Japhet describes this part of the verse as "difficult... provocative... very much at variance with the book's attitude towards exile." She speculates that the reference to Judah being taken into exile may be a gloss intending to restore a reality the Chronicler wished to avoid. She admits however, that arguing along these lines does run the risk of becoming a vicious circle (*I & II Chronicles*, p206). In a later work she argues that 9:1 actually contrasts "all Israel" on the one hand and "Judah" on the other, with the implication that while Judah may have been exiled, Israel never was. S. Japhet 'Exile and Restoration in the Book of Chronicles' in B. Becking & M.C.A. Korpel (ed) *The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post-Exilic Times* (OTS XLII; Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp33-44.

⁵⁴⁴ At 2 Kings 5:2 there is a reference to a young Israelite girl taken captive by the Aramaeans and given as a servant to Naaman's wife.

The theme of captivity recurs in the account of Hezekiah's reign. In his letter to Israel and Judah prior to the celebration of the Passover Hezekiah refers to the captivity of their children and kindred and promises that an appropriate response to YHWH, expressed in attendance at the cult, will result in them finding compassion with their captors and returning to the land (2 Chronicles 30:6-9). While the mention of captivity no doubt refers in the first instance to the events of Ahaz's reign the description in verse six of Israel as "the remnant....who have escaped from the hands of the kings of Assyria" suggests that the Chronicler's thought is moving against a broader canvas. This impression is strengthened by the language of verse 9, which echoes the words of Solomon's dedication prayer in 1 Kings 8:50. Significantly, this verse was not reproduced in the Chronicler's version of Solomon's prayer. Williamson suggests this displacement is understandable in view of the Chronicler's patterning of Hezekiah on Solomon⁵⁴⁵. However, we may go further and state that this is further evidence of the Chronicler's desire to expand the application of this part of Solomon's prayer from a situation of exile to a situation of captivity.

Essentially, then, the Chronicler has modified Samuel-Kings understanding of the possible states of God's people (possession of the land, exile) by expanding it into a threefold schema (possession of the land, exile, captivity)⁵⁴⁶. Both exile and captivity arise from YHWH's judgement on the unfaithfulness of his people, particularly but not exclusively in the sphere of cultic worship. However, exile may be distinguished from captivity in that while the former results in the total removal of God's people from the land captivity represents a partial displacement of God's people such that some remain in the land while

⁵⁴⁵ Williamson, 1 and 2 Chronicles, p368.

⁵⁴⁶ In some ways this threefold schema is not dissimilar to that developed by Mosis in Untersuchungen zur Theologie des chronistischen Geschichtswerkes. Mosis argues that the Chronicler develops a threefold schema of Israel at rest (exemplified by the Solomonic era), Israel dwelling amongst the nations (exemplified by the Davidic era) and Israel in a state of unfaithfulness and experiencing the judgement of YHWH (exemplified by Saul's reign and the exile). The Chronicler portrays the Solomonic era as unique in Israel's history; he understands his own post-exilic era to be analogous to the Davidic era, an 'in between' time during which the people await the eschatological restoration of the Solomonic ideal. My schema differs from Mosis in that the 'ideal' is represented by all the people of God dwelling in the land and worshipping YHWH – there is thus no distinction between the Davidic and Solomon eras except insofar as it is only with the construction of the temple under Solomon that the full reality of worship may be experienced. Like Mosis, I agree that the Chronicler regarded his own post-exilic era as falling short of the ideal, not because of the absence of rest but because not all of Israel dwelt in the land.

others are dispersed through the nations. While other sections of the Old Testament are particularly interested in exploring the appropriate reaction of God's people to the situation of exile the Chronicler is more interested in exploring the appropriate response to a situation of captivity. He does this by picking up motifs and themes originally applied to an exilic context, and shows how they may be expressed in and through temple worship, since that possibility remains open when at least part of God's people remain in the land.

No doubt the Chronicler's interest in captivity reflects his assessment of the post-exilic era during which he wrote. It may reflect one or more specific incidents in this period when some of the people were taken into captivity⁵⁴⁷. However, the difficulty in establishing a precise dating for the composition of his work makes it impossible to relate this theme to any particular historical event. It is more likely that the Chronicler perceived an analogy between the idea of captivity and the experience of the post-exilic era as a whole. There is no evidence that the Chronicler believed that the Israel of his day to be in a state of continued exile⁵⁴⁸. With the restoration of temple worship the exile had ceased. Nevertheless, insofar as part of Israel remained outside the land the effects of the Assyrian and Babylonian deportation had not been totally reversed and Israel could be said to be in a state of captivity.⁵⁴⁹ For the Chronicler, major national gatherings at the temple, such as

⁵⁴⁷ Williamson refers to the involvement of some Jews in the abortive revolt against the Persians led by the Sidonian Tennes in the middle of the fourth century BCE which may have resulted in some of them being deported. 1 and 2 Chronicles, p219.

⁵⁴⁸ Cf Allen, The First and Second Books of Chronicles, p302 who argues that "Chronicles acknowledges the problematic condition of metaphorical exile" and refers to M.A. Knibb's article 'The Exile in the Literature of the Intertestamental Period' HeyJ (1976), pp253-272. However, Knibb does not discuss Chronicles in this context and there are in fact elements of his thesis that tell against a belief in a continued exile in Chronicles. So Knibb argues that Daniel 9:24-27 has transformed Jeremiah's prophecy of a 70 year exile so that it stretches down to his own day. However, 2 Chronicles 36:20-21 indicates that in the view of the writer the 70 years had been fully exhausted by the Babylonian exile. On the question of whether there was a widespread belief in a continued exile in second temple Judaism see a number of the essays in J.M. Scott (ed) Exile: Old Testament, Jewish and Christian Conceptions (SJFSJ: Leiden: Brill, 1997).

⁵⁴⁹ As such, the Chronicler's work stands alongside other Old Testament witnesses to a deferred hope in the post-exilic context. The most interesting parallel is the prayer of Ezra (Ezra 9:6-15). Here Ezra describes the post-exilic community as the escaped (פליטה) remnant (שאר Niphal), the same pair of words used to describe the pre-exilic community in 2 Chronicles 30:6. The context for Ezra's prayer is mixed marriages, particularly among the leadership of the community. Israel's current state is described in terms of slavery (verse 8). However, the theme of captivity is touched on in verse 7. For an examination of the theme of continued servitude in Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah see H. van Grol 'Indeed Servants We Are: Ezra 9,

that portrayed in 2 Chronicles 30, represented the means by which YHWH could be petitioned for the ingathering of Israel, and also a means by which such ingathering could take place. As in 1 Chronicles 16:35-36, the praise and prayer of the temple had as its goal and climax the appeal to YHWH to gather his people from among the nations so the cycle of praise could continue afresh.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter began by surveying debates concerning the date, authorship and genre of Chronicles. The introduction concluded that Kratz had suggested a fruitful way of exploring these issues, particularly those related to the genre and purpose of Chronicles. Kratz argued that Chronicles served to shape the memory and identity of post-exilic Israel. It sought to do this by constructing a sense of unity out of the diversity of Israel's historical experience and textual inheritance. Kratz suggested three aspects of this search for identity:

- . textual identity, that is the methods used by the Chronicler in utilising and transforming the sources available to him;
- . temporal identity, that is the motives and intentions of the Chronicler with respect to the concerns and interests of his contemporary situation
- . prophetic identity, that is the Chronicler's understanding of the status and authority of his work.

With respect to textual identity, the chapter has outlined the purposeful manner in which the Chronicler combined and transformed the legal and narrative traditions available to him. In the case of legal traditions, the Chronicler should not be dismissed as a pedant who was simply concerned to establish the legitimacy of one or more of the pentateuchal

Nehemiah 9 and 2 Chronicles 12 Compared' in B. Becking & M.C.A. Korpel (ed), The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post-Exilic Times (OTS XLII; Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp209-227.

traditions. Rather, he developed a trajectory already present within those traditions. Leviticus 26 showed how concepts which applied in the first instance to cultic worship could be used to interpret a situation in which Israel's unfaithfulness resulted in her exile from land and temple. The Chronicler in turn re-integrated themes which originally applied to a context of exile and judgement into a portrayal of Israel's cultic worship.

This transformation of legal traditions was both supported by and combined with a transformation of narrative traditions. Whereas Samuel-Kings allowed for two possible scenarios facing the people of Israel – possession of the land or exile – the Chronicler added a third category, that of captivity. Here part of the people remained in the land and had access to the Temple, but because of human unfaithfulness some of their fellow Israelites were scattered among the nations. Thus, just as in the case of the Chronicler's transformation of legal traditions elements drawn from the context of exile are combined with other elements which presuppose the settlement of God's people in his land.

The most likely explanation of the Chronicler's method lies in the second element of identity – his understanding of how the message of his work related to his contemporary situation. The Chronicler shared in the widespread feeling that the reality of Israel's post-exilic existence fell short of the ideal enshrined in her historical and prophetic traditions. There is however, no hint in the Chronicler's work of disappointment with Israel's cultic institutions. The gap between ideal and reality lay in the fact that only part of Israel were gathered in the land and around the Temple. The call to Israel to humble themselves and seek YHWH in the context of temple worship was intended to bring about this gathering – both as people responded voluntarily to the summons and as YHWH responded to the pleas by releasing the remainder of Israel from their captivity.

The third aspect of identity mentioned by Kratz concerns the Chronicler's self-understanding. As noted earlier, both Willi and Schniedewind characterise the Chronicler primarily as an interpreter or exegete of Scripture who thereby placed his own writings on a different level of authority. In contrast, Kratz argues that the Chronicler understood himself to be inspired by the same prophetic spirit that inspired the pre-exilic prophets.

Resolution of this debate is not straightforward, perhaps because the alternatives are falsely contrasted. Some of the post-exilic works that correspond most closely to the classic prophetic genre display a particular interest in the exegesis of pre-exilic traditions⁵⁵⁰. In this light ‘inspired exegesis’ may be an appropriate label for the Chronicler’s work, as long as ‘exegesis’ is understood to incorporate the combination and transformation of traditions as well as interpretation. Moreover, a high view by the Chronicler of the authority of his own work should not be played off against his assessment of his sources. As Talshir notes, it was a commonplace activity of the Second Temple period to radically rework aspects of the biblical tradition while nevertheless accepting its authority⁵⁵¹.

In summary, the books of Chronicles represent a creative transformation and combination of legal and narrative traditions designed to address the particular situation of post-exilic Israel. The next chapter will examine how this process worked itself out in the case of the two Passover accounts.

⁵⁵⁰ Michael Fishbane terms this process ‘mantological exegesis.’ He argues that a major impetus for its development is when later prophets believe that earlier predictions have failed and so stand in need of revision. *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, pp443-6. However, the fact that many pre-exilic prophecies lacked a specific time-frame makes ‘failure’ a somewhat problematic term; ‘delayed fulfilment’ may be more accurate.

⁵⁵¹ Z. Talshir ‘Several Canon-Related Concepts Originating in Chronicles.’ Talshir cites the examples of the various editions of biblical scrolls from Qumran, the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint, as well as new compositions such as the Temple Scroll and the Book of Jubilees.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE PASSOVER IN CHRONICLES

The previous chapter has outlined the theological vision of the Chronicler. Drawing on Israel's legal and narrative traditions and the memory of exile he shaped a vision of Israel's pre-exilic history that addressed the situation of his post-exilic contemporaries. In particular, he was concerned that Israel should seek YHWH in the context of temple worship in the hope that YHWH would gather the scattered people of Israel from amongst the nations. This chapter considers how this vision is worked out on the context of the Passover under Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 30) and Josiah (2 Chronicles 35). While there are a number of similarities between the two Passover accounts there are sufficient differences to justify treating them separately.

7.1 The Passover under Hezekiah

The section below considers the account of the Passover under Hezekiah in the context of the Chronicler's wider narrative of Hezekiah's reign.

7.1.1 *Hezekiah in Chronicles*

After Solomon and David, the Chronicler's account of Hezekiah's reign is the longest for any Judean monarch. Moreover, the emphasis in the Chronicler's narrative of his reign is quite different from the corresponding account in Kings⁵⁵². In Kings Hezekiah's cultic reforms are a minor aspect of his reign, being detailed in a single verse (2 Kings 18:4). Instead, the following verse summarises his reign in terms of his unprecedented trust (בטח) in YHWH. The same verb occurs another seven times in the subsequent account of Jerusalem's deliverance from the Assyrian invasion (18:13-19:37). Chapter 20 recounts Hezekiah's restoration from his illness, a visit from Babylonian envoys and the death of Hezekiah. That is, in Kings Hezekiah is an example of trust in YHWH in the face of national and personal disaster.

⁵⁵² Dillard *2 Chronicles*, pp227-229.

In contrast, the vocabulary of trust is almost entirely absent from the Chronicler's account, the verb **בטח** occurring only once (32:10). Much greater attention is given to Hezekiah's cultic reforms, which are described in an account stretching from 29:1 to 31:21. The main sections of this account are as follows:

29:1-2	Introduction to Hezekiah's reign
29:3-19	Cleansing of temple
29:20-36	Restoration of temple worship
30:1-31:1	Celebration of Passover and destruction of cultic objects
31:2-19	Organisation of priests and Levites
31:20-21	Evaluation of Hezekiah's temple reforms
32:1-23	Assyrian invasion and defeat
32:24-31	Hezekiah's sickness and prosperity
32:32-33	Conclusion of Hezekiah's reign

Although the Chronicler uses 2 Kings 18:1-4 as a framework for this section elements of the earlier account are transformed or omitted. The Kings account mentions four specific reforms at 18:4 – the removal of high places, and the destruction of the pillars (**מצבת**), sacred pole (**אשרה**)⁵⁵³ and the Nehushtan. The most natural interpretation of this list is that it incorporates actions both at the temple (hence the mention of a single Asherah) and throughout the countryside (the removal of high places).

By contrast, in Chronicles the cultic reforms are recounted in three stages, beginning with the centre and moving outwards. The cleansing of the temple, which takes place at Hezekiah's behest, is described in 29:3-19. The city of Jerusalem is cleansed as part of the national celebrations recorded in chapter 30. On their return from the celebrations the worshippers extend the destruction of cultic objects "throughout all Judah and Benjamin, and in Ephraim and Manasseh (2 Chronicles 31:1)."

⁵⁵³ A number of versions refer to sacred poles, no doubt influenced by the Chronicles account.

The same pattern of literary dependence and creativity is seen in the Chronicler's evaluation of Hezekiah's reign. In Kings Hezekiah is described first as one who did what was right in the eyes of YHWH, "just as his ancestor David had done (18:3)." Two verses later he is described as unique amongst the kings of Judah – "there was no one like him among all the kings of Judah after him, or among those who were before him." Verse six commends his obedience to YHWH – "he did not depart from following him but kept the commandments (מצוהיו) that YHWH commanded Moses." Verse seven then describes his reign as one of prosperity.

As in the account of cultic reforms, Chronicles has transformed the evaluation of Hezekiah so the importance of the temple is highlighted. The language of 2 Kings 18:3 is reproduced in 2 Chronicles 29:2, where it serves as a summary of Hezekiah's reign. However, the more detailed evaluation in 2 Kings 18:6-7 has been transformed and relocated to 2 Chronicles 31:20-21, where it now relates specifically to "every work that he undertook in the service of the house of God." Furthermore, Chronicles has modified the earlier evaluation so that Hezekiah's obedience now is in accordance "with the law and the commandment (ובחורה ובמצוה)." The addition of Torah is consistent with the tendency noted in the previous chapter for the Chronicler to expand the legal terminology of his sources to emphasise the role of a written and authoritative Torah throughout Israel's history. Chronicles concludes this evaluation of Hezekiah's cultic action by referring to his seeking (דרש) YHWH and his prosperity. While the theme of prosperity is present in Chronicles' sources the motif of seeking YHWH through temple worship is a particular interest of the Chronicler. It is not the case that the Chronicler is uninterested in the non-cultic aspects of Hezekiah's reign. In chapter 32 he describes a variety of military and economic achievements including the strengthening of Jerusalem's walls, the diversion of the waters of Gihon and the accumulation of livestock, silver, gold and precious stones⁵⁵⁴.

⁵⁵⁴ Knoppers comments "The scope of these reforms belies some influential conceptions of Chr's work as narrowly religious or theological." Gary N. Knoppers. 'History and Historiography: The Royal Reforms' in M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund & Steven L. McKenzie (eds) *The Chronicler as Historian* (JSOTSS 238; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp178-203.

Nevertheless, the particular prominence given to the temple in the Chronicler's account is consistent with his understanding of the central role it plays in the life of YHWH's people.

7.1.2 *The Passover Account*

7.1.2.1 *Sources and Historicity*

As noted earlier Samuel-Kings makes no mention of any Passover during Hezekiah's reign. Moreover, 2 Kings 23:22 states that no Passover like that celebrated under Josiah had been kept since the days of the judges. Since most commentators understand the distinctive aspect of the Josianic Passover to be its location at the temple in Jerusalem this makes it difficult to accommodate an earlier centralised Passover under Hezekiah.

Broadly speaking, there have been three views on the historicity of the Chronicler's portrayal of a Hezekian Passover:

- . the Chronicler has created the account of the Passover out of his experience of the post-exilic cult and it has little basis in historical reality
- . the Chronicler has supplemented a tradition which referred to a national celebration of Unleavened Bread under Hezekiah
- . there are good reasons for believing that the Chronicler had access to genuine traditions of a Passover under Hezekiah.

A recent exposition of the first position is an article by Mathias Delcor⁵⁵⁵. He argues that 2 Kings 23:22 clearly contradicts the celebration of such a Passover under Hezekiah. He also argues that there are several indications that the Chronicler has modelled his portrayal of Hezekiah's Passover on that celebrated under Josiah – the common emphasis on the role of

⁵⁵⁵ M. Delcor 'Le récit de la célébration de la Pâque au temps d'Ezéchias d'après 2 Chr 30 et ses problèmes' in A. Schenker (ed), *Studien zu Opfer und Kult im Alten Testament* (Tübingen : JCB Mohr, 1992), pp83-106.

the Levites, royal provisions for the sacrifices and the offering of additional sacrifices to accompany the Passover⁵⁵⁶. Moreover, the fact that both accounts show the influence of Priestly legislation indicates that they are modelled on post-exilic practice rather than pre-exilic tradition. He concludes that there is little to be said for the historicity of the chapter and it is best understood as a *midrash* on the Passover celebrated under Josiah.

Delcor's position is not without its weaknesses. If the celebration of a Passover under Hezekiah contradicts 2 Kings 23:22 it needs to be explained why the Chronicler has retained a similar notice at 2 Chronicles 35:18. A number of the similarities between the accounts of the Passovers under Hezekiah and Josiah, such as the role of Levites and the details of additional sacrifices, may be attributed to the particular interests of the Chronicler rather than to one account being modelled on the other. Even if both accounts do reflect the influence of post-exilic practice this does not deny a genuine tradition of a pre-exilic celebration, as is certainly the case for the Josianic Passover. Moreover, this approach is often associated with a certain lack of interpretative imagination. Curtis and Madsen, who describe the Hezekian Passover as "probably a purely imaginary occurrence" describe the purpose of Chapter 30 as follows – "Since Hezekiah was held to have been a reformer equally with Josiah, it was felt he too must have celebrated in a similar manner the Passover."⁵⁵⁷ Not only does this appear to be a somewhat circular argument, but it also fails to account for the distinctive aspects of the Hezekian and Josianic Passovers.

Both Haag⁵⁵⁸ and Williamson⁵⁵⁹ argue that the Chronicler has built on a tradition of a celebration of Unleavened Bread under Hezekiah, although their method of argument is slightly different. Haag relies on a literary-critical analysis of 2 Chronicles 30 which

⁵⁵⁶ 'Le récit de la célébration de la Pâque au temps d'Ezéchias', p101.

⁵⁵⁷ E.L. Curtis & A.A. Madsen, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Chronicles (ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1910), pp470-471.

⁵⁵⁸ H. Haag 'Das Mazzenfest des Hiskia' in H. Gese & H. P. Rüger (eds) Wort und Geschichte: Fs K. Elliger (AOAT 18; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1973), pp87-94.

⁵⁵⁹ H.G.M. Williamson, 1 and 2 Chronicles, pp360-365.

isolates a pre-Chronistic text which mentioned Unleavened Bread only. A later redactor added the Passover material, using Chapter 35 as his model. The fact that the Passover material in 2 Chronicles 30 is later than the corresponding material in Chapter 35 explains the unqualified language of 2 Chronicles 35:18. Williamson is not convinced by Haag's division of the chapter, but does suggest that aspects of 2 Chronicles 30 (the fact that Unleavened Bread alone is mentioned and verses 13 and 21-22, the much greater prominence given to Unleavened Bread in this chapter compared to Chapter 35) witness to an earlier tradition of a centralised Unleavened Bread apart from Passover. However, in the Chronicler's own day the two celebrations were combined and this has been reflected in his narration.

The particular literary analysis of Haag has not won widespread support, so the argument for a pre-Chronistic tradition of a centralised Unleavened Bread apart from a celebration of Passover is best assessed in terms of general probabilities. The main difficulty with the suggestion is that in the narrative as it stands so many of the aspects which make it distinctive - the delay until the second month, the problem of uncleanness – are associated with the Passover rather than Unleavened Bread. Moreover, it is not clear how Williamson's position actually overcomes the problem of 2 Chronicles 35:18, since the Chronicler would be still be responsible for both this verse and the account of Hezekiah's Passover.

Those who argue that there are good reasons for detecting a genuine historical tradition behind 2 Chronicles 30 point to various 'non-standard' aspects of the celebration – the dating in the second month, the participation of some worshippers who were unclean, the extension of the festival for an additional seven days – as signs that the Chronicler is unlikely to have crafted the account out of his own imagination⁵⁶⁰. Moreover, the Deuteronomistic Historian may have had reasons to suppress any tradition of a Hezekian

⁵⁶⁰ So Dillard, 2 Chronicles, p240.

Passover, particularly if the first edition of his work had the Josianic reforms as its climax⁵⁶¹.

The ‘non-standard’ aspects of Hezekiah’s Passover are certainly worthy of note. However they are not ‘heterodox’ as such. Numbers 9:1-14 does provide some textual precedent for a Passover in the second month and while extending the celebrations for an extra seven days might be unusual, the Chronicler would surely regard it as commendable.

By its very nature the debate on the sources and historical traditions which may lie behind 2 Chronicles 30 must remain open, especially since none of the positions outlined above are without their difficulties. While archaeology may be helpful in assessing some aspects of the Chronicler’s Hezekiah narrative⁵⁶² it is highly unlikely that it could provide any evidence concerning the observance or non-observance of a particular festival. As a result, the analysis which follows will be primarily concerned to read the Passover account against the broader background of the Chronicler’s ideology rather than seeking to determine precisely how that account relates to the world of the ‘real’ Hezekiah.

7.1.2.2 Structure

The references to ‘all Israel’ in 2 Chronicles 30:1 and 31:1 suggest these verses frame the account of Hezekiah’s Passover. This is further indicated by the placement of 30:1 out of chronological sequence; the events narrated in verses 2 to 5 preceded it in time. The remainder of the account is structured around the preparations for and celebration of the festival⁵⁶³.

⁵⁶¹ So S.L. McKenzie, *The Chronicler’s Use of the Deuteronomistic History* (HSM 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), pp170-72.

⁵⁶² A. Vaughn concludes that archaeological findings provide support for the Chronicler’s association of economic prosperity with Hezekiah’s reign. *Theology, History and Archaeology in the Chronicler’s Account of Hezekiah*. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999).

⁵⁶³ So Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, p936, although my division of the material is slightly different from hers.

30:1	Introduction: Summons of all Israel
	Preparations
30:2-5	Decision to celebrate the Passover
30:6-9	Sending of letter to Israel and Judah
30:10-12	Reaction to the letter
	Celebrations
30:13-14	Gathering and removal of altars
30:15-20	Passover
30:21-22	Unleavened Bread
31:23-27	Seven additional days of rejoicing
31:1	Conclusion: Dispersal of all Israel

De Vries has demonstrated that 2 Chronicles 30 is one of five passages in Chronicles exhibiting a ‘festival schema.’⁵⁶⁴ The four elements of this schema are (1) the opening notice (2) the identification of the participants (3) an account of the celebration (4) the notice of a joyful celebration. Set against this schema, the most distinctive aspect of Hezekiah’s Passover is the amount of space accorded to the identification and gathering of the participants (verses 1-13a on De Vries’ reckoning). On the other festival occasions the gathering of the participants is narrated in a rather straightforward fashion⁵⁶⁵. This indicates where the emphasis lies in 2 Chronicles 30 – not so much on the ritual details of the Passover celebration itself but on the question of who should participate in the Passover

⁵⁶⁴ S.J. De Vries ‘Festival Ideology in Chronicles’ in H.T.C. Sun & K.L.Eades (ed) Problems in Biblical Theology: Essays in Honour of Rolf Knierim (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), pp104-124. The five passages are 2 Chronicles 7 (temple dedication under Solomon), 2 Chronicles 15 (covenant renewal under Asa), 2 Chronicles 29 (temple re-dedication under Hezekiah), 2 Chronicles 30 and 35.

⁵⁶⁵ 2 Chronicles 7:8 records that all Israel participated in the festival at the dedication without indicating how they were gathered; 2 Chronicles 16:9 notes that Asa gathered Judah and Benjamin and those from the Northern Kingdom who were residing as aliens with them; 2 Chronicles 29:20 and 36 suggest that participation in the temple re-dedication was limited to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; 2 Chronicles 35:18 and 19 state that Josiah’s Passover was kept by the inhabitants of Judah and Israel “who were present (הנמצא).”

and why. More specifically, the Chronicler displays a particular interest in the participation of all Israel, including the inhabitants of the former Northern Kingdom⁵⁶⁶.

Some commentators relate this interest in the North to the political circumstances surrounding Hezekiah's accession⁵⁶⁷. With the fall of the Northern Kingdom the opportunity presented itself for Judah to extend its influence northwards and recover some of the land lost under Ahaz. It is further suggested that Hezekiah's naming his son Manasseh, after one of the Northern tribes, was part of this policy. However, the narrative of Chronicles makes no reference to such political concerns, and to interpret the text on its own terms requires setting them aside in the first instance.

30:1

This verse introduces the account that follows. Here it is Hezekiah who both summons (יִשְׁלַח) and writes letters to the people, that they may come to the Jerusalem temple and celebrate the Passover.

The terminology of keeping Passover to YHWH (לַעֲשׂוֹת פֶּסַח לַיהוָה) occurs in variety of legal texts, both Priestly and Deuteronomic⁵⁶⁸, as well in the Kings' account of Josiah's Passover⁵⁶⁹. Its use here therefore says little about the Chronicler's relationship to other OT traditions, although the additional designation of YHWH as the "God of Israel (אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) is distinctive. Its use here probably reflects the role of Hezekiah's Passover in attempting to re-unite inhabitants of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms.

⁵⁶⁶ See the reference to the Northern tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh in verse 1; and the references in verses 5 and 10 to the Passover invitation being sent to inhabitants of the former Northern Kingdom.

⁵⁶⁷ Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, pp299-301; J.M. Myers *II Chronicles*. (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1965), pp176-9.

⁵⁶⁸ For P – Exodus 12:48, Numbers 9:5,10,13,14. It also occurs at Deuteronomy 16:1.

⁵⁶⁹ 2 Kings 23:21, 23.

These verses are particularly concerned to explain why Hezekiah's Passover was celebrated in the second month, rather than in the first month as was both customary and required by the Torah. They function as a 'flashback', narrating the background to the decision recounted in verse 1. The Chronicler explains that in reaching the decision Hezekiah consulted his officials and "all the assembly (קהל) in Jerusalem." The value of joint action between King and people is a favourite motif of the Chronicler⁵⁷⁰. The exact nature of the קהל is difficult to define. Johnstone⁵⁷¹ describes it as "the sacred assembly" without qualification and provides 1 Chronicles 13:2 as a cross-reference. However, the parallel is not exact since in 1 Chronicles 13 David addresses קהל ישראל whereas the context of 2 Chronicles 30 indicates a smaller gathering, restricted to the residents of Jerusalem. In light of this, קהל is best understood as a general term for any gathering of YHWH's people without the exact nature and status of that gathering differing according to context.

Verse 3 explains why it was not possible to keep the Passover at its appointed time. Two reasons are given – insufficient numbers of priests had sanctified themselves and the people had not yet assembled in Jerusalem. Both these reasons have been queried, especially since 2 Chronicles 29:17 indicates that the temple cleansing was not completed until the sixteenth day of the first month. In other words, the temple was not ready for the celebration of the Passover at its normal time and any further explanation for the delay is superfluous. Williamson in fact describes the first reason in verse 3 as "somewhat artificial" and suggests it reflects the Chronicler's criticism of the priesthood, probably arising from a dispute in his own day⁵⁷². Japhet states that the Chronicler's argument "bears the marks of

⁵⁷⁰ As noted, amongst others, by Japhet (*I & II Chronicles*, p938). The association of various cultic practices with royal sanction would no doubt emphasise their authority and antiquity, while the idea of lay initiative would resonate with the experience of the Chronicler's contemporaries in an age where the monarchy was no longer extant.

⁵⁷¹ W. Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles - Volume 2: 2 Chronicles 10-36* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), p199.

⁵⁷² *1 and 2 Chronicles*, p366.

apologetic” and suggests the real reasons for the delay may lie elsewhere – perhaps in an emergency situation, such as a military campaign. The delayed Passover then remained within Israel’s collective memory, even as the original rationale was forgotten⁵⁷³.

Most of the difficulties arise from the assumption that Hezekiah’s Passover was celebrated in the first year of his reign⁵⁷⁴. Certainly, 29:3 states that Hezekiah’s reforms began in the first month of his reign. If 30:2 then refers to the same year, and the events narrated in Chapter 31 follow on immediately from the Passover, all Hezekiah’s cultic reforms would be completed in the first two months of his reign. The inherent implausibility of this situation suggests that some or all of the dates in 2 Chronicles are ‘pseudo-dates’, intended to emphasise Hezekiah’s zeal rather than providing an exact chronology of events⁵⁷⁵. If this is the case, the lack of preparation by the priests and people would suggest that such a large-scale Passover celebration was not the norm.

This is certainly suggested by the language of verse 5. Here the king and the assembly determine to make a proclamation throughout the land summoning the people to keep the Passover in Jerusalem. The second half of the verse explains the need for such a proclamation – **כִּי לֹא לָרַב עָשׂוּ כִּכְחוֹב**. The significance of this explanation turns on two issues – the distinctive aspect of the celebration (ie the meaning of a Passover being kept **לָרַב**) and the basis for such a practice (ie the referent of the citation formula **כִּכְחוֹב**). While the NRSV translates **לָרַב** as “in great numbers” Japhet prefers the JPS rendering “many [times]” or “often.”⁵⁷⁶ She argues that the NRSV translation would require the form **בָּרַב**.

⁵⁷³ *I & II Chronicles*, p939. Japhet discusses, but does not endorse Talmon’s argument that the delay arose from Hezekiah’s desire to reach out to the North through reconciling the divergent calendars of Israel and Judah. S. Talmon ‘Divergences in the Calendar Reckoning in Ephraim and Judah’ *VT* 8 (1958), pp58-63.

⁵⁷⁴ As recognised by Keil. See C.F. Keil *Biblischer Commentar über Die Nachexilischen Geschichtsbücher: Chronik, Esra, Nehemia und Esther* (Leipzig: Dörffling und Franke, 1870), pp343-44.

⁵⁷⁵ W.H. Barnes ‘Non-Synoptic Chronological References in the Books of Chronicles’ in M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund & Steven L. McKenzie (eds) *The Chronicler as Historian* (JSOTSS 238; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp106-131. On pp109-110 Barnes refers to a parallel in the Babylonian Inscription of Esarhaddon, in which all his reforms are dated to the first year of his reign, notwithstanding the fact that this year was a period of considerable turmoil.

⁵⁷⁶ *I & II Chronicles*, pp940-41.

Moreover, she argues, the distinctive aspect of Hezekiah's celebration is not the number of participants but its location in Jerusalem. However, there are good grounds for translating **לרב** as "in great numbers." Certainly, it carries this sense in verse 13 where the Chronicler describes the people who gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover as **קהל לרב** **מאד**. Admittedly, the word is used adjectivally in verse 13 and adverbially in verse 5. Even so, it is unlikely the word carries different meanings in the two verses – and far more likely that the Chronicler has used the word twice to establish an identity between what the people failed to do in the past and what they now do under Hezekiah.

When it comes to identifying the referent of **ככתוב** most commentators argue that the Chronicler had the regulations of Deuteronomy 16:1-8 in mind⁵⁷⁷. However, there are subtle but important differences in emphasis between Deuteronomy 16 and 2 Chronicles 30 which make this unlikely. In Deuteronomy 16:1-8 the key issue is location – the Passover is to be celebrated at the place which YHWH will choose, and not at any other place throughout the land. In 2 Chronicles 30 the key issue is participation by as many of the people as possible. Certainly, the participation of as many Israelites as possible requires that the Passover be celebrated in one place, and the presumption is that the Jerusalem temple is that location. However, Chronicles contains no explicit polemic against alternative locations for celebrating the Passover similar to that of Deuteronomy 16. The most natural reading of the text is that if the people did not celebrate the Passover at Jerusalem they would not celebrate it at all.

This suggests that **ככתוב** does not refer primarily or exclusively to Deuteronomy 16. A more natural referent is a text such as Numbers 9:13, which states that all Israelites are under an obligation to keep the Passover. It is also likely that the Chronicler has in mind

⁵⁷⁷ So Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, p244; Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, p941; H.G.M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, p366; K.L. Spawn "As It Is Written" and Other Citation Formulae in the Old Testament: Their Use, Development, Syntax and Significance (BZAW 318; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), pp111-12. Shaver is more hesitant – "One thinks immediately of Deut. 16:1-8, the first text to state such a requirement, but Ezek. 45:21-24, Num. 28:16-25, and the Holiness Code (Lev. 23:5-8) all presuppose Jerusalem as the site of the daily burnt offerings of Unleavened Bread." (*Torah and the Chronicler's History Work*, pp110-11).

non-pentateuchal texts which speak of the importance of seeking YHWH in and through temple worship, possibly including portions of his own work, especially 2 Chronicles 7:12-14⁵⁷⁸. This means that we cannot presume that the Chronicler believed that Hezekiah's Passover was the first instance of a centralised Passover in Jerusalem. Rather, it was the first occasion, probably since the division of the kingdom (see verse 26) that such large numbers of Israelites, from both the North and the South, had the opportunity to participate.

30:6-9

These verses, and in particular the appeal of 6b-9 are the key to understanding the purpose of this Passover narrative. While the passage recounts the contents of the letter sent throughout Israel and Judah the appeal has much in common with speeches elsewhere in Chronicles, including Hezekiah's appeal to the Levites in 2 Chronicles 29:5-14.

The introduction to the letter in verse 6 combines the perspectives of verses 1 and 2-5 – while the letter was sent at the king's command (כְּמִצְוַת הַמֶּלֶךְ), the letter itself came with the authority of the king and his officials (מִיַּד הַמֶּלֶךְ וּשְׂרָיו). There is thus no basis for assuming it expresses “two somewhat conflicting features in the Chronicler's attitude”⁵⁷⁹ or that “as the king commanded” introduces some further action which has dropped out of the text⁵⁸⁰.

The text of the letter may be set out as follows:

(6b) Israelites!

Turn to YHWH, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel

⁵⁷⁸ A referent which encompasses a variety of texts may explain why the uses of כְּכַתּוּב in Chapter 30 (verses 5 and 18) stand alone, ie make no reference to a specific corpus of writing, unlike the other uses of this citation formula in Chronicles which refer specifically to the Torah of YHWH, or the book of Moses (see 1 Chronicles 16:40, 2 Chronicles 23:18, 25:4, 34:21, 35:12, 35:20).

⁵⁷⁹ Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, p941.

⁵⁸⁰ So Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, p300 and BHS.

so that he may turn to the remnant of you who have been preserved from the hand of the Assyrian kings.

(7) Do not be like your fathers and brothers who were unfaithful to YHWH, the God of their fathers

so that he gave them to be a desolation, just as you see.

(8) So then, do not be stiff-necked like your fathers, but reach out to YHWH and come to his sanctuary, which he has sanctified forever, and serve YHWH your God, so that he may turn his fierce anger from you.

(9) For when you turn to YHWH your brothers and sons will find compassion with their captors, and return to this land.

For YHWH your God is compassionate and merciful, and will not turn his face from you if you turn to him.

The key to the message of the letter is the idea of turning (שׁוּב), both human and divine. At a number of points one type of turning is linked to another as cause and effect. At the opening and closing of the letter (verses 6b and 9b) Israel's turning to YHWH results in YHWH's turning to them. In verse 9a Israel's turning to YHWH results in their captive brothers and sons returning to the land. The vocabulary of turning is absent from verses 8 and 9, which do however spell out in detail what turning to YHWH means in practice. Negatively, it means not following the faithless example of the ancestors of Hezekiah's generation. Positively, it means coming to the sanctuary and serving YHWH in the context of cultic worship.

Both the emphasis on the importance of temple worship and the language used in the letter have parallels elsewhere in Chronicles. The relationship between turning to YHWH and the temple is evident from Solomon's dedication prayer. At 2 Chronicles 6:24-25 YHWH is asked to forgive the sins of his people and return them to the land when they turn to YHWH, confess his name and pray in his house. A similar pattern is found at 6:26-27, except that here YHWH's judgement is experienced through drought, and the people are to turn from their sins, rather than to YHWH, and pray towards the temple (אֶל-הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הַזֶּה).

In 6:34-39 the prayer envisages a situation of future exile and captivity where the people “come to their senses (וְהָשִׁיבוּ אֶל-לִבָּם)”, “repent with all their heart and soul (וְשִׁבוּ אֵלַי בְּכָל-לֵב וּבְכָל-נַפְשָׁם)” and pray towards the land, the city and the temple. Once again, the intended result from such activity is forgiveness by YHWH.

Finally, in his speech to Solomon on the night on the temple dedication YHWH himself declares that if his people humble themselves, pray, seek his face and turn (וְיָשֻׁבוּ) from their wicked ways he will hear their prayers, forgive their sin and heal their land (2 Chronicles 7:14).

This emphasis on the importance of turning to YHWH is also evident in Solomon’s dedication prayer in Samuel-Kings. However, the subsequent narrative of Israel’s history in Kings makes no mention of an occasion where repentance was expressed in and through temple worship, although שׁוּב is used for the attitude of heart that was expected of Israel and her leaders⁵⁸¹.

The situation is quite different in Chronicles, where we are told of a small number of instances where the people did turn to YHWH. Sometimes turning is expressed without mention of the temple, as in 2 Chronicles 15:3-4, where the prophet Azariah exhorts his contemporaries by recalling a time, presumably the pre-monarchic era, when Israel was without the true God, a teaching priest and law. Even so, he recalls, when Israel turned to YHWH in their distress and sought him he was found by them. At 2 Chronicles 19:4 we are told that Jehoshaphat turned the people to YHWH. The immediate context is his judicial reforms rather than any cultic activity. However, the account of Jehoshaphat’s reign does climax with an account of the people going to Jerusalem to worship at the temple (2 Chronicles 20:27-28),⁰ so such concerns are not entirely absent. It is only with Hezekiah’s reign, however, that the link between turning to YHWH is expressed as clearly as in the dedication prayer of Solomon.

⁵⁸¹ See 1 Kings 13:33 and 2 Kings 17:13. In both instances we are told that Israel and her leaders failed to turn.

Chronicles also contains a small number of references to YHWH's turning away his anger from his people. In each instance YHWH is responding to some action by the people or their leaders, whether this involves self-humbling, as in the case of Rehoboam during the invasion of Shishak (2 Chronicles 12:12), or making a covenant, as in the case of Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 29:10).

But it is only in 2 Chronicles 30:6-9 that the Chronicler links human and divine turning in such a relationship of cause and effect. He may have been encouraged to make this link because of his general understanding of the relationship between human repentance and divine forgiveness. He may have also been drawing on other aspects of the Old Testament tradition, such as Zechariah 1:3 and Malachi 3:7 which make the same link⁵⁸².

Other aspects of the letter are less characteristic of the Chronicler's general usage. First, the designation of YHWH as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel is not typical of Chronicles. In Chronicles YHWH is a number of times addressed or described as the God of Israel. However, this is almost always⁵⁸³ a reference to the nation rather to the individual patriarch, as in this instance. The Chronicler's only other reference to YHWH as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel occurs at 1 Chronicles 29:18, where it is part of David's prayer after he has received the offerings for the building of the temple. Mason argues that the echo of this prayer in 2 Chronicles 30 may be intended to emphasise that the divine purpose in establishing the temple is being fulfilled through Hezekiah⁵⁸⁴. Japhet sees a desire to reach out to the North by referring to the patriarchal traditions shared by all tribes⁵⁸⁵.

⁵⁸² So Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, p943.

⁵⁸³ The only clear exception is 1 Chronicles 29:10, where David addresses YHWH as "the God of our ancestor Israel."

⁵⁸⁴ R. Mason, *Preaching the Tradition: Homily and Hermeneutics After the Exile* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p105.

⁵⁸⁵ Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, p944.

It is also noteworthy that, outside Chronicles, whenever YHWH is identified by reference to the three patriarchs it is in a context where the nature of his relationship to Israel is in question or under threat. At 1 Kings 18:36, during the conflict with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel Elijah appeals to YHWH to manifest his power – “YHWH, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel.” Immediately before the deliverance from Egypt YHWH reveals himself to Moses and the Israelites as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob⁵⁸⁶. Whether or not Chronicles is alluding to either of these passages, the use of patriarchal formula does suggest the pivotal nature of Hezekiah’s invitation. Just as in the days of Moses and Elijah the people must choose whether or not to encounter YHWH, not in the exodus or on Mount Carmel but in worship at the temple.

Indeed, there are signs that the letter is alluding to the exodus tradition, and more specifically the narrative of the golden calf in Exodus 32-34. In verse 9 YHWH is described as gracious (חַנּוּן) and merciful (רַחוּם), the same pair of words used in Exodus 34:6 by YHWH as he passes before Moses⁵⁸⁷, although in Chronicles the order of the words is reversed. Several times in the golden calf narrative Israel is described as a stiff-necked people⁵⁸⁸; the same term is used in 2 Chronicles 30:8 to describe the ancestors of Hezekiah’s generation. In Exodus 32-34 it is the intercession of Moses that is responsible for preserving the people in the face of YHWH’s anger at their sin. Several examples of his intercession are recounted in the narrative but it is his plea at Exodus 32:12 which is most significant in the context of 2 Chronicles 30 – “Turn from your fierce anger (שׁוּב מִחֲרוֹן) (אֲפֹךְ) change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people.” The language is

⁵⁸⁶ See Exodus 3:6, 15, 16; 4:5.

⁵⁸⁷ The similarity in wording between Exodus 34:6 and 2 Chronicles 30:9 is noted by Delcor (‘Le récit de la célébration de la Pâque au temps d’Ezéchias’, p96) and Keil (*Nachexilischen Geschichtsbücher*, p348) neither of whom develops the parallel at any length.

⁵⁸⁸ Exodus 32:9, 33:3, 33:5 and 34:9. They are also so described in the parallel account in Deuteronomy – see 9:6 and 9:13. The idiom occurs only seventeen times in the Old Testament; hence the associations with the golden calf incident are particularly strong.

reminiscent of 2 Chronicles 30:8 where the people are urged to come and serve YHWH at the sanctuary so that “his fierce anger may turn away from you (וַיִּשָׁב מִכֶּם חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ).”

Taken together, these parallels between Exodus 32-34 and 2 Chronicles must be more than accidental. Certainly, there are other indications from elsewhere in the Old Testament that the language and motifs of Exodus 32-34 were used in the post-exilic era to explore the basis for divine forgiveness in the face of human sin and repentance⁵⁸⁹. By means of these parallels the Chronicler establishes an analogy between Israel in the days of Moses and Hezekiah. In both instances the nation has experienced the judgement of YHWH and stand under the threat of further calamity. But whereas in Exodus it is the intercession of an individual which can avert YHWH’s anger, in Chronicles that privilege and responsibility falls upon the nation as a whole. By heeding the call to come and serve YHWH at his sanctuary they show that human repentance which is met by divine repentance.

30:10-12

These verses record the passage of the letter through the North and the South and the reactions of the people in the two regions. The response of the two regions to the summons is quite different. Generally the reaction of the North is negative – verse ten describes how the messengers were mocked by the inhabitants. Nevertheless, verse eleven does state that אֶךְ-אֲנָשִׁים מֵאַשֶׁר וּמִנַּשֶׁה וּמִזְבֻּלֹן responded positively. Williamson argues that the RSV (and NRSV) translation “only a few [men] from Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun” is unnecessarily pessimistic in light of verse 18⁵⁹⁰. This may be true, although the more unqualified language in the next verse concerning the response of Judah indicates that the

⁵⁸⁹ See for example the book of Jonah, which has several points of contact with Exodus 32-34. The words of Jonah at 4:2 clearly recall Exodus 34:6-7, and the idea of YHWH turning from his fierce anger and changing his mind concerning the disaster he planned to bring against Nineveh (Jonah 3: 9-10) closely parallels Exodus 32:12. The same combination of ideas is found in Joel 2:12-14, where it is the penitence of YHWH’s people, expressed in fasting, weeping and mourning, which prompts YHWH’s change of mind. See the discussion in T.B. Dozeman ‘Inner-Biblical Interpretation of Yahweh’s Gracious and Compassionate Character’ *IBL* 108/2 (1989), pp207-223, who argues that both Joel and Jonah are interpretations of the account of covenant renewal in Exodus 32-34.

⁵⁹⁰ 1 and 2 Chronicles, p369.

Chronicler does wish to distinguish the attendance of the North and South at the Passover. The translation of Dillard - “However, some men from Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun”⁵⁹¹ – conveys this nuance well.

The Chronicler uses the language of self-humbling (כניע Niphal) to describe the willingness of the Northerners to come to Jerusalem. The previous chapter has surveyed the importance of this concept in the Chronicler’s thought. Here submission to YHWH is expressed through participation in temple worship, even in the face of opposition.

Verse 12 records a uniformly positive response to the invitation on the part of Judah. Elsewhere in Chronicles there is no indication of any hesitancy on the part of the Judean people to participate in the temple cult. Where the cult is not operative this is due to the derogation by the king or cultic officials. In this instance the enthusiasm of the people is however ultimately ascribed to YHWH who gave the people one heart to “to obey the command of the king and the officials by the word of YHWH⁵⁹² (בדבר יהוה).” Schniedewind sees here a reference to the Mosaic law⁵⁹³, although this is unlikely given that there is no explicit mention of the Mosaic law in the preceding verses. Japhet sees “an exceptionally broad understanding of the origin of the king’s authority and a widening of the idea of the ‘word of the Lord’ acting through the king and the political system.”⁵⁹⁴ Japhet seems here to be identifying the king’s command with the word of YHWH, that is, assigning Hezekiah a prophetic role. However, this is not justified syntactically⁵⁹⁵ and is

⁵⁹¹ 2 Chronicles, p238.

⁵⁹² The NRSV translation “to give them one heart to obey what the king and the officials commanded by the word of YHWH” is misleading, in that it reads מצוה as a verb that is then modified by בדבר יהוה. However, it is more likely that בדבר יהוה modifies לעשות ie it is the people’s obedience, rather than the royal edict which takes place by/in response to the word of YHWH. The closest parallel in Chronicles is 1 Chronicles 21:19, where David went up בדבר־גד ie in response to Gad’s instructions.

⁵⁹³ W.M. Schniedewind, The Word of God in Transition: From Prophet to Exegete in the Second Temple Period. (JSOTSS 197; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), p135.

⁵⁹⁴ I & II Chronicles, p947.

⁵⁹⁵ See footnote 592 above.

more likely that the “word of YHWH” is a reference to the legal and prophetic traditions which contribute to the letter. That is, the word of YHWH exerts its influence not only in its original form and context but also as it is reformulated and re-applied in a new setting.

30:13-14

These verses describe the gathering that took place in Jerusalem. Verse 13 particularly emphasises the numbers involved – “many people (עַם־רַב)....a very large assembly (קָהָל לְרַב מְאֹד).” The last description recalls the similar description of Solomon’s festival in 2 Chronicles 7:8, suggesting that Hezekiah’s Passover occupies a place in Israel’s history akin to the temple dedication under Solomon. Verse 14 describes the purpose of the gathering as being “to keep the Festival of Unleavened Bread (לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־חַג הַמַּצּוֹת).” The use of עָשָׂה in connection with Unleavened Bread is found in a small number of post-exilic texts⁵⁹⁶; here the terminology and the parallel with the similar expression concerning Passover in verse 2 demonstrates the degree to which the celebrations of Passover and Unleavened Bread had merged together at the time of the Chronicler, if not earlier⁵⁹⁷.

The first act of the pilgrims in Jerusalem is to destroy the altars and incense burners erected by Ahaz. The fact that the city as a whole must be cleansed prior to the celebration of Passover/Unleavened Bread indicates that the Festival was not limited to the temple as such and suggests that at least by the time this account was written it was customary for meals to be shared throughout the city.

30:15-20

These verses describe the celebration of Passover. There are a number of syntactical problems that make it difficult to reconstruct the precise sequence of events. However two

⁵⁹⁶ 2 Chronicles 30:13, 21; 35:7; Ezra 6:22.

⁵⁹⁷ Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, p948.

themes stand out – the enthusiasm of the pilgrims and the grace of YHWH, notwithstanding a number of cultic anomalies.

The first half of verse 15 suggests the laity were responsible for slaughtering the Passover animal⁵⁹⁸. Verses 15b-16 then outline the role of the priests and Levites in the festivities. Both Williamson and Japhet argue that the events of 15b must have preceded those of 15a and hence the relevant verbs should be translated as pluperfects – “the priests and the Levites had been ashamed, and they had sanctified themselves and brought burnt offerings into the house of YHWH.”⁵⁹⁹ Presumably then, the shame of the priests and Levites arose from their failure to sanctify themselves in sufficient numbers to allow the Passover to be celebrated at its normal time. It is recounted here to contrast their laxity with the zeal of the laity. Johnstone, however, argues that far from being ashamed at their own shortcomings the priests and were in fact scandalized by the action of the pilgrims in participating in the Passover in a state of ritual uncleanness. Verse 15b recounts how they have already sanctified themselves and the sanctuary and verses 16-17 describe their (unsuccessful) attempts to remedy the situation⁶⁰⁰. However, this does not explain the link made in verse 15 between their shame and their sanctification; and the view of Williamson and Japhet is preferable.

Verse 16 describes the role of priests and Levites in the celebration of Passover and the basis for their roles. Verse 16a states that “they took their accustomed posts (כַּמִּשְׁפָּטִים) according to the law (כְּחֻרָה) of Moses the man of God” while 16b describes the particular responsibilities of the priests and Levites in more detail – the priests dashed the blood they received from the hands of the Levites. The main interpretative issue is how to

⁵⁹⁸ As noted by Shaver the phrase “slaughter the Passover (שָׁחַט הַפֶּסַח)” is found outside Chronicles only at Exodus 12:21. (*Torah and the Chronicler's History Work*, p112). While Chronicles follows Deuteronomy 16 in locating the Passover at the Temple, it follows P in using שָׁחַט rather than זָבַח.

⁵⁹⁹ Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, p369; Japhet *I & II Chronicles*, p949.

⁶⁰⁰ Johnstone *1 and 2 Chronicles: Vol. 2*, p203.

relate the two halves of the verse to each other. Specifically, is the Chronicler claiming Mosaic authority for the specific activities in 16b?

Japhet argues that he is. However, she then faces the difficulty that the extant Pentateuch contains no such regulations⁶⁰¹. She offers the explanation that the Chronicler did not refer to the written word as it stands, but as it was understood and interpreted, either by him, or at his time⁶⁰². However, she does not specify precisely which parts of the law were interpreted in this way and so her suggestion remains undeveloped⁶⁰³. It also faces the difficulty that verse 17 appears to provide a justification for the practices in verse 16b; such a justification would surely be superfluous if the practice was already understood to be in accordance with Torah.

For this reason, it is best to adopt the view of Williamson⁶⁰⁴ and Spawn⁶⁰⁵ that the referent of כְּתוּרָה is verse 16a only. In other words, what the law required was the participation of priests and Levites on major sacrificial occasions and verse 16b is a particular application of that general principle.

Verse 17 begins with כִּי, and is intended to explain the role of the Levites in slaughtering the Passover animals, rather than leaving the task to be carried out by the laity as in Exodus

⁶⁰¹ The closest Pentateuchal analogy would be the oft-stated requirement for the blood of various sacrifices to be dashed (זָרַק – the same verb used in 2 Chronicles 30:16) against the altar – eg Leviticus 1:5,11; 3:2, 8, 13. However these texts make no mention of the Levites playing an intermediary role in gathering the blood and passing it onto the priests. Moreover, these texts require that the blood be dashed against the altar, whereas 2 Chronicles 30:16 does not specify where the blood is to be dashed.

⁶⁰² I & II Chronicles, p950.

⁶⁰³ Japhet's position seems to be shared by Michael Fishbane, when he comments on 2 Chronicles 30:16 that "it refers to the fact that the priests sprinkled blood upon the altar after having received it from the Levites as being performed 'according to the Torah of Moses' – even though such praxes are unknown to our received Pentateuchal sources." (Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel, p533) However, on p154 of the same work he describes the levitical involvement in the sprinkling of blood in 2 Chronicles 30 as a temporary expedient due to lay impurity.

⁶⁰⁴ 1 and 2 Chronicles, pp369-70.

⁶⁰⁵ "As It Is Written" and Other Citation Formulae in the Old Testament, pp218-220.

12:6. Many of the pilgrims, particularly from the North were in a state of ritual uncleanness; and if they were to slaughter the Passover it would not be holy.⁶⁰⁶ Admittedly, there is a certain disparity between the problem and the remedy, since while only some of the worshippers were unclean, the Levites manipulated the blood for all.

Notwithstanding the efforts of the cultic officials, verse 18 records that many of the worshippers ate the Passover in a state of uncleanness, contrary to the presupposition of Numbers 9:6 and the more general regulations of Leviticus 7:19-21, which required that any person who eats a sacrifice in a state of uncleanness be cut off from the people.

Hezekiah's response to the people's predicament is to pray on their behalf. In praying on behalf of the nation Hezekiah is acting as Moses did in the golden calf incident⁶⁰⁷. In its thought the prayer resembles YHWH's promise to Solomon in 2 Chronicles 7:12-14. In that passage YHWH promises to hear from heaven and grant healing and forgiveness to those who seek (בִּקֵּשׁ) his face and pray. Now Hezekiah prays on behalf of those who set their hearts to seek (לִדְרוֹשׁ) YHWH⁶⁰⁸. The specific content of his petition is for YHWH to "make atonement for (כַּפֵּר Piel)" those who participated in the Passover contrary to the requirements of purity. As Japhet notes, the prayer does not ask for pardon or forgiveness since there is no mention of sin⁶⁰⁹. Rather it asks for YHWH to protect the people from the consequences of their cultic impurity which, according to Leviticus 15:31, could include death. YHWH hears Hezekiah's prayer and heals the people. There is no need to assume

⁶⁰⁶ The fact that verse 18 specifically mentions the problem of uncleanness amongst the Northerners tells against the suggestion of Fishbane (*Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, p154) that the pilgrims became impure through contact with non-YHWHistic cult objects during their destruction. It is more likely that the Chronicler understood their impurity to have arisen from lack of regular contact with the temple and its ministrations.

⁶⁰⁷ See Deuteronomy 9:20 and 9:26. His actions are also reminiscent of those of Abraham in Genesis 20, who prays for Abimelech after the latter has inadvertently incurred guilt through contact with Sarah. As with Hezekiah in 2 Chronicles 30, the result of Abraham's intercession is that YHWH grants healing.

⁶⁰⁸ Interestingly, the same form of words is used of Jehoshaphat at 2 Chronicles 19:3, where it also carries the nuance of good intentions not always fully carried through.

⁶⁰⁹ *I & II Chronicles*, p953.

that a plague had not actually taken place⁶¹⁰, since 1 Chronicles 21 provides a precedent for a plague which spread with extraordinary speed. What is particularly significant is that unlike 2 Chronicles 29:24 atonement is achieved without any cultic activity. This is further evidence that the Chronicler has drawn on traditions which seek to establish a hope for Israel in an exilic setting where access to the temple was not possible. It may also reflect the Chronicler's hopes for his own day, that Jews from outside Israel, who were not able to regularly avail themselves of cleansing through the temple rites, would be willing and able to participate in the Passover celebration.

30:21-22

Compared to Passover the celebration of Unleavened Bread is unproblematic and hence is narrated at less length. Kleinig notes the chiasmic shape of the account⁶¹¹:

- A The people of Israel who were present at Jerusalem kept the festival of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness;
- B and the Levites and the priests praised YHWH day by day, accompanied by loud instruments for YHWH.
- B' Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all the Levites who showed good skill in the service of YHWH.
- A' So the people ate the food of the festival for seven days, sacrificing offerings of well-being and giving thanks to YHWH the God of their ancestors.

This highlights two interests of the Chronicler – the importance of joyful worship by the people and the role of the priests and Levites. The emphasis on joy in worship is found in all the Chronicler's festival reports with the exception of Josiah's Passover in 2 Chronicles 35.

⁶¹⁰ As by Japhet (*I & II Chronicles*, p953) who understands 'heal' as a preventative rather than corrective measure; or Keil (*Nachexilischen Geschichtsbücher*, p350) who argues that 'heal' is a metaphor for the forgiveness of sin.

⁶¹¹ Kleinig, *The Lord's Song*, p76.

The daily praise of the priests and Levites would have accompanied the regular burnt offerings. The example of levitical praise in 1 Chronicles 16 indicates that this praise would have included exhortations to the worshippers to remember the deeds of YHWH celebrated in the festival, as well as petitions to YHWH to save and gather his people along the lines envisaged in 30:6-9.

30:23-27

The interest in rejoicing is sustained throughout this account of the additional seven days of festal celebration. The account brings to a climax several of the themes developed earlier in the chapter. Whereas earlier the celebrations were hindered by the failure of the cultic officials or worshippers to sanctify themselves in sufficient numbers, now the priests sanctify themselves “in great numbers (לרב)”, enough to sacrifice the thousands of animals given to the assembly by Hezekiah and his officials. Verse 25 gives the most expansive description of the assembled worshippers in the whole chapter – it incorporates the whole assembly of Judah, the priests and Levites, the assembly which had come out of (הבאים) Israel and resident aliens (גרים) from both Israel and Judah. The regulations of Exodus 12:48-9 allowed an alien who was circumcised to participate in the Passover⁶¹² and the Chronicler mentions them to make his description of the celebration of the Passover as inclusive as possible. The description of rejoicing is also heightened – verse 26 records that there was great joy (שמחה גדולה) in Jerusalem, such as there had not been since the days of Solomon.

⁶¹² It is interesting that whereas Exodus 12:48-9 recognises a distinction between גרים who are circumcised (and may thus participate in the Passover) and those who are uncircumcised (and hence excluded from participation), 2 Chronicles 30:25 assumes that at least in the case of Judah all גרים were able to participate. This may mean that by the time of the Chronicler גרים was a technical term for a proselyte (so Williamson, 1 and 2 Chronicles, p370). However, the actions of David in 1 Chronicles 22:2, where he singles out the גרים for (forced?) labour in the construction of the temple, suggests they occupied a somewhat subordinate position in the Chronicler’s vision of Israelite society.

The final act of the celebrations is narrated in verse 27. The levitical priests⁶¹³ stand up and bless the people. The rest of the verse states “their voice was heard and their prayer came to his holy dwelling place, to heaven⁶¹⁴.” It is not immediately clear whose voice and prayer come to YHWH in heaven – the priests or the people. When they do discuss the issue commentators generally opt for the former, either because the priestly blessing was equivalent to a prayer⁶¹⁵ or because they may have in fact spoken a prayer rather than a blessing of the people⁶¹⁶.

However, the wording of verse 27 resembles the prayer at the presentation of the tithes in Deuteronomy 26:15 as well as Solomon’s temple dedication prayer in 2 Chronicles 6⁶¹⁷. In both these other passages it is the prayer of the people, rather than priestly or levitical prayer which is envisaged. While this does not require that 2 Chronicles 30:27b also refer to a prayer of the people, it does point in this direction. Furthermore, the preceding narrative, and in particular Hezekiah’s letter, has portrayed the people’s worship as functioning as a prayer – that is, petitioning YHWH for a desired outcome, in this case the reversal of captivity and the return of the people to the land. Read in this light 30:27b brings the account to a climax by noting that the people’s worship has received divine approval⁶¹⁸.

⁶¹³ The NRSV follows a few Hebrew manuscripts and a number of versions in reading “the priests and Levites”. However the MT’s **הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם** is to be preferred, both because it is the more ‘unusual’ reading in the context of the chapter, and because it is consistent with passages such as Numbers 6:22-27 where blessing is a priestly prerogative.

⁶¹⁴ The NRSV’s “to his holy dwelling in heaven” is slightly misleading in that it could imply that the dwelling is not coterminous with heaven. However the MT’s **למעון קדשו לשמים** clearly identifies the two.

⁶¹⁵ Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, p305.

⁶¹⁶ Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles* p206.

⁶¹⁷ The closest resemblance is with Deuteronomy 26:15, where the worshipper who has distributed the tithe asks YHWH to look down “from your holy habitation, from heaven (**מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם**)” and bless Israel. In 2 Chronicles 6:39 Solomon asks YHWH to hear his people’s prayers “from heaven, your dwelling place (**מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם מִמְּכוֹן שְׁבִתְךָ**).”

⁶¹⁸ cf the analysis of Kleinig: “YHWH answered the prayers of his people and conveyed his blessing to them through the benediction spoken by the priests at the festival. (*The Lord’s Song*, p111).

31:1

This verse recounts the return of the pilgrims to their homes. As they go, they destroy various cultic objects, completing the reforms begun by Hezekiah in Chapter 29. Compared to 2 Kings 18, which appears to focus on Hezekiah's reforms in Judah, the Chronicler extends the scope of this popular action to incorporate both the South and North.

7.1.3 *The Message of Hezekiah's Passover*

Some commentators argue that the Chronicler has portrayed Hezekiah's reign, and his Passover in particular, as the restoration of an ideal which had been lost through the division of Israel and Judah. This is especially true of Williamson, who states that "it would appear that the Chronicler made a deliberate attempt...to show that with Hezekiah the situation prevailing under Solomon was restored, and involved in this would be, of course, the restitution of the unity of all Israel."⁶¹⁹ Williamson points to several aspects of the Chronicler's account of Hezekiah to support this conclusion. The first is the explicit link made between Hezekiah and Solomon in 2 Chronicles 30:26. The second is the narrative parallels between the accounts of the two reigns – for example, the fourteen days of celebration following Hezekiah's Passover matches the fourteen days of celebration at the dedication of the temple under Solomon in 2 Chronicles 7. Moreover, the Chronicler regarded Hezekiah's period as one where the land was restored to its Solomonic extent, as witnessed by the reference in 2 Chronicles 30:5 to the invitation being sent from Beersheba to Dan, and the use of the phrase אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל at verse 30:25, a verse which describes the geographical distribution of participants in the Passover⁶²⁰. Williamson then goes on to survey the use of the word 'Israel' for the period from Hezekiah to the end of the monarchy, arguing that it is consistent with the view that under Hezekiah the situation lost

⁶¹⁹ Williamson *Israel in the Books of Chronicles* p125. Williamson's argument is adopted by Dillard (see *2 Chronicles* pp228-9) and Throntveit (*Hezekiah in the Books of Chronicles*, p310).

⁶²⁰ Williamson points out that אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל is found in Chronicles only in the reigns of David (1 Chronicles 22:2), Solomon (2 Chronicles 2:16 [ET 2:17]), Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 30:25) and Josiah (2 Chronicles 34:7). 1 Chronicles 21:2 defines Beersheba to Dan as the extent of the land under David (*Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, p123).

with the division of the kingdom was fully restored. “Not only is the nation brought back to the Lord and its political fortunes restored, but in principle, the whole population is again re-united under the Davidic king in worship at the Jerusalem temple.”⁶²¹

However, there are good grounds for qualifying Williamson’s assessment. In particular, the language of 2 Chronicles 30:1-31:1 makes it impossible to conclude that the situation of the united kingdom is fully restored. A suitable reference point for comparison is the language used in 1 Chronicles 13:1-6 for the gathering of the people under David when the ark was brought from Kiriath-jearim. Here David speaks to “all the assembly of Israel (וּיְקָהָל דָּוִיד אֶת־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל) (לְכָל קָהָל יִשְׂרָאֵל)” and David then assembles all Israel (וּיְקָהָל דָּוִיד אֶת־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל) so that “all Israel” goes with him to bring up the ark. The same unqualified description of the people’s gathering is found in 2 Chronicles 5 to 7 in the temple dedication under Solomon⁶²².

The picture is subtly different in the account of Hezekiah’s Passover. While it does use the language of “all Israel” to describe the scope of Hezekiah’s Passover invitation⁶²³, in contrast to the situation under David and Solomon it is not used for the subsequent gathering⁶²⁴. As shown in the detailed analysis above, whenever the gathering is described in detail a distinction is drawn between the complete participation of people from the territory of Judah and Benjamin, and the partial, although noteworthy participation of people from the territory of the Northern Kingdom. No such qualification is apparent during the days of the united kingdom. So whenever the Chronicler refers to Israel in the

⁶²¹ Israel in the Books of Chronicles, p131.

⁶²² Eg 2 Chronicles 5:6 refers to “King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel (כָּל־עַדָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל) who had assembled before him” and 2 Chronicles 7:8 records how “all Israel (כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל)” held the festival with Solomon, “a very great assembly (קָהָל גָּדוֹל מְאֹד).”

⁶²³ See 2 Chronicles 30:1 and 6.

⁶²⁴ It is true that 2 Chronicles 31:1 does refer to “all Israel”, but this is immediately qualified by “who were present (הַנִּמְצְאִים)” ie there is a recognition that the gathering did not in fact encompass all Israel. The reference in the same verse to all the Israelites returning home should be read in this light.

period from Hezekiah to the exile it needs to be kept in mind that this is an Israel which still falls short of the ideal.

If Hezekiah's Passover did not achieve the restoration of the united kingdom what was its significance? At the very least it marked the restoration of temple worship after the reversals under Ahaz. It is in this sense that Hezekiah may be said to be a second Solomon – he restored the temple to its rightful place in the life of the people, albeit in a changed political and social situation⁶²⁵.

More than this, however, Hezekiah's Passover represents an opportunity for the people of YHWH to gather together and petition YHWH for the full restoration of the Davidic-Solomonic ideal of a united people gathered in worship around the Jerusalem temple. Earlier it was shown that the key to interpreting this account is 30:1-13 and in particular the letter in verses 6b to 9. Here the people are exhorted to turn and seek YHWH by worshipping at his temple, so that he may turn to them and bring their kindred back from captivity. It was shown that this fitted into the Chronicler's broader understanding of temple worship, as exemplified by the paradigmatic example of levitical praise in 1 Chronicles 16:7-36, which concludes with a plea to YHWH to gather his people from among the nations so that all may praise and glorify him. Likewise, 2 Chronicles 30:27b concludes the account of Hezekiah's Passover with an emphasis on prayer and petition to YHWH.

Was this prayer answered, and if so, how? Certainly, 30:27 states that the prayer was heard by YHWH, and commentators have sought to explore ways in which the narrative of the rest of Hezekiah's reign makes this clear. Japhet sees the reference in 31:10 to YHWH

⁶²⁵ Commentators who argue along these lines include DeVries, who describes Hezekiah as a re-dedicator of the temple ('Festival Ideology in Chronicles', p110), Ackroyd, who concludes that "the story of Hezekiah represents the overthrow of the alien powers and the establishment of new life for the people of God" ('The Chronicler as Exegete', p328), and Graham, who states that "Hezekiah's reign may be seen as reversing some of the effects of Rehoboam's" ('Setting the Heart to Seek God: Worship in 2 Chronicles 30:1-31:1' in M.P. Graham, R.R. Marris, R.R. & S.L. McKenzie, (eds) Worship and the Hebrew Bible: Essays in Honour of John T. Willis. (JSOTSS 284; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999, p134).

blessing his people with prosperity as in part an answer to this prayer⁶²⁶. Kalimi argues that 32:1, which introduces the account of Sennacherib's invasion with the words "after these things and these acts of faithfulness (וְהָאֵלֹהִים)" establishes a cause and effect relationship between Hezekiah's reforms and the subsequent deliverance from the Assyrians⁶²⁷.

However, the account of Hezekiah's reign makes no mention at all of the very matter which is the subject of the letter in 30:6-9 – the return of captive Israelites to the land. It is true that Johnstone sees in the account of Hezekiah's Passover a foreshadowing of the eschatological return of Israel to the land envisaged in the Jubilee⁶²⁸. Even so, it still falls short of the full reality.

Chronicles gives no explanation for the failure of Hezekiah's Passover to achieve its desired end. Presumably, it could be due to the less than complete participation of inhabitants of the former Northern Kingdom, although this is never stated as such in the text. Another possible explanation is that in dwelling on the theme of continued captivity the Chronicler has so reflected the circumstances of his own day that it he was unable to integrate it within his so-called 'doctrine of immediate retribution.' Alternatively, it may be that the Chronicler recognised that while retribution was immediate, it was not always complete. YHWH did respond to his people's obedience and prayer with blessing and deliverance. However, the fullness of what they sought still lay in the future, and presumably required further persistence and commitment in their worship.

Clearly, such a message would be particularly relevant for a post-exilic situation where notwithstanding the return to the land much of the nation remained scattered amongst the

⁶²⁶ I & II Chronicles, p957.

⁶²⁷ Kalimi, *Zur Geschichtsschreibung des Chonisten*, p24.

⁶²⁸ Johnstone notes that the language of 2 Chronicles 31:1 "all the people of Israel returned... to their individual properties" resembles the proclamation in Leviticus 25:9-10 that in the year of Jubilee each Israelite should return to their individual property. He also detects echoes of that expectation in Cyrus' proclamation of return which concludes the Chronicler's work (*I and 2 Chronicles*, p200).

nations – that is, a situation of ‘captivity’. The narrative of Hezekiah’s Passover would appear to be particularly addressed to those loosely attached to the Jerusalem cult, whether by reasons of distance, indifference or conviction⁶²⁹.

It remains to be examined what this has to do with the Passover as such. Are the particular concerns of the Chronicler in 2 Chronicles 30 necessarily linked to the Passover, or could they be furthered through any festal celebration? The letter in 30:6-9 makes no specific reference to the Passover, but refers to coming to the sanctuary and serving YHWH in general terms. The actual celebration of the Passover is narrated briefly, and there is no attempt to explicate the particular historical associations of the Passover or explore how these relate to the historical situation under Hezekiah. One may speculate that the nationalistic associations of the Passover made it an ideal celebration around which to base hopes of an Israelite renaissance, but the Chronicler makes no mention of this. However, there are indications that the Chronicler has shaped his account to reflect certain themes associated with the Passover. It has been noted above that the language of 30:6-9 shows a number of connections with the Book of Exodus, although primarily with Chapters 32-34 rather than with the departure from Egypt *per se*. Nevertheless, one can presume that the Chronicler was aware of the associations between the Passover and the exodus, especially since he makes no attempt to provide an alternative historical basis for the festival.

More clearly, there are a number of parallels between Hezekiah’s Passover and Numbers 9:1-14. In the Numbers passage a number of people are unable to participate in the Passover in the first month because they are unclean through touching a corpse. YHWH speaks to Moses, telling him that any Israelite who is unclean through contact with a corpse or away on a journey can keep the Passover in the second month. The reasons for the delay

⁶²⁹ The precise relationship between the Jewish diaspora and the Jerusalem Temple in the Persian and Hellenistic eras is a matter of conjecture. The situation is further complicated by the existence at various times of rival temples at Elephantine, Mt Gerizim and Leontopolis. Frey concludes that in each instance political factors seem to have been the predominant factor in establishing the temple, and in no instance was the temple intended to establish a new religious community separate from Jerusalem. J. Frey ‘Temple and Rival Temple – The Cases of Elephantine’ in B. Ego, A. Lange, & P. Pilhofer, (ed) *Gemeinde ohne Tempel*. (WUANT 118; Tübingen: JCB Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1999), pp371-394.

of Hezekiah's Passover until the second month are similar although not identical – the problem is the uncleanness of the priests rather than the people, and while many Israelites are absent in the first month they are not on a journey as such. Moreover, like 2 Chronicles 30, Numbers 9 emphasises the duty of the people to keep the Passover and specifically mentions the right of the resident alien to participate.

All this makes it unlikely that Japhet's verdict that "as the texts stand, there is really no connection between them"⁶³⁰ is correct. Nevertheless, Chronicles makes no reference to any legal precedent as a basis for the decision to delay the Passover, which is portrayed as an *ad hoc* expedient arising from consultation between the king, his officials and the laity. Michael Fishbane describes this consultation as an example of legal exegesis⁶³¹, whereby the earlier law was applied to a different, but analogous situation. The issue of uncleanness was extended from a private to a public context, and the provision in Numbers 9:10 concerning the worshipper "away on a journey (בדרך רחקה)" is re-applied in the light of the use of similar terminology in passages such as Deuteronomy 14:24 to indicate distance from the central sanctuary. However, it is impossible to determine the extent to which this accurately reflects the thought process of Hezekiah and his counsellors and/or the author of Chronicles.

Perhaps more attention needs to be given to the similarities of the narrative settings of Numbers 9 and Hezekiah's Passover. In both cases the people of Israel find themselves in a liminal state. In Numbers 9 the people have left Egypt but are yet to enter Canaan. In 2 Chronicles 30 the people have reversed the apostasy of Ahaz, but the effects of that apostasy still linger. In both situations the people are able to experience YHWH's grace through the cult, notwithstanding particular circumstances which make a flawless observation of cultic regulations impossible. Such a message would presumably have spoken powerfully to another group of Israelites who found themselves in a liminal state,

⁶³⁰ I & II Chronicles, p939.

⁶³¹ Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel, pp154-9.

with the exile in the past but the effects of that exile still lingering in the captivity of many of her people.

Even so, the account of Hezekiah's Passover reveals more about the Chronicler's understanding of the cult in general than the Passover. Insofar as the Passover is caught up into this broader understanding of YHWH's purposes, it has an important role to play in the life of his people.

7.2. The Passover Under Josiah

7.2.1 *Josiah in Chronicles*

In Chronicles Josiah is the last King whose reign is narrated at any length. The account of his reign may be outlined as follows:

34:1-2	Introduction and evaluation
34:3-7	Reforms in Judah, Jerusalem and Israel
34:8-18	Discovery of the Book of Law
34:19-28	Josiah's Response to the Book
34:29-33	National Response to the Book
35:1-19	Celebration of the Passover
35:20-27	Josiah's Death

Both Kings and Chronicles begin their accounts of Josiah's reign with a positive evaluation of his reign – he did what was right in the sight of YHWH, and walked in the ways of his ancestor David and did not turn aside to the right or to the left.⁶³² Chronicles does not however contain a statement concerning Josiah like that found at 2 Kings 23:25 – “Before him there was no king like him, who turned to YHWH with all his heart, with all his soul,

⁶³² 2 Kings 22:2 and 2 Chronicles 34:2. The only difference between the two verses is that whereas 2 Kings 22:2 refers to Josiah walking *בכל-דרך דוד* 2 Chronicles 34:2 describes him walking *בדרכי דוד*. The difference is probably stylistic rather than substantial.

and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him.” In contrast, the Chronicler narrates the obedience of the people at greater length. So whereas Kings and Chronicles record that in response to reading of the book of the law Josiah made a covenant with YHWH to which the people joined themselves, the Chronicler adds that “the inhabitants of Jerusalem acted according to the covenant of God, the God of their ancestors....all his days they did not turn away from following YHWH the God of their ancestors.”⁶³³ All this is consistent with the view that although the Chronicler regarded Josiah as an exemplary monarch, he did not occupy the pivotal role in his work he did for the author of Samuel-Kings.

Beyond this, there are a number of differences between Chronicles and Kings both in the ordering of material and in the description of various aspects of Josiah’s reform. Most notably, Kings appears to locate a number of activities in the eighteenth year of Josiah’s reign – the discovery of the book of the law, the making of a covenant, extensive cultic reforms and the celebration of the Passover. In contrast, the Chronicler locates a series of developments at various points in Josiah’s reign – he begins to seek YHWH in the eighth year of his reign (ie at age sixteen), he commences purging Jerusalem, Israel and Judah of various cultic items in the twelfth year of his reign, and it is in the eighteenth year of his reign that the book of the law is discovered, the covenant made and the Passover celebrated. This means that much of Josiah’s reforms are placed before the discovery of the law book⁶³⁴. The most common explanation for this is that the Chronicler wished to present Josiah as a pious king from his youth, who did not need the influence of the law book to attack idolatry⁶³⁵. It has also been suggested that he wished to portray the discovery of law book as a reward for Josiah’s reforming activity⁶³⁶.

⁶³³ 2 Chronicles 34:32b, 33b.

⁶³⁴ The note at 2 Chronicles 34:33 that following the making of the covenant in eighteenth year Josiah took away various abominations from the land of Israel indicates that the Chronicler does not wish to deny any cultic reforms to Josiah following the discovery of the law book.

⁶³⁵ Curtis and Madsen, *Chronicles*, p502; Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, p321.

⁶³⁶ Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, pp401-2.

7.2.2 *The Passover Account*

7.2.2.1 *Structure*

One result of the Chronicler's organisation of material is that the account of the Passover follows on immediately from the making from the covenant by Josiah and the people. Nevertheless, there are no obvious links between the two narratives although the chronological note in 35:19 makes it clear they took place in the same year.

Compared to the short notice in 2 Kings 23:21-23 the description of the Passover in Chronicles is much expanded. In Kings there is no description of the actual celebration apart from Josiah's command that it was to be celebrated in accordance with the book of the covenant. There is no equivalent note in the Chronicler's account, which can be structured as follows:

35:1	Introduction
35:2-6	Directions to Priests and Levites
35:7-9	Provision of Animals
35:10-16	Slaughter and Preparation of Passover Animals
35:17-19	Summary and conclusion

Using De Vries' schema, the most distinctive aspect of the account, particularly in comparison with Hezekiah's Passover is the lack of attention given to the participants and the more detailed description of the celebration itself. Unlike the account of Hezekiah's Passover, there is no invitation issued or explanation given concerning the purpose of the celebration. Those who took part in the celebration are listed relatively briefly in verse 18 – Josiah, the priests and Levites, and all Judah and Israel who were present. This verse is somewhat ambiguous since it is not immediately clear whether “who were present

(הַנִּמְצָאִים)”⁶³⁷ qualifies “Israel” or “all Judah and Israel” ie whether the Chronicler wishes to indicate partial participation amongst Israel and full participation by Judah, or partial participation by both groups⁶³⁸. This imprecision contrasts with the great attention given in the account of Hezekiah’s Passover to describing who did and did not take part. The Chronicler describes the actual Passover at greater length here than in Chapter 30 – additional details include the means of distributing the burnt offerings, the skinning and cooking of the Passover animals. These differences suggest that notwithstanding the similarities in the Chronicler’s two Passover accounts they perform different functions in his work.

35:1

Like Chapter 30 the account of Josiah’s Passover begins with a summary statement which is followed by a narrative flashback. The summary is a report that Josiah kept a Passover to YHWH in Jerusalem; this differs from 2 Kings 23:21 which is a command from Josiah to the people to keep the Passover. As noted above, Chronicles also lacks a notice that the Passover was kept as prescribed in the book of the covenant. It is not necessarily the case that the Chronicler wishes to weaken the link between the discovery of the book and the celebration and the Passover⁶³⁹. Rather, as noted by Williamson, he portrays the celebration of the Passover as an application of the general principle of 34:33, where it is recorded that in response to the book Josiah made all who were in Israel worship YHWH⁶⁴⁰. That is, for the Chronicler the book serves initially as a general exhortation of fidelity to YHWH, rather than a prescription for a particular form of Passover.

⁶³⁷ Johnstone (*1 and 2 Chronicles Vol: 2*, pp254-255) translates הַנִּמְצָאִים as “those who survived” and sees it as a reference to all the inhabitants of Israel and Judah who remained after various deportations rather than a means of distinguishing those who participated in the celebration from those who did not. However, the Niphal of נִמְצָא clearly has the latter meaning in 2 Chronicles 30:21 and it seems best to give it the same meaning here.

⁶³⁸ Contextually, the first meaning is more likely, given that 34:30 indicates that all the people of Judah took part in the (immediately preceding?) covenant ceremony.

⁶³⁹ Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, p1046.

⁶⁴⁰ See Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, p404.

More puzzling is the statement that the Passover was kept in Jerusalem, not so much because it is made, but because of the emphatic position it occupies in the syntax of the verse⁶⁴¹. It is difficult to see why the Chronicler would choose to emphasise the location of Josiah's Passover, especially since the Hezekian Passover provided a precedent for such a celebration, and in any case, as noted earlier, there is no indication in Chronicles that the Passover could or would be celebrated anywhere else. It may be that, if the Chronicler is using Samuel-Kings as a source, he has picked up the emphasis on Jerusalem in 2 Kings 23:21-23.

The second half of the verse records that the Passover animal was slaughtered on the fourteenth day of the first month. This reflects the provisions of Exodus 12:6 and contrasts with the celebration of Hezekiah's Passover in the second month. The verse states "they slaughtered (וַיִּשְׁחָטוּ)" the Passover lamb. At first glance this would appear to be a reference to the people as a whole, particularly since this was the practice according to Exodus 12:6. Moreover, 2 Chronicles 30:17 assumes that lay slaughter of the Passover was the normal practice, suspended only in the case of worshippers who were ceremonially unclean. However, the subsequent narrative makes it clear that it was in fact the Levites who slaughtered all the Passover animals. The Chronicler may be suggesting by this particular narrative pattern that the Levites exercise a representative function, acting on behalf of the people as a whole⁶⁴².

35:2-6

As in 2 Chronicles 30 a general introduction is followed by a narrative 'flashback'. Here however, the flashback concerns instructions given to the cultic officials rather than the

⁶⁴¹ That is, the placement of the indirect object (בִּירוּשָׁלַם) immediately after the verb; compare the more usual order in 2 Chronicles 30:5 where, in a similar phrase, בִּירוּשָׁלַם is placed at the end.

⁶⁴² See 2 Chronicles 35:6, where the Levites are instructed to act "for your brethren (לְאַחֵיכֶם)."

people as a whole. Both the priests and Levites are encouraged in their service of YHWH, through the temple worship. The idea of service is a key theme in the account of Josiah's Passover⁶⁴³. In every instance it refers to the actions of the cultic officials. This contrasts with Hezekiah's Passover, where the only use of the word-group refers to the actions of the people⁶⁴⁴. Once again, this suggests that the cultic officials are acting on behalf of the people.

Verse 3 is difficult to interpret. According to the MT Josiah commands the Levites to "Put the holy ark in the house that Solomon, son of David, king of Israel, built." However, there is no indication in the preceding narrative that the ark had been removed from its place. Keil and Williamson suggest that **תנו** be translated "leave." In any case, the general point of the verse seems clear. Because the ark is placed within the temple the Levites are set free from their responsibility for carrying it and are able to serve in other capacities. This principle is established by David at 1 Chronicles 23:24-32 and later implemented by Solomon.

The emphasis on Davidic and Solomonic precedent is sustained in verses 4 and 5, in which Josiah gives the Levites instructions for preparations for the Passover. First, they are told to prepare themselves⁶⁴⁵ by their ancestral houses (**לְבֵית־אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם**) according to their divisions (**כַּמִּחְלָקוֹתֵיכֶם**) in the written directions⁶⁴⁶ of David and his son Solomon. This is clearly a reference to the traditions found in 1 Chronicles 23-27, where the priests and Levites are organised into divisions by their ancestral houses. While the two terms cover

⁶⁴³ The noun **עֲבוֹדָה** occurs at 35:2, 10, 15 and 16; the verb **עָבַד** at verse 3.

⁶⁴⁴ 2 Chronicles 30:8.

⁶⁴⁵ Adopting the *Ketib* (**הִכְנוּ** - a niphal imperative) rather than the *Qere* (**הִכְנוּ** - a hiphil imperative). The latter is reflected in the NRSV's "Make preparations". However, at this point a reference to the Levites' internal organisation seems more in order.

⁶⁴⁶ David's writings are described as a **כְּתָב**, Solomon's as a **מִכְתָּב**. Japhet (*I & II Chronicles*, p1048) suggests the first term be translated "writing" and the second "directions". However, the use of the words elsewhere in Chronicles suggests no hard and fast distinction between them – eg **מִכְתָּב** is used in 2 Chronicles 21:12 and **כְּתָב** in 2 Chronicles 2:10 [ET 2:11] to describe a letter sent from one party to the other.

the same unit each has a different focus - the **מחלקות** divide the cultic officials into rosters with different responsibilities, while the **בית-אבות** divide them according to genealogical origin⁶⁴⁷. David hands over the plans for the temple, including the organisation of cultic officials, to Solomon in 1 Chronicles 28:11-19 who then implements them after the temple dedication at 2 Chronicles 8:14. This may be the basis for the Chronicler's attribution of them to Solomon as well as David.

In verse 5a the Levites are instructed to take up their positions in the holy place according to the groupings of the **בית-אבות** of the people; the correspondence between the organisation of the Levites and people is re-iterated in the second half of the verse which stipulates that there be Levites for each division of the people. Normally the divisions of the Levites would perform their duties consecutively throughout the year, but the particular circumstances of a national pilgrimage festival required all of them to be active, whether this involved all divisions ministering simultaneously⁶⁴⁸ or consecutively.

The division of the laity into ancestral houses for the Passover celebration is consistent with the stipulations of Exodus 12:3, although whether the **בית אב** of 2 Chronicles 35:5 is the same as the **בית אב** of Exodus 12:3 is an open question⁶⁴⁹, although it may be that the use

⁶⁴⁷ This relationship is apparent from the organisation of Levites in 1 Chronicles 23. The list of 22 units in verses 7 to 23 is introduced in verse 6 with the statement that "David organised them in divisions (**מחלקות**)" and concluded in verse 24 with the statement that "These were the sons of Levi by their ancestral houses (**לביה אבותיהם**)."

⁶⁴⁸ W. Johnstone (1 and 2 Chronicles, p248).

⁶⁴⁹ Unravelling the precise identity of the **בית אב** and the **בית-אבות** in Chronicles requires two questions to be answered (1) How is the pre-exilic **בית אב** related to the post-exilic **בית-אבות** (noting that the former term predominates in pre-exilic literature and the latter term in post-exilic literature)? (2) In this respect should Chronicles be classified as pre-exilic (ie reflecting the social arrangements of the era in which it is set) or post-exilic (ie reflecting the social arrangements of the era in which it was written)? For discussions of this question see J. Blenkinsopp 'Temple and Society in Achaemenid' in P.R. Davies (ed) Second Temple Studies. Vol. 1, The Persian Period (JSOTSS 117; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), pp22-53; J.P. Weinberg The Citizen-Temple Community. Translated by D.L Smith-Christopher (JSOTSS 151; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), pp49-61; J.E. Dyck The Theocratic Ideology of the Chronicler. Pp188-9. At least in Chronicles the two terms appear to be interchangeable, with **בית אב** occurring 10 times and **בית-אבות** 24 times. The former term is used to refer to a single house, as in 1 Chronicles 24:6, where it is the clearly the singular of the **בית אבות** mentioned two verses earlier.

of the term here is drawing an analogy between the celebration under Josiah and the regulations in Exodus 12. Within Chronicles the **בֵּית אֲבֹתָם/אֲבוֹתָם** is an important unit for the organisation of the genealogical material in 1 Chronicles 1-9. Whenever the laity are organised into ancestral houses in the narrative the context is one of military service⁶⁵⁰ – with the exception of 2 Chronicles 35:5. The Chronicler may be encouraging his readers to see in the gathering of the people for the celebration of the Passover an analogy to the gathering of the people for military service⁶⁵¹. In practice this would be consistent with two modes of thought. Either the Passover could be a the means of preserving and expressing militaristic ambitions, or the Passover could be a means of transforming and to some extent suppressing militaristic ambitions by diverting national energies and hopes into the cultic sphere⁶⁵².

In verse 6 the Levites are given three directions – “slaughter the Passover lamb”, “sanctify yourselves”⁶⁵³ and “on behalf of your kindred make preparations.” Whereas the

⁶⁵⁰ See 1 Chronicles 12:31 [ET 12:30], 2 Chronicles 17:14 and 2 Chronicles 25:5. The genealogies sometimes also link the ancestral houses to military matters – see, for example 1 Chronicles 7:2,4.

⁶⁵¹ This link between Passover-genealogical organisation-military service casts an interesting light on the narrative in 1 Chronicles 21 where David numbers the people for military service and YHWH sends pestilence against by means of a destroying angel (**מַלְאֲךְ הַמְּשַׁחֵת**) – here the language is reminiscent of the ‘destroyer’ (**הַמְּשַׁחֵת**) who struck down the Egyptian first-born. Note also that 1 Chronicles 20:1 locates warfare in the Spring, the time of the year during which Passover was celebrated. William Johnstone argues that the particular sin of David was his failure to levy the half-shekel tax mandated by Exodus 30:11-16. See W. Johnstone ‘Prospective Atonement: The Use of Exodus 30:11-16 in 1 Chronicles 21’ in *Chronicles and Exodus: An Analogy and its Application*, pp128-140.

⁶⁵² The first alternative would suit the pre-exilic narrative setting of Chronicles, while the second might be more appropriate to a post-exilic compositional setting, particularly if the Temple was to some extent dependent on Persian patronage.

⁶⁵³ It is sometimes suggested that the command to the Levites sanctify themselves is anomalous, since presumably they would have already sanctified themselves prior to slaughtering the Passover lambs. Both Dillard (2 Chronicles, p285) and Japhet (I & II Chronicles, p1049) recommend emending **הַקֹּדְשִׁים** to **הַקֹּדְשֵׁנוּ** “holy offerings”. The text’s current order could then be retained to read (i) “Slaughter the Passover lamb and the holy offerings” (so Japhet) or (ii) it can be re-arranged to read “Slaughter the Passover lamb and prepare the holy offerings” (so Dillard). However both readings are problematic. (i) There is no narration elsewhere in Chapter 35 of the Levites killing the holy offerings. The two other uses of the verb **שָׁחַט** (verses 1 and 11) mention the Passover only. (ii) Making “holy things” the object of “prepare” would appear to unnecessarily restrict the Levites’ actions “on behalf of their brothers”, which as verses 10-13 demonstrate, incorporated much more than just the ‘holy offerings.’ It seems best to retain the MT reading, recognising that the Chronicler is not always bound by chronological ordering.

involvement of the Levites in the slaughtering of the Passover lamb under Hezekiah was portrayed as a temporary expedient, here it has all the authority of an established practice. Regardless of whether or not the Chronicler is accurately reporting the practice of Josiah's or his own day, or portraying an ideal yet to be realised⁶⁵⁴, one needs to explain how this innovation might be justified. The phrase at the end of the verse – “acting according to the word of YHWH by Moses”⁶⁵⁵, while requiring the Levites to perform all their duties in accordance with Torah falls just short of claiming Mosaic precedent for their specific responsibility for slaughtering the Passover. If this was the case, one would expect a simple citation formula such as כִּדְבַר־יְהוָה בִּיד־מֹשֶׁה. Certainly, the only occurrence of a straightforward citation formula in the rest of the chapter (verse 12) concerns the distribution of the burnt offerings rather than the slaughter of the Passover animal.

Shaver draws attention to the regulations in Ezekiel 44:11, which give the Levites the duty of slaughtering the burnt offering (עֹלָה) and sacrifice (זֶבֶח) for the people, as a possible basis for the Levites' role in slaughtering the Passover⁶⁵⁶. However, Ezekiel 44 is a difficult passage to interpret⁶⁵⁷ and it is unclear how, if at all, it relates to actual practice in

⁶⁵⁴ Williamson (*1 and 2 Chronicles*, p406) leans in this direction. However Ezra 6:19-22 assumes that it was the practice for the Levites to slaughter the Passover. If, as Williamson believes, Chronicles and Ezra are the works of different authors, it is unlikely that both would describe the same ideal apart from some basis in historical reality.

⁶⁵⁵ This follows the NRSV in reading the infinitive construct לַעֲשׂוֹת adverbially, ie the citation formula specifies the manner in which the three imperatives in 6a are to be executed. Alternatively, it could be that לַעֲשׂוֹת is the complement of וְהַכִּינוּ לְאַחֲכֶם, in which case it is only the preparations on behalf of the laity which are to be conducted in accordance with Torah (so Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, p406).

⁶⁵⁶ J. Shaver *Torah and the Chronicler's History Work*, p114. Fishbane (*Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, pp138-143) also discusses Ezekiel 44 in the context of 2 Chronicles 35, although he appears to regard them as independent examples of inner-Biblical exegesis, both of which are concerned with the transfer of cultic responsibilities from the laity to the Levites.

⁶⁵⁷ Specifically, the chapter gives two explanations for the cultic responsibilities of the Levites. On the one hand, the Levites exercise certain responsibilities because the people transgressed by admitting foreigners to the sanctuary (verses 6-8). On the other hand, the Levites are excluded from certain priestly prerogatives because of their involvement in idolatry (verses 10, 12-13). Two recent discussions of this passage are R.K. Duke 'Punishment or Restoration? Another Look at the Levites of Ezekiel 44.6-16' *JSOT* 40 (1988), pp61-81 and S.L. Cook 'Innerbiblical Interpretation in Ezekiel 44 and the History of Israel's Priesthood' *IBL* 114/2 (1995), pp193-208. Both authors regard Ezekiel 44:6-16 as dependent on Priestly traditions found in Numbers 16-18.

Israel's history. Moreover, there are no obvious verbal links between Ezekiel 44 and 2 Chronicles 30 and 35 and on the only occasion where Chronicles explicitly assigns responsibility for the slaughtering of sacrifices it is the priests rather than the Levites who are responsible⁶⁵⁸. That is, the involvement of the Levites in the slaughter of the Passover appears to be a case *sui generis*, rather than an application of a general principle concerning sacrificial practice. If there is a general principle at work, it is the one mentioned earlier, which sees the Levites as representatives for the people as a whole, particularly on occasions of national celebration.

35:7-9

These verses record the provision by the King and officials of animals for the Passover and accompanying offerings. This extends the practice of Hezekiah, who provided animals for sacrifices at the second week of festivities following the Passover during his reign (see 30:24). Two groups of animals are mentioned in verse 7 – those from the flock (צאן), further specified as lambs and young goats (כבשים ובני-עזים); and cattle (בקר). One possibility is that the Chronicler is following Deuteronomy 16:2, which specifies צאן ובקר in connection with the Passover over and against Exodus 12:5 which directs that the Passover be taken from הכבשים or העזים only⁶⁵⁹. However verses 11-12 clearly distinguish the Passover animal from the cattle. It is far more likely, as Fishbane argues⁶⁶⁰ that the Chronicler has conflated the language of the two passages, thereby equating the צאן of Deuteronomy with the כבשים and עזים of Exodus 12. The Chronicler clearly distinguishes the בקר of Deuteronomy from the Passover proper; later Jewish tradition described the cattle as *hagigah*, peace offerings made during the festivals.

⁶⁵⁸ See 2 Chronicles 29:24, where the priests slaughter the sin offerings made on behalf of the nation during the rededication of the temple. Two verses earlier it is stated that “they slaughtered” the accompanying burnt offerings without specifying a particular actor. The most likely candidates are the priests (mentioned in verses 21b and 22a), although the king and the city officials mentioned in verse 20 are another possibility.

⁶⁵⁹ So A.C. Welch, *The Work of the Chronicler: Its Purpose and Its Date* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), p141; Eves, *The Role of Passover in the Book of Chronicles*, pp190-4.

⁶⁶⁰ *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, pp136-7.

This description of the Passover celebrations is framed by two statements that what was done was in accordance with the king's command, thereby encouraging the reader to interpret the account by means of Josiah's speech in verses 3 to 6.

In verses 11 to 14 the various aspects of the cultic service are described, focussing particularly on the duties of the Levites. As in verses 1 and 6 they are responsible for slaughtering the Passover, while the priests dash the blood. Verse 12 describes how they set aside (hiphil of סור) the burnt offering (העלה) for distribution to the ancestral houses of the people, so they might offer them to YHWH in accordance with book of Moses. Following Rudolph⁶⁶¹ most recent commentators agree that this is not the normal burnt offering but instead refers to the fat portions which are removed from the animal and offered to YHWH in accordance for the regulations for the well-being offering in Leviticus 3:4-5 and 9-11. While this explains the use of the citation formula in verse 12 it is not without its difficulties. First, while the hiphil of סור is used in Leviticus 3 for the removal of the fat portions from the well-being offering, it is used a number of times in Chronicles in a non-technical sense⁶⁶². Hence one cannot assume that the use of this verb in verse 12 necessitates a linkage with Leviticus 3. Moreover, the fat portions in Leviticus 3 are not described as עלה but as offerings by fire (אשה). Finally, there is the problem of verse 14, which refers to “the burnt offerings and the fat parts (העולה והחלבים).” This can be accommodated within Rudolph's theory either by assuming that the Chronicler gives a different sense to עלה in verses 12 and 14⁶⁶³, or that the burnt offerings and fat parts of

⁶⁶¹Rudolph Chronikbücher, p327.

⁶⁶² Eg 2 Chronicles 30:14, 32:12 and 33:15 for the removal of altars and other cultic objects.

⁶⁶³ Japhet, I & II Chronicles, pp1052-3.

verse 14 are the one and the same thing⁶⁶⁴. While either explanation is possible neither is probable.

It is more likely that three types of offerings are described in verses 11 to 13 – the Passover animal, the burnt offerings and the cattle (which can be identified with the “holy offerings” in verse 13). The fat parts in verse 14 come from the holy offerings – hence it is these, rather than the Passover, which are portrayed as well-being offerings⁶⁶⁵. The only difficulty with this explanation is identifying the burnt offerings which were to be offered in accordance with the book of Moses. Numbers 28:16-25 contains regulations for additional burnt offerings on the first morning of the Festival of Unleavened Bread rather on Passover eve as such. It may be that in focussing on the Passover the Chronicler has brought forward these offerings a day earlier.

The cooking of the offerings is described in verse 13. While the holy offerings are cooked in vessels in accordance with normal sacrificial practice, the Passover animal is cooked in fire (וַיִּבְשֹׁלוּ הַפֶּסַח בָּאֵשׁ). This is clearly a conflation of Exodus 12:8, which directs that the Passover be roasted over fire (צִלִּי-אֵשׁ) and Deuteronomy 16:7 which requires that it be cooked (בִּשַׁל)⁶⁶⁶. This still leaves open the question of what the Chronicler envisaged taking place. Fishbane suggests the Chronicler’s phrasing is ‘incomprehensible’⁶⁶⁷, in which case it is purely hermeneutical, ie intended to reconcile texts rather than describe reality. However, the fact that the Chronicler distinguishes the cooking of the Passover

⁶⁶⁴ Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, p407.

⁶⁶⁵ Strangely Johnstone (*1 and 2 Chronicles*, p253) argues that the קֹדְשִׁים are the choice cuts reserved for the priests along the lines of Leviticus 7:28-34 and Numbers 18:18, notwithstanding that verse 13 states that they were distributed to the laity (לְכָל-בְּנֵי הָעָם). Instead, the use of vocabulary normally associated with the priests for the consumption of meat by the laity suggests that the Chronicler wishes to portray the Passover as on occasion on which some of the normal distinctions between clergy and laity are dissolved. Certainly this is the implication of verse 14, which refers to the personal participation of the priests in the Passover without suggesting that it differs in any way from that of the laity.

⁶⁶⁶ As argued in Chapter Five where a method of food preparation is in view בִּשַׁל is best understood as “cook in a vessel” rather than “boil”, although in practice it often involves boiling in a liquid.

⁶⁶⁷ *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, p135.

from the cooking of the holy offerings⁶⁶⁸ indicates that he is following Exodus, while giving **בשל** a broader meaning than is customary⁶⁶⁹.

The main concern of verses 14 to 15 is the role of the Levites in serving the priests and other cultic officials so they could continue their duties uninterrupted. The mention of singers in verse 16 indicates that cultic praise was incorporated into the Passover rite as well as the subsequent Festival of Unleavened Bread⁶⁷⁰.

35:17-19

These verses summarise the celebrations as a whole. After a brief reference to the Festival of Unleavened Bread in 17b, verse 18 returns to the Passover, which it describes as unprecedented since the days of Samuel. The incomparability formula used for Josiah's Passover in verse 18 differs from that in 2 Kings 23:22:

2 Kings 23:22

כי לא נעשה כפסח הזה מימי השפטים אשר שפטו את-ישראל
וכל ימי מלכי ישראל ומלכי יהודה

2 Chronicles 35:18

ולא-נעשה פסח כמהו בישראל מימי שמואל הנביא וכל-מלכי ישראל לא-עשו כפסח
אשר-עשה יאשיהו והכהנים והלויים וכל-יהודה וישראל הנמצא ויושבי ירושלם

⁶⁶⁸ The contrast is made clear by the use of the preposition **ב** – the Passover is cooked **באש** while the holy offerings are cooked **בסירות** and other vessels.

⁶⁶⁹ See Shaver Torah and the Chronicler's History, p116.

⁶⁷⁰ In this sense, this an extension of the theme of rejoicing present in earlier narratives (2 Chronicles 29:25-30, 30:21) rather than a contrast, as Japhet (I & II Chronicles, p1053) argues.

Perhaps because of his account of the earlier Passover under Hezekiah the Chronicler is slightly more explicit that what is unique about Josiah's Passover is the nature of the celebration rather than the celebration of the Passover as such. In 18b he expands 2 Kings' "no Passover like this had been kept (לֹא נַעֲשֶׂה כַּפֶּסַח הַזֶּה)" by adding that it was kept "by Josiah, by the priests and the Levites, by all Judah and Israel who were present, and by the inhabitants of Jerusalem." This is probably not a reference to the size or comprehensiveness of the gathering, since these aspects have already been stressed in the account of Hezekiah's Passover, and there is no indication that Josiah's celebration exceeded it in either respect. It is more likely to refer to the unprecedented organisation of the cultic responsibilities of the various parties in accordance with law and custom⁶⁷¹. Whereas Hezekiah's Passover is to some improvised and irregular Josiah's Passover is planned and prepared from the beginning.

Chronicles also differs from Kings in that it states that no such Passover had been kept since the days of Samuel, rather than from the days of the judges. In effect, both statements are identical – Josiah's Passover was unprecedented during the era of the monarchy. The era of the judges is virtually passed over in silence by the Chronicler⁶⁷² so it no surprise that he refers instead to the figure associated in his narrative with the beginnings of the monarchy⁶⁷³.

7.2.3 The Message of Josiah's Passover

The analysis above has identified a number of emphases in the account of Josiah's Passover.

⁶⁷¹ It is, however, unduly restrictive to see the distinctive aspect of Josiah's Passover in the role of the Levites only (so Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, p407; Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, p329). Verse 18 makes no distinction between the Levites and other groups, and while the Levites are particularly prominent in the earlier narrative, they are not the only actors.

⁶⁷² The exceptions that prove the rule are the brief references in 1 Chronicles 17:6, 10.

⁶⁷³ See 1 Chronicles 10:3, where David is anointed as King over Israel in accordance with the word of YHWH by Samuel. The description of Samuel as a prophet in 35:18 probably has this earlier passage in mind.

- . the importance of order and preparation in the conduct of cultic worship
- . the distinctive roles of various parties, particularly but not exclusively the Levites, in the conduct of cultic worship
- . the importance of conducting cultic worship in accordance with law and custom, and a desire to reconcile various aspects of Israel's legal traditions.

As in the case of Hezekiah's Passover, these points could presumably have been made through an account of any festal celebration. There is no attempt to probe the meaning or historical associations of the Passover. The emphasis is much more on the importance of appropriate praxis, although it should not be assumed that the Chronicler wished to deny the importance of his associations. Presumably these were available to his audience from other sources. It was more important for him to show his audience how the Passover had been, and could be conducted.

7.3 Conclusion

The existence of two Passover accounts in Chronicles means one cannot move straight to a consideration of the relationship between the Chronicler's understanding of the Passover and the broader themes identified earlier in this study without first examining the distinctive features of these two accounts and how they relate to one another.

7.3.1 *Hezekiah and Josiah's Passover: Complements or Contrasts?*

A comparison of the Passovers under Hezekiah and Josiah reveals both similarities and differences.

Eves⁶⁷⁴ lists five similarities in the two accounts:

⁶⁷⁴ Eves, The Role of Passover in the Book of Chronicles, pp3-5.

- . the prominent role of the Levites
- . the provision of sacrifices by the kings and officials
- . Passover and Unleavened Bread are celebrated in Jerusalem
- . the Passover is killed using the terminology of Exodus 12:6 and 12:21
- . the priests receive the blood from the Levites

An additional similarity not mentioned by Eves is that both accounts report the participation of inhabitants of Jerusalem, Judah, and the former Northern Kingdom.

Eves lists several differences between the two accounts, the most significant being as follows:

- . the celebration of Unleavened Bread is relatively more prominent in the Hezekiah account
- . there are various non-standard aspects in Hezekiah's Passover - celebration in the second month, the participation of worshippers who are ritually unclean, the extra seven days' of celebration - whereas Josiah's Passover is portrayed as complying with law and custom
- . Whereas Hezekiah consults prior to summoning worshippers to the celebration, Josiah's Passover is the result of unilateral royal initiative
- . The slaughter of the Passover by the Levites is a temporary expedient in Hezekiah's Passover, but a regular practice by the time of Josiah
- . A concern to reconcile various legal traditions is evident in Josiah's Passover

One may add a third category – themes which are common to both accounts but expressed somewhat differently in each instance.

- . In both accounts the Chronicler stresses the breadth of participation, including inhabitants of the former Northern Kingdom. However, the account of Hezekiah's Passover also mentions the participation of resident aliens. It is also more explicit concerning the non-participation of some Northerners.

The theme of serving/service (עבדה/עבד) occurs in both accounts. However in Hezekiah's Passover it is the people as a whole who are invited to serve YHWH, whereas in Josiah's Passover the focus is on the service of the priests and Levites.

Both accounts mention the role of music in worship – but in the earlier account the music accompanies the celebration of Unleavened Bread, whereas under Josiah the temple singers are present at the celebration of Passover.

The complex picture outlined above makes it apparent that any explanation which suggests that the Chronicler has taken a particular understanding of the Passover, applied it to the tradition of a celebration under Josiah which he inherited from his sources, and then projected it back into the days of Hezekiah, is inadequate.

Eves, in fact, argues that the two accounts reflect somewhat different understandings of Passover praxis. In the account of Josiah's Passover the influence of Deuteronomic traditions is relatively more prominent, whereas in Hezekiah's Passover Priestly traditions, and Numbers 9 in particular, are more important. This may reflect the Chronicler's greater freedom to craft a narrative where he is not bound by a text from his *Vorlage*. Beyond this, Eves suggests the Chronicler incorporated different understandings of the Passover to reflect and reconcile different understandings in the community of his own day⁶⁷⁵.

However, Eves fails to demonstrate that the differences between the two Passovers in Chronicles correspond to differences in praxis in the post-exilic community⁶⁷⁶. It is more likely that the Chronicler intends some degree of normative distinction between the two Passovers. Riley argues that the two incomparability formulae in 30:26 and 35:18 “have the effect of ensuring that the audience perceives Hezekiah's Passover (and reform) as a

⁶⁷⁵ “...his primary method was to allow two orthodox, reforming kings who both seek the Lord to celebrate the Passover in their own way with significant and intentional differences in the celebration. These differences were not arbitrary but reflected diverse interpretations and practices in the post-exilic community.” T.L. Eves The Role of Passover in the Book of Chronicles, p320.

⁶⁷⁶ Eves points to three post-exilic texts (the Elephantine Papyrus, The Book of Jubilees and the Temple Scroll) which reflect debates over Passover praxis. However, in none of these texts are the debates framed to reflect the differences between the two Passovers in Chronicles.

restoration of the cultus of the days of the United Monarchy and Josiah's celebration as a progression upon it."⁶⁷⁷ Josiah's liturgies mark an advance on developments under Hezekiah because of Josiah's exercise of his liturgical authority and the full implementation of the book of the law.

While this is no doubt true, there is no indication that the Chronicler regarded Hezekiah's Passover as inadequate, given the circumstances under which it was celebrated. As outlined above, the two incomparability formulae in 30:26 and 35:18 focus on different aspects of the Passover – the breadth of participation and the festal joy in the first instance, the organisation of the people for their various cultic duties in the second. In Hezekiah's Passover the focus is on who should participate in the Passover and how it fits into YHWH's purposes for his people. In Josiah's Passover the focus is on how the Passover may be celebrated in accordance with law and custom. Moreover, there are indications that the Chronicler wishes to equate the two celebrations. So while the Levites have a more prominent role in Josiah's Passover the Chronicler is at pains to emphasise that their functions are exercised on behalf of the laity. While this pro-Levite apologetic may reflect the debates and concerns of the Chronicler's own time, it also establishes a continuity at the level of principle between the two Passovers even if there is some difference in practice. At 30:8 the people are invited to serve YHWH; in Josiah's Passover it is the cultic officials who are primarily responsible for service. Yet, for the Chronicler clerical service does not displace lay service; rather it is the means by which it is expressed and brought to fruition. This, in turn, raises the question of how the Chronicler's view of community is reflected in these two accounts.

7.3.2 Passover and Community

Insofar as the Passover accounts are concerned the Chronicler's view of Israel may be examined from two perspectives – his understanding of Israel as a whole, and his understanding of the internal distinctions and divisions within the community.

⁶⁷⁷ Riley. *King and Cultus in Chronicles*, p136.

It has been shown above that central to the Chronicler's understanding of Israel is the notion of captivity. The Israel of Hezekiah and Josiah's day fell short of the ideal represented by the Davidic-Solomonic era, since part of Israel remained separated from land and temple. However, those who remained in the land could re-assert their identity and petition YHWH to restore their national fortunes by gathering at the temple for worship. As one of the major national festivals the Passover was particularly suited for this purpose.

Internally, the Chronicler's understanding of community contains both egalitarian and hierarchical elements. The egalitarian elements include the role of the assembly in cultic decisions and the participation of all the people in the Passover meal without any difference in the part of the animal and accompanying offerings to be consumed by the laity and the priesthood. The hierarchical elements are the focus on the roles of cultic officials and the tendency for such officials, particularly the Levites to exercise cultic functions which are elsewhere the prerogative of the laity. The Chronicler seeks to reconcile these apparently conflicting tendencies by portraying the Levites as acting on behalf of the laity and with their consent⁶⁷⁸. This dynamic is particularly evident when the narrative of Hezekiah's Passover is read alongside that of Josiah's – the first expressing the national longing for restoration, the second describing how this can be implemented in an ordered cultic celebration.

7.3.3 *Passover and Memory*

Neither 2 Chronicles 30 nor 35 uses the language of memory in relation to the Passover, nor do they explicitly associate it with the exodus or any other historical referent. Insofar

⁶⁷⁸ On the importance of the tribe of Levi for the Chronicler's understanding of Israel's cultic and national identity see T. Willi, 'Leviten, Priester und Kult in vorhellenistischer Zeit: Die chronistische Optik in ihrem geschichtlichen Kontext' in B. Ego, A. Lange, & P. Pilhofer, (eds) *Gemeinde ohne Tempel: Zur Substituierung und Transformation des Jerusalemer Tempels und seines Kults im Alten Testament, antiken Judentum und frühen Christentum*. (WUNT 118; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), pp75-98 and J. Schaper, *Priester und Leviten im achämenidischen Juda*. (FAT 31; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), pp269-303.

as Chronicles is interested in the memory of Passover, it is the memory of the two celebrations under Hezekiah and Josiah rather than the celebration in Egypt. This fits in with its broader understanding of Israelite identity as being shaped primarily by present temple service rather than past historical experience.

However, there are indications that this is a relative rather than absolute emphasis. That is, Chronicles does not intend to displace other Old Testament traditions which associate the Passover with the exodus, but to incorporate them within its broader perspective. Chronicles' emphasis on Mosaic precedent as the criterion for appropriate Passover praxis as well as the attempt to reconcile various aspects of Pentateuchal legislation testify to its indebtedness to and respect of prior tradition. It is also evident in more subtle ways. Chronicles picks up the importance of the **בֵּית אֱלֹהִים** in the Passover celebration from Exodus 12, but transforms it into a unit of organisation which can be applied to national as well as domestic celebrations. The incomparability formulae at 2 Chronicles 35:18, by interpreting Josiah's Passover as a return to a prior, albeit long-distant pattern also recognises the authority of past tradition.

Chronicles' Passover accounts deconstruct any strict distinction between textual and ritual coherence. The actual accounts themselves exhibit a particular interest in ritual action. There is no indication in the accounts themselves that the ritual needed to be accompanied by words of explanation to make its significance clear. Insofar as the celebration is accompanied by words, these are praises and thanksgivings directed to YHWH (see 2 Chronicles 30:22, 35:15). However, the validity of such ritual is to a large extent determined by its adherence to textual authority – preparations are made “according to the word of YHWH by Moses” (2 Chronicles 35:6). As was made clear in Chapter 6, for the Chronicler Mosaic, and to some extent Davidic, authority was not simply a matter of oral tradition but had come to be associated with written texts. Hence text does not displace rite, but shapes it.

Moving to the two categories developed in this thesis, those of mimesis and catechesis, one sees in Chronicles a concern for both, although expressed somewhat differently than in the

texts discussed in previous chapters. Insofar as the Chronicler wishes to portray the Passover as mimetic, it is not by imitating the Passover of Egypt or the circumstances of the departure from Egypt. If there is a norm for future generations, it is the Passover as practised by the Israelites under the two reforming kings which provides a model. And yet, the fact that the Chronicler can approve Hezekiah's somewhat irregular celebration indicates that he is no ritual perfectionist. Israel is encouraged to seek YHWH at the temple even when her ritual practice fell short of the ideal.

The most significant example of catechesis, that is a form of words which interprets the significance of the Passover action, is the letter in 2 Chronicles 30:6b-9. However, this is not a form of words to be used at each subsequent celebration along the lines of Exodus 12:25-27, but a one-off statement which gains its permanence not by being incorporated within annual ritual practice but by being incorporated into the text of Chronicles. Even so, it interprets the significance of each subsequent celebration of Passover, in the time of the reader and beyond. As long as Israel remained in the situation of captivity presupposed by the letter, every Passover had the nature of an enacted prayer, petitioning YHWH to restore the fortunes of his people.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

This thesis has sought to provide a fresh perspective on the Old Testament Passover by considering its function in shaping Israel's collective memory. Here the focus is not on those cultic experiences which may lie behind the text, but how the text itself has shaped praxis and facilitated the transmission of tradition from one generation to another.

Chapter One introduced the work of Jan Assmann as a dialogue partner. Assmann has argued that ancient societies, and Israel in particular, underwent a transition from ritual to textual coherence as the primary strategy for transmitting cultural memory, with the interpretation of a canon replacing the repetition of ritual actions. The exegesis of selected Passover texts has questioned the applicability of this model to Israel. While it is not the intention of this study to establish a chronological ordering for all the Old Testament Passover traditions, there would be little disagreement that Chronicles contains some of the later, if not the latest, texts dealing with this subject. However, in Chronicles the emphasis on the Passover as rite is as strong as ever, as evidenced by the attention given to reconciling various ritual regulations.

It has been suggested throughout this thesis that mimesis and catechesis are better categories for analysing the similarities between Old Testament Passover texts. Mimesis refers to the resemblance between a ritual action and a past event. Catechesis refers to explanatory words which interpret the significance of the action to participants and observers. This does not imply that every ritual action has a single straightforward meaning, and that catechesis simply translates this meaning for the benefit of onlookers⁶⁷⁹. Rather, ritual actions carry within themselves a field of possible meanings and it is this pluriformity which both necessitates catechesis and gives it some degree of creative freedom.

⁶⁷⁹ On the problematic aspects of treating ritual as a text which needs to be decoded see C. Bell, Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice. (New York: Oxford University Press 1992), pp44ff.

Close analysis of the Passover texts in Exodus, Deuteronomy and Chronicles suggests that much of their distinctiveness lies in the interplay between these two factors. In the case of Exodus 12:1-13:16 a key dynamic is the mimetic relationship between the Passover of future generations, the Passover of Egypt and the circumstances surrounding the departure from Egypt. It was demonstrated that the compiler(s) of Exodus reckoned with a mimetic gap between the two Passovers precisely so that future celebrations could continue to communicate the significance of fundamental events in Israel's history. In Deuteronomy 16 the mimetic pattern is slightly different. Here the celebration of Passover/Unleavened Bread is shaped to resemble one particular aspect of the exodus tradition – namely the people's departure from Egypt at a particular point in time. This contrasts with the tradition in Exodus 12:1-14 where the celebration is shaped to resemble a number of aspects of the exodus tradition. Finally, in Chronicles the model presented for imitation is not the Passover as celebrated in Egypt, nor the exodus experience, but the Passover as celebrated under two reforming kings, Hezekiah and Josiah.

With respect to catechesis, two patterns are evident in Exodus 12:1-13:16. In Exodus 12:1-14 there is no explicit provision for catechetical explanation of the rite, whereas in 12:21-27 there is an expectation that the significance of future Passover celebrations will be explained within a family context. In Deuteronomy 16 there is no mention of any catechesis. However, inter-textual links suggest that the compiler(s) understood that the form of words in Exodus 13:9 would explain the significance of the celebration of Passover/Unleavened Bread. In Chronicles there is no mention of any catechesis accompanying the celebrations under Hezekiah or Josiah, but the letter in 2 Chronicles 30:6-9 does interpret the significance of the celebration.

It is possible to observe here a certain 'textualisation' of catechesis. That is, catechesis is not just provided by short dialogues or explanations spoken in the context of the rite itself. It is also provided by other texts which, while being part of Israel's heritage, are not read or spoken within the context of the rite itself. In this sense, they correspond to Assmann's category of cultural texts. However, rather than text displacing rite it provides an ever-widening context within which it may be understood.

As each of the passages surveyed shape Israel's collective memory they also shape its view of community. In Exodus the memory of Israel's costly deliverance from death shapes a view of Israel as a community set apart for YHWH. In Deuteronomy the memory of the departure from Egypt reminds Israel of its obligation to keep Torah. In Chronicles the celebration of Passover expresses Israel's longing to be free from the lingering burden of captivity. Moreover, the function of canon in providing a variety of contexts within which the rite of Passover can be understood means that Israel's collective memory becomes ever richer and applicable to a wider range of contemporary situations.

This study could be extended in several directions. One could explore how other aspects of Israel's life witnessed in the Old Testament contributed to her collective memory, and whether the 'textualisation' of catechesis is a broader trend within the canon. Of course, long after the Old Testament had ceased to develop it has continued to shape the collective memory of the Jewish and Christian communities. Notwithstanding that neither community practises the Passover as described in the Old Testament it continues to exert a powerful influence – in the Jewish community as a transformed rite observed in the home rather than the temple and in the Christian community as a powerful symbol. Indeed, within the Christian context mimesis is textualised as well as catechesis – the Passover becomes a textual foreshadowing of the redemptive work of Christ⁶⁸⁰. From one generation to another the Passover continues to be a source of meaning and memory.

⁶⁸⁰ See eg 1 Corinthians 5:7 and the survey of Patristic exegesis of the Passover in K. Gerlach, *The Antenicene Pascha: A Rhetorical History* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998). On the mimetic nature of typology in early Christian apologetics see F. Young 'Typology' in S.E. Porter, P. Joyce and D.E. Orton (ed) *Crossing the Boundaries: I's Michael Goulder* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp29-48.

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