פי־שׁנים ברוחך:

The Elijah-Elisha Succession in Light of Max Weber's Understanding of Charismatic Authority and Institution Building

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Division of Religion

Drew University in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Hsueh-Ming Liao

Drew University

Madison, New Jersey

May 2015

פי־שׁנים ברוחך:

The Elijah-Elisha Succession in Light of Max Weber's Understanding of Charismatic Authority and Institution Building

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Division of Religion

Drew University in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Committee:

Dr. Herbert B. Huffmon, Chair

Dr. Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan

Dr. Jack Berezov

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The present study took longer than expected, especially due to some unexpected difficulties, chiefly as I tried to juggle my teaching and the completion of my dissertation with some serious injuries after being hit in a traffic accident. Without the unswerving support and unflagging guidance of Prof. Herbert Huffmon, I doubt that I would have been able to make it through the discouraging periods and to achieve the completion of this thesis. So I am very grateful to Prof. Huffmon, my advisor and mentor throughout The process, for his patience and encouragement in the course of my research and writing. I am also grateful to my first teacher in Old Testament studies, Dr. Joseph Jung-Min Kuo, for his encouragement and support from the early days of my graduate studies.

Also, I greatly appreciate the patience and support of the other members of my dissertation committee, Dr. Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan (now President of the Claremont School of Theology) and Dr. Jack Berezov (now retired from work with various congregations). for the counsel and forbearance. Their insightful suggestions have been very beneficial for this study.

My greatest thanks are reserved for Pei-Yu, my wife. Her faith in me and her encouragement and support during some very difficult times, setting aside some of her own professional goals, have been a constant source of inspiration for me to persist in the completion of this dissertation. I could not have done this work without her constant help.

Blessed are all those who have doctoral committees such as my own and family support such as I have experienced. For me, their combination of wise counsel and forbearance has guided me in this long journey and “anointed” me, as it were, to move onward in my own calling as a biblical scholar.

ABSTRACT

Building on Max Weber's understanding of charismatic authority and its relationship with institution building, this study investigates the features of the immediate prophetic succession of Elijah by Elisha, the only clear case of prophetic succession reported in the Hebrew Bible. The contrast and comparison of the Elijah-Elisha succession with other kinds of succession, such as the emphasis on hereditary succession for kingship and the priesthood, point up other aspects of the Elijah-Elisha succession as it relates to the classic charismatic character of Israelite prophecy.

In the Introduction, the basic issues in connection with prophetic succession are delineated. The following brief review of the history of research sets the stage for the careful analysis of the charismatic succession of Moses by Joshua and Elijah by Elisha. Chapter Two addresses Weber's special association of charisma with institution building, while taking into consideration various critiques and modifications of Weber's theory as offered by social theorists such as Reinhard Bendix, Edward Shils, S. N. Eisenstadt, and Julien Freund, as well as the work of the biblical scholar, Rodney R. Hutton.

Chapter Three applies Weberian theory to the matter of charismatic succession. The biblical tradition uses the terminology of apprenticeship as a basis for the preparation of a potential successor, particularly in the traditions of the relationship between Moses and Joshua. In Chapter Four, the prophetic bands from the time of Samuel and again associated especially with Elisha, suggest attempts to institutionalize prophecy that had limited success. The careful delineation in the tradition of the successful succession by Elisha to the prophetic role of Elijah, presented in Chapter Five, begins with Weber's own discussion of the relationship of the Elijah to Elisha and presents a careful analysis of the

way the tradition depicts the relationship of Elijah to Elisha. As the comments in the concluding chapter indicate, the tradition also carefully presented the Elijah-Elisha succession as a one-generation matter, as there is no suitable candidate to succeed Elisha. This study provides a preview of the continuing fragility of charismatically endorsed institutionalized leadership in the subsequent developments of biblical religion.

CONTENTS

List of Abbreviations and Terms

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	*Anchor Bible Dictionary*
AE	*American Ethnologist*
AnBib	Analecta biblica
AOTC	Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries
ASR	*American Sociological Review*
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
AusBR	*Australian Biblical Review*
BE	Biblical Encyclopedia
BG	Biblishe Gestalten
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BKAT	Biblicsher Kommentar Altes Testament
BLS	Bible and Literature Series
BO	Berit Olam
BRS	Biblical Resource Series
BWAT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten Testament
CAIS	Civilization of the American Indian Series
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CC	Continental Commentaries
ConC	Concordia Commentary: A Theological Exposition of Sacred Scripture
CPNIVC	College Press NIV Commentary
CS	Contributions in Sociology
E	Elohistic source
ECC	Eerdmans Critical Commentary
EvT	*Evangelische Theologie*
FCBS	Fortress Classics in Biblical Studies
FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
HALOT	*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*
HCOT	Historical Commentary on the Old Testament
hiph'il	causative conjugation of the Hebrew verb
hithpa'el	reflexive conjugation of the Hebrew verb
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
ICC	International Critical Commentary
ITC	International Theological Commentary

J	Yahwistic source
JAAR	*Journal of the American Academy of Religion*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JPSTC	JPS Torah Commentary
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
LAI	Library of Ancient Israel
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
MT	Massoretic Text
NCB	New Century Bible
NCBC	New Cambridge Bible Commentary
NIB	*New Interpreter's Bible*
NIDB	*New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
niph'al	passive-reflexive conjugation of the Hebrew verb
NJPS	New Jewish Publication Society Tanakh
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTM	Oxford Theological Monographs
PBM	Paternoster Biblical Monographs
PFES	Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society
pi'el	Hebrew verbal conjugation with doubled middle radical
qal	base form of Hebrew verb
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLSS	Society of Biblical Literature Semeia Studies
SBS	Sources for Biblical Study
SHBC	Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary
TBT	*The Bible Today*
TDOT	*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*
TLOT	*Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*
UAC	Understanding Ancient Civilizations
UTB	Uni-Taschenbücher
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WAW	Writings from the Ancient World

WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WO	*Die Welt des Orients*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZRG	*Zeitschrift für die Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Although we find references in the secondary literature to a loose kind of "prophetic succession" and the biblical texts themselves refer to an awareness of the prophetic tradition (e.g., Hos 12:10-14; Jer 28:8-9; Deut 18:15), the Hebrew Bible provides only one clear reference to immediate prophetic succession, namely the instance of the transfer of prophetic power from Elijah to Elisha. There is also a parallel tradition of the transfer of leadership from Moses to Joshua. Prophets may be more or less contemporary with each other, as with Amos and Hosea, but actual succession is not otherwise a feature of the prophetic tradition except in the sense that a certain prophet having ceased activity, another prophet—following an interval of irregular length—may arise with no specific formal relationship, such as kinship or apprenticeship, to any predecessors.

A. Statement of the Problem: The Issue of Prophetic Succession

Max Weber presents a "historical development of Judaism," in which he "came across a figure, which he will no longer lose sight of as his presentation of ancient Judaism progresses, the *prophet*."[1] The charismatic Elijah, according to Weber, begins the line of prophets whose prophecies were not in response to a request but were forthcoming without being requested and, above all, passed on, particularly, featuring threats of doom.[2] But the relationship of Elisha to Elijah, in terms of succession, is not

[1] See Dirk Käsler, *Max Weber: An Introduction to His Life and Work* (trans. Philippa Hurd; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 130.

[2] For Elijah, see Max Weber, *Ancient Judaism* (trans. Hans H. Gerth and Don Martindale; New York: Free Press, 1952), 108-9. See also Käsler, *Max Weber*, 130.

addressed by Weber in terms of his understanding of the relationship of charisma with institution building. Webers refers instead to Elisha as Elijah's successor on as "an endeavor of this epigonus of the ancient Nebiim . . . which even in the tradition shows an ambitious 'straining.'"[3]

1. Weber's Expectation regarding Three Types of Authority and His Emphasis on Charisma and Institution Building

Charismatic authority, unstable, unpredictable, and leading more to institutional building rather than direct succession, is different, in Weber's "three pure types of legitimate domination," from the other authorities, that is, rational/legal authority and traditional/hereditary authority, which are stable, predictable, and inclined to direct succession by rules and beliefs.[4] In Weber's conception,

> [T]he first, which he called "legal authority," is rational in character; it is based on belief in the rationally established laws and in the legitimacy of the leaders appointed in accordance with the law. The second, or "traditional authority," is based on belief in the sanctity of traditions in force and on the legitimacy of those who are called upon to exercise power. The third, which Weber called "charismatic authority," is based on the members' abandonment of themselves to an individual distinguished by his holiness, his heroism or his exemplariness. Legal authority is the most impersonal; the second is based on piety, and the last is in the realm of the exceptional.[5]

---

[3] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 108.

[4] Weber differentiates charismatic authority from rational/legal authority and traditional/hereditary authority, and also states that charismatic authority is expected to contribute to institution building. See Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (2 vols.; ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 215-16.

[5] Julien Freund, *The Sociology of Max Weber* (trans. Mary Ilford; New York: Pantheon, 1968), 229.

The Hebrew Bible contains many narratives that illuminate the role and function of prophets and prophecy in ancient Israel. The biblical prophets represent classic examples of Max Weber's category of charismatic authority, and as such Weber's *model* anticipates frequent institutionalization under such authority, as indeed clearly happens in respect to kingship, as discussed below in Chapter Four.[6] Even so, the problem of prophetic succession, a tradition from one charismatic leader to another, is noted as very difficult and Weber himself dismisses the Elijah-Elisha succession as secondary and forced. Indeed, since the immediate/explicit transfer of prophetic authority in the Hebrew Bible occurs in only one narrative sequence—the succession story of Elijah and Elisha (1 Kgs 19:15-17; 2 Kgs 2:1-15)—examining biblical texts alone provides only limited insight into this important issue of prophetic succession. Granted, the prophetic bands[7] may well represent an attempt at routinization, but these bands, also identified as the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים), only rarely produce anyone cited as providing an individual oracle, as in 1 Kgs 20:35-41.

Charisma, as represented by Israel's prophets,[8] has the potential to lead to rountinization/institution building. In spite of the anticipation of routinization of

---

[6] For further discussion of "institution building," see also S. N. Eisenstadt, ed., *Max Weber on Charisma and Institution Building: Selected Papers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), esp. 46-47. As for charismatic authority illustrated by prophets, see Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* (trans. Ephraim Fischoff; Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), 46-59; see also Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 90-117, on prophecy in relationship to Yahweh as war deity, and pp. 267-96 on the social context and social psychology of prophecy.

[7] This phrase is used loosely as a generic term in reference to בני־הנביאים (e.g., 2 Kgs 2:3, 5, 7, 15), חבל נביאים (e.g., 1 Sam 10:5, 10), and להקת הנביאים (e.g., 1 Sam 19:20).

[8] Weber's definition of "prophet" (*Sociology of Religion*, 46) fits well with the perspective of this present study: "We shall understand 'prophet' to mean a purely

charismatic prophecy, there is but little Biblical evidence of such direct continuity. In addition to the Elijah-Elisha narratives, however, there are the Moses-Joshua narratives that provide many similarities. Accordingly, we will draw upon the Moses-Joshua narratives for comparison and contrast regarding charismatic succession, and we can look for similarities in these two cases that may assist us in discerning the nature and character of potential direct prophetic succession. Nevertheless, while many prophets were more or less contemporary with other prophets as mentioned, actual, specified succession is not otherwise a feature of the prophetic tradition. Aside from Elijah and Elisha, "succession" occurs generally in the sense that prophets—one or more—appear on the scene, usually following an irregular interval when there were no recorded prophets, but with no specific formal relationship such as kinship or apprenticeship with any predecessor or contemporary.[9] As mentioned at the very beginning of this chapter, however, the prophets were aware of being part of a tradition.

According to the Weberian model of charismatic authority, charisma is related to institution building. Instances in the biblical tradition that are well known occur with the prophetic charismatic anointing of kings who then establish hereditary dynasties, the most successful example being David, who was anointed by Samuel (1 Sam 16:1, 13) and

---

individual bearer of charisma, who by virtue of his mission proclaims a religious doctrine or divine commandment." The objection by Peter L. Berger ("Charisma and Religious Innovation: The Social Location of Israelite Prophecy," *ASR* 28 [1963]: 940-50) was immediately countered by James G. Williams ("The Social Location of Israelite Prophecy," *JAAR* 37 [1969]: 153-65).

[9] Accordingly, R. B. Y. Scott regards this type of prophetic succession as "an apostolic succession of prophetic voices" which found no parallel in the ancient world. For further details, see Scott, *The Relevance of the Prophets: An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets and Their Message* (rev. ed.; New York: Mcmillan, 1968), 60-89.

who founded a long-lasting hereditary dynasty, and the anointing of Jehu by one of Elisha's entourage from the prophetic band that led to another significant hereditary dynasty (2 Kgs 9:1-6),[10] but this process also showed the inability of charismatic designation.[11] In these instances the succession—or institutionalization—in authority became routinized as a matter of heredity. As indicated, the closest biblical parallel to the non-hereditary Elijah-Elisha prophetic succession in charismatic leadership is the case of Moses and Joshua, who are described as having a much greater range of authority than Elijah or Elisha. Num 27:15-23 refers to a divinely authorized transfer of "authority" (הוד) from Moses to his apprentice, Joshua, to be confirmed by the priest Eleazar through the use of the sacred lots (Urim). The text notes that Joshua himself was "a man with the spirit" (איש אשר־רוח בו) (Num 27:18).[12] This succession is later described in Ben Sira 46:1as Joshua even being a "successor of Moses in the prophetic office" (διάδοχος Μωυσῆ ἐν προφητείαις).[13]

---

[10] The anointing of Solomon is carried out by the priest, Zadok, alone in 1 Kgs 1:39, though Nathan the prophet, who is said to be present together with Benaiah, the leader of the palace guard, apparently participates in the anointing (1 Kgs 1:34, 45). Note the discussion in Martin Noth, *Könige I: 1-16* (BKAT; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1968), 23-24, 26-27.

[11] Samuel anointed Saul (1 Sam 10:1-2) and also deposed him (13:13-14); Ahijah of Shiloh anointed Jeroboam (1 Kgs 11:30-31), implying thereby deposing Solomon from full hereditary succession, and also deposed the anointed Jeroboam (14:7-11). Jehu ben Hanani deposed Baasha (1 Kgs 16:1-4).

[12] Though the word רוח here is not precisely defined, it is clear from the context that it refers to a special gift from Yahweh that enables Joshua to carry out his new task. See Martin Noth, *Numbers: A Commentary* (trans. James D. Martin; OTL; Philadelphia, Westminster, 1968), 214-15. Deut 34:9 identifies the רוח as "a spirit of wisdom" (רוח חכמה) and notes that Moses "laid his hands on [Joshua]," as in Num 27:18

[13] The Hebrew text of Ben Sira 46:1 identifies Joshua as משרת מֹשה בנבואה; see P. C. Beentjes, *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew: A Text Edition of All Extant Hebrew*

As noted, the closest parallel in the Hebrew Bible to the Elijah-Elisha succession is the *non-hereditary* succession to Moses by Joshua. Although Moses is occasionally identified as a "prophet" (נביא) in Deuteronomy (e.g., 18:15; 34:10; see also Hos 12:14), Joshua is not so identified in the Hebrew Bible, though, as noted, that role is implied in Ben Sira 46:1. Apart from the succession elements already mentioned, Joshua is connected with signs and wonders, and he is cited as using a prophetic speech formula: "thus says Yahweh" (כה־אמר יהוה) (Josh 24:2). So Joshua is described as a charismatic person upon whom Moses, acting under divine command, bestowed the requisite qualities. Ronald E. Clements attributes this rarity of succession to the "individuality" and "creativeness" of charisma,[14] but the analysis of the role and character of succession in charismatic leadership merits further discussion.

2. Weber's Own Discussion of the Elijah-Elisha Relationship

Elijah and Elisha exemplify Max Weber's category of charismatic authority, which poses the possibility of succession, as the expectation is that charismatic authority

---

Manuscripts and a Synopsis of All Parallel Hebrew Ben Sira Texts (VTSup 68; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 81. Note that Patrick W. Skehan and Alexander A. Di Lella render the Greek translation as specifying an "aide to Moses in the prophetic office" and identify משׁרת ("aide") as, literally, "a minister of, the same word used to describe him [Joshua] in Exod 33:11." Joshua, in their comment, is "like Elisha, who assisted and later succeeded Elijah (1 Kgs 19:21; 2 Kgs 2:9-15)," in following Moses "in the prophetic office." See Skehan and Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: A New Translation with Notes, Introduction and Commentary* (AB 39; New York: Doubleday, 1987), 517, 519.

[14] Ronald E. Clements, "Max Weber, Charisma and Biblical Prophecy," in *Prophecy and Prophets: The Diversity of Contemporary Issues in Scholarship* (ed. Yehoshua Gitay; SBLSS; Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1997), 102.

will lead to institutionalized structures.[15] Indeed, as Reinhard Bendix notes, Weber refers to three methods of securing (internal) charismatic succession:

> (1) A new charismatic leader is designated [by others] on the basis of criteria that are thought to ensure the requisite charismatic qualities of the chosen one. (The Dalai Lama is chosen in this manner).
> (2) The original charismatic leader designates his own successor or representative, and the followers recognize this designation through acclamation. . . . However, if the leader does not designate his own successor and if there are no external criteria that are believed to be authentic, then:
> (3) The disciples and followers of the charismatic leader are believed to be best suited to designate a qualified successor. Here again recognition by acclamation is originally required, if the people's belief in the charisma of the successor is to be preserved. . . . Because the charisma of leadership is thought to exist in the person, his designation and acclamation as the successor are regarded as his rightful claim, and his "election" as the duty of the ruled. Only one man is believed to be the "right successor," and all those who fail to designate and acclaim him—whether they are in the majority or not—thereby commit a magical offense.[16]

According to the tradition, Elisha first became Elijah's designated successor "in waiting" through divine appointment (1 Kgs 19:16), though there is no reference in the text as to this anointing specifically being carried out; there is, instead, the symbolic bestowal of Elijah's mantle. Having himself subsequently requested a double portion of Elijah's spirit (פי־שנים ברוחך), Elisha acquired "the requisite charismatic qualities," i.e., prophetic power, from Elijah and demonstrated his powers (2 Kgs 2:9-14). The recognition (acclamation) of the succession was then made by the "prophetic band" (בני־

[15] See S. N. Eisenstadt, ed., *Charisma and Institution Building*, ix.

[16] Reinhard Bendix, *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 305. See also Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1125-27. Note that Reinhard Bendix's *Mar Weber* was originally published by Doubleday in 1960 whereas the version this study uses is a reprint published in 1977 (same pagination) with a new introduction by Guenther Roth which is useful and insightful in its description of the academic development related to Weber's social theory and particularly in Bendix's influence in respect to the understanding of charisma.

הנביאים): "The *spirit* (רוח) of Elijah has settled on Elisha" (2 Kgs 2:15, *emphasis* added), thus illustrating two of the three institutionalization processes indicated by Bendix.[17] This process is described in detail in Chapter Five.

Weber's considers Elijah as a classic prophet, who is disruptive: "King Ahab called Elijah a mischief maker and a destroyer of the people. *He was, indeed, the very type of the later prophets*" (*emphasis* added)."[18] Furthermore, Weber continues,

> Tradition knows him as one most passionately possessed by the angry spirit of Yahwe. . . . But tradition knows him also as a religious hero, who wrestled with and scolded his God like Moses and is held by God worthy of an epiphany, much like that of Moses. Tradition knows him as the last great magician. He is the only one among those whom Yahwe took into heaven whom the editors of the present revision have allowed this honor. . . . Along with his legendary elevation to a superhuman form, tradition presents a purely historical figure. Freed from all such supernatural features, this figure in a decisive point corresponds to the later type of "prophet" and is also handled in the revision of the tradition as one of its prototypes.[19]

Based on Weber's recognition of the imagery of Elijah, we might anticipate a discussion of Elijah's charismatic succession by Elisha. However, when it comes to the Elisha-Elijah relationship, note a key passage from Weber's *Ancient Judaism*:

---

[17] Note Joseph Blenkinsopp's comment that "[t]he call of Elisha, which was to become a basic paradigm for charismatic succession [outside the Hebrew Bible], involved the transfer of spirit from master to disciple." (Such a transfer also occurs with Moses and Joshua as noted above.) Basically, Blenkinsopp agrees with Bendix's Weberian analysis by stating that "[the transfer] had to be verified by the disciple's prophetic colleagues and validated by miracles." See Blenkinsopp, *Prophecy and Canon: A Contribution to the Study of Jewish Origins* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), 144.

[18] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 109.

[19] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 109-10. As for the comparison and contrast between the prophet and the magician, see Weber, *Sociology of Religion*, 47.

> In the legendary figure of Elijah this type [those "seized by this prophetic spirit of Yahweh] reached its climax and at the same time inclined toward the new type of the later scriptural "prophet." Elijah differed from the old "man of God" in that he addressed his oracles, at least in part, to the politically interested "public" and not alone to the authorities: kings or elders. Elijah is the first specifically "clerical" figure of Israelite history.[20]

His further comment comes in another key text regarding his view of the Elijah-Elisha "succession" and addresses the core of this present study, leading to a detailed discussion in Chapter Five, where Gustav Hölscher's important view of ancient Israelite prophecy (1914), just prior to Weber's initial publication of his essays on ancient Judaism (1917-1919), becomes part of the investigation:

> The biased tradition of the Nebiim brought him [Elijah] at least indirectly into connection with the Nabi-school of Elisha, which still retained a traditional character. Elijah has been made into a magician of the type of Elisha only by legend and by the endeavor of this epigonus of the ancient Nebiim to pose as Elijah's successor, an endeavor which even in the tradition shows as ambitious "straining."[21]

The reason why the process of transfer from Elijah to Elisha, as just noted, needs no special comment by Weber regarding the transfer of prophetic power from Elijah to Elisha lies in his understanding of Elijah and Elisha as contrasting. Weber says that "Elijah's appearance obviously was so impressive because, in contrast to the ecstasy charms of the Baal Nebiim, he used no means other than the plain imploration of Yahwe by prayer."[22] This represents a contrast between Elijah and Elisha:

---

[20] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 108.

[21] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 108.

[22] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 108.

> He [Elijah] was threatened with death by the queen of the Northern Kingdom, while Elisha acted as war magician of Ahab. Elijah received his commands from Yahwe in solitude and announced them personally as the emissary of his God, as the Yahwistic view of the time usually ascribed it to the epiphanies of Yahwe's angels. His incomparable prestige rested on this and upon his hitherto unheard of lack of discretion in standing up to the political power holders. Historically he is important as the first fairly ascertainable prophet of doom. In this he is the forerunner of a series of grand figures which for our present day literary sources begin with Amos and end with Ezekiel.[23]

For Weber, "[T]he typical individual prophet, Elijah, the deadly enemy of Baal ecstasy, hails from Gilead and is a typical migratory nomad. Elihsa, the mass ecstatic, was, according to tradition, a peasant." The huge contrast between Elijah, "a typical migratory nomad," and Elisha, a "mass ecstatic" and "peasant," with their major prophetic functions concludes the section of Weber's discussion of the Elijah-Elisha relationship before we investigate further into their succession. However, the biblical tradition goes to great lengths to demonstrate how fully Elisha represents a direct, even surpassing, succession to Elijah, as discussed in Chapter Five.

B. History of Research on Ancient Israel's Prophetic Tradition and the Question of Prophetic Succession

The question of prophetic succession and the relationship of charisma to institution building continually raised problems in ancient Israel. We find indications of various attempted solutions: First, we see some unsuccessful attempts to routinize charismatic authority through heredity, as when Abimelech strives to succeed his father, the "judge" (שׁופט)[24] Gideon/Jerubbaal (Judg 9:1-6), even though Gideon had reportedly

---

[23] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 108-9.

[24] Note Frank M. Cross's interpretation that "[t]he office of [שׁופט] in Israel is best described as an undifferentiated executive office of the league"; theywho "have presided over intertribal councils, called up the league militia for holy war, and otherwise exercised judicial, military, and cultic functions." See Cross, *Canaanite Myth and*

rejected any possibility for himself or his sons to "rule" (משל) over Israel (Judg 8:22-23). Abimelech's abortive regency is concluded by the tradition in a verse indicative of depreciation by not mentioning his political action as a "despotic usurpation of power": "Abimelech tyranized Israel for three years" (וישר אבימלך על־ישראל שלש שנים) (Judg 9:22),[25] before being deposed by a popular rebellion in Shechem (9:23-56).

The charismatic Samuel, in his old age, appoints his sons as "judges" (שפטים) (1 Sam 8:1), but the appointees, described as being self-centered and corrupt, are not acceptable to the people (8:5), and seem to have had judicial rather than military roles. Moreover, Saul regards his son, Jonathan, as his proper successor (1 Sam 20:31), thereby affirming hereditary succession, but this anticipated succession is countered by Samuel's designation of David as a disruptive successor (cf. 1 Sam 23:17).

In addition, there is a *possible* hereditary prophetic succession involving Hanani and Jehu ben Hanani, discussed below. In terms of comparative study, there is an immediate contrast between the very rare reference to prophetic succession in ancient Israel, whereas among shamans instances of institutionalized succession, often along hereditary or kinship lines, and commonly combined with apprenticeship, are fairly

---

Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), 219.

[25] Abraham Malamat has an insightful analysis of Weber's understanding of charismatic authority applied to premonarchical Israelite judges in which Gideon and his son Abimelech are two important figures in the discussion. This present study agrees with Malamat, on the one hand, that the judges by function deserve the appellation of "deliverer-judges" for they "delivered" and/or "saved" their nation out of distress. Abimelech, on the other, is insufficient to be a "judge" (שופת) because of traits which are diametrically opposed to those of charisma. See Malamat, "Charismatic Leadership in the Book of Judges," in *Magnalia Dei: The Mighty Acts of God, Essays on the Bible and archaeology in Memory of G. Ernest Wright* (ed. F. M. Cross, W. E. Lemke, and P. D. Miller; New York: Doubleday, 1976), 152-68.

common.[26]

Second, an institutionalization of charisma apparently was attempted in the form of the prophetic groups of the northern kingdom which frequently feature the easily induced—thus easily routinized—element of group ecstasy but with the occasional citation of a prophetic oracle ascribed to a member of the prophetic guild, as in 1 Kgs 20:35-42, including the "thus says Yahweh" (כה אמר יהוה) formula.[27]

The issue of prophetic succession has not consumed modern scholarship, nor has the issue of charismatic institutionalization of a prophetic role or "office." Scholars have

---

[26] For further discussion see Chapter Three, reporting principally on the recent comprehensive study by Thomas DuBois *An Introduction to Shamanism* (Cambridge, New York, etc: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Other specialist studies pertinent to this present work, especially in terms of apprenticeship and transfer of authority, i.e., succession of authority, include Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (trans. by Willard R. Trask; Bollingen Series 76; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964); Neville Drury, *The Elements of Shamanism* (Shaftesbury, Dorset: Element Books, 1989); Jeremy Narby and Francis Huxley, eds, *Shamans through Time: 500 Years on the Path to Knowledge* (New York: J. P. Tarcher/Putnam, 2001); Stephen Larsen, *The Shaman's Doorway: Opening Imagination to Power and Myth* (Rochester, Vt.: Inner Traditions, 1998); John A Grim, *The Shaman: Patterns of Religious Healing Among the Ojibway Indians* (CAIS; Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983); J. P. Brown, "The Mediterranean Seer and Shamanism," *ZAW* 93 (1981): 374-400; A. Leo Oppenheim, *Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization* (rev. ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977); Lester L. Grabbe, *Priests, Prophets, Diviners, Sages: A Socio-Historical Study of Religious Specialists in Ancient Israel* (Village Forge, Pa.: 1995); R. P. Carroll, "The Elijah-Elisha Sagas: Some Remarks on Prophetic Succession in Ancient Israel," *VT* 19 (1969): 400-415; Denise L. Carmody and John T. Carmody, *Shamans, Prophets and Sages: An Introduction to World Religions* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1985); Annemarie de Waal Malefijt, *Religion and Culture: An Introduction to Anthropology of Religion* (London: Macmillan, 1968); Felicitas D. Goodman, *Ecstasy, Ritual, and Alternate Reality: Religion in a Pluralistic World* (2[d] ed.; Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1988); Felicitas D. Goodman, *Where the Spirits Ride the Wind: Trance Journeys and Other Ecstatic Experiences* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1990).

[27] Note that "a member of the sons of the prophets" (איש אחד מבני הנביאים) (1 Kgs 20:35) performs prophetic task as an agent isolated from the prophetic group.

generally been willing to note that prophetic succession is usually intermittent and at times nonexistent. It is not that the issue was noted only to be dismissed, but rather that most scholars have been more interested in questions such as the social function or location of the prophets and their prophecy. Many scholars note the Elijah-Elisha succession only in passing, seeming to take it for granted without any discussion, as can be found in some standard accounts of the history of prophecy.[28] Julius Wellhausen, for instance, maintained that the Israelite prophets are the "true pioneers of Israel's faith and the founders of ethical monotheism."[29] He offered no investigation, however, as to how the faith "pioneers" transmitted their heritage and, in particular, their "office" for the generations to come. Many of his scholarly contemporaries, particularly Bernhard Duhm and W. Robertson Smith, held a similar position. A new generation, featuring Hermann Gunkel, among many others, arose and turned their attention to the literary forms of the prophetic messages, whether oral or written, perhaps under the influence of German Romanticism.[30]

---

[28] For example, W. Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel and Their Place in History to the Close of the Eighth Century B.C.* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1912), 116; Ronald E. Clements, *One Hundred Years of Old Testament Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), 51 (Julius Wellhausen), and 70-71 (Gerhard von Rad); Joseph Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel* (rev. and enl. ed.; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 55-64; Robert R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 192-206, and "Current Issues in the Study of Old Testament Prophecy," in *Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honour of Herbert B. Huffmon* (ed. J. Kaltner and L. Stulman; London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 38-39; and Benjamin Uffenheimer, *Early Prophecy in Israel* (trans. by David Louvish; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1999), 410-13.

[29] Ronald E. Clements, *Old Testament Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), 51.

[30] Wilson, "Current Issues," 38-39.

Analysis of the Biblical traditions within their historical-cultural context, with a focus on what the traditions present as to the issue of succession, not the elusive question of what actually happened (what the stories tell us and what the dynamics of the story are), lead us to Elijah and Elisha.

The tradition-historical approach to the study of the Israelite prophets emerged from the great shadow of form criticism, and Gerhard von Rad is an advocate of this perspective. Von Rad's major concern was the prophetic message which he discussed in connection with the particular historical traditions of each prophet who receives, delivers, and, especially, interprets the message(s) theologically.[31] Along the same line of approach, we have Ronald E. Clements, who extends his scope of interest to include the relationship of the prophets with the covenant tradition. In his later research, he also explores the issue of how the Weberian theory of charisma is related to biblical prophecy, particularly in the realm of prophetic leadership.[32]

Along with the tradition-historical line, we have, for example, Johannes Lindblom,[33] Joseph Blenkinsopp,[34] Alexander Rofé,[35] and Benjamin Uffenheimer[36] in

---

[31] Ronald E. Clements, *Old Testament Interpretation*, 70-71; Gerhard von Rad, *The Message of the Prophets* (trans. D. M. G. Stalker; New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 264-70.

[32] Clements, "Max Weber," 89-108.

[33] For Johannes Lindblom, "ecstasy," being directed by the spirit of Yahweh, is the very characteristic of prophecy. However, the question of prophetic succession is not among his targets, though he discusses the term בני־הנביאים. See Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel* (rev. ed.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1963).

[34] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *History of Prophecy*.

[35] Alexander Rofé, *The Prophetical Stories: The Narrative about the Prophets in the Hebrew Bible, Their Literary Types and History* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1988), 41-

major discussions of the history of prophecy; Georg Fohrer,[37] Helmer Ringgren,[38] Rainer Albertz,[39] Patrick Miller,[40] and Ziony Zevit[41] in the more recent major studies concerning the history of the religion of Israel; and John Gray,[42] Simon J. DeVries,[43] T. R. Hobbs,[44] Mordechai Cogan,[45] Walter Brueggemann,[46] and Volkmar Fritz,[47] who address the issue

---

48.

[36] Uffenheimer, *Early Prophecy*.

[37] Georg Fohrer, *History of Israelite Religion* (trans. D. E. Green; Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1972); trans. of *Geschichte der Israelitischen Religion* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1968).

[38] Helmer Ringgren, *Israelite Religion* (trans. D. E. Green; BJS; London: SPCK, 1966).

[39] Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period* (trans. J. Bowden; 2 vols.; OTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1994).

[40] Patrick D. Miller, *The Religion of Ancient Israel* (LAI; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2000).

[41] Ziony Zevit, as well as Alexander Rofé, is more interested in the literary genre to which the Elijah and Elisha cycles belong than in the topic of prophetic succession. Both use [the] technical terms, such as *legenda* and *vita*, as labels for the miraculous stories of Elijah and Elisha. See esp. Ziony Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallactic Approaches* (London: Continuum, 2001), 489-92.

[42] John Gray, *I & II Kings* (2[d] fully rev. ed.; OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970).

[43] Simon J. DeVries, *1 Kings* (WBC 12; Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1985).

[44] T. R. Hobbs, *2 Kings* (WBC 13; Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1985).

[45] Mordechai Cogan, *I Kings* (AB 10; New York: Doubleday, 2001).

[46] Walter Brueggemann, *1 & 2 Kings* (SHBC; Macon, Ga.: Smyth and Helwys, 2000).

[47] Volkmar Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings* (trans. Anselm Hagedorn; CC; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2003).

of the Elijah-Elisha succession in commentaries on 1-2 Kings. But none of these review in detail the succession of Elijah by Elisha. More recent researches, in addition, by Susanne Otto[48] and Bernhard Lehnart[49] for example, offer useful analyses and insightful discussions particularly in historical-critical studies. However, a detailed study of this specific prophetic succession reclaims a missing element in modern scholarship.

Some recent studies, nevertheless, have paid particular attention to the relationship between prophets and their society. Robert Wilson, for example, in 1980, addressing an issue raised by Peter L. Berger,[50] highlighted the relationship of the prophets to society and raised the question of their support groups, thus focusing on preservation of a revered leader rather than replacement with new leadership.[51] R. E.

---

[48] Otto, *Jehu, Elia und Elisa: Die Erzählung von der Jehu-Revolution und die Komposition der Elia-Elisa-Erzählungen* (BWAT 248: Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2001); "The Composition of the Elijah-Elisha Stories and the Deuteronomistic History," *JSOT* 27 (2003): 487-508.

[49] Lehnart, *Prophet und König im Nordreich Israel: Studien zur sogenannten vorklassischen Prophetie im Nordreich Israel anhand der Samuel-, Elija- und Elischa-Überlieferungen* (VTSup 96; Leiden, Germany: Brill, 2003).

[50] Berger argued that the prophets can no longer be regarded as "isolated individuals opposed to the established religion of the priesthood," and he thus suggested that Weber's theory of charisma needs a modification based upon contemporary understanding of the prophets that "would de-emphasize [Weber's] non-institutional character [of ancient Israelite prophecy]." But this is a critique of Weber's application; his theory could have used other figures, such as the "judges." The objection raised by him, building on the work of others regarding cultically based prophecy, i.e., prophets were not individuals with a special gift but figures centered in the cult—raises the issue of the social location of prophecy (from pre-kingship to the United Monarchy and the contemporary Kingdoms of Israel and Judah—i.e., up through the end of the independent Northern Kingdom of Israel). For his detailed discussion, see Peter L. Berger, "Charisma and Religious Innovation," 940-50. Note especially the response by Williams ("Social Location"), as noted above, n. 2.

[51] Wilson, *Prophecy and Society*, 192-203.

Clements, however, in 1997, redirected attention to the question of how the Weberian theory of charisma is related to biblical prophecy, particularly in the realm of prophetic leadership and its effectiveness.[52] But his special interest was "the nature and contribution of prophecy to the development of ancient Israel, and to the formation of a corpus of prophetic writings in the Bible,"[53] thus differing from the focus of this present project. His work, however, is quite pertinent for its contribution to the question of the formation of the prophetic narratives and writings.

Other scholars have concerned themselves with the "office" of the prophets, as illustrated by the study of James Muilenburg,[54] or with prophetic tradition and its development, as addressed *inter alia* by Sigmund Mowinckel.[55] Picking up on questions raised by Wilson,[56] Thomas Overholt turned to comparison of Elijah and Elisha with traditional shamans.[57] Joseph Blenkinsopp argued that the key element in the Elijah-

---

[52] Clements, "Max Weber," 89-108, esp. 89.

[53] Clements, "Max Weber," 94.

[54] James Muilenburg, "The 'Office' of the Prophet in Ancient Israel," in *The Bible in Modern Scholarship* (ed. J. P. Hyatt; Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1965), 74-97.

[55] Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Spirit and the Word: Prophecy and Tradition in Ancient Israel* (ed. K. C. Hanson; FCBS; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2002), 83-99.

[56] See his overview: Wilson, "Current Issues," 38-46.

[57] See Thomas W. Overholt, "Thoughts on the Use of 'Charisma' in Old Testament Studies," in *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honor of G. W. Ahlström* (ed. W. Boyd Barrick and John R. Spencer; JSOTSup 31; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1984), 287-303; and "Elijah and Elisha in the Context of Israelite Religion," in *Prophets and Paradigms: Essays in Honor of Gene M. Tucker* (ed. Stephen Breck Reid; JSOTSup 226; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 94-111, and note his work on the important parallels in shamanism, in his *Prophecy in Cross-Cultural Perspective: A Sourcebook for Biblical Researchers* (Atlanta: Scholars

Elisha cycles is charismatic leadership,[58] and his discussion is very helpful for this present study. Robert B. Coote led a group that explored Elijah and Elisha in socio-literary perspective.[59] Yet even in a collective volume published in 2007 that dealt with the Elijah-Elisha cycle, we find no attention given to the matter of charisma and institutionalization in the account of the succession of Elijah and Elisha.[60]

The topic of prophetic succession, however, did become a focus in other recent studies. Rodney R. Hutton presents an analysis of the relationship of charisma and institution formation, applying and critiquing Weberian theories of charisma, which, unfortunately, he somewhat misrepresents. His critique is that charisma is "not essentially anti-institutional but in fact is given firm social and cultural definition within an institutional framework,"[61] which is actually in agreement with Weber.[62] Overall, his insightful exploration of Mosaic authority, relating the issue of charisma and institutionalized power, offers an analog to the present study of the issue of direct

---

Press, 1986), esp. 7-10.

[58] Blenkinsopp, *History of Prophecy*, 55-64.

[59] See Robert B. Coote, ed., *Elijah and Elisha in Socioliterary Perspective* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1992).

[60] See Mishael M. Caspi and John T. Greene, eds., *And God Said, "You Are Fired": Elijah and Elisha* (North Richland Hills, Tex.: Bibal Press, 2007).

[61] See Hutton, *Charisma and Authority in Israelite Society* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1994), v.

[62] Note S. N. Eisenstadt's explication of Weber's theory of charisma and his emphasis on Weber's attempt to combine "the charismatic aspects" and "the more ordinary, routine aspects" in his social theory. See Eisenstadt, *Charisma and Institution Building*, ix, and the discussion in Chapter Two.

prophetic succession.[63]

Paul J. Kissling, in seeking to "expose the subtlety of narrative portrayal in the texts," investigates the narratives of Moses, Joshua, Elijah, and Elisha in terms of their reliability as presented in the "final form of the Primary History."[64] His analysis recognizes the parallels between the Moses-Joshua tradition and the Elijah-Elisha tradition. In exploring the reliability of the narratives, Kissling indicates that the storyline of each cycle intertwines with the other, referring back to the previous events and/or interpreting them. Thus he focuses on the formation of the tradition, whereas this present study focuses on the description of the process of succession.

As for the more sociological issues, Christa Schäfer-Lichtenberger presents a helpful understanding of the concept of charisma as it pertains to succession, especially regarding Joshua as successor to Moses and Solomon as successor to David. Based on the narratives about Joshua, her investigation presents Joshua as an ideal—though partial—successor to Moses and discusses the concept of succession in relationship to divine authority. Accordingly, she provides a model for a similar close study of the Elijah-Elisha narratives and a focus on the issue of succession.[65]

A recent publication on the Elijah cycles through "narrative-theological reading" by Havilah Dharamraj is another work that contributes to the present study as the author

---

[63] See Rodney Hutton, *Charisma*, 18-22.

[64] Paul J. Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History: Profiles of Moses, Joshua, Elijah and Elisha* (JSOTSup 224; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 1.

[65] Christa Schäfer-Lichtenberger, *Josua und Salomo: Eine Studie zu Autorität & Legitimität des Nachfolgers im Alten Testament* (VTSup 58; Leiden: Brill, 1995), esp. 24-26.

explores the Elijah stories by reading closely the verses and crucial terms. Dharamraj's research starts with a simple question asking if Elijah is the expected prophet like Moses along with the definition of a "prophet like Moses" and the explication of the methods applied in the research, the writer then investigates the Elijah stories episode by episode, including 1 Kings 16-19, partially 22, 2 Kings 1, and 2 Kings 2. Some crucial theological ideas and discussions are interspersed with explorations of the Elijah stories.[66]

C. Methodology

This study, while drawing on historical research and analysis, is primarily sociological in approach. Part of the primary interest of this study can be detected through Norman K. Gottwald's comment on Elijah and Elisha:

> [The Elijah-Elisha stories] are dubbed "popular" stories because of the apparent powerful impression that the prophets made on a sector of the north Israelite populace. Yet not just anyone "impressed" by these prophets would have told such stories. The point is not that they indiscriminately did marvels, but that they did their wonders by the power of Yahweh against Baal and his followers and on behalf of Yahweh believers in dire need. The bearers of these stories must have been active propagators of Yahweh allegiance and consistent opponents of Baal, who suffered from famine, sickness, poverty, and expropriation of their land, and in whose minds the capacity of the Omri dynasty—and perhaps also of the Jehu dynasty—to reliably prosecute the necessary cult and social praxis was in growing doubt.[67]

Another focus of this study is on the question of charisma and its anticipated institutionalization, most specifically on the question of immediate charismatic succession as opposed to transforming prophetic charisma into institutionalized, even inherited charisma, as in Davidic kingship, or into scribal (bureaucratic) continuity, as in

---

[66] Havilah Dharamraj, *A Prophet Like Moses?: A Narrative-Theological Reading of the Elijah Stories* (PBM; Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2011).

[67] Norman K. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 352.

the model of the Mosaic prophet in Deuteronomy 18. This sociological approach will be delineated in each chapter, as pertinent. Chapter Two in particular discusses the pertinent analyses and critiques of the Weberian model of charisma and institution building that have been raised from various perspectives, mainly dependent upon key figures in sociological theory (e.g., Bendix, Eisenstadt, Shils) or in biblical studies (e.g., Clements, Hutton, Schäfer-Lichtenberger). The ingredients will be (1) Historical analysis of the biblical traditions within their historical/cultural context, with a focus on what the traditions present as to the issue of succession, not what actually happened, i.e., what the stories tell us and what the dynamics of the story are; (2) Social: Use of the sociological theories of Max Weber in particular (especially, as explicated by Bendix and Eisenstadt); (3) Exegetical: Study of the texts themselves with the citation of many modern commentators.

CHAPTER TWO

WEBER'S ANALYSIS OF CHARISMATIC AUTHORITY AND INSTITUTION BUILDING

In Weber's understanding, persons or objects that possess "charisma," which represents an "extraordinary quality," are able to command a "unique, magical power."[1] Weber's description of charismatic authority, one of his "three pure types of legitimate domination," stresses that the "charismatic grounds" depend on "devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him."[2] His own classic definition is:

> The term "charisma" will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. There are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a "leader."[3]

Such an authority can properly be applied to Moses and Elijah, both of whom were recognized by their followers and noted in the tradition as displaying charismatic authority. Charismatic authority, in contrast to legal-rational authority which depends on formally enacted norms, usually in written form, and traditional authority, which rests on a collective sense that should be accepted as legitimate, and is legitimized not by personal characteristics or competence but by the social attribution to an individual. Before entering the discussion of Weber's focus on charismatic authority and the associated institution building, we, however, shall point out some pertinent problems or issues that relate to this present study. One of the issues is that Weber does not see the

---

[1] Bendix, *Max Weber*, 299. Weber (*Sociology of Religion*, 2) defines "charisma" as "a gift that inheres in an object or person simply by virtue of natural endowment."

[2] Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1:215.

[3] Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1:241.

institutionalization of charisma as a necessary outcome, but he does emphasize that charismatic authority normally becomes rationalized and institutionalized. It typically does that because charismatic authority is not self-perpetuating; the qualities are not a matter of heredity. Charismatic authority is unpredictable, uncontrollable, and inherently disruptive by nature. The tendency of such authority, therefore, is to become institutionalized. That is the nature of charismatic authority and, as Weber recognized, we have examples from Israel: the charismatic king, the charismatic priest, and so forth, become routinized. Samuel's appointing his sons to important positions is an attempt to secure some kind of self-arranged succession (1 Sam 8:1-3).[4]

A. Weber's Understanding of Charismatic Authority

As mentioned, according to Weber, there are "three pure types of legitimate domination," which, based upon "the validity of the claims of legitimacy," can be categorized as "legal authority" based on "rational grounds," "traditional authority" based on "an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions," often heredity, and "charismatic authority," dependent upon "devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person."[5]

---

[4] Samuel's sons are mentioned in the beginning of 1 Samuel 8, even though the reason for their mention is vague, as John Mauchline concludes. Roy L. Heller points out, however, that "it was his sons' actions (8:1-3) that had led to the demand by the elders for the very king" and that "Samuel's appointing of his sons as judges and his not rebuking them for their gross iniquity (8:1-3) appears as only the first of many examples that cast a shadow on the moral character of the prophet." Besides, Heller indicates that the moral ambiguity and the ethical condemnation that the texts expressed represent reverberation of Eli and his "worthless" sons onto Samuel and his "worthless" sons. See Mauchline, *1 and 2 Samuel* (NCB; London: Oliphants, 1971), 107; Heller, *Power, Politics, and Prophecy: The Character of Samuel and the Deuteronomistic Evaluation of Prophecy* (LHBOTS 440; New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 46, 112, 148.

[5] Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1:215.

Charismatic authority in its pure form is particularly characterized by its incompatibility with "everyday routine structures."[6] Three major processes that might provide direct succession of charismatic authority are search, revelation, and designation. In the first process, a new charismatic leader is selected after a search "on the basis of criteria of the qualities which will fit him for the position of authority."[7] In Tibet, the selection of a new Dalai Lama consists of a search based upon this process. We can also find in the Hebrew Bible instances such as Samuel's selection of Saul as the first king of Israel by lot, a process that is presumably divinely controlled (1 Sam 10:20-21). The difference between the latter and the former lies in the divine revelation. Samuel's selection is directed by divine guidance, and the result has to be confirmed by divine approval. Thus we find the criteria of revelation "manifested in oracles, lots, divine judgments, or other techniques of selection"[8] in deciding the successor in charismatic leadership. Similarly, in early Israel "judges" (שפטים), temporary war leaders in times of turmoil, were designated by divine manifestations directly to such individuals.[9] Elisha's

---

[6] Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1:246.

[7] Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1:246.

[8] Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1:247.

[9] Worth quoting here is Abraham Malamat's list of traits that fits well with Weber's definition of charismatic authority applied to ancient Israel and that shows why the "deliverer-judges" of the book of Judges have charismatic authority. (1) "A prerequisite for the maturing of the charismatic attribute is a situation of major crisis, above all one induced by an infringement upon national and territorial integrity, in other words, subjugation by an enemy. (2) "The charismatic trait involves direct contact with transcendental powers and identification with the symbols held most sacred by a people. In Israel such experiences were realized in the intimate relationship of the charismatic personage with God, expressed in religious revelations and in [רוח יהוה] with which the hero has come to be associated, by himself and by the people," e.g., רוח יהוה with Othniel

succession to Elijah largely follows this type of solution. Elijah, while encountering Yahweh, was informed of his successor and instructed to anoint him לנביא תחתיך ("as prophet in place of you"; 1 Kgs 19:16). Afterwards, legitimacy has to be verified through some act of designation, as Elijah acknowledged Elisha as his successor through the symbolic act of throwing his mantle over him (1 Kgs 19:19), though ultimately God's direct designation was necessary (2 Kgs 1:10).

By way of example, the priesthood became institutionalized by heredity and other requirements, where the prophet has a call. Weber's comment serves as a clear divider between the prophets and the priests in terms of God's designation or the personal call:

> For our purposes here, the personal call is the decisive element distinguishing the prophet from the priest. The latter lays claim to authority by virtue of his service in a sacred tradition, while the prophet's claim is based on personal revelation and charisma. . . . The priest, in clear contrast, dispenses salvation by virtue of his office. Even in cases in which personal charisma may be involved, it is the hierarchical office that confers legitimate authority upon the priest as a member of a corporate enterprise of salvation.[10]

(Judg 3:10), Gideon (6:34), Jephthah (11:29), Samson (13:25; 14:6, 9; 15:14). (3) "Sometimes the divine contact required public signs and acknowledgement prior to the act of deliverance, to affirm the authority of the charismatic person both in his own eyes and in the consciousness of the people." (4) "The authority bestowed upon the charismatic leader is characteristically spontaneous. The judges were appointed for their task *ad hoc*, and their nomination was specifically personal and consequently non-hereditary or non-transferable. (5) "The authority of charismatic leadership, by nature, is not dependent on social class or status, nor on age-group or sex. This is attested to by such figures as Jephthah, who was of dubious descent, the "lad" Gideon, who was the youngest of his family, and Deborah, the judge and prophetess." (6) "The rise and activity of charismatic leaders are not necessarily linked to important religious or civil centers." (7) "Finally, the specific relationship between the charismatic leader and the people, which is not based upon formal rules or administrative organization, and certainly not on coercion; rather, it rests upon emotion, the personal reverence toward the charismatic individual on the part of his devotees." See Malamat, "Charismatic Leadership," 161-63.

[10] Weber, *Sociology of Religion*, 46-47.

Weber continues his analysis on the difference in terms of the function of the prophet:

> But the prophet, like the magician, exerts his power simply by virtue of his personal gifts. Unlike the magician, however, the prophet claims definite revelations, and the core of his mission is doctrine or commandment, not magic. Outwardly, at least, the distinction is fluid, for the magician is frequently a knowledgeable expert in divination, and sometimes in this alone. At this stage, revelation functions continuously as oracle or dream interpretation.[11]

Furthermore, magical acts are part of the authentication of charismatic authority, as with Moses, Elijah, and Elisha.[12]

B. Critiques of Weber's Understanding of Charismatic Authority

In order to get a better picture of Weber's theory of charismatic authority and how it operates, we need to consider some critiques of Weber's sociological analysis.[13]

1. Reinhard Bendix

The sociologist Reinhard Bendix argues that Weber's analysis of charisma and institution building could be improved by distinguishing "domination as a result of charismatic leadership" from domination through "charismatic authority."[14] In regard to "charismatic leadership" Bendix stresses the difference between his own analysis and Weber's by pointing out that "Weber saw legal and traditional domination as *permanent* structures" that "are not well adapted to the satisfaction of needs that are out of the

---

[11] Weber, *Sociology of Religion*, 47. In Weber's comment (*Ancient Judaism*, 108-9), Moses, Elijah, and Elisha are contrasted with magicians.

[12] Weber, *Sociology of Religion*, 47.

[13] Peter Berger's "Charisma and Religious Innovation," as mentioned in Chapter One, represents a critique not of Weber's theory but of his use of Israelite prophecy as a primary example. See the discussion in Chapter Four.

[14] Bendix, *Max Weber*, 298. Note that the three methods developed to address the issue of succession, as discussed above in Chapter One, relate to the category of "charismatic leadership."

ordinary," whereas "in times of trouble the 'natural' leader is neither the official nor the master whose authority is based on the sanctity of tradition, but the man who is believed to possess extraordinary gifts of body and mind."[15] As for "charismatic authority," he stresses that, in contrast to the unstable domination on the basis of "charismatic leadership," "charismatic authority" comes from what most interests the disciples and retainers, "who wish to appropriate the leader's powers of control, determine the rules of succession and recruitment, and monopolize the economic opportunities that the leader's influence has made available."[16] Consequently, we must keep in mind that direct charismatic succession is one of the decisive elements in distinguishing "charismatic leadership" from the more routinized "charismatic authority.

Bendix's modification of Weber's theory of charisma is helpful for the topic of charismatic succession by reference to his differentiation between "charismatic leadership" and "charismatic authority." One of the major differences between "charismatic leadership" and "charismatic authority" lies in that charisma, though a destabilizing influence on other forms of domination, is itself unstable, as "the exercise of power is bound up with a concrete person and his distinctive qualities" (as we will see below in the discussions of Elijah with his נער in 2 Kings 18 and 19, of Elijah and Elisha in 2 Kings 2, and of Elisha with Gehazi in 2 Kings 4 and 5), and the distinctive qualities

---

[15] Bendix, *Max Weber*, 299.

[16] Bendix, *Max Weber*, 308. Regarding "disciples" and "retainers," note that Bendix (*Max Weber*, 300) also indicates that the occurrence of "charismatic leadership" is especially associated with emergencies, which exhibit "a collective excitement through which masses of people respond to some extraordinary experience and by virtue of which they surrender themselves to a heroic leader." In analyzing "charismatic leadership," therefore, we cannot ignore the crucial elements of "collective excitement" and a "heroic leader."

may be routinized in that "charisma may be transmitted to the members of a family or become the attribute of an office or institution regardless of the persons involved,"[17] i.e., the charismatic leadership becomes routinized as "charismatic" authority. This "charismatic authority" is characterized by "impersonal charisma" attributed to families "in the belief that this extraordinary quality has been transmitted through blood ties,"[18] i.e., heredity. Aristocracy is a consequence of "charismatic authority" that does not focus on the extraordinary qualities of an individual; it cares mostly about heredity. Obviously, prophetic succession in the Old Testament—the case of Elijah and Elisha—belongs to the category "charismatic leadership" rather than "charismatic authority."[19] For a ruling family based on the "charismatic authority," according to Bendix, succession becomes the great problem of continuity, whereas "the personal qualification of the ruler," as we see in the case of Elijah and Elisha, "is by comparison secondary."[20]

Bendix, in the conclusion of his discussion of Weber's theory in terms of charismatic leadership and domination, offers some theoretical perspectives that give us a

---

[17] Bendix, *Max Weber*, 307, 308.

[18] Bendix, *Max Weber*, 309.

[19] Bendix (*Max Weber*, 309) indicates that familial charisma, such as developed in aristocracy, "has generic problems of its own, especially in regard to succession," mainly because the charisma of a family fails to lead to a selection of an unequivocal successor. Bendix further notes that "familial charisma may lead to wild palace intrigues." A good example is Adonijah's claim, as the oldest living son, to be the successor to David, but he lost out to his younger half-brother Solomon, as (allegedly) so designated by David himself (1 Kings 1), illustrating Bendix's observation of potential problems when "palace intrigues . . . particularly where polygamy is practiced and the wives' struggle for the future of their children is added to the ruler's interest in eliminating rival contenders." In contrast, we do not see a similar case in the prophetic succession of Elijah, with no attested family, by Elisha, selected by divine instruction and divine confirmation.

[20] Bendix, *Max Weber*, 312.

clearer picture of his critique of Weber's theory. He reminds us that the sequence of Weber's discussion "begins by focusing attention on a basic relationship between ruler and ruled: the charismatic prophet or war leader and his disciples or followers."[21] The starting sequence, as Bendix points out, prepares us to explore the relationship between the charismatic leaders, such as Moses and Elijah, and their associated attendants, such as Joshua and Elisha, who succeeded them. In addition, Weber gave considerable attention to the development of "various manifestations of charisma,"[22] which provides us some elements for the major focus of this study. Weber's analysis of domination starts with the concept of charisma instead of the comparative evidence; therefore, Bendix underlines this point "because this procedure, which starts with an ahistorical concept and then discusses the depersonalization of charisma, tends to give the impression of a unilinear devolution or deterioration."[23] In other words, Bendix explains that it would appear strange "if a scholar who subjected the idea of progress to a sophisticated critique forgot his own strictures by adopting the view that history consists of the routinization of genuine charisma" merely because the impression "results from an artifact of exposition."[24] Bendix's conclusion, in short, is that "no prophet," according to Weber, "can completely extricate himself from the involvement with magical acts by which he 'proves' his mission, while the priests for their part cannot permit institutionalization to

---

[21] Bendix, *Max Weber*, 325.

[22] Bendix, *Max Weber*, 325.

[23] Bendix, *Max Weber*, 325.

[24] Bendix, *Max Weber*, 325-26.

undermine their charismatic mission without losing their authority over the laity."[25] Bendix's analysis and critique guide this present study to focus more on "charismatic leadership" in contrast not only to "charismatic authority" but also to "priestly institutionalization," drawing on Weber's ideas and Bendix's modification.

In a study published in 1986, twenty-six years after his major discussion of Weber's ideas, Bendix discusses the widespread use of the epithet, "charismatic," being applied to "nearly every leader with marked popular appeal."[26] Bendix notes the question of the appropriateness of using the term "charismatic" of contemporary political leaders that was raised by Karl Loewenstein, who questions whether "charisma" can properly be used except for "those areas of the world in which a popular belief in supernatural powers is still widespread."[27] At the same time, Bendix notes that for Edward Shils there is "a charismatic element in all societies," drawing upon Weber's distinction between the disruptive or innovative effect of charisma and the continuous and routine character of tradition or the legal order."[28]

Bendix agrees with Shils that "Weber himself did not confine his use of the term to magical or religious beliefs, and he analyzed the institutionalization of charisma

---

[25] Bendix, *Max Weber*, 327.

[26] Reinhard Bendix, "Reflections on Charismatic Leadership," in *Charisma, History, and Social Structure* (ed. Ronald M. Glassman and William H. Swaton, Jr.; CS 58; New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 17-25, 206-7.

[27] Bendix ("Charismatic Leadership," 17) refers to Loewenstein's 1966 essay, 74-85.

[28] Bendix ("Charismatic Leadership," 17) cites Edward Shils's 1965 study that, in revised form, constitutes Chapter 6 in Shils, *The Constitution of Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 119-42.

through kinship, heredity, and office. But he also believed that the opportunities for genuine charisma had diminished in the course of an increasing rationalization and bureaucratization of Western society."[29] It is this last point that Shils disputes, but this issue in not pertinent to the study of the Elijah-Elisha succession, so we pursue it no further, noting only the observation that "[c]harisma has necessarily a protean character, since it may become a focus of belief whenever ultimate concerns are given an authoritative ordering."[30]

What is of particular interest, as Bendix introduces his study of the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru and Kim Il-Song, is his question as to "How can the loyalties of a personal following be transferred to the institutions of government ("routinized in Weber's terminology)?," for "without such transfer, governmental stability is not assured."[31]

These matters direct Bendix's attention to a restatement of Weber's original formulation. And at this point Bendix returns to his clarification of Weber by commenting on "charismatic leadership."[32] Bendix identified "[f]ive specifications [that] are added to Weber's basic definition of charisma," summarizing the first three specifications and quoting Weber verbatim for specifications four and five.[33]

(1) "'[C]harisma' is probably the greatest revolutionary power in periods of

---

[29] Bendix, "Charismatic Leadership," 17-18.

[30] Bendix ("Charismatic Leadership," 18) is again referring to Shils's 1965 study.

[31] Bendix, "Charismatic Leadership," 18.

[32] Bendix, "Charismatic Leadership," 19.

[33] Bendix, "Charismatic Leadership," 19-20.

established tradition."

(2) "[I]t typically neglects considerations of economic efficiency and rationality."

(3) "[T]he charismatic leader and his followers constitute a congregation (*Gemeinde*); he has no officials assisting him, but rather disciples or confidants [apprentices] who have no career or qualifications in the bureaucratic sense—and no privileges. They are personally called by their leader . . . and may be summarily dismissed whenever he judges that they have failed his trust in them."

(4) "It is *recognition* on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma. This is freely given and guaranteed by what is held to be a "sign" or proof (*Bewährung*), originally always a miracle, and consists in devotion to the corresponding revelation, hero worship, or absolute trust in the leader. But where charisma is genuine, it is not this which is the basis of legitimacy. This basis lies rather in the conception that it is the *duty* of those who have been called to a charismatic mission to recognize its quality and to act accordingly. Psychologically this "recognition" is a matter of complete personal devotion to the possessor of the quality, arising out of enthusiasm, or of despair and hope. No prophet has ever regarded his quality as dependent on the attitudes of the masses toward him. No elective king or military leader has ever treated those who have resisted him or tried to ignore him otherwise than as delinquent in duty."

(5) "If proof of his charismatic qualifications fails him for long, the leader endowed with charisma tends to think his god or his magical or heroic powers have deserted him. If he is for long unsuccessful, above all *if his leadership fails to benefit his followers,* it is likely that his charismatic authority will disappear. This is the genuine charismatic meaning of the phrase 'by the grace of God (*Gottesgnadentum*).'"[34]

And these qualities bring us back to the problem of direct succession.

2. Edward Shils:

Edward Shils is a frequently cited critic of Weber's understanding of charismatic authority, whose comments feature prominently in the work of the biblical scholar, Rodney Hutton, mentioned in Chapter One, and in the extensive survey by the sociologist,

[34] Bendix cites Weber, 1978a, 241.

S. N. Eisenstadt, discussed below.[35] Shils does not mention the refinement offered by R. Bendix, discussed above, who found it useful to differentiate domination associated with charismatic leadership as opposed to domination associated with charismatic authority. As noted, charismatic leadership is more applicable to figures such as Elijah and Elisha who take initiative but who lack power.

For Shils, one primary focus of his analysis is the reformulation of "Weber's theme of the 'routinization of charisma' into the dispersion and attenuation of charisma," to which he subsequently added "a temporal category which refers to the transiency and duration of charisma," drawing heavily on his studies of political populism and his "attribution of charismatic qualities to the mass of the population."[36] His differentiation from Weber does not have to do with the routinization of charisma in itself, but with the ways in which the routinization plays out. Shils defines charisma in Weberian fashion, while emphasizing his differences in regard to the outcome of charismatic routinization:

> Charisma, then, is the quality which is imputed to persons, actions, roles, institutions, symbols and material objects because of their presumed connection with "ultimate," "fundamental," "vital," order determining powers. This presumed connection with the ultimately "serious" elements in the universe and in human life is seen as a quality or a state of being, manifested in the hearing or demeanor and in the actions of individual persons in intense and concentrated form in particular institutions, roles, and individuals—or strata of individuals. It can also be perceived as existing in attenuated and dispersed form.[37]

More particularly, Shils clarifies his understanding of charismatic authority:

---

[35] Shils, *Constitution of Society*, reprints a number of his studies pertinent to the issue of charisma in chapters 5-7, including a revised form of his article, "Charisma, Order, and Society," *ASR* 30 (1965), 199-213.

[36] Shils, *Constitution*, xviii.

[37] Shils, *Constitution,* 110.

> Those persons who possess an intense subjective feeling of their own charismatic quality, and who have it imputed to them by others, we will call charismatic persons. In the charismatic persons it is "directly" experienced; in the others it is experienced only in "mediated" form through intensely and concentratedly charismatic persons or institutions. The authority exercised by these individuals who "experience" charisma directly, of all others in the society who experience it only in mediated form, we will call charismatic authority.[38]

In this context, however, we want to revert to Bendix's clarification of what is only implicit in Weber's own writings, viz., distinguishing "domination as a result of charismatic leadership . . . from domination as a result of charismatic authority." Charismatic leadership relates to "extraordinary" leadership: "the extraordinary qualities of a person and the identification of followers with that person."[39]

An illustration of the difference between the domination of charismatic leadership and the domination of charismatic authority from within the Elijah-Elisha tradition would be the success of Elijah at Mt. Carmel in the contest with the prophets of Baal (and Asherah) which, in the narrative, allowed Elijah to exercise leadership and slay the prophets of Baal, only to flee shortly thereafter from the wrath of the authority figure, Queen Jezebel (1 Kings 18-19), and the domination of charismatic authority by the military leader, Jehu, who, having been charismatically designated as the successor king of Israel, is responsible for the killing of King Joram of Israel and King Ahaziah of Judah, the Queen-mother, Jezebel, and seventy descendants of the late King Ahab of Israel, and then ruling, i.e., dominating, over Israel for twenty-eight years (2 Kings 9-10).

For Rodney Hutton, Shils offers "[t]he most insightful critique of Weber's theory of domination . . . by insisting that charisma as such not only disrupts social order but,

---

[38] Shils, *Constitution*, 111.

[39] Bendix, *Max Weber,* 299, discussed above.

more importantly, maintains or conserves it."[40] (Indeed, Elijah and Elisha are presented as sustaining the "proper" order of "Yahweh alone" as opposed to the more inclusive religious policies of the regime of Ahab.)

An additional point made by Shils that is taken up in the critique of Weber's understanding of charisma and institutionalization presented by Eisenstadt, discussed below, is an emphasis on charismatic authority that buttresses "central" concerns of the community and is not restricted to being disruptive, an observation that is complicated by the realization that societies typically have multiple centers which can be competitive with each other. As Shils insists, it is not just a matter of central vs. peripheral.

3. S. N. Eisenstadt

Shmuel N. Eisenstadt's extensive introduction to Max Weber's *On Charisma and Institution Building: Selected Papers*,[41] presents an enthusiastic yet critical description and evaluation of Weber's understanding of charisma in relationship to institution building that accompanied the reprinting of most of Weber's writings specifically related to the question of charisma and institution building. He also states that his essay benefitted from comments by Edward Shils,[42] whom he also frequently cites in his essay. His treatment is not restricted to the importance of the charismatic stimulus in institution building but concentrates especially on the intricacies of institution building and the interplay of charismatic and ordinary contributions to that process. As such Eisenstadt

---

[40] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authority,* 64, who cites an article by Shils that subsequently appeared in revised form in Shils, *Constitution*, 119-42.

[41] The volume (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1968), is edited and with an introduction (ix-lvi) by S. N. Eisenstadt.

[42] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, viii.

goes well beyond the boundaries of the present study and the report on Eisenstadt is accordingly restricted.

At the very beginning of his essay, Eisenstadt states that:

> The central themes of this essay are that the concept of charisma as developed by Weber and its possible further extensions are of crucial importance for understanding of the processes of institution building; that this concept was already implicit—and to some extent even explicit—in Weber's own writings; and that the explication of the relations between charisma and institution building is perhaps the most important challenge which Weber's own work poses for modern sociology. In much of existing sociological literature it has been assumed that a deep chasm exists between the charismatic aspects and the more ordinary, routine aspects of social organization and the organized, continuous life of social institutions—and that Weber himself stressed this dichotomy. It seems to me, however, that this is a mistaken view and that the best clue to understanding Weber's work . . . lies in the attempt to combine the two and to analyze how they are continuously interrelated in the fabric of social life and in the processes of social change.[43]

So Eisenstadt's central critique is that Weber did not develop his thesis about charisma and institution building as thoroughly as he should have.

Eisenstadt argues that although "sociological analysis has reached a stage [as of 1968] in which, while building on Weber it may soon go beyond him—if not in the richness of details, then at least in analytical and conceptual elaboration."[44] But Weber's ideas themselves need to be developed further. So Eisenstadt's goal is explication and development, i.e., an affirming critique:

> [W]e shall concentrate on the exposition of some of the main substantive problems implied in his analysis, and the purpose both of the selections from Weber's work included here and of this brief introduction is to attempt to present and analyze some of these problems.[45]

---

[43] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, ix.

[44] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xii-xiii.

[45] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xiii.

For Eisenstadt, Weber's special gift was his ability "to analyze the most salient of the common characteristics and problems of different spheres of human endeavor, and to explore the conditions of emergence, continuity, change, and stagnation of different types of social organization and cultural creativity" as he applied "broad analytical categories" to explicate specific societies and institutions. It is this combination that "constitute[s] "the uniqueness and strength of his work."[46]

Of central importance for Weber's focus on the importance of creativity and freedom is his concept of charisma, which goes far beyond the political sphere.[47] Charisma may be defined as "a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional qualities,"[48] but the larger concern is "social or political systems based on charismatic legitimation."[49] He notes that:

> Charismatic groups [note the prophetic bands] do not have elaborate systems of roles, rules, and procedures to guide the performance of administrative functions. They disdain "everyday economizing," the attainment of a regular income by continuous economic activity devoted to this end.[50]

Eisenstadt emphasizes, however, that although charisma may seem to be "the antithesis of routine,"[51] and may entail "strong tendencies toward the destruction and

---

[46] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xiv.

[47] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xviii.

[48] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xviii.

[49] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xviii-xix.

[50] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xix.

[51] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xix.

decomposition of institutions,"[52] yet "charismatic personalities or collectivities may be the bearers of great cultural social innovations and creativity, religious, political, or economic."[53] Charisma has two faces:

> [C]harismatic predispositions may arise from the darkest recesses and excesses of the human soul, from its utter depravity and irresponsibility of its most intensive antinomian tendencies; while, on the other hand, charisma is the source of the fullest creative power and internal responsibility of the human personality. . . . While analytically this distinction between "organized" (traditional, legal, or bureaucratic) routine and charisma is sharp, this certainly does not imply total dichotomy between concrete situations. . . . [T]his dichotomy between orderly institutional life and the destructive or the innovative and constructive potentials of charismatic activities could become sharply articulated. . . . Throughout his discussion of charisma Weber emphasizes not so much the charismatic leader, but the charismatic group or band, be it the religious sect or the followers of a new political leader. *The first meeting point between the charismatic predisposition toward the destruction of institutions and the exigencies of orderly social organization is demonstrated in the necessity of the charismatic leader or group to assure some continuity for this very group, that is, to assure the succession of its leadership and the continuity of its organization. Such transformation of a great charismatic upsurge and vision into some more continuous social organization and institutional framework constitutes the first step in the routinization of charisma* (*emphasis* added).[54]

---

[52] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xix.

[53] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xx.

[54] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xx-xxi. This point is particularly pertinent to the connection of Samuel and Elisha with different prophetic bands, and the putative role of the bands in the development of the Elijah-Elisha traditions discussed in Chapter Four, but does not fit as well with the Elijah-Elisha succession as unique. It also helps to clarify that the charismatic founding of an institution, as in the charismatic founding of kingships that would become hereditary, if only briefly (Saul [Samuel, who also deposed Saul], David [Samuel], Jeroboam [Ahijah of Shiloh, who also deposed Jeroboam], Jehu [Elisha]; see the discussion in Chapter Three]).

At this point, Eisenstadt shifts to the special issue of "'charisma of the office,' . . . of kinship, . . . of hereditary charisma, . . . or of 'constant charisma,'" a term borrowed from Shils.[55] Eisenstadt adds:

> As is well known, these concepts, especially that of the charisma of the office, have been used by Weber to denote the process through which *the charismatic characteristics are transferred from the unique personality or the unstructured group to orderly institutional reality* (*emphasis* added).[56]

The connection of charisma and institutionalization is fully explicit when Eisenstadt indicates that:

> *[T]he test of any great charismatic leader lies not only in his ability to create a single event or great movement, but also in his ability to leave a continuous impact on an institutional structure—to transform any given institutional setting by infusing into it some of his charismatic vision, by investing the regular, orderly offices, or aspects of social organization, with some of his charismatic qualities and aura.* Thus here the dichotomy between the charismatic qualities and orderly regular routine of social organization seems to be obliterated (*emphasis* added).[57]

One criticism of Weber that Eisnstadt offers is that Weber takes for granted the "appeal of the charismatic," the question or conditions that lead to the development or acceptance of charismatic leadership, such as "extreme situations of social change and disturbances," i.e., stress or anomie.[58]

Eisenstadt, however, stresses that the appeal of charisma cannot be restricted to situations of anomie and refers to the work of Shils to that effect.[59] He states that

---

[55] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxi.

[56] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxi.

[57] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxi.

[58] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxiii.

[59] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxv.

charisma can also be "a constituent element of any orderly social life," as "[t]he search for meaning, consistency, and order is not always something extraordinary."[60] He adds that "some predisposition to the acceptance of charismatic appeals and some quest for meaning and order exits in most social situations,"[61] all of which contributes to the importance of charismatic authority. It is not a matter of central vs. peripheral social location:

> The preceding analysis of the processes of institutionalization of the charismatic and of the nature of the situations in which people are especially sensitized to the appeal of the charismatic has mainly been focused on more dispersed, microsocietal situations. And yet the most common emphasis in Weber's own work . . . was that the charismatic tends to become more fully embedded in more central societal locations and in the broader macrosocietal frameworks and that these frameworks tend to be directed by the charismatic symbols.[62]

Eisenstadt is convinced that Shils has provided a very important development in the understanding of the institutionalization of charisma in arguing for a "center" as "the structural locus of the macrosocietal institutionalization of charisma."[63] Eisenstadt quotes Shils to the effect that this "center" is "a phenomenon of the realm of values and beliefs . . . which govern the society." It is "ultimate and irreducible" and it "is felt to be such by many who cannot give explicit articulation to its irreducibility. The central zone

---

[60] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxvi.

[61] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxix.

[62] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxix.

[63] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxix.

partakes of the nature of the sacred"; it is, in a sense, an "'official' religion," even if the society does not so understand it.[64]

From this perspective, the "close relation between the charismatic and the center is rooted in the fact that both are concerned with the maintenance of order and with the provision of some meaningful symbolic and institutional order."[65] But then there may be multiple centers in a society that "embody . . . charismatic orientation . . . political, cultural, religious or ideological, and other centers."[66] What does seem clear is that "the process of routinization of charisma and the charismatic qualities may differ greatly among different institutional spheres,"[67] a matter that "has been dealt with by Weber only indirectly, by way of illustration or by analysis of some aspects of charismatic leadership in the different spheres of social life."[68]

> (Weber concentrated on) the religious and political spheres, and has presented there some of the obvious differences between the charismatic qualities or orientation in these two spheres. Thus the prophet or the mystagogue, different as they are in their basic orientations, have to be able especially to organize purely symbolic-emotive spheres and to restructure the emotional components of personality, while the political leader has to exhibit different qualities or orientations, in combining a symbolic ordering of the social stability with more detailed daily problems of administration.[69]

---

[64] Eisenstadt is here citing from Edward Shils, "Centre and Periphery," in *The Logic of Personal Knowledge: Essays Presented to Michael Polanyi* (London: Rutledge & Kegan Paul, 1961), 117-31. This study is reprinted in revised form in Shils, *Constitution*, 93-109.

[65] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxx.

[66] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxx.

[67] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxxi.

[68] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxxi.

[69] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxxi.

In Eisenstadt's judgment, "the relation between the center or centers and the periphery . . . has not . . . been fully explained (by Weber) in its relation to the political and religious fields. In a way, Weber took it for granted."[70] Another neglected area for Weber, as identified by Eisenstadt, is "the (implied) distinction between the ordinary and the charismatic."[71] This is an important issue because "the ordinary and the charismatic are continuously interwoven in the process of institution building."[72] As Eisenstadt elaborates:

> [I]n the crystallization of institutional frameworks a crucial part is played by those [charismatic] people who evince a special capacity to set up broad orientations, to propound new norms, and to articulate new goals. In other words, institution building is based not only on the direct or indirect exchange of various institutional resources for the implementation of their discrete, instrumental goals but in addition also necessarily includes interaction between, on the one hand, those individuals or groups who are able to articulate varied collective goals and crystallize acceptable norms and, on the other, those individuals, groups, or strata that are willing to accept such regulations and norms.[73]

In terms of the present study, the prior question to that of institution building is the special leadership of the charismatic person who displays extraordinary qualities judged to be bestowed by divine or other supernatural powers, which are thereby inherently unpredictable and unstable in terms of continuity, but which leadership benefits the group or society by engaging in aspects of institution building as opposed to

---

[70] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxxiii.

[71] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxxiv.

[72] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxxviii.

[73] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xxxix.

the very difficult task of self-reproduction. Eisenstadt, whose focus is on the elements of institution building and the processes of social change, comments:

> [A] crucial aspect of the charismatic personality or group is not only the possession of some extraordinary exhilarating qualities, but also the ability through these qualities, to reorder and reorganize both the symbolic and cognitive order which is potentially inherent in such orientations and goals and the institutional order in which these orientations become embodied, and that the process of routinization of charisma is focused around the ability to combine the reordering of these two spheres of human existence and of social life.[74]

Eisenstadt recognizes, shifting to economic issues, that:

> We know as yet very little either about conditions of development of such entrepreneurial, charismatic people, of their psychological and behavioral attributes, and about the conditions under which they may be capable of implementing their vision.[75]

The production of charismatic prophetic leaders in ancient Israel was just as difficult and enigmatic; it required divine initiative, and for ancient Israel there seems to be a significant differentiation between the charismatic leadership of persons such as the prophets and the institutional leadership by such persons as established kings and priests.

4. Julien Freund

Julien Freund's comment that "charisma presupposes a crowd of followers" in connection with "collective concepts, such as crowd or nation,"[76] particularly reminds us of the relation between Elisha, the bearer of charisma, and the "sons of the prophets" (2 Kgs 4:42-44; 6:1-7). The acquirement of a "crowd of followers" depends upon the "meaningful relationships between its individual members and the leader who commands

---

[74] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xl.

[75] Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xl.

[76] Freund, *Max Weber*, 114.

their devotion."[77] However, Weber's sociology, according to Freund, "does not assert that the relation between masses and charisma is a necessary one, but only an adequate one" through "the general rules of experience."[78]

Freund then leads us into the religious types related to charismatic figures, of which three are representative: sorcerer, priest, and prophet. Freund has analyzed the distinction between the sorcerer and the priest, for which Weber offered no clues. After his analysis, he considers the "prophet," who, according to Weber, is "the absolutely personal bearer of a charisma who in virtue of his mission announces a religious doctrine or a divine command."[79] Whatever he announces or delivers—whether "an ancient revelation, or one regarded as ancient, in a new manner, or . . . an entirely new message"—does not matter at all; what matters is that "he may be the founder of a religion or a reformer."[80] The "determining factor" for this lies not in "his action" which "should give rise to a new community or [in] . . . his disciples" who "should be personally attached to him, or to his teaching alone" but in his "personal vocation."[81] Elijah, another bearer of charisma, is a model of this type in the fact that his "personal vocation" determines his role as a reformer especially when he challenged the 450 Baal prophets by repairing the altar of Yahweh with twelve stones, which number is representative of the tribes of the sons of Jacob (1 Kgs 19:30-31).

---

[77] Freund, *Max Weber*, 114.

[78] Freund, *Max Weber*, 139-40.

[79] Freund, *Max Weber*, 195.

[80] Freund, *Max Weber*, 195.

[81] Freund, *Max Weber*, 195.

Freund continues the distinction between the priest and the prophet by a common fact that the former "is at the service of a sacred tradition" while the latter "is the man with a personal revelation, who claims authority in virtue of a new law."[82] Furthermore, when it comes to charisma, he points out that "the prophet acts in a purely charismatic fashion . . . in virtue of a personal gift."[83] Above all, he concludes his comment with "one feature that is absolutely fundamental: the prophet promotes his idea for its own sake, and never against remuneration of any kind. His activity is wholly gratuitous."[84]

As for the continuity of charisma, or, in other words, the succession of charismatic authority, Freund sees in it a "source of difficulties," such as, "For how is such an authority to be kept in being once the charismatic leader has disappeared?"[85] Freund suggests that succession is "the great problem of charismatic authority":

> For how is the system to be perpetuated after the death of the leader since the charisma can neither be learned nor taught, but is aroused and experienced, and since both followers and the leader's staff have a material and ideal stake in having the regime endure? The difficulty lies in the fact that the followers' obedience is pure devotion to the person of the leader and lacks the continuity which makes the strength of tradition and legality.[86]

Notwithstanding the problem and the difficulty he points out, he also leads us to some options for the "great problem of charismatic authority" by employing Weber's examination of the "various alternatives":

---

[82] Freund, *Max Weber*, 195.

[83] Freund, *Max Weber*, 195-96.

[84] Freund, *Max Weber*, 196.

[85] Freund, *Max Weber*, 243-44.

[86] Freund, *Max Weber*, 244.

> One is to discover another bearer of charisma possessing characteristics similar to those of the deceased (as in the case of the Dalai Lama); the consequence of this procedure is to found a tradition. Another is to trust in revelation, oracles, fate, divine judgment or some other irrational criterion; in such cases, the path leads more or less slowly in the direction of legal authority. Or the leader, during his lifetime, himself appoints his successor with or without the approval of his followers. Or again, the appointment is made by the charismatic general staff; this procedure rules our election by majority vote, for, if the notion of charismatic rule is to be upheld, what matters is to find the right man. Or again, if blood is regarded as the determining factor, then the charisma may become hereditary [as in a recent example, Fidel Castro yielding to younger brother, Raul Castro].[87]

What is lacking in Freund's critique is the mention of the shift to rountinization of charismatic authority. We, however, can turn to another critique of Weber to continue the exploration of this current study.

5. Rodney R. Hutton

Rodney R. Hutton (1994) provides a study of the relationship of charisma to ancient Israelite society, probing into Moses, the "judges," kingship, prophecy, the priesthood, and the wisdom tradition. He does not take up the topic of direct prophetic succession, which is the focus of the present study. His begins his analysis of Weber's "charismatic authority" with its dependence on "'extra-ordinary' (*ausseralltäglich*) appeal to the holiness or the heroic or exemplary qualities of a person."[88] Since Weber's

---

[87] Freund, *Max Weber*, 244-45.

[88] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authority*, 3. Note that Rodney Hutton, unlike Bendix, does not differentiate "charismatic authority" from "charismatic leadership" in his analysis of Weber's charisma theory. (Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authority*, 135, n. 78, cites a later article by Bendix but makes no mention of Bendix's extensive discussion in his earlier *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait*). Rodney Hutton cites the influence of Weberian theory on the study of leadership in the early Christian church, as represented by the work of Hans von Campenhausen, "who argued that leadership in the early church resulted from the coalescence of the presbyterial leadership of the Jewish elders [corresponding to Weber's 'traditional' authority], the spirit-empowered free exercise of authority in the Pauline congregations [corresponding to Weber's 'charismatic' authority], and the 'routinization' of this charisma under the impact of the bureaucratic

development of his notions of social organization is based upon the distinction between a "community" (*Gemeinschaft*) and a "society" (*Gesellschaft*) that Ferdinand Tönnies had made previously,[89] Rodney Hutton argues that Weber's charismatic leadership "was an anomaly from the very beginning" in the sense that "Weber was operating with two forms of social organization but with three forms of leadership" and that "there was an almost predetermined correlation of 'rational' authority with 'society' and 'traditional" authority with 'community.'"[90] Rodney Hutton, therefore, suggests that Weber was led to define charismatic leadership in antisocial terms merely because there was no basic social structure for charismatic leadership to fit into.[91] Thus Rodney Hutton's summary[92] that "[c]harisma was the term given to those who, wanting to create *new* structures, neither can nor want to base their authority on recognized social bases of authority," reminds us of the Elijah-Elisha succession, in which Elijah did as he had been instructed by Yahweh in creating "new structures" by symbolically anointing Elisha as his successor (1 Kgs 19:19), although the actual installment of the successor was dependent on divine consent (2 Kgs 2:10-11). In sum, Rodney Hutton argues that "Weber's notion

---

structures of Hellenism [corresponding to Weber's 'legal/rational' authority]." See also von Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1969), esp. 56-85.

[89] Ferdinand Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundbegriffe der reinen Soziologie* (1887; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970).

[90] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma*, 3-4. Rodney Hutton fails to recognize Weber's attention to the interplay of charisma with both legal and traditional types of authority in the process of institutionalization. See Eisenstadt, *Max Weber*, xviii-xxii.

[91] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authority*, 4.

[92] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authority*, 4.

of charisma was itself an anomaly within his own system, without a social setting, and therefore was bound to be misconstrued and misused in the ensuing conversation."[93]

Rodney Hutton turns our attention to the "judges" (שׁפטים) (temporary war leaders) for his discussion of Weber's sense of charismatic leadership. He suggests that Abraham Malamat, "who was so optimistic about the equation that he lamented Weber's lack of attention to the judges," offers in his work the best illustration of the assumption relating to the "style of leadership" the "judges" have exhibited.[94] One of Malamat's arguments was that Weber could have identified an "ideal type" of charismatic leadership by serious consideration of the "judges,"[95] as an alternative to the prophet. Furthermore, Rodney Hutton also points out some others, such as Stewart Clegg, Dankwart Rustow, and Bryan Wilson who have not accepted Weber's terminology of domination as an element of charisma in analyzing the leadership of the "judges" of Israel.[96] (But, as noted, Rodney

---

[93] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma*, 5. Rodney Hutton relies very heavily on Shils and basically ignores the critique of Reinhard Bendix. See Bendix, *Max Weber*, 298-328, on "Charismatic Leadership and Domination."

[94] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authority*, 50. Note the discussion of Malamat's study in Chapter One.

[95] Malamat, "Charismatic Leadership," 157.

[96] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authority*, 63. See also Stewart Clegg, *Power, Rule and Domination: A Critical and Empirical Understanding of Power in Sociological Theory and Organizational Life* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), especially in his reluctance to differentiate distinct types of domination. Rodney Hutton also cites Dankwart A. Rustow, *A World of Nations: Problems of Political Modernization* (D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1967), 166-68, 153 [so], for his analysis of "pure charisma," and Bryan R. Wilson, *The Noble Savages: The Primitive Origins of Charisma and Its Contemporary Survival* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 9, for his insistence on the distinctiveness of charisma within the types of leadership.

Hutton does not incorporate Bendix's modification of Weber's theory.)[97]

Rodney Hutton also cites the sociologist E. Shils as representative of "the most insightful critique of Weber's theory of domination."[98] According to Rodney Hutton, Shils insists that

> [T]he charismatic quality of an individual as perceived by others, or himself, lies in what is thought to be his connection with (including possession by or embodiment of) some very central feature of man's existence and the cosmos in which he lives. . . . The centrality is constituted by its formative power in initiating, creating, governing, transforming, maintaining, or destroying what is vital in man's life.[99]

In other words, Shils proposes that the "vital layer" that charismatic attribution always focuses on engages the core of human existence which shows itself in the need for order. Shils understands that the charismatic disposition, symbolic of the disposition of awe and reverence, needs to be aroused by the essence of an ordered cosmos.[100] Such an understanding of charisma leads Shils to detect institutions themselves as charismatic because of the tremendous power condensed in them.[101] In short, when it comes to the "judges" (not the prophets), Rodney Hutton cites several social theorists who do not agree with Weber's theory of domination when it comes to understanding the charismatic leadership of the "judges." But that still leaves Bendix as a more insightful guide.

In reference to prophecy, Rodney Hutton mentions recent studies (as of 1994)

---

[97] Bendix's modification of Weber's theory is not discussed by Rodney Hutton; Rodney Hutton's only reference to Bendix (135, n. 78) deals with another issue.

[98] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authority*, 64.

[99] Shils, "Charisma, Order, and Status," 201.

[100] Shils, "Charisma, Order, and Status," 203-4.

[101] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authority*, 65.

pertaining to the broader social location of intermediation, draws conclusions concerning the interplay of the "charismatic" and "institutional"' dynamics of Israelite prophecy, and sets aside the issue of "cultic prophecy."[102] His focus is, rather, the "social location of intermediaries" and "the interplay of the 'charismatic' and 'institutional' dynamics of Israelite prophecy."[103] He turns in particular to the instance of Elijah's challenging Ahab and Jezebel,[104] and suggests that Weber has offered conflicting evaluations that have confused us about "whether or not the prophets were charismatic leaders," for Weber, in his theory of three ideal types of leadership, clearly regarded the prophets as exemplary bearers of pure charisma.[105]

As Rodney Hutton understands it, Weber tried to convince us that the prophets based their claim to authority on personal revelation and charisma, whereas the priests

---

[102] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authority*, 106. For the "cultic prophecy" related to Rodney Hutton's discussion, see Sigmund Mowinckel, *Psalmenstudien* (Kristiania: Jacob Dybward, 1923), 3:4-29, reprinted as "Cult and Prophecy," in *Prophecy in Israel: Search for an Identity* (ed. D. L. Petersen; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 74-98; A. Haldar, *Associations of Cult Prophets among the Ancient Semites* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1945); A. R. Johnson, *The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1962); and Jörg Jeremias, *Kultprophetie und Gerichtsverkündigung in der späten Königszeit Israels* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1970). In addition, for a comparison between the priest and the prophet related to charisma, see also the comments of the sociologist, Julien Freund, *Max Weber*, 195, emphasizing Weber's sense of the prophet as "the absolutely personal bearer of a charisma who . . . announces a religious doctrine or a divine command." Note the discussion of Freund, above.

[103] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authority*, 106.

[104] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authorit*, 105. The other initial figure is Amos, who, according to Rodney Hutton, rails against Jeroboam at Bethel. Both figures "have inspired images of what it means to be truly "charismatic."

[105] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authorit*, 106; Max Weber, *Sociology of Religion*, 46.

claimed attention through their service in a sacred tradition; that is, in contrast, the prophets' mission did not come from human agency but instead was seized by force of personality.[106] Rodney Hutton says that Weber considered the prophet to be "the isolated charismatic individual representing God alone," and he also comments that "Weber's desire to anchor capitalism's legal/rational principles in the Judeo-Christian tradition . . . drove him in the opposite direction."[107]

Rodney Hutton concludes his discussion of Weber on the prophets with the suggestion that a closer consideration of the prophetic social function as found in current social-scientific studies "will seek to illustrate the interworking of 'charismatic' and 'institutional' dynamics in prophetic experience,"[108] which is actually rather Weberian. Rodney Hutton's study, however, ignores two basic problems for his discussion of the role of charisma in ancient Israel. First, in regard to Weber's analysis, he seems unaware of the interplay, in Weber, of charismatic authority with the other two categories of authority posited by Weber, as emphasized by Eisenstadt—it is not a simplistic matter of "two" not matching "three"; and second, as discussed at length abve,, he takes no note of the friendly refinement by Bendix in distinguishing domination by charismatic leadership from domination by charismatic authority. It is somewhat disappointing that, he does not discuss the matter of direct charismatic succession, which is the focus of the present study; Elijah and Elisha are mentioned only in passing. Rodney Hutton's study is certainly interesting, but he does not offer any help in the analysis of the Elijah-Elisha

---

[106] Weber, *Sociology of Religion*, 46.

[107] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authorit*, 107.

[108] Rodney Hutton, *Charisma and Authorita*, 107.

succession.[109]

[109] Rodney Hutton mentions Elijah and/or Elisha a few times in his subsequent general study of Israelite prophets, but only in connection with the origins of Hebrew prophecy. He considers these two figures, crucial to the present study, as attested in the "collections of prophetic narratives" under the Deuteronomistic Historian's consideration. He does not discuss prophetic succession. See his *Fortress Introduction to the Prophets* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), 1-15.

CHAPTER THREE

CHARISMA AND INSTITUTION BUILDING IN ANCIENT ISRAEL: A WEBERIAN ANALYSIS

Relationship is a key word in understanding the Hebrew Bible, particularly the network of social webs and interactions intertwined by prominent figures as described within the tradition, including, of course, Israel's god. As applied in this study, particularly in terms of prophetic succession, we cannot ignore "relationship" as one of the key terms in analyzing and interpreting the process of the charismatic succession. Here we are going to review the shamanic tradition for ethnographic parallels, and, in light of that review, we will examine the role of assistants and attendants for charismatic leaders as presented in the Hebrew Bible, giving special attention to the Moses-Joshua succession and to some other examples of the attempts to institutionalize charismatic leadership.

A. Ethnography of Shamanic Succession, Particularly Charismatic Succession

In the study of prophecy in ancient Israel, some scholars have highlighted parallels with shamanism, a world-wide phenomenon that has been studied at first hand by many careful observers and in particular by many trained ethnographers. Shamanism exhibits a wide variety of practices, but it also provides a comparative model for the issue of prophetic succession in ancient Israel. Shamanism was cited in particular by Robert Carroll in connection with the Elijah-Elisha succession, though, as mentioned in Chapter One, his emphasis was on the mosaic model of Deuteronomy 18 and the portrayal of Elijah as a second Moses.[1] More importantly, shamanic parallels play a prominent role in

[1] Robert P. Carroll, "Elijah-Elisha Sagas," 400-415. See also Lester L. Grabbe, *Priests, Prophets, Diviners, Sages*, 148-49.

the comparative studies by Thomas Overholt.[2]

A recent comprehensive example of an ethnographic study of an individual shaman, as well as shamanism is general, is offered by Thomas DuBois.[3] DuBois, who emphasizes that shamanism is a religion rather than religious phenomena, i.e., both "a world phenomenon" and "locally delimited and specific,"[4] offers an extensive report about his immigrant Laotian shaman informant. He suggests that the encounters and/or communications with spirits have become a deciding factor for ordinary persons who turn out to be shamans. In addition to his own research, Dubois also supplies information from other scholars indicating that contact with spirits, visible or visionary, whether the spirits are related to the person in contact or not, is crucial for the person in question to become a shaman.

Thai, a Hmong American from Laos who was DuBois' main informant, was himself a college student and also a *txiv neeb*, i.e., a shaman, during the period of DuBois' research. Thai became a *txiv neeb* at a very young age and, worked on behalf of other Hmong immigrants in America who were continuing to concern themselves with "an unseen but highly influential spirit world."[5] For his clients he traveled "between the visible world of the everyday and a profoundly different and powerful unseen."[6]

---

[2] Thomas Overholt, *Prophecy in Cross-Cultural Perspectives: A Sourcebook for Biblical Researchers* (SBS 17; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), and his *Channels of Prophecy: The Social Dynamics of Prophetic Activity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989).

[3] Thomas A. DuBois, *Shamanism*.

[4] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 5.

[5] Dubois, *Shamanism*, 3.

[6] Dubois, *Shamanism*, 3.

As a *txiv neeb,* Thai's primary task in traveling the spirit world, according to DuBois, involved the following:

> Through a set of rituals that hold psychic and physical dangers for the practitioner, Thai travels that spirit world, pursuing confronting, cajoling, and confounding spirit entities on behalf of his clients and community. Through these journeys, Thai gains information and strategies for curing woes facing his fellow Hmong: sickness, social strains, misfortune. He rescues or recovers fugitive souls that have distanced themselves from their bodies and counters the aggressions of foreign souls that have made incursions on his clients' health or wholeness.[7]

DuBois offers some information about Thai's calling, which he describes as "a supernaturally initiated personal relationship between a living human being and one or more spirit guides."[8] He also refers to a shamanic predisposition or potential:

> The future shaman may possess certain psychic, emotional, or even physical characteristics that create a shamanic predisposition or potential. The future shaman may also undergo a serious illness or near-death experience that marks entry into a shamanic role. Yet quintessentially neither illness nor inherent potential is sufficient if the spirits do not elect to invite the shaman into a relationship. This supernatural contact [is] often experienced as frightening, but intensely alluring and ultimately deeply meaningful.[9]

DuBois then proceeds to mention the importance of the stages involved, namely, "becoming aware of the new role and status," the role that "established shamans play in helping shamans-in-training develop and hone their skills," and "how this process of initiation [is] evaluated and supported by the community which will eventually benefit from the new shaman's activities."[10] In highlighting the matters of predisposition, calling,

---

[7] Dubois, *Shamanism*, 3.

[8] Dubois, *Shamanism*, 56.

[9] Dubois, *Shamanism*, 56.

[10] Dubois, *Shamanism*, 56.

training, and validation, DuBois has outlined some stages that are parallel with stages in the transition from Elijah to Elisha.

Drawing heavily on DuBois as a current comprehensive survey, the shamanic model is presented here in terms of categories that seem particularly relevant to the study of the unique Elijah-Elisha succession as presented in the Book of Kings.

1. Predisposition

DuBois notes that in some cultures "shamanism is passed down intergenerationally within specific family lines."[11] In the case of his informant, Thai, he indicates that "in Thai's clan, a tutelary spirit makes itself available to only one member of the family in a lifetime, so when the shaman dies, the family is anxious to discover a replacement."[12] His mother was a shaman also, but she was a member of another clan, so there was that element of unrecognized heredity.[13]

What Thai himself emphasized, however, was the importance of his father in regard to the possibility of being "chosen to inherit the clan's shamanic relation."[14] His father "had learned a vast amount of shamanic knowledge from his mother, who was also

---

[11] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 86. DuBois (*Shamsnism*, 69) even refers to a Korean shaman from Cheju Island who "counted himself as the twenty-fourth generation of shamanism in his family." (Note that this branch of Korean shamanism emphasizes hereditary succession, emphasizing the memorization of rituals.)

[12] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 86. This is reminiscent of the command by Yahweh that Elijah anoint his successor at a time when Elijah had sought death, viewing himself as having failed (1 Kings 19), even as he continues on for a while in the narrative though accomplishing only one of the three tasks assigned to him.

[13] In Thai's case, his clan was more restrictive than other Hmong clans in which a tutelary deity could be connected with several different members of the family. DuBois, *Shamanism*, 86.

[14] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 86.

a shaman, and was immediately and consistently supportive of Thai in his calling."[15]

Thai's statement is:

> My dad is a very traditional man.
> I think that the spirit chose me.
> I have a strong belief that the spirit has chosen me because of my dad too.
> Because my dad can be a good helper. . . .
> Even though he is not a shaman, he knows a lot,
> he knows more than a shaman can know,
> about the spirit world,
> and those spirits' names,
> the chanting, and everything.
> With my dad's help, and my spirit, then, ceremony after ceremony, as the years went by I picked it all up. It came naturally . . .
> Without him I cannot do my ceremony.[16]

(In other words, he served a kind of apprenticeship in connection with his father.) DuBois also cites M. A. Czaplicka's comment about shamanic succession among the Khanty (Ostyak) where "a shaman generally chose a successor from among the rising generation," and serves as mentor to the chosen one:

> [T]he father himself chooses his successor, not necessarily according to age, but according to capacity; and to the chosen one he gives his own knowledge. If he has no children, he may pass on the office to a friend or to an adopted child.[17]

Another point that DuBois makes in regard to predisposition is that an outsider to the community frequently emerges as a shaman.[18] He comments that "cross-culturally shamanic diviners are often cultural outsiders, persons whose cultural or personal alterity

---

[15] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 86.

[16] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 86.

[17] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 86-87, quoting from M. A. Czaplicka, *Aboriginal Siberia: A Study in Social Anthropology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1917), 177.

[18] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 103.

contribute to the aura of supernatural acuity."[19] As an outsider, Elijah could be an example: a person from the Trans-Jordan area who is identified as "the Tishbite, one of the residents of Gilead" (התשבי מתשבי גלעד) (1 Kgs 17:1), a wanderer without patronym or any mention of a family connection,[20] and whose appearance is described as "a hairy man with a leather belt tied around his waist" (איש בעל שער ואזור עור אזור במתניו) (2 Kgs 1:8).

2. The Calling

Interestingly, Thai himself told DuBois that "I don't know how long I've been a shaman—ever since I can remember I have been helping people."[21] DuBois adds the comment:

> In fact, already while still *in utero* [shades of Jeremiah 1], Thai displayed such unusual body movements and constant shaking that his mother—a shaman herself and the mother of nine children before Thai—feared for her very life. Once he was born, Thai kicked and thrashed constantly until he learned to crawl. Then he used his new ability to set up a rudimentary altar, complete with a bowl for sacrificial rice and a stick. He pulled a little chair up in front of his creation and spent hours a day there, showing an unmistakable predilection for shamanic activities. Nevertheless, the little child failed to thrive physically and at the age of two was far below where he should be in terms of size and weight. He was also stricken with a severe ailment that caused his parents to fear that he would die. They consulted a female shaman in the same refugee camp for help. In a daylong trance the shaman came to understand that, incredible though it seemed to her,

---

[19] DuBois, 103, referring to the work of Barbara Tedlock, "Divination as a Way of Knowing: Embodiment, Visualization, Narrative, and Interpretation," *Folklore* 112 (2001): 189-97.

[20] Jerome T. Walsh's comment helps us with a better understanding of 1 Kgs 17:1, a brief introduction to Elijah's first appearance in the Hebrew Bible: "[W]hile these opening words may have been more intelligible to the ancient reader than they are to us, they give us today little information about Elijah: he is from Gilead, an Israelite region east of the Jordan River, but whether he is a native of the region or an immigrant is not clear." See Walsh, *1 Kings* (BO; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1996), 226.

[21] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 57.

> Thai had already become a shaman. As Thai reports her testimony: "I heard the drum, his drumming, the sounds of his equipment. I heard all of this for hours and hours, and I couldn't believe it. I checked again and again, but your baby is a shaman, a *true* shaman!" [Think of Samuel.] The shaman told the parents to ask Thai if he would like to perform a séance and if he should respond affirmatively, to supply him with the equipment and means to do so. They asked him as instructed, and he avidly accepted the invitation. He began to work from then on as a shaman. "The more ceremonies I would do and practice the healthier I got and I felt better." His health improved as a result. As Thai relates: "Without my helping spirit I would not be here today; maybe I would be dead."[22]

3. Training

DuBois states that "although relations with spirits lie at the heart of the shamanic calling, many shamanic traditions include an important role for human trainers."[23] He indicates that whereas "Buryat, Koryak, and Chukchi shamans tended to withdraw from human society in order to receive training from the spirits alone, their counterparts among Sakha, Enets, and Ket peoples relied on a combination of spiritual and human instruction."[24] The reality of being able to effectively practice benefits from apprenticeship, i.e., human training:

> Human trainers can help the shaman hone skills of use in a séance, or learn esoteric knowledge of value during spirit journeys or healing. Understanding one's shamanic duties often entails a minute knowledge of the culture's cosmology and the mythic history by which the cosmos came to be the way it is. A formal period of training may also help the new shaman become recognized as a professional, conferring the status and notoriety that an advanced degree can provide in Western societies.[25]

---

[22] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 57. Note the similarities with the young Samuel (1 Samuel 1-3).

[23] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 68.

[24] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 69. Dubois refers here to the study by Robert Hutton, *Shamans: Siberian Spirituality and the Western Imagination*, (London and New York: Hambledon and London, 2001).

[25] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 69.

But human training may also be regarded as a lesser form of preparation. DuBois refers to a study of the Chepang *pande* shamans of Nepal, some of whom "learn their art from other practitioners" whereas "others receive the entire instruction through dreams, or through supernatural abduction in the forest."[26] The study found that "Chepang community members view *pande* who have received human instruction as less powerful than those whose training has been exclusively supernatural, suggesting that the former may lack spiritual support or an authentic calling."[27] There is a similar situation in Korea:

> In Korea, training and form of initiation distinguishes two broad classes of shamans. In some regions, *sessŭmu* shamans dominate: these are hereditary shamans who learn elaborate shamanic songs as part of a familial tradition but who generally do not experience spirit possession within the séance. . . . In contrast, in other parts of Korea, inspired, initiated shamans (*kangshinmu*) receive callings from the spirits and acquire formal training only subsequently. Training helps them hone their communications with possession deities or the spirits of the dead, while also learning songs, dances, and ritual procedures expected of professionals. Within Korean tradition, both types of shaman can be called *mudang*.[28]

As for Thai's Laotian tradition, DuBois says that "most new shamans work with a human master for some time, who even journeys with them and subsequently reviews their descriptions of the journey. (It is important not to interrupt the séance itself; the critique comes after.) DuBois also notes the presence of assistants:

> The trainee also usually has a helper, often a family member, that undergoes the

---

[26] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 69.

[27] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 69. DuBois cites the work of Diana Riboli, *Tunsuriban: Shamanism in the Chepang of Southern and Central Nepal* (Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 2000), 72-73.

[28] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 69-70.

> training as well. They will work together in the shaman's future career. Finding a compatible trainer is not always easy, however: the master shaman's spirit must get along with the novice's; if that is not the case, the novice must search for a new master. A student cannot make a spirit journey without the help of a spirit helper, regardless of personal desire or the assistance of a living shaman. In fact, to attempt such a journey without a spirit [spirit helper?] would be dangerous.[29]

More specifically, DuBois states that his informant, Thai, indicated that he "cannot undertake any spirit journey without the help of his father."[30] The tutelary spirit may be central to Thai's shamanic practice, but the human assistant—in Thai's case, his father—is also important:

> [T]he human assistant also plays an essential role: monitoring the shamanic journey by listening in on the conversations that Thai enunciates while in trance, providing the percussive music that helps launch the shaman on his journey, guarding the shaman's body from harm during the ritual and providing the various pieces of equipment that are needed in given procedures: the horns used for divination, rings used for ensnaring souls, spirit money that must be burned as an offering. Thai's father has served as his son's assistant for the whole of Thai's career, and it is evident to Thai that his help is crucial.[31]

Eliade as well offers an important comment about the training of Buryat shamans, particularly relevant to the understanding of the prophetic bands in Israel:

> For many years after his first ecstatic experiences (dreams, visions, dialogues with the spirits, etc.) the apprentice prepares himself in solitude, taught by old masters and especially by the one who will be his initiator and who is called the "father shaman." During all this period he shamanizes, invokes the gods and spirits,

---

[29] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 70.

[30] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 88.

[31] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 89. DuBois (89) also refers to helpers for Evenki (Tungus) shamans who sing along with the shaman and help in the beating of the drum. He adds that "although the role of helper could potentially be played by anyone in the community Evenki shamans tended to have regular helpers with whom they habitually performed." Note that the range of assistance provided by Thai's father or the Evenki helpers seems rather different from the activity of assistants for Elijah or Elisha who are reported as carrying messages to kings (1 Kgs 18:43-44), "pouring water over the hands" of the prophet (2 Kgs 3:11), or as acting as intermediaries between the prophet and members of the public and serving as advance messengers of the prophet (2 Kgs 4:.12-15, 29-31).

learns the secrets of his profession.[32]

4. Validation

DuBois also emphasizes the importance of community acceptance, entailing community participation, which goes together with the public performance of healings and rituals, often with public participation—compare 1 Kings 18. The public character of shamanic activity is not only important for the effectiveness of the client's therapy but also for the standing of the shaman, as "[t]he community must accept a shaman as valid."[33] In that respect, "the community is not simply the recipient of shamanic services, but the shaper of a shaman's career."[34]

DuBois also mentions a public shamanic contest, somewhat rigged in advance, held by a Manchurian village from which two candidates, both affiliated with the recently deceased shaman, competed for the succession.[35] The winner was the one who

---

[32] Eliade, *Shamanism,* 115-16. Eliade notes that the "father" shaman identifies the apprentices as "his sons" (see 116-120).

[33] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 89.

[34] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 90. Dubois (90-91) also reports at length an instance of a twentieth-century Taiwanese woman who claimed to be a shaman and "appeared at first to have received a shamanic calling" but who was rejected by her rural community. An established area shaman who worshipped the same deity as the woman, examined her and concluded that "she had been visited by a ghost rather than a god." The putative shaman than shifted to another deity, and then yet a third deity, and sought to establish a shamanic practice with the aid of her mother. However, the village community increasingly withdrew their support in spite of the potential advantages of having their own shaman. The reasons for the lack of validation included that she was an outsider without significant local affiliation, that her husband, who was not locally respected, seemed to be seeking only to profit from her practice, and that she did not fit with the local norm of having unpresuming male shamans connected with local gods and ancestors (90-91). DuBois bases him comments on the work of Margery Wolf, "The Woman Who Didn't Become a Shaman," *American Ethnologist* 17 (1990), 419-30.

[35] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 91-92.

succeeded in entering a trance and conducting a séance—reminiscent of 1 Kings 18.[36]

Finally, DuBois emphasizes how the public performance of rituals can serve to draw out important information about the source of a problem or illness, e.g., without affixing blame on specific individuals, which allows the community to resolve problems while preserving the community's capability to work together for their mutual well-being.The shaman and the community are mutually validated.[37]

B. Terminology of Apprenticeship/Succession: מְשָׁרֵת and נער

1. מְשָׁרֵת

The Hebrew מְשָׁרֵת is a *pi'el* participle of שָׁרַת, meaning "to attend" or "to wait on (as an attendant)." Basically, שָׁרַת conveys a sense of personal service, especially cultic service. For example, this term I used in reference to Joseph, who "attended" Potiphar as soon as he found favor in his sight (וימצא יוסף חן בעיניו וישרת אתו) (Gen 39:4), and he later "attended" as well two palace officials while imprisoned at the house of the captain of the guard ("[The captain of the guard appointed Joseph to them, and he attended them.") (ויפקד שר הטבחים את־יוסף אתם וישרת אתם) (Gen 40:4). The verb שָׁרַת is especially related to cultic service but is not restricted to that context. Samuel as a boy was left in the care of Eli, the priest at Shiloh, so that he could learn how to "minister" to Yahweh (והנער היה משרת את־יהוה) (1 Sam 2:11), and it did not take long for Samuel to become an "attendant" of Yahweh (ושמואל משרת את־פני יהוה) (1 Sam 2:18). Yet the service offered by an

---

[36] DuBois herein draws upon the work of S. M. Shirokogoroff, as summarized by Vladimir N. Basilov, "Chosen by the Spirits," in *Shamanic Worlds: Rituals and Lore of Siberia and Central Asia* (ed. Marjorie Mandelstam Balzer; Armonk and London: New Castle Books, 1997), 3-45, citing p. 9.

[37] DuBois, *Shamanism*, 92-94.

"attendant" can also vary. It can refer to domestic service for a person of high rank in government, as Joseph becomes Potiphar's personal "attendant" (וישרת) in charge of his entire household (Gen 39:4). The role that Abishag the Shunammite takes on in "attending" the apparently senile King David is another example (ואבישג השונמית משרת את־המלך) (1 Kgs 1:15) of personal service. An "attendant" (משרת), as in the cases of Joshua and Elisha, may become a successor to his master, after an apprenticeship as personal assistants.[38] According to tradition, Joshua is cited as Moses' "attendant" (משרת) in Exod 24:13; 33:11 (also identified as a נער); Num 11:28 (noted as so serving "from his youth"); and Josh 1:1. As for Elisha, 1 Kgs 19:21 states that "he followed after Elijah and attended him" (וישרתהו).

2. נער

Exod 33:11 is not the only verse that contains both משרת and נער in describing a someone serving as Joshua did for Moses. 2 Sam 13:17 uses these two terms for the person serving Amnon, the crown prince, in the narrative of Amnon's violation of his half-sister, Tamar (2 Sam 13:1-19). Following the violation and Amnon's radical

[38] Both Moses and Elijah, the masters, have mysterious "deaths" in the tradition. There was no human witness when Moses died, and he was buried by Yahweh in an unknown place (Deut 34:5-6). Richard D. Nelson comments that the feature that "he [Yahweh] buried him" (ויקבר אתו) of Deut 34:6 is legendary, "but then blocks the natural impulse toward a grave cult." Elijah was taken away by a whirlwind from Yahweh (2 Kgs 2:11), and his ascent is regarded by some scholars as a euphemism for his death in a legendary fashion. Marvin A. Sweeney indicates that 2 Kings 2 does not imply Elijah's death, as the portrayal of Enoch in Gen 5:21-25 does, so "he is portrayed in later tradition as an eternal figure, who will return at the time of 'the Day of YHWH' (Mal 3:23-24)." These two charismatic leaders associated with a mysterious death or legendary disappearance appeared again to Jesus on a mountain, as cited in the Synoptics (Matt 17:3; Mark 9:4; Luke 9:30). See Nelson, *Deuteronomy* (OTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 396; Sweeney, *I & II Kings* (OTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 274.

emotional shift, Amnon "summons his youth—his attendant" (ויקרא את־נערו משׁרתו) to just get Tamar out of his sight (v. 17). Amnon's "attendant" (משׁרת) does as commanded and barred her reentry into Amnon's house (13:18). The obedient attendant does what the master says, regardless of its propriety. Again, the conduct and appearance of Solomon's attendants (ומעמד משׁרתו ומלבשיהם), which makes a profound impression on the queen of Sheba (1 Kgs 10:5), is not referring to a group of potential successors. So it should be quite clear that although an "attendant" who serves some kind of apprenticeship is a potential successor, the Hebrew term משׁרת in itself has no necessary connection with succession. The term implies an aptitude and possibly some training; it does not require being in a professional apprenticeship.

C. Moses and Joshua, including Joshua as Moses' משׁרת/נער

The first decisive general succession in ancient Israel involves the succession of Moses by Joshua, whatever the date and process of the description may be. So it is important to ascertain the perceived process. Moses, whose roles go well beyond being a prophet, is described as being assisted by Joshua, identified as his "attendant" (משׁרת) (Exod 24:13; 33:11; Num 11:28; Josh 1:1) and as a "servant" (נער).[39] In the biblical tradition, only Joshua and Elisha are described as the actual successors of their masters.

[39] Note that Joshua in 33:11 is identified as Moses' "attendant" (משׁרת) and is also identified as a נער, meaning "youthful servant or attendant." See John Van Seters, *The Life of Moses: The Yahwist as Historian in Exodus-Numbers* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 199, 294, 315. Somewhat similarly, Samuel serves as God's "attendant" (משׁרת) under Eli's supervision (והנער שׁמואל משׁרת את־יהוה לפני עלי) (1 Sam 3:1) and proves to be a more expansive leader than was Eli. Elijah has at least one unnamed "servant" (נער), or possibly two (1 Kgs 18:43; 19:3), apart from Elisha, who is identified as his attendant by וישׁרתהו in 1 Kgs 19:21; note also 2 Kgs 3:11. Besides, Elisha has Gehazi as a "servant" (נער) (2 Kgs 4:12, 25; 5:20; 8:4) and is also the "master" (אדון) of some individual members of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים), as noted in 2 Kgs 2:15-17; 4:38-41, 42-44; 6:1-7; 9:4-10.

However, Joshua succeeds Moses as a leader and covenant mediator (Joshua 24), not in terms of the revelatory aspect of Moses' role.[40]

The relationship of Joshua to Moses and of Elisha to Elijah is expressed by the key Hebrew term משׁרת and variants (as well as נער, in the case of Joshua). Both terms, משׁרת and נער, are indicative of a personal relationship between master and servant. Both terms carry more than one meaning, usually clarified by the context. The current study will explore the usage of each term as it relates to succession.[41]

Joshua, Moses' successor as designated by God (Num 27:12-23; Deut 3:23-28), first appears in the present sequence as a warrior commander commissioned by Moses to form a military group and then lead it (Exod 17:8-16).[42] Joshua's initial task is to lead a military attack on the Amalekites, so he and the troops fight against the Amalekites and defeat them (Exod 17:8-13; E). The episode occurs as part of Israel's early experience in

---

[40] Note that Joshua is described in Ben Sira 46:1 as the "successor of Moses in the prophetic office" (διάδοχος Μωυσῆ ἐν προφητείαις). For a further analysis of Joshua's status, see P. Skehan and A. Di Lella, *Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 518-19.

[41] The study of these two terms draws especially on K. Engelken, "שׁרת," *TDOT* 15:503-14; C. Westermann, "שׁרת," *TLOT* 3:1405-7; and H. F. Fuhs, "נער," *TDOT* 9:474-85. For additional aspects of "נער," see Milton Eng, *The Days of Our Years: A Lexical Semantic Study of the Life Cycle in Biblical Israel* (LHBOTS 464; New York: T & T Clark, 2011), 58-84.

[42] Worth quoting is Van Seters's literary-critical analysis (*Life of Moses*, 199-200): "The role of Joshua as the military leader in this episode [Exod 17:8-16] raises the question of how the account is related to the Joshua tradition in the book of Joshua and to the other mentions of him in J. It has been noted that in other battle accounts in the Pentateuch the military leader is not mentioned and Israel alone is the subject of the narrative. Joshua appears elsewhere in J as Moses' assistant. . . . The particular verbs that describe Joshua's military activity—*gbr* [גבר], 'be victorious,' and *ḥlš* [חלשׁ], "defeat"—are used again in a conversation between Moses and Joshua to describe the noise in the camp of Israel as the they descend the mountain of God."

the wilderness before reaching Mount Horeb.[43] Right after Israel's complaint about the lack of water at Rephidim and the miracle of water coming from a rock, the Amalekites come and attack them, with no reason stated.[44] Joshua is assigned a military task. It is remarkable that Joshua's first appearance in the Hebrew Bible is somewhat abrupt in that the patronymic "son of Nun" (בן־נון) is not introduced until Exod 33:11 (E). A biblical figure so introduced is usually of no significance or treated as if he has already been known to the audience, like Elijah the "Tishbite" (1 Kgs 17:1).[45] At this point, however, Joshua's role in relation to Moses has not been specified. So far he is a battlefield commander under the authority of Moses (Exod 17:10). Joshua is clearly described as junior to Moses.[46] He is a "young man" (נער), and his victories on the battlefield against the Amalekites are all dependent upon Moses' hand in a literal sense (v. 11).[47] In general,

---

[43] Some commentators argue that the episode could be a redactional transference from its original location after the covenant chapters (Exod 17-19). For a further discussion, see William H. C. Propp, *Exodus 1-18* (AB 2; New York: Doubleday, 1999), 615-16.

[44] Camel nomads were early Israel's inveterate enemies (Judg 6:5; 7:12; 1 Sam 27:9), and the Amalekites were among them. According to Scripture, they moved over through the desert south and east of Canaan (Gen 14:7; Num 13:29; 1 Sam 15:7; 27:8; 30:11-20; 1 Chr 4:43) and made occasional raids into Israel in its heartland (Judg 6:3-5, 33; 12:15; 1 Sam 30:1-2). Biblical genealogies connect the Amalekites to the Edomites (Gen 36:12, 16; 1 Chr 1:36). Since the Edomites were described as descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother, it is implicit that Amalek is Israel's "brother" so that their bellicosity became heinous to Israel. See Propp, *Exodus 1-18*, 616.

[45] Elijah's biblical debut and other occurrences never provide a patronymic. His mysterious background adds some weight to the mystery of his career, including his ascent into the heavens. Note his role as an outsider.

[46] See Exod 33:11 (E), in which Joshua is said to be a נער, discussed further below.

[47] Dramatically, the results of Joshua's fight with the Amalekites are decided by Moses' hand. When Moses raises his hand with the "staff of God" (v. 9), Joshua prevails;

Joshua at first is a silent, minor character of modest significance, overshadowed by Moses' divine power, though his role as Moses' successor is anticipated in Exod 17:14.[48]

Nevertheless, the role Joshua plays in relation to that of Moses is not restricted to being a battle commander. In keeping with being Moses' successor in the long run (Numbers 27), Joshua begins his more intimate relationship with Moses as a משׁרת, an "attendant." There are four occasions in the Hebrew Bible where Joshua is portrayed as Moses' משׁרת and each text describes him as a young person of modest significance, thus silent (Exod 24:13 and 33:11), as lacking in understanding (Num 11:28), or as a rising star who needs encouragement and divine assistance (Josh 1:1). When the term משׁרת is used of Joshua, he is portrayed as more of a novice or apprentice who is not yet mature enough to be an independent military leader, though he elicits attention for his performance.

Joshua as Moses' משׁרת is first mentioned in the tradition in Exod 24:13, which describes that "Moses arose with Joshua, his attendant, and Moses went up to the mountain of God" (ויקם משׁה ויהושׁע משׁרתו ויעל משׁה אל־הר האלהים).[49] This move leads to an

---

if not, Joshua loses. Moses's divine power is thus shown through use of the "staff of God."

[48] As Moses is told by Yahweh to write down in a scroll an account ofthe victory over Amalek as a reminder (זכרון) to "put into Joshua's ears" (ושׂים באזני יהושׁע) (Exod 17:14), the phrase "into Joshua's ears" instead of "to the people" (Exod 11:2; 24:7; Deut 32:44; cf. Exod 10:2; Deut 31:30), indicates Joshua's singularity and significance in Moses' entourage and thus already points to Joshua's candidacy to be Moses' successor.

[49] "The mountain of God" (הר האלהים) first appears in the Pentateuch in Exod 3:1, a reference to Horeb where Moses tended the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro. Nahum M. Sarna points out that "this description is traditionally taken as anticipating its later role as the site of the national covenant between God and Israel." See Sarna, *Exodus* (JPSTC; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991), 14.

additional theophany as Moses goes up to the mountain of God with the leaders of Israel, including Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy elders (Exod 24:9-18). They enjoy a banquet with God, and then Moses is summoned by God to come on up to him to receive the "tablets of stone" (v. 12) bearing the law and the commandment written by God.[50] So Moses goes up, as commanded, together with Joshua his "attendant" (מְשָׁרֵת), leaving other leaders behind. This action shows the significant role Joshua plays, especially when he is the only one who can go up with Moses to help Moses accomplish his task.[51] Interestingly, however, Joshua, as a mere servant, apparently is not important enough to be mentioned in the invitation to begin with. When Moses and his company arrive at the mountain and encounter Yahweh, "the God of Israel," there, Yahweh commands Moses to come nearer on the mountain so that Yahweh could give him "the tablets of stone, with the law and commandment, which I have written for their instruction" (v. 12). Supposedly, Moses is to approach Yahweh by himself, leaving his company behind. But in the narrative there seems to appear a personally insignificant guest, mentioned neither among the invitees nor in the previous narrative. When Yahweh finishes calling Moses to come

---

[50] It is essential for us to understand Moses' reaction to the apostasy (Exod 32:15-16, 19) with the occurrence of the "tablets of stone" in Exod 24:12. The crisis caused by the apostasy is precipitated by Moses' prolonged stay on the mountain (Exod 24:18). See Sarna, *Exodus*, 153.

[51] Joshua's presence in Exod 24:9-18 is unexpected, since he is not one of the leaders; apparently he is the classic invisible servant. The mention of Joshua as Moses' מְשָׁרֵת, however, as Brevard S. Childs indicates (*Exodus*, 507), "connects with his subsequent role in ch. 32," where he detects the noise the people make and mistakes it as that of war (Exod 32:17). As with Joshua's unexpected appearance in Exod 24:13, his debut in Exod 17:9 is also abrupt, without further identification by means of a patronym. See Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary* (OTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster, 1974), 507. Sarna (*Exodus*, 95) suggests that Joshua could be already well known at this point, but the emphasis seems to be his servant invisibility.

near, the narrative continues with a new note: "So Moses set out with his attendant, Joshua, and Moses went up onto the mountain of God" (ויקם משׁה ויהושׁע משׁרתו ויעל משׁה אל־הר האלהים) (Exod 24:13). Joshua enters this episode abruptly, again, without a formal introduction or allusion. His sudden appearance implies that he must have been present with Moses for some while, as he is not summoned by Moses to suddenly appear at the last minute to come along with him to the mountain. Accordingly, he presumably has been there with the group of representatives since God commanded them to come forward. He seems to be an invisible part of Moses' presence, as appropriate to a modest subordinate. When Moses is being summoned again, this invisible servant suddenly comes into sight and thus has to be left behind for the final ascent. Again, as in his first appearance mentioned above, Joshua is invisible and silent, functioning as a sort of footnote in this episode, presumably because he is merely an "attendant" (משׁרת), not a principal character in this narrative.[52]

Joshua as Moses' "attendant" (משׁרת) appears also in Exod 33:11, an occurrence that is particularly interesting in the combination of משׁרת with נער ("youth" or "servant"): ומשׁרתו יהושׁע בן־נון נער ("and his attendant Joshua son of Nun was a youth"). Note the differentiation that Exod 33:7-11 tells us how Yahweh communicates with Moses in the "tent of meeting" outside the camp, as Yahweh speaks to Moses "face to face" (פנים אל־

[52] Joshua receives miraculous power to defeat the Amalekites in the form of the staff Moses held aloft. The narrative gives no detailed explanation for Joshua's role as Moses' משׁרת until Numbers and Deuteronomy, and, of course, the Book of Joshua, tell the reader about his being Moses' heir. Carol Meyers's analysis is that "as the warrior par excellence in the generations before David, his military leadership is prefigured in Israel's first battle." See Meyers, *Exodus* (NCBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 135.

פנים) (v. 11; alternatively "mouth to mouth" [פה אל־פה] in Num 12:8).[53] The context of Exod 33:11 clearly shows that Joshua being Moses' משׁרת means not only that he is Moses' "attendant" or "servant" but suggests the possibility of his becoming Moses' successor.[54]

Another occurrence of משׁרת as a title for Joshua further explicates that possibility. In Num 11:16-30 Yahweh tells Moses to gather seventy elders of Israel so that he can transfer some of Moses' spirit to them. Two men stayed behind in the camp, not being among the seventy elders, yet they also receive the spirit—a demonstration of its power—and are able to "become ecstatic" (התנבא), just like the seventy, when they receive part of Moses' spirit. Now, Joshua, "son of Nun, the משׁרת of Moses, one of his chosen men," advises Moses to stop these two men from doing so. But Moses disagrees with him on this matter and says to him: המקנא אתה לי, meaning, "Are you zealous on my account?"[55] Obviously, Joshua has said something inappropriate here regarding

---

[53] Num 12:8 is part of Yahweh's rebuke to Miriam and Aaron for their challenge of Moses's leadership and authority. Yahweh reveals in this verse that Moses is completely different in the special way he communicates with Yahweh, viz., "mouth to mouth," whereas others get messages from Yahweh in visions or/and dreams (v. 7). See Noth, *Numbers*, 95-96.

[54] E. Noort combines the special description of Joshua in Sir 46:1 as "Moses' successor in the prophetic office" (διάδοχος Μωυσῆ ἐν προφητείαις: משרת משה בנבואה; Beentjes, *Ben Sira in Hebrew*, 81) with the phrase that Joshua is Moses' "attendant" (משׁרת) and concludes that Joshua is Moses's successor in light of Elisha's relationship to Elijah (1 Kgs 19:21). See Noort, "Joshua: The History of Reception and Hermeneutics" in *Past, Present, Future: The Deuteronomistic History and the Prophets* (eds. Johannes C. de Moor and Harry F. van Rooy; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 212. Indeed, the two narratives interact, but separating out the process is a matter basically of speculation.

[55] The Hebrew form המקנא is a *pi'el* ptc. of קנא, which in Baruch A. Levine's analysis means "to express zeal and passion." Levine reminds the reader that the priest Phineas קנא for Yahweh in Num 25:13, which means he showed zeal and passion for God's honor. In addition, Elijah was extremely zealous for Yahweh in defending his

Yahweh's assignment of the "sharing" of the spirit. Again, a משרת who never appears to be the principal character in a narrative should remain silent, if not invisible.

Moses, on hearing Joshua's protest, apparently thinks that Joshua is trying to protect Moses from any alternative to his authority as the ultimate communicator with Yahweh, so he says that Joshua is "zealous on my account."[56]

The death of Moses prompts a major shift in regard to Joshua, who now assumes a crucial leadership role. Num 27:12-13 records the divine announcement about the impending death of Moses in coordination with the death of another exodus leader, Aaron: "You (Moses) will be gathered to your people, as Aaron, your brother, was gathered" (ונאספת אל־עמיך גם־אתה כאשר נאסף אהרן אחיך) (v. 13). Yahweh commands Moses to ascend the Abarim mountain range, where he can look out at the land Israel has been promised because Moses will not be able to enter himself. Num 27:14 is an explanation for the divine punishment for Moses' inability to enter the land. Moses then asks Yahweh to appoint a successor to take his place and lead the people into the promised land (Num 27:15-17). Yahweh agrees to Moses' request and appoints Joshua, "a man of spirit" (איש אשר־רוח בו) (27:18), as Moses' successor. Apparently, the book of Joshua opens with the notice of "the death of Moses" so as to mark both the end of the Mosaic period and the

---

honor (1 Kgs 19:10-14). See Levine, *Numbers 1-20,* 326.

[56] המקנא אתה לי (Num 11:29) in Milgrom's translation is "Are you wrought up on my account?" He points out that Num 25:11 and 13 provide another case for the interpretation of קנא. Milgrom translates 25:11, with occurrences of בקנאו, קנאתי, and בקנאתי, as "Phinehas, son of Eleazar son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the Israelites by displaying among them his passion for Me, so that I did not wipe out the Israelite people in My passion." The phrase קנא לאלהיו (25:13) is translated as "he took impassioned action for his God"; see Milgrom, *Numbers*, 90, 216.

beginning of Joshua's time.[57] Joshua then leads Israel into the promised land, which is a task that Moses was not able to accomplish, allegedly because he had angered Yahweh, as Num 20:1-13 recounts, mainly regarding the miraculous gift of water at Meribath-kadesh.[58] The significance of Joshua is manifest in the very opening of the book of Joshua, especially in the words of Yahweh to Joshua, which reveals Joshua's role in the succession to Moses:

> After the death of Moses the *servant* (עבד) of Yahweh, Yahweh said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' *attendant* (משרת), "Moses *my servant* (עבדי) is dead. Now get up, cross the Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the Israelites. Every place on which the sole of *your* [pl.] foot will

---

[57] See Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 21-36: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 4A; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 349; Jacob Milgrom, *Numbers* (JPSTC; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990), 234. For the failure of Moses and Aaron and the reason for their inability to enter the promised land, see Levine, *Numbers 1-20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 4; New York: Doubleday, 1993), 490-91; Milgrom, *Numbers*, 166-67. For the expression "you will be gathered to your people," see Levine, *Numbers 1-20*, 494, Milgrom, *Numbers*, 169-70.

[58] Ironically, the murmuring story that begins the miraculous gift of water at Meribath-kadesh is the only complaint in the book of Numbers that does not elicit Yahweh's anger and judgment against the people. Other complaints include one about their misfortunes in the wilderness (11:1-3), their desire for meat (11:4-35), the challenge of Miriam and Aaron against Moses (12:1-2), the spy story in 14:11-12, 26-35, and the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in 16:21, 45. The murmuring story about water ends with divine anger and punishment of Moses and Aaron, Yahweh's mediators for this event. People get what they wanted; Moses and Aaron lose what they were seemingly destined for: both are unable to enter the promised land. The murmuring story (Num 20:1-13) begins with a death notice of Miriam and ends, according to Thomas B. Dozeman, with a "death sentence" for Moses and Aaron when they showed their lack of faith in instructing the people how to get the water from the rock. The narrator does not tell us why and how Miriam dies, nor the reason for the "death sentence." The brothers and the sister (Num 26:59), the co-leaders of the exodus (Mic 6:4), either arrive at or see the termination signals of their careers in the context of this complaining story. (Aaron's death is recorded in Num 20:28, and Moses' in Deut 34:5. None of the co-leaders enters the promised land.) For Moses' rebelliousness in Num 20:1-13, see Dozeman, "Numbers," *NIB* 2:159-61; for the symbolic meaning of the rod related to Moses' rebellion, see Levine, *Numbers 1-20*, 489-90; for the sin of Moses and Aaron, see Milgrom, *Numbers*, 163-67.

> step I have given to *them* [lit., it], as I said to Moses. . . . No one shall stand against *you* [sg.] all the days of *your* [sg.] life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with *you* [sg.]; I will not abandon *you* [sg.] or forsake *you* [sg.]. Be strong and brave, for you shall lead this people to inherit the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be very strong and brave [sg.], being careful to act according to all the teaching that *my servant* (עבדי) Moses commanded you; do not deviate from it right or left, so that *you* [sg.] may be successful everywhere you go. This scroll of this teaching shall not disappear from *your* [sg.] mouth. *You* [sg.] should study it day and night so that you may act carefully in accordance with everything written in it. Then *you* [sg.] will make your ways prosperous and will succeed. Surely I have commanded *you* [sg.]: Be strong and brave; do not fear or be frightened, for Yahweh your God is with *you* [sg.] everywhere you go." (Josh 1:1-9; *emphasis* added)

The first chapter of the book of Joshua, along with chapters 23 and 24, not only "frames the book of Joshua in literary terms and the period of Joshua in biblical-historical terms" but also transitions between the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua.[59] The continuity between the final chapter of the Pentateuch and the beginning of the book of Joshua is featured in various ways, including the significance of Joshua's succession to Moses' leadership.[60] Even though the book of Joshua opens with a mention of the death of Moses,[61] the "servant of Yahweh" (עבד יהוה),[62] we also note that in the very beginning

---

[59] Hartmut N. Rösel explains that the main elemenet of continuity is God himself. He also holds that the first chapter of Joshua represents "the start of a new book and of a new period" with its form and content; "but neither the book nor the period does in fact represent a completely new beginning." The book of Joshua, as literature, continues the Pentateuch, and, as biblical history, "continues a process that started in the time of Moses." See Rösel, *Joshua* (HCOT; Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 26.

[60] Joshua's succession to Moses for the leadership role provides another perspective for the "continuity" that the Book of Joshua extends: "The deuteronomic historian then shows how a leadership succession emerged from Moses to Joshua, from Joshua to the judges, and then ultimately to the kingship that finally results in the dynasty of David." See Clements, "Deuteronomy," *NIB* 2:519.

[61] Moses speaks to Israel about his inevitable death before leading the people to the promised land because God constrains him (Deut 34:1-2). But his announcement also includes that his successor Joshua will take the leadership role in guiding them into the land (v. 3). Therefore, Joshua's installation into Moses' leadership office becomes the

of the Book of Joshua that Joshua is defined as Moses' "attendant" (משׁרת), the Hebrew term which refers to "the personal servant of a personality like a 'man of god' (2 Kgs 4:43; 6:15 [i.e., Elisha]; 1 Kgs 19:21 [i.e., Elijah]), a prince (2 Sam 13:17-18 [i.e., Amnon]), or a leader of Israel, as in this case [i.e., Moses]."[63] Joshua in Yahweh's recommissioning words is considered to take Moses' place as a leader, in other words, as Moses' successor in leadership (cf. Deut 34:9),[64] which explains why he is commanded

---

point of Deut 34:7-8, which finds its repetition in Joshua 1:1-9. For a further analysis regarding the import of Moses' death and Joshua's succession, see Clements, "Deuteronomy," *NIB* 2:519-20.

[62] References to the "death of Moses" and the "servant of Yahweh" use two phrases that represent the continuity between Deuteronomy and Joshua; see Deut 34:5 (וימת שׁם משׁה עבד־יהוה). Therefore, Rösel considers the death of Moses as the motif that "forms a historical and a literary break." The death of Moses as described here, according to Adolph L. Harstad, is unique in three ways. First, when he died, he was healthy and vigorous (Deut 34:7). Second, Yahweh buried him (ויקבר אתו) in an unknown location (Deut 34:6). Third, his death signaled that Israel's entry into the promised land was near at hand (Josh 1:2). The mention of the death of Moses that opens Joshua 1 is a remarkable transition for the following speech of Yahweh to Joshua. Harstad also reminds us that the basis of Yahweh's calling Moses as a "servant" (עבד) appears in Num 12:7-8, where Yahweh rebuts the challenge of Miriam and Aaron by defining the office of Moses as "my servant" (עבדי), which is a title "more than a description of Moses' function." He further points out that the relevant passages of Numbers show that this is a title of high honor, with a divine calling, evidencing that Moses was "the one chosen by [Yahweh] to lead the covenant nation out of bondage, the mediator of the Sinai covenant, the great leader who had taken Israel to the doorstep of the promised land." In addition, as Robert B. Coote indicates, the phrase "after the death of Moses," the opening of the narrative of Joshua, "is the deuteronomistic writer's way of demarcating the end of the period of Moses, when the law was laid down, and the commencement of the period of Joshua." Coote further points out that the period of the judges starts "after the death of Joshua" (Judg 1:1) as the period of Joshua ends. See Rösel, *Joshua*, 28; Harstad, *Joshua* (ConC; St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004), 42; Coote, "Joshua," *NIB* 2:584.

[63] Rösel, *Joshua*, 28.

[64] As Ronald E. Clements indicates, Deut 34:9 declares that "Joshua was fully empowered as the successor to Moses," who, with "unique miracle-working power," had been endowed with charismatic leadership. See Clements, "Deuteronomy," in *NIB* 2:538.

to accomplish the task "as I promised Moses" (כאשר דברתי אל־משה) (Josh 1:3; cf. Deut 11:24-25). This opening speech is considered as Yahweh's instruction and another commissioning of Joshua, of which the main themes include "the conquest and distribution of the land under the law of Moses"[65] and in which two important terms, "servant" (עבד) and "attendant" (משרת), appear again to describe the role each plays in his relationship with Yahweh.[66] Moses as the "servant" (עבד) of Yahweh is a frequent reference, and this description of Moses is characterized as a symbol of his loyalty to God.[67]

The significance of the appearance of the title "attendant" (משרת) in the opening

---

[65] Coote, "Joshua," *NIB* 2:584.

[66] Harstad (*Joshua*, 43) states that משרת is the *pi'el* participle of שרת, "which occurs only in the *pi'el* and means 'to minister, serve, assist.'" Accordingly, Joshua' relationship to Yahweh, when he was Moses' משרת, lies in the fact that he is subservient to Moses, the servant of Yahweh. In Rösel's view, the differentiation between משרת and עבד lies in "service to the master in person"; עבד המלך ("servant of the king"), contrary to משרת, for example, "is a high official who does not perform acts of service for the king's personal needs." Therefore, as Rösel points out, a priest functions as an "attendant" (משרת) offering "personal service to his deity," whereas David is Yahweh's "servant" (עבד). Rösel (*Joshua*, 28) concludes that Joshua, the "attendant" (משרת) of Moses (cf. Exod 24:13; Num 11:28), "was in charge of Moses' personal needs but was also associated with him and his 'sphere' on a higher level, which made him the most natural successor."

[67] Levine points out that the Hebrew עבד here may also be used to refer to Abraham (Gen 2:24), Caleb (Num 14:24), and especially David (2 Sam 3:18). A few places in the Hebrew Bible characterize prophets with the term עבד, such as 2 Kgs 9:17; 17:13; Jer 7:25; Ezek 38:17; Zech 1:6; Ps 126:5. Above all, as Levine notes, the term עבד clearly "connotes loyalty and would be reserved for those who epitomize loyalty to God." Worth noting is the challenge related to the term עבד when Miriam and Aaron complain against Moses for the so-called "monopoly" of Moses' prophetic authority in communicating with Yahweh. They get a response from Yahweh in which Yahweh calls Moses "my servant" (עבדי) and affirms Moses' prophetic dimensions by showing the intimacy between them (Num 12:1-8). See Levine, *Numbers 1-20*, 331.

What intrigues us is that the phrase, "the servant of Yahweh" (עבד יהוה), which opens the book of Joshua also occurs just before the close of the book in Josh 24:9; the difference is that the latter occurrence refers to Joshua.

chapter of the book of Joshua goes together with the realization that Joshua is not only Moses' "attendant" (משרת) but also his successor, especially in Yahweh's commissioning of Joshua which emphasizes the authority and leadership of Moses and the continuity of that leadership by Joshua.[68] As confirmation of being Moses' successor, Joshua is given several promises in Joshua 1 concerning crossing the Jordan and becoming a people in the land. Josh 1:5 affirms that no enemy will be able to withstand Joshua. Furthermore, there is a declaration that God will be with Joshua as he was with Moses (כאשר הייתי עם־ משה אהיה עמך).

After promising Joshua that "I will not abandon you or forsake you" (לא ארפך ולא אעזבך) in Josh 1:5, Yahweh immediately encourages Joshua to be strong and brave (חזק ואמן) (v. 6; note that the admonition also appears in vv. 7, 9). The encouragement serves to remind Joshua that he should lead the people across the Jordan in order to settle in the land, as promised to Moss (vv. 3-6). Joshua and the people are to adhere to the "book of the teaching" (ספר התורה) (v. 8).

The summary validation of Joshua as the successor to Moses is in the conclusion of Deuteronomy, which affirms that "Joshua, the son of Nun, was filed with the spirit of wisdom because Moses laid his hands upon him and the people of Israel heeded him and did as the Lord had commanded Moses" (Deut 34:9). Joshua was designated by Moses and acclaimed by the people. The succession succeeded, although it did not constitute a complete replacement. Moses was unique:

There has never arisen a prophet in Israel like Moses who Yahweh knew face to

[68] For a detailed analysis concerning Joshua as Moses's successor, see Schäfer-Lichtenberger, *Josua und Salomo*, 107-224; on the continuity, see also Rösel, *Joshua*, 28.

> face. For all the signs and wonders Yahweh sent him to perform in the land of Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his servants and all his land. And for the mighty deeds and great fear that Moses performed before all Israel. (Deut 34:10-12)

Obviously, Joshua's significance in the Exodus-Numbers narratives prepares him for his eventual emergence as the successor to Moses, having prepared himself through being an effective assistant/attendant to Moses.

D. Charismatic Succession in National Leadership: A Mixture of Failure and Success

The biblical roles that fit the Weberian category of charismatic authority provide various examples of how they seem to succeed in the process of institutionalization. As a starting point we have social theory—the Weberian theory about the types of authority, and charismatic leadership as well as charismatic authority in particular, with its well-attested relationship to institution building. An initial question, then, is what happens in connection with prophecy, a charismatic manifestation. What happens in this matter of succession or institutionalization? What do we expect in terms of the connection with institutionalization? We find that routinization takes place in regard to charismatic kingship, moving from the charismatic founder of a potential dynasty (e.g., Saul, David, Jeroboam, Jehu) to routinization of kingship based primarily in heredity (but not just to the eldest son), and we find something similar in the Israelite priesthood, in terms of the tradition that, e.g., Aaron was charismatically chosen. These are typical instances of charismatic selection leading to institutionalization through hereditary.

1. Aaron as the Charismatic Priest Who Founded a Hereditary Priesthood

The first appearance of Aaron in the Book of Exodus is when he is singled out by God as the eloquent brother of the reticent Moses, who is "slow of speech and slow of tongue." (Exod 4:10). Aaron will be able to speak on behalf of God (and Moses), because

"You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth—I will be with you and with him as you speak, and tell both of you what to do" (Exod 4:15; NJPS); i.e., Aaron has a direct connection with God.[69] But Aaron is known especially as a priest, and, as Joseph Blenkinsopp states, the Israelite priesthood has possessed a bad reputation in Christian Old Testament scholarship, particularly since the Enlightenment.[70] So we cannot ignore, as Blenkinsopp reminds us, that "the priest . . . exists in the first place to *facilitate* the carrying out of ritual" in the life of ancient Israel, which certainly includes ritual.[71] We cannot, therefore, easily let go of the role of charisma in the depiction of the foundation of the Israelite priesthood through Aaron.

In the tradition Aaron plays a central role in his official ordination as priest of God, even though the portrayals are not fully consistent.[72] According to one tradition, Aaron is

---

[69] Note Exod 7:1-2 in which Aaron is like a prophet for Moses, who speaks as if God. Aaron also performs wonders with his rod (Exod 7:8-12).

[70] For his argumentation, see Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel* (Library of Ancient Israel; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 66-68; for the scholarly arguments Blenkinsopp offers, see also the parallel arguments of Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (Trans. by J. Sutherland Black and Allen Menzies; New York: Meridian Books, 1957), 361, 509; Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (2 vols.; OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961-1967), 1:405, 2:315; Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (2 vols.; New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 1:259-60.

[71] For further discussion, including the services of and expectations of the Israelite priesthood and "Weber's thesis of the this-worldly orientation of religious phenomena," see Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet*, 80-83.

[72] In John R. Spencer's view, Aaron's negative images, besides his positive ones such as his being an "officially ordained priest of God," include his being "at odds with Moses and 'mainline' religious practices" because "the positive images appear in the later biblical materials and negative images are prominent in the earlier materials." As Aaron's priestly status, however, Merlin D. Rehm argues that some narratives in the Pentateuch, such as Exodus 4; 17; 18; 20; 24; 31; Numbers 12; and Deuteronomy 10; 33; do not present Aaron as a priest "but as an elder of the people who makes the life of Moses, the leader, difficult." However, Richard D. Nelson maintains that sources from the Second

said to be Moses' spokesperson, serving as an "adjutant as closely associated with the elders, *but not as priest*,"[73] even though Exod 4:14 stresses his Levitical status.[74] Blenkinsopp briefly indicates, however, that the priestly aspect of Aaron's role appears "in Genesis through Joshua and Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah" as an exception even though the mention of Aaron the priest or of Aaronite priests does not come out in any pre-exilic or post-exilic text.[75] In William H. C. Propp's analysis, however, Exodus 4:14 is perceived by many as a "foreshadowing of Aaron's priestly ordination and/or the Levites' pedagogic mission" because the Levites "would become a sacred tribe (32:26-29)."[76] We need to keep in mind that, as already mentioned, in Exod 4:15-16, Yahweh answers

---

Temple period present Aaron "as the first ancestor from whom the priestly families of the Jerusalem Temple descended and paradigm for the office of high priest," whereas his appearance in pre-exilic texts shows him "in non-priestly roles as Moses' spokesperson and assistant." See Spencer, "Aaron," *ABD* 1:1; Rehm, "Levites and Priests," *ABD* 4:299; Nelson, "Aaron," *NIDB* 1:1. In addition, as for Aaron not being a priest in early tradition, see Cody, *Priesthood*, 45, 146-51, 155-56; but for Aaron as a priest, 41-42, 150, 159, 194-95. See also Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet*, 84-86, for the analysis of Aaron's multiple associations with other figures, such as Hur, Miriam, and Moses.

[73] Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet*, 85.

[74] William H. C. Propp notes that "the deputation of Aaron is in some sense a punishment, a diminution of Moses' dignity" especially in that "Aaron will construct the Golden Calf," which makes all Israel suffer. Blenkinsopp comments that "Deuteronomy likewise says nothing about Aaron *qua* priest and nothing about Aaronite priests ('sons of Aaron')." See Propp, *Exodus 1-18: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 2; New York: Doubleday, 1999), 213.

[75] Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet*, 85.

[76] Propp's comment follows his inference that the language in Exod 4:14 tries to persuade us that Moses and Aaron "are nothing more than *fellow* Levites" with הלא אהרן אחיך הלוי ("Is not Aaron your brother Levite?") and that Exod 15:20 (E) designates Miriam as Aaron's sister, "implying that she is more closely related to Aaron than to Moses." Only P would like to tell us that three of them, according to Propp, are "full siblings" as Num 26:59 shows. See Propp, Exodus 1-18, 213-14.

Moses that "you [Moses] shall speak to him [Aaron] and put the words in his mouth. (ודברת אליו ושׂמת את־הדברים בפיו) I will be with you and with him as you speak, and tell both of you what to do. He shall speak for you to the people."

The association of Aaron with the priestly service first comes out in Exod 28:4: "These are the vestments they are to make. . . . They shall make these sacral vestments for your brother Aaron and his sons *to serve as priest for me* (לכהנו־לי)" (*emphasis* added).[77] The priestly office was granted not only to Aaron but also to his sons. To begin with, Aaron is granted the role because of his charisma, especially when in his role as Moses' spokesperson. His sons' succession obviously turns the succession into a matter of inheritance, i.e., routinization.

2. Gideon and Abimelech: Heredity as Insufficient for the Continuation of Charismatic Leadership

Gideon, according to the Scriptural tradition, is a charismatic שופט, that is, a temporary war leader chosen by God (Judg 6:14, 16). His success in protecting the people from the "hand of Midian" (6:1) leads to popular support for him to "rule" (משל) over them (8:22). But Gideon declines the offer to become a king over Israel (8:23). Ironically, in the tradition Gideon goes beyond the personal issue for himself and reportedly states that neither he nor his sons would "rule" over the Israelites: "Yahweh shall rule over you" (יהוה ימשׁל בכם) (8:23). Yet Abimelech, Gideon's son born to a concubine, already by his name, אבימלך, represents some ambiguity. The name ostensibly means "My [divine] Father is King," but it could be taken to allude to the idea that "My [personal] Father is King," as opposed to "My [divine] Father is King," already hinting at future claims to be

[77] Meyers (*Exodus*, 240) indicates that "[I]n setting the task for the artisans, the word 'priest' is used for the first time in association with Aaron."

a king by succession, i.e., via heredity.[78]

The Gideon-Abimelech narratives, accordingly, illustrate the issue of charismatic authority leading to institution building in the form of hereditary succession. The tradition provides a hint of future steps, following Gideon's refusal of the people's invitation, and prepares us for Abimelech's unsuccessful attempt to form a hereditary kingship. A careful reading through the relevant narratives brings out some details contributing to theological and religious meanings and reflections which help us to comprehend how heredity and succession function in ancient Israel.

Judges 6-8 contain the primary Gideon narrative, which begins with an editorial introduction about Israel's current situation. Israel "again" falls into apostasy by turning to another deity that Yahweh has warned against (Judg 6:8-10). The apostasy "again" leads Israel into oppression, this time by the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the "people of the East" (6:3). The immediate divine punishment that has been affecting Israel is that marauding groups led by the Midianites periodically appear during the harvest season to exploit the crops and abduct some of the stock animals (6:1-5). Israel becomes destitute due to the Midianite oppression (6:6) and its life sustenance is threatened. Therefore, it is

---

[78] Abimelech in Hebrew (אבימלך), as noted, doubtless means "my [divine] father is king." What interests us is to whom the term "father" might be taken to refer, as it could perhaps have been viewed by some—especially by Abimelech—as ambiguous. If the ambiguity encouraged the name to be taken to mean that Abimelech's father, that is, Gideon, is king, it would be quite ironic. Robert G. Boling offers a detailed discussion of the name Abimelech in comparison with other names of a similar patter, "such as Ahimelech, Abijah, Abiel, Abijam, Elimelech, etc. Boling translates Abimelech as "my father is מלך," in the first place, and offers an understated conclusion that "[I]t is probable that in the name of Gideon's most famous son, the first element, "my father," was intended to refer to Yahweh, and the second element refers to Yahweh's position in Israel as 'King.'" In his explication, the personal name, Abimelech, as "my [divine] father is king" shows no contradiction with Gideon's confession that Yahweh is the one and only king. See Boiling, *Judges*, 162-63.

time "again" to cry out aloud to Yahweh for help (6:7). Yahweh "again" acts to deliver the disobedient Israelites.

The opening scene is impressive: "The Israelites did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, and Yahweh gave them into the hand of Midian seven years" (6:1).[79] The following verses set up a clear background for Israel's current situation: Israel is under oppression for seven years (vv. 2-5).

There subsequently appears an unnamed prophet—a נביא—sent by Yahweh, giving a message with the regular prophetic formula "thus says Yahweh" (כה־אמר יהוה) (6:8). The context contains a reminder that Yahweh, "the God of Israel" (אלהי ישׂראל) (6:8), led Israel out of Egypt, "the house of slavery" (6:8), into the promised land, and a warning that Israel "shall not pay reverence to the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live" (6:10). The prophet concludes his words with "You have not given heed to [Yahweh's] voice" (6:10).[80] The conclusion of the unnamed prophet's oracle explains that the oppression is a direct consequence of Israel's disloyalty. Simply put, the intention of the prophet's speech is to reprimand Israel and announce that the people deserve what they now experience.[81] The present oppression is divine punishment for Israel's rebellion,

---

[79] The phrase "The Israelites did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh" occurs several times in Judges (2:11; 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1), indicating a pattern of rebellion against Yahweh as a fixture of the author's understanding of the period.

[80] The prophet of Yahweh functions as Yahweh's spokesperson to reveal to Israel the reason for their current difficulties. "They have not," as Susan Niditch indicates, "responded to God's saving acts in Egypt with full covenantal loyalty, but have been seduced by the gods of those they have conquered." The prophet here also functions as a bridge to introduce a new savior judge into the stage of the Book of Judges. See Niditch, *Judges: A Commentary* (OTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 90.

[81] A careful reading of Judges can remind us of a similar instance narrated prior to the unnamed prophet's rebuke in Judges 4, in which Deborah, a "prophetess" (נביאה; v.

a standard motif in the Book of Judges.

After the unnamed prophet's rebuke, God responds by sending a "messenger" (מלאך) to Gideon at Ophrah.[82] The "messenger" greets Gideon by saying "Yahweh is with you, you mighty warrior" (יהוה עמך גבור החיל) (Judg 6:12). Two points are worth noting here: first, the "you" is a masculine singular form, obviously specifying Gideon; secondly, the title "mighty warrior" for Gideon is indeed contrary to the current situation for he is described as engaged timidly in "beating out wheat in the wine press, to hide it from the Midianites" (v. 11). Gideon, in his reply, questions that Yahweh could abandon them once he has brought them out of Egypt. His response is, in actuality, a protest. Yahweh's messenger answers him that he should "go" and "deliver Israel from the hand of Midian" (v. 14) abandoning his protest about Yahweh. Now, all Gideon needs to do, without hesitation, is to go and save his people from the oppression. There is no time to complain or protest.[83]

---

4) who "judged" (שׁפטה) Israel, guided Barak, the military leader, to victory but told him beforehand that the victory would belong to no one but Yahweh. This episode also notes that subsequently "[t]he Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. . . . So Yahweh sold them into the hand of King Jabin of Canaan" (4:1-2). Israel, in the Book of Judges, has repeatedly done evil in the sight of Yahweh, without learning a lesson from their mistakes.

[82] The appearances of Yahweh's "messenger" (מלאך) are few in Judges. A messenger is cited twice regarding the commissioning or promise of a "judge,/temporary military leader, i.e., in the narrative of Gideon in chapter 6 and that of Samson in chapter 13. They serve as representatives of God, even though a messenger (2:1-5) had warned Israel about its rebellion and the oppression by foreigners as a divine punishment. For a discussion of Yahweh's מלאך, see Robert G. Boling, *Judges: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 6A; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975), 26, 66-67.

[83] Confusing to us is the fact that both Yahweh and his messenger come into play in the commissioning scene. Yahweh appears to Gideon right after Gideon realizes that he has "seen the messenger of Yahweh face to face." Gideon requests help from Yahweh. Yahweh answers Gideon immediately that he will be fine. Weber maintains that in the

The commissioning scene here easily reminds us of the episode concerning the commissioning of Moses in Exod 3:7-12, in which "God" (האלהים) says to Moses in person that "I will be with you" (אהיה עמך).[84] In the tradition, Moses is commanded to return to Egypt to bring Yahweh's people out from there so that they can worship God on Mt. Horeb. Here, "Yahweh" (יהוה) commands Moses to bring his people out of Egypt, and then "God" (האלהים) promises Moses through a "sign" (אות) that he will be with him, stressing that it is the deity (האלהים) who commissions him. In both cases, "being with you" becomes a marker of the commissioning. In Gideon's case, after building an altar to commemorate Yahweh (יהוה) at Ophrah, Gideon then begins his task.

Ironic in terms of the appellation "mighty warrior" from Yahweh's messenger, Gideon's first act is to tear down the altar of Baal at night, for Gideon is "too afraid of his father's house and of the people of the town to do it by day" (6:27).[85] Gideon should get credit for being a "warrior" by tearing down the altar of Baal, but it is hard to view him at

---

commissioning scene Yahweh shifts between appearing through a messenger and as himself. The later tradition believes that only Moses has seen Yahweh "face to face." See Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 107, and note Deut 34:10-12.

[84] The Hebrew terms האלהים and יהוה appear alternately in Exodus 3. Take Exod 3:7-12 for instance. The discourse between the divinity and Moses starts with יהוה and ends with האלהים, interposed with Moses' query to האלהים. Obviously, the verses with יהוה are traditionally attributed to J and those with האלהים to E. Something like the same alternation of J and E also appears in the Gideon narrative.

[85] Note that Gideon also bore the name Jerubbaal (ירבעל), as stated in Judg 7:1, suggesting some religious ambiguity at least on the part of his parents. In Robert G. Boling's comment, "[E]xamples of Yahwists bearing baal-names are not uncommon . . . and may here and there be taken as evidence of religious syncretism." Besides, "in the period under consideration an 'Israelite' was only recognizable by his own confession of faith in Yahweh, irrespective of his parents' religious preference." See Boling, *Judges: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 6A; New York: Doubleday, 1976), 135.

that point as "mighty." At any rate, he does as Yahweh (יהוה) has bidden, and he is successful.

After the completion of Yahweh's first designated assignment, Gideon is turning into a warrior whose activities are reported in Judg 6:33-8:3. His military action against the Midianites is initiated through the possession of Yahweh's "spirit" (רוח) (6:34), which signals the infusing of divine power.[86] The so-called "mighty" Gideon still reveals his lack of faith in "God's" (האלהים) designation of him by saying "if you [האלהים] indeed will deliver Israel by my hand . . ." (6:36), requesting a supportive sign.

Following the victory over the oppressors there is an offer to Gideon by the Israelites, for him to become ruler over Israel. The offer is pleasing in that they want Gideon to set up a dynasty by saying, "[R]ule over us (מׇשׇל־בנו), you and your son and your grandson also" (8:22).[87] The intrigue here is that this request is the first popular invitation in the Book of Judges for a "judge" (שׁופט) (i.e., a temporary war leader) to become a regularized ruler. Furthermore, Gideon's son and grandson are put into consideration for the rulership. The offer is surely tempting, particularly at a time of troubles. Gideon, however, is presented as having no such ambition, so he replies that "I will not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you" (8:23). He shuts the door on a hereditary kingship for himself and his descendants. If Gideon had agreed with the

---

[86] Yahweh's "spirit" coming upon the judges is a special phenomenon which is reported several times in Judges. In addition to Judg 6:34, see 3:10; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 9; 15:14.

[87] Note the Hebrew imperative "rule" (מׇשׇל) used in this request and also in 9:22. Alberto J. Soggin argues that the term מׇשׇל, instead of מלך, is used deliberately to show the theocratic ideal the narrator seeks to emphasize for the pre-monarchical period. For details, see Soggin, *Judges: A Commentary* (trans. John Bowden; OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980), 158-59.

Israelites' offer, the first dynasty of Israel could have begun with Gideon and his sons. Moreover, his response in particular concludes with the essence of his theological reflection that "Yahweh will rule over you" (יהוה ימשׁל בכם) (8:23).[88] His confession manifests the notion that Yahweh is the one and only proper ruler/king of Israel. Gideon is presented as an advocate of a kind of theocracy.[89]

Weber compares Gideon's declination of the hereditary rulership with Jephthah's similar refusal of the offer by the elders of Gilead. As a war hero and, according to Weber, "an example of the instability and purely charismatic character of warlordism among tribes of pure cattle-breeders," Jephthah had an opportunity to have the dignity of a "chief" or "commander" (קצין) (Judg 11:6), presumably rather parallel to the position of a "ruler" (נגיד), but he refused the offer presented to him following the successful liberation of Israel from the oppression of the Ammonites.[90] Later, the army, in accord with the elders' proposal, gave him the dignified title of "head" (ראשׁ) (11:11), although it does not clearly imply an ongoing, i.e., routinized office, in cndtrast with the ongoing rulership offered to Gideon. Weber comments that Gideon turns down the offer of rulership and yet is willing

---

[88] There is no denying that Judg 8:22-23 contains anti-kingship sentiments. Some commentators even argue that Gideon accepted the offer and became king implicitly, though they have no clear textual support. Others insist that Gideon did turn down the offer and refused to become king. Judg 8:23 in its literal sense does state that Gideon declines the request. For details and further discussion, see Gerald E. Gerbrandt, *Kingship according to the Deuteronomistic History* (SBLDS 87; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 123-29.

[89] C. F. Burney considers Gideon's response as an affirmation of theocracy by indicating that "[T]he conception of Theocracy here put forward belongs to the later eighth century stage of prophetic thought." Gideon's reply here foreshadows an issue that would soon take place in 1 Samuel concerning kingship. See Burney, *The Book of Judges: With Introduction and Notes* (2[d] ed.; London: Rivingtons, 1930), 235.

[90] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 40.

to accept the people's contributions from the booty, with which he establishes a religious foundation.[91] Gideon plays the role of a priest, using an ephod he has made from the booty. He does decline the offer of to become an established political leader/ruler, but he creates an opportunity for himself as a religious leader.

If the narrative stopped here, Gideon would presumably have become at least a religious hero of ancient Israel. But it continues to develop with Gideon's interest in acting like a priest as seen in Judg 8:24-27, and the narrator adds a denunciation that "Gideon made an ephod . . . and all Israel prostituted themselves to it . . . and it became a snare to Gideon and to his family." The point that deserves comment lies not in Gideon's ephod or the snare but in the reference to Gideon's family, including Abimelech.

Abimelech himself is now, according to the tradition, striving for recognition and hereditary kingship, building on what his father actually rejected. The narrative of Abimelech's ambition offers him no sympathy at all, especially in contrast to Gideon, his father. Gideon, who became a temporary war leader by divine appointment. Abimelech, to the contrary, has not received any call from above but does have some support for his royal initiation from his Shechemite kinsfolk, all in keeping with the notion of a hereditary office.[92] Abimelech clears the field of candidates by killing a legendary seventy sons of Gideon to shut down the potential threat of another candidate for the (hereditary) kingship.[93] In the long run, Abimelech becomes the opposite of his father,

---

[91] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 40-41.

[92] Tammi J. Schneider, "Abimelech," *NIDB* 1:13.

[93] Gerbrandt (*Kingship*, 132) argues that "it is explicitly stated that Abimelech's crime was killing his brothers ([Judg] 9:24, 56), and that Shechem's crime was helping him to kill his brothers (9:24)." Note also the parallel with the assassination of seventy

Gideon, in his eagerness to grasp kingship. However, judging from the Israelites' offer for Gideon to be their ruler with hereditary rights, it was probably an easy transfer for Abimelech to press for the kingship for himself, with its implication of further hereditary succession. Abimelech failed, however, to establish himself as king, not generating much support (Judg 9:55-57).

3. Samuel as Intermediary: Attendant to Eli; "Judge"; "Prophet"; and the Issue of Leadership/Succession

The birth of Samuel is dramatic. According to the tradition, his birth was possible only because his mother, Hannah, immersed herself in fervent prayer to Yahweh, following many years of barrenness. He was born into an Ephraimite family. His father, Elkanah, had two wives, one of whom, Peninnah, had borne several children and had taunted Hannah for being a childless woman before she finally gave birth to Samuel. (Hannah had not been impressed by Elkanah's affirmation that, as the favorite wife of Elkanah, he, as a loving husband, was more important than ten sons; literally, he is quoted as saying "am I not better for you than ten sons?" (1 Sam 1:8). Hannah clearly thought otherwise.

The narratives about Samuel are intermingled with those of Eli, whose family experiences discord between Eli, the father, and his two sons. Therefore, the beginning of 1 Samuel impresses us with different kinds of succession issues. The internal conflict within families obviously fits with the bigger picture of the internal conflicts about leadership among the Israelites. Hannah had no child and was in conflict with Peninnah; Eli's sons were in conflict with their father. Both cases foreshadow the internal conflicts

---

sons of Ahab that was prompted by Jehu (2 Kgs 10:1-7).

within Israel.[94] Hannah's perseverance in seeking a son and her vow that she would dedicate her son to Yahweh (1 Sam 1:11) means that Samuel came into the world explicitly understood as a gift from Yahweh to Hannah and as destined to be devoted to the Lord which meant being entrusted to the mentoring of the (high) priest, Eli. Samuel later even becomes the *de facto* leader of Israel. In contrast, Eli's two sons are described as taking bribes (2:22) and are assigned by a "man of God" (איש־אלהים), in a retrospective speech, to an early death (2:27-34). But the issue of a predicted, enduring succession is pointedly stated in 1 Sam 2:35, over against the fate of Eli himself and his two sons. Yahweh announces "I will raise up for myself a *faithful* priest (כהן נאמן). . . . I will build him a *faithful* house (בית נאמן)" (*emphasis* added), i.e., a successful hereditary priestly office. Note Lyle M. Eslinger's comment:

> Included among his [Samuel's] activities is his priestly role, prepared for in [1 Samuel] 1-3 and implemented in chs. 7-12. The case for Samuel grows stronger when Samuel's origin and priestly apprenticeship are considered. One recalls that his birth to a barren woman bears the mark of divine intervention and purpose. He is Yahweh's all the days of his life (1:11, 28) and grows up as an *apprentice* to Eli (2:11, 18, 26; 3:1, 3). He wears the priestly clothing (2.18). Finally, the juxtaposition of the "outgoing" priests and the growing favor of Samuel in 2:25f foreshadow the succession.[95]

Though Samuel is not described as a divinely appointed successor for the (high) priest, Eli, he does become a *de facto* religious and political successor in several respects.

Samuel spent his childhood at the sanctuary in Shiloh, "serving" (משרת) Yahweh in the presence of Eli. He becomes a priest and serves under God's direction, having even

---

[94] Robert Polzin implies that the internal conflict within Elkanah's family is intended as a parable of Israel's internal struggle at this moment in its history. See Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History, Part Two: 1 Samuel* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), 18-30.

[95] Lyle M. Eslinger, *Kingship of God in Crisis: A Close Reading of 1 Samuel 1-12* (BLS 10; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 139, *emphasis* added.

received a four-fold vision (1 Sam 3:4-16) and having been identified as known to all Israel as "Samuel, faithful as a prophet for Yahweh" (נאמן שמואל לנביא ליהוה) (3:20). Samuel's call while a "youthful attendant of Yahweh" (2:11), in the priestly tradition—not an attendant of Eli—came during the night, and Yahweh continued to reveal himself to the young Samuel (3:21), though otherwise the word of Yahweh" (דבר־יהוה) was rare in those days" (3:1). In the tradition, the young Samuel has first known the word of Yahweh in a nighttime commissioning. Yahweh initially called him three times, and each time he thought it was Eli who had summoned him. Eli dismissed the first two calls when Samuel came to him and asked him why he, Eli, had summoned Samuel, but with the third summons Eli realized that it was Yahweh who had been calling Samuel. He told Samuel how to answer if the voice appeared again: Samuel was instructed to respond, saying, "Speak, Yahweh, for *your servant* (עבדך) is listening" (3:9; *emphasis* added). The call does occur again and it *is* Yahweh calling him. Yahweh tells Samuel what he has determined to do: the elimination of Eli's priesthood and that of his sons. (Eli's two sons are subsequently killed by the Philistines on the same day; Eli dies upon hearing of the loss as well of the ark of the covenant that had been in their care.)

After telling Eli what Yahweh has told him, Samuel has become a person for whom Yahweh is present and with whom Yahweh communicates ("Samuel grew up and Yahweh as with him and none of his words fell upon the ground") (ויגדל שמואל ויהוה היה עמו ולא־הפיל מכל־דבריו ארצה) (1 Sam 3:19). Apparently, Samuel is now Yahweh's spokesman, as "Yahweh revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of Yahweh (בדבר יהוה)" (3:21). Moreover, the tradition tells us that Samuel later presides over a

"band of prophets" (להקת הנביאים) (19:20).[96] Samuel therefore is described not only as a priest but also as a prophetic leader, called by Yahweh. In addition, Samuel is a nazirite (implied in the MT of 1 Sam 1:11 and made explicit in some versions), consecrated by his mother to Yahweh's service. He is the *de facto* priestly leader and also, at the same time, a prophetic leader.[97]

---

[96] Weber maintains that "[t]he miracle stories included in the Book of Kings derive from the organized schools among the Northern Nebiim" and "likewise the stories of the prehistoric seers, Samuel, above all, show that there existed circles which indeed withdrew not only from courtly but likewise from school-organized prophetic influence." (Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 195). That Samuel is the head of such a prophetic band indicates that we cannot ignore this dimension of Samuel's life.

[97] The Hebrew term נזיר, "nazirite," derivesd from נזר, which refers to "consecratio," and "being set apart" (see Exod 29:6; Lev 21:12; Num 6:7), so it demonstrates a dedication to Yahweh that implied distinctive behavior related to observing prohibitions regarding hair cutting, drinking wine, or touching the dead. The earliest nazirites, like Samson in the period of the Judges (11th-12th centuries BCE.), appear to play the role as a life calling. But Samuel, as an example of the nazirites in the later times, is presumably one for a temporary period as payment of the vow of Hannah, his mother. Hannah's vow (1 Sam 1:11) and her pledge (1:22) make explicit that the child of promise will become a nazirite. P. Kyle McCarter's considers 1 Sam 1:11, for which MT reads ונתתיו ליהוה כל־ימי חייו ומורה לא־יעלה על־ראשו ("Then I will give him to Yahweh all the days of his life, and a razor will not touch his head"), as abrupt in mentioning the "razor" as an allusion to the nazirite status, especially in contrast to the longer text of the LXX which reads καὶ δώσω αὐτὸν ἐνώπιόν σου δοτὸν ἕως ἡμέρας θανάτου [not very temporary!] αὐτοῦ καὶ οἶνον καὶ μέθυσμα οὐ πίεται καὶ σίδηρος οὐκ ἀναβήσεται ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ. In Samson's case, Samson's mother was instructed by an "angel" of Yahweh before conception that "no razor is to come on his head, for the boy is to be a nazirite to God from birth" (Judg 13:5). McCarter further points out that a possible construction of 1 Sam 1:11 of LXX and 4QSam[a] indicates that Samuel is a nazirite with the explicit mention of the term נזיר in 4QSam[a]. He also reminds us that Num 6:1-21 clearly defines the nazirite status, which Hannah wants Samuel to have, as including the possibility of being "endowed with certain charismatic gifts as a warrior." Samson (Judg 13:5, 7) is the primary example. See McCarter, *I Samuel*, 53-54, 56, 61; Tony W. Cartledge, "Nazir, Nazirite," *NIDB* 4:241.

As for Samuel being a prophet and a nazirite, Weber states, with Samuel as an instance, that the naziriteship which considers Samuel as a war leader against the Philistines had a close relation to the prophetic role, in which Samuel serves as a prophet and head of the prophetic group. Weber concludes his statement that the shading off into one another between the nazirite and the prophetic roles is "in perfect agreement with

When we turn to the "important crossroads in the story of 1 Samuel,"[98] 1 Sam 7:3-17 tells us that Samuel also serves as a "judge" (שׁופט), or more appropriately, a military leader. Deuteronomistic theology is exemplified in 1 Sam 7:3-17, stressing that victory is a result of repentance and faithfulness. Samuel demands that the Israelites make up their minds concerning which of the gods they shall turn their heart to. They need to decide at this moment that their hearts should be directed to Yahweh and that they should serve him alone without thinking of worshiping any other deities, such as Baal or Astarte. As a leader, Samuel persuades the people to repent and be faithful by way of the cleansing ritual in which they drew water and poured it out before Yahweh at Mizpah (1 Sam 7:6). Samuel, plainly, is making up for the losses Israel has suffered under Eli and his sons. As mentioned, Samuel's central importance signals an end to Eli's priesthood yet marks a new beginning not only for himself but for Israel as well. The new "judge" (שׁופט) is going to lead Israel back to Yahweh through repentance and faithfulness, and we now are able to see a new path for Israel to follow religiously and theologically.

In addition to bringing reconciliation with Yahweh, Samuel also brings victory in the battle against the Philistines who have oppressed Israel for a long while. Samuel once more reveals his capacity where Eli's sons showed corruption. 1 Sam 7:7-14 relate how Israel fights against the Philistines and triumphs over them. The narrator reports that the Philistines were defeated and not able to intrude into the territory of Israel; above all,

---

what is known of other organizations of crusaders." See Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 96.

[98] Bruce C. Birch has suggested that 1 Samuel 7 is an "important crossroads" in which we find two strands of Israel's story, conducted by "God's word" and "God's hand," coming into harmony. We can also see internal conflict along with external threat mixed up in this chapter where Samuel, as a 'judge,' leads Israel to overcome the troubles in sight. See Birch, "Samuel," *NIB* 2:1015-16.

Yahweh is now lending his hand to Israel, under Samuel's leadership, against the Philistines. Even the enigmatic Amorites make peace with Israel. The following verses (15-17)[99] portray Samuel as a war leader just like the major "judges" (שׁפטים) (Judg 3:7-10, 28-30; 7:1-23), with the distinction that he is not on the battlefield with the Israelites.[100] Besides, Samuel is one of only two "judges" who engages in "ongoing judicial activity."[101]

4. Samuel and the Question of Succession

a. Samuel and His Sons

The tradition advises us that Samuel in his old age apparently attempted to institutionalize at least a segment of his range of "offices," viz., that of (judicial) "judge." "He appointed his sons (Joel and Abijah) "judges" for Israel" (וישׂם את־בניו שׁפטים לישׂראל) (1 Sam 8:1, *emphasis* added), based in Beersheba. His two sons, however, were unlike their father; they proved to be corrupt. Whatever their range of duties, apparently focused on judicial functions, "they were bent on gain, they accepted bribes, and they subverted justice" (1 Sam 8:2), and the situation was serious. In response, "all the Israelite elders"

---

[99] Note that the reference in 1 Sam 7:15 to the effect that "Samuel "judged" (שׁפט) Israel all the days of his life" affirms that Samuel has been a "judge" throughout his adult life.

[100] Samuel's absence from the battlefield is possibly because he was a nazirite (1 Sam 1:11), as discussed above. Nazirites, according to Scripture, are not allowed to defile themselves by contact with the dead, even including close kin (Num 6:6-7), though Samson seems an exception. The battlefield is a place where the contact with the dead is too frequent for Samuel to be there. Theoretically, Samuel, as a nazirite, should avoid getting onto the battlefield. Therefore, even though he acts like a war leader, he does not get involved in the battles himself.

[101] The other one is Deborah. (Judg 4:4-5; 1 Sam 7:15-17). See David Jobling, *1 Samuel* (BO; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1998), 72.

gathered at Ramah to meet with Samuel and register their complaints. In light of the corruption of the sons and the advanced age of Samuel, they proposed a radical break and asked Samuel—entrusting the task to him—to appoint a *king* "to *judge* us like all the nations" (1 Sam 8:5; emphasis added). Samuel's attempt to arrange for a hereditary succession, whatever the range of responsibilities might be assigned to his sons, failed in this succession fails because his sons—portrayed basically as judicial figures—are regarded corrupt ("they engaged in bribery and subverted justice" [ויקחו־שׁחד ויטו משׁפט]; 8:3), so the elders of Israel rejected their leadership (8:5). The sons failed in their assignment and had no validation from the community.

Samuel's reported reluctance about the request to appoint a king is evidenced in his immediate response to Yahweh, in which he takes the request personally, thinking the elders of Israel are trying to get rid of him. (After all, the confidence he had in his sons proved to be a big mistake.) Yahweh responds to Samuel and tells him to listen to their request; Yahweh further advises Samuel that "they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them" (8:7). Their quest for a king "to judge us like all the nations" implies that Yahweh's kingship, with reliance on charismatically selected leaders, is not sufficient. In that respect, Samuel failed on the issue of succession.

Yahweh advises Samuel not to take the request personally (even though Yahweh takes it personally!); in addition, Yahweh advises Samuel to give Israel a solemn warning about the ways of any king who is chosen to rule over them (8:9). Definitely, Yahweh's reaction is here presented as viewing the institution of a monarchy as far removed from his will and command, but Yahweh allows it to take place in keeping with the people's insistence.

It is not hard for us to see the struggle and the tension portrayed between the will of Yahweh and that of the people of Israel. Samuel, as Yahweh's spokesman, has to play the intercessory role between both parties. He has to use powers granted from Yahweh to deliver "the words of Yahweh" (8:10) and to let the people know the hazards of their desired change (8:10-22). The "judges" appear in a time of need; they are not present constantly; they are not immediately at hand. The presence of kings is different; kingship exists once the selection happens and the individual kingship is expected to endure until the death of the king, with hereditary succession. But the king is always there no matter what the situation is; in good times or difficult times he is always there, ready and obligated to protect them and do their bidding. In addition, however, Samuel stresses that the king, unlike the "judge" (שׁופט), will exploit people; the people should get ready for the king's demands: taxes, animals, human labor, all mainly for the king's own needs. In brief, the Israelites will have to endure the consequences of what they are asking for. The response by the people was again to press their demand for a king: "We must have a king over us, that we may be like all the other nations: Let our king rule over us and go out at our head and fight our battles." (1 Sam 8:19b-20)

So far the Biblical tradition has provided two unsuccessful attempts at hereditary succession: the Gideon-Abimelech case and the Samuel and sons case. Each instance demonstrated that the actual conduct of the possible candidate, Abimelech or Samuel's sons, failed to gain public validation. Now Samuel was presented with a new opportunity.

b. Samuel and Saul

There are two account of the selection of Saul as the first accepted king of all Israel: 1 Sam 9:1-10:16, selection by direct divine revelation followed by an ecstatic

experience; and 1 Sam 10:17-24, selection by lot accompanied by public acclamation.

In the first account, Saul has been dispatched by his father to find some asses who have strayed. He and the accompanying "servant" (נער) at first have no success, but, at the suggestion of his servant, he seeks assistance from a "man of God" in the area who is known for unusual insight and who might help in return sought for an appropriate gift. So they searched out the "man of God," whom they identify as a "seer," and found him in the area of Zuph, where he was to bless a sacrifice. (The Lord had already alerted this man, i.e., Samuel, that there would be a Benjaminite in attendance and that he should anoint this visitor as "ruler [נגיד] over my people Israel" [1 Sam 9:16]). This new "ruler "will deliver my people from the hands of the Philistines" (9:16). Samuel began the process by advising Saul that the stray asses had been found but that Saul and all his father's house were the real find. This puzzled Saul, but he accompanied Samuel as a special guest at the local banquet and that evening Samuel had a talk with Saul (9:22-24). The next morning, as they were leaving the city, Samuel took Saul aside, anointing his head with oil, kissing him and saying: "Has not Yahweh anointed you as ruler over his allotted people?" (הלוא כי־משחך יהוה על־נחלתו לנגיד) (10:1). Note the longer text preserved in the Septuagint, "Has not Yahweh anointed you prince over his people Israel? It is you who will muster the people of Yahweh! It is you who will free them from the grip of their enemies all around."[102] Samuel also told Saul of various signs and events that would follow, advising Saul that at Gibeah-elohim, the residence of a Philistine prefect, he would meet "a band of prophets coming down from the high place," preceded by a group

[102] The translation of the Septuagint text is that of McCarter, *I Samuel,* 166. Note his discussion, pp. 171, 180-81

of musicians and prophesying. As for Saul himself, "Then the spirit of Yahweh will rush upon you, and you will prophesy (i.e., become ecstatic) along with them and be turned into another man" (1 Sam 10:3-7).[103] The narrative concludes with the notice that when Samuel and Saul parted, to meet again at Gilgal, "God gave him [Saul] another heart and all these signs came to pass (v. 9; note also vv. 10-11). This personal transformation on the part of Saul serves to validate his anointing as "ruler" (נגיד) over Israel.

There is a second account of the designation of Saul as king (or ruler) over Israel through a sorting ritual at Mizpah, presided over by Samuel, in 1 Sam 10:17-27a. With the people of Israel in attendance, organized by tribes and clans, the lots designated the tribe of Benjamin, then narrowed down to the clan of the Matrites, then (with the Septuagint) the clan of the Matrites, man by man, finally selecting Saul, son of Kish. Once Saul was located and presented to the people, Samuel asked them, "Do you see the one whom the Lord has chosen? There is none like him among all the people. And all the people acclaimed him, shouting, 'Long live the king." (! Sam 10:24). So Saul is accepted by the people.

c. The Deposition of Saul

But those who are installed by charismatic figures can also be deposed by that same person. And such was the fate of Saul, as happened when he met up with the delayed Samuel at Gilgal, having proceeded to offer sacrifice on his own. Samuel announced that this preempting of Samuel's role meant that instead of a lasting dynasty, Saul's kingship would not endure. "Yahweh will seek out a man after his own heart, and Yahweh will appoint him ruler [נגיד] over his people, because you did not abide by what

[103] McCarter, *1 Samuel,* 166, whose translation is followed here.

Yahweh had commanded you" (1 Sam 13:14).

d. Samuel and David

Samuel proceeded to designate a king-in-waiting, as Saul continued as king, even with some wavering support from Samuel (1 Sam 15, for example), until his death in battle with the Philistines. Saul did have a successor son, Ish-bosheth (Esh-baal), who briefly ruled over a remnant kingdom in the north following his father's death, but the Saulide line did not survive the opposition of David, the king-in-waiting who, after the death of Saul, ruled from Hebron in the south before uniting all Israel under his rule at his new capital, Jerusalem.

In view of Saul's missteps, Samuel was commanded by Yahweh to anoint a new king from among Jesse's sons, even while Saul was still actively serving as king. At this point David, the one who was "after [Yahweh's] own heart" and intended to "rule over his people" (1 Sam 13:14), closes the curtain on Saul in 1 Samuel 16. The reported conflicts between Saul and David quickly led to David being "officially" designated by Samuel as the future king.

In 1 Samuel 16, Samuel, having ended his direct connection with Saul (1 Sam 15:35), God advised Samuel to proceed with a new anointing. He sends Samuel to meet with Jesse of Bethlehem, as God had chosen one of Jesse's sons as the new king. Samuel met Jesse's sons as part of a sacrifice in Bethlehem. Seven sons pass before Samuel in review, but none of them had the "heart"—the interior qualities—that God was seeking. Upon inquiry, Jesse told Samuel that there was yet one more son, the youngest of them all, who was away tending the flock. When the youngest one, David, was finally presented: "He was ruddy-cheeked, bright-eyed, and handsome. And the Lord said, 'Rise and anoint

him, for he is the one.'" (! Sam 16:12). Samuel did so, in the presence of the brothers," and the spirit of the Lord gripped David from that day on." (v. 13). 1 Sam 16:14, the following verse, notes that "the spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul," being replaced by "an evil spirit from the Lord." The full acclamation of David came much later. Saul had been anointed; Saul had been deposed and replaced.

e. Ahijah of Shiloh and the Anointing and Deposing of Jeroboam I

During the latter years of the reign of Solomon, the prophet Ahijah of Shiloh privately approached the Ephraimite Jeroboam, son of Nebat, who was one of King Soloamon's important officials and who, at that time, was wearing a new robe. . In a fulsome resume of Deuteronomistic tradition and its non-institutionalizing, conditional approval, Ahijah designated Jeroboam as the (partial) successor of Solomon, while deposing Solomon's heir apparent from rule over all Israel.

> Abijah took hold of the new robe he (Jeroboam) was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces "Take ten pieces," he sad to Jeroboam. "For thus said the Lord, the God of Israel: 'I am about to tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hands, and I will give you ten tribes. But one tribe shall remain for the sake of My servant, David, and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel. For they have forsaken Me; they have worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Phoenicians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites; they have not walked in My ways, or done what is pleasing to Me, or [kept] My laws and rules, as his father David did. However, I will not take the entire kingdom away from him, but will keep him as "ruler" (נגיד) as long as he lives for the sake of My servant David whom I chose, and who kept My commandments and My laws. But I will take the kingship out of the hands of his son and give it to you—the ten tribes. To his son I will give one tribe, so that there may be a lamp for My servant David forever before Me in Jerusalem to establish My name. But you have been chosen by Me; reign wherever you wish, and you shall be king over Israel. If you heed all that I command you, and walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight, keeping My laws and commandments as My servant David did, then I will be with you and I will build for you a lasting dynasty as I did for David. I hereby give Israel to you and I will chastise David's descendants for that [sin], though not forever.'" (1 Kgs 11:31-39; NJPS)[104]

[104] Note that the Septuagint text offers an additional account of Jeroboam and his

This is presented as a private act, with no report of any change by Jeroboam or any public response. The actual occasion of the change in the kingship is described in 1 Kgs 12:15 as a transfer directly orchestrated by God, who "brought it about in order to fulfill the promise that the Lord had made through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat." At that time there was a public acclamation of separation under Jeroboam rather than acceptance of the terms of Solomon's son, Rehoboam:

> We have no portion in David, No share in Jesse's son! To your tents, O Israel! Now look to your own house, O David. (1 Kgs 12:16)[105]

But in a demonstration of the tenuousness of charismatic authority, Ahijah of Shiloh enters again into the status of Jeroboam I on the occasion of a disguised consultation of Ahijah by Jeroboam's wife in regard to an ailing son. Ahijah gives the queen a message for Jeroboam:

> Thus said Yahweh, the God of Israel: "I raised you up from among the people and made you ruler [נגיד] over my people Israel. I tore away the kingdom from the house of David and gave it to you. But you have not been like my servant David, who kept my commandments and followed me with all his heart, doing only what was right in my sight. You have acted worse than all those who preceded you; you have gone and made for yourself other gods and molten images to irritate me; you have cast me behind your back. Therefore I will bring disaster upon the house of Jeroboam and will cut off from Jeroboam every male, bond and free, in Israel. I will sweep away the house of Jeroboam utterly, as dung is swept away. Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the town shall be devoured by dogs; and anyone who dies in the open country shall be eaten by the birds of the air; for Yahweh has spoken." (1 Kgs 14:7-11)

To this denunciation, Ahijah adds even more by advising the queen that "Yahweh will raise up a king over Israel who will destroy the house of Jeroboam." (2 Kgs 14:14)

---

rise to the throne in 3 Kgdms 12:24b-f.

[105]Note the parallel text in 2 Chr 10:15.

Whatever the realities of the situation may have been, it is clear that charismatic initiation of a king or ruler in ancient Israel is represented in the Deuteronomistic tradition as a conditional form of institutionalization. Solomon's Davidic legacy could be restricted and prophetic endorsement could be reversed. Jeroboam's son, Nadab, briefly succeeded his father (2 Kgs 14:20; 15:26), but was soon overthrown by Baasha.

f. Jehu ben Hanani and the Installation and Deposition of Baasha

1 Kgs 16:1-4, using the formulaic language of 2 Kgs 14:7-11, reports the rise and fall of the successor to the line of Jeroboam I:

> The word of Yahweh came to Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha. Because I lifted you up from the dust and made you a ruler [נגיד] over my people Israel, but you followed the way of Jeroboam and caused my people Israel to sin, vexing Me with their sins—I am going to sweep away Baasha and his house. I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat. Anyone belonging to Baasha who dies in the town shall be devoured by dogs and anyone belong to him who dies in the open country shall be devoured by the birds of the sky.[106]

Baasha reportedly ruled for about twenty-three years (Asa 3 to Asa 26; 1 Kgs 15:33; 16:8) and his son, Elah, succeeded him. Elah himself ruled for only two years before being killed in a military coup led by Zimri (1 Kgs 16:8-9), who also reportedly killed off all the male members of the House of Baasha (1 Kgs 16:9-14). Zimri himself ruled for only seven days, as he was quickly overthrown in another military coup led by Omri, the military commander, who was acclaimed as king by "all Israel" (1 Kgs 16:17).

The House of Omri, with its four kings, was itself brought to an end by the military coup led by Jehu ben Nimshi, a coup initiated by the anointing of Jehu, under the direction of Elisha in the last of the prophetic anointings of kings in ancient Israel, as

[106] Note the restatement of this in 1 Kgs 16:7.

discussed in Chapter Five, with a hereditary succession of four ore kings. The early instability of kingship in the Kingdom of Israel, and the contrast with the remarkably successful routinization of Davidic hereditary kingship in the Kingdom of Judah, illustrates the varied outcomes of charismatically inspired institution building.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHARISMA AND INSTITUTION BUILDING AMONG THE PROPHETS

We have discussed how charisma may function in terms of institution building in ancient Israel, as exemplified by the story of the transfer of authority from Moses to Joshua, and the charismatic initiation of routinized kingship, as illustrated by the story of David's kingship. So this chapter shifts the attention to prophecy and the issue of how charisma and institution building may unfold in reference to charismatic prophecy. This section will begin with the one possible instance of hereditary succession in the interesting references to Hanani and Jehu, ben Hanani. Following that, we will turn to the question of an apparent attempt to institutionalize prophecy through the prophetic bands in the time of Samuel and the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) who flourished in the period of Elijah and Elisha. The succession of Elijah by Elisha, involving Elisha as Elijah's "attendant" (משרת), is the second, though primary, focus of this section which begins by taking up the instances of Elijah and his "servant" (נער) mentioned in 1 Kings 18 and, possibly the same "servant" (נער) person, in 1 Kings 19 as well as Elisha's role as Elijah's "attendant" (משרת) (1 Kgs 19:21; see also 2 Kgs 3:11-12, with reference to Elisha as someone "who poured water on the hands of Elijah")), and the role of Elisha's "servant" (נער), Gehazi (2 Kgs 4:12, 25; 5:20; 8:4), an unnamed "attendant" (משרת) (2 Kgs 4:43), and another appearance of an unnamed "attendant" (משרת) and "servant" (נער) (2 Kgs 6:15).[1] Finally, this chapter concludes with a discussion of the roles of prophetic assistants as described in the narratives of the Book of Kings.

A. The Prophetic Bands as a Possible Attempt to Institutionalize Prophecy

[1] The unnamed attendant/servant in this passage and in 2 Kgs 4:43 has been identified by some scholars as Gehazi (e.g., Engelken, *TDOT* 15, 508), but such an identification is never explicit in the text.

In 2 Kings 9 Elisha sends "one of the sons of the prophets" (אחד מבני הנביאים) (v. 1) to anoint Jehu as king over Israel. This member of the band, later identified as the "prophet [Elisha]'s servant" (הנער הנביא) or, more literally, "the young man, the servant [who is] the prophet" (הנער הנער הנביא) (v. 4), suggesting an apprentice is instructed to deliver an oracle using the prophetic formula "thus says Yahweh" (כה־אמר יהוה) (v. 6), though the oracle is not directly from the revelation of Yahweh but from the instruction of Elisha (v. 4)! From the perspective of Jehu, the recipient of the oracle, the "apprentice" appears as an actual prophet, speaking for Yahweh. There is no mention to Jehu of the "prophet" being sent by Elisha, and Jehu acts on the basis of the oracle—an oracle that expands incredibly on the words supplied to the "prophet" by Elisha, thus illustrating how a member of the prophetic band might be understood as an independent prophet. Another intimation of succession from within the prophetic band is found in 1 Kgs 20:35-43, in which a member of the "sons of the prophets" (מבני הנביאים) declares a direct oracle from Yahweh to an unnamed king. These examples raise the question of attempts to institutionalize prophecy. There is also some evidence of special "sight."[2] But if so, the attempts were not successful in terms of anything beyond an occasional one-time oracle or vision (in the tradition).

B. A Possible Instance of Hereditary Succession: Hanani and Jehu ben Hanani

The Hebrew Bible does not give us any explicit example of hereditary prophetic succession. The only possibility is the relationship between Hanani (2 Chr 16:7), whose name is a hypocoristic form of a name such as Hananiah,[3] and Jehu ben Hanani (1 Kings 16:1, 7; 2 Chr

[2] See Robert R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society*, 141. Note the special "sight" of Elisha's "attendant" (משׁרת) in 2 Kgs 6:15-17, though the vision is interpreted for him by Elisha, the man of God.

[3] Note the related hypocoristic name, Hanan, son of Igdaliah, identified as "a man of

19:2; see also 2 Chr 20:34). They are close enough together in time to be considered as father-son, though in connection with a relatively common personal name, Hanani. 2 Chr 16:7 mentions "the seer Hanani" (חנני הראה), who rebuked King Asa of Judah (905-874 B.C.E.) toward the end of his reign for his reliance on the King of Aram rather than on Yahweh.[4] 1 Kgs 16:1-4 refers to a Jehu ben Hanani (יהוא בן־חנני) who deposes King Baasha of Israel (902-886), and 1 Kgs 16:7 and 12 identify Jehu as a "prophet" (נביא). 2 Chr 19:1-3, using a different title, mentions "Jehu, son of Hanani, the visionary" (יהוא בן־חנני החזה),[5] who rebukes King Jehoshaphat of Judah (874-850). Moreover, 2 Chr 20:34 refers to the deeds of King Jehoshaphat as written down in the Annals of Jehu son of Hanani as incorporated in the Book of the Kings of Israel, implying that Jehu lived well into the reign of Jehoshaphat. So Jehu's "career" would have lasted more than 40 years, which is feasible, and the time-span would allow him to be a son of the Hanani associated, apparently in his later years, with King Asa of Judah. The shift between the Northern Kingdom (Jehu ben Hanani) and the Southern Kingdom (Hanani and Jehu ben Hanani), is also conceivable. Accordingly, it is plausible that Hanani and Jehu ben Hanani constitute an instance in the Hebrew Bible of charismatic/prophetic father-son succession. The Hanani-Jehu ben Hanani case is the one and only possible instance in the Hebrew Bible

---

God" in Jer 35:4.

[4] Sara Japhet suggests that 2 Chr 16:7-9, a theological conclusion that follows "the Chronicler's standard procedure," is "drawn by a prophet, who also warns of imminent consequences." She compares Jehu's appearing before Jehoshaphat for the war in Ramoth-Gilead to Shemaiah's approaching Rehoboam during Shishak's campaign (2 Chr 12:5-8) and the prophet Eliezer ben Dodavahu confronting Jehoshaphat for the "ships" project (2 Chr 20:37). She points out that the political event in the case of 2 Chr 16:7-9 "follows without interference the original lines of 1 Kings 15, the prophetic response acting as a bridge between this and the future history of Asa." See Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary* (OTL; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1993), 734. See also Mordechai Cogan, *I Kings*, 410.

[5] For further analysis on the patronym, see Japhet, *Chronicles*, 734. For the role Jehu and Hanani play, see Cogan, *I Kings*, 408-9.

regarding a prophetic sequence involving heredity. The traditions, however, have no interest in this possible succession. A case of charismatic prophetic succession that is unambiguous in the Hebrew Bible is the Elijah-Elisha succession, in which there is no hint of heredity, though reference is made to divine appointment as well as the relationship between a master and an apprentice, as also found in the Moses-Joshua succession, as discussed in Chapter Two.

C. Elements of a Possible Institutionalization

1. The Prophetic Groups in the Time of Samuel—Ecstasy and the Bestowal of Spirit

This study has introduced the roles of the "servant" (נער) and the "attendant" (משרת) in relation to the question of prophetic succession and now turns to the prophetic groups, referred to as a "prophetic group" (חבל נביאים) and a "band of prophets" (להקת הנביאים), with reference to the formation and function of such groups.

The "prophetic group" (חבל נביאים), as noted, is a phrase for a prophetic group that is characterized by an enthusiastic display of ecstasy.[6] The label appears only twice in the Hebrew

[6] H. P. Smith identifies the חבל נביאים as a "company of dervishes engaged in their religious exercises," of which the enthusiastic nature is "evident from the later narrative and from the parallel account," 1 Sam 19:18-24; see Smith, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Samuel* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1977), 68. Hertzberg (*Samuel*, 85) also points out that the חבל נביאים is inspired by music in order to be sent into a prophetic ecstasy. McCarter (*I Samuel*, 182) adds that "The hand that shaped the stories of Samuel and Saul viewed the prophet as a sober mediator between God and man, whose leadership responsibilities were unlimited except by the divine will itself and whose complete integration into the social structure could therefore be taken for granted. But here we encounter another aspect of the phenomenon of prophecy. These prophets, like Samuel, are recipients of divine inspiration, but in them it expresses itself in the form of ecstatic practices of an orgiastic type, which set them apart from other individuals. Examples of such supernormal group behavior abound in the annals of the religions of the world—the case of the various orders of dervishes in Islam is only the most obvious—and on the basis of theses parallels one can fill out the scant biblical evidence to give a fairly complete description of an Israelite prophetic troop of the type Saul encounters. Expressions of possession by the spirit of God must have included singing and dancing to the accompaniment of such musical instruments as those listed here in v. 5, and the rites may have involved self-flagellation or mutilation as well (cf. 1 Kgs 18:28). In addition, we should think of more sedate displays of ecstasy, such as trances and ecstatic fits (cf. 19:22-24), among these

Bible, both times in 1 Samuel 10. 1 Samuel 9 contains an episode in which Samuel is commissioned by Yahweh to anoint Saul to be a "ruler" (נגיד) over Israel (9:16), and 1 Samuel 10 presents an episode in which Saul encounters a "prophetic group" (חבל נביאים) (1 Sam 10:5, 10), as foretold by Samuel, and becomes transformed like one of them.

The climax of the initial anointing of Saul as the future king is that Saul will encounter a "prophetic group" (חבל נביאים) "coming down from the "high place" (במה) with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre playing in front of them" and, above all, they will be מתנבאים, that is "falling into prophetic ecstasy" (v. 5).[7] Besides, Samuel adds, within the context of that prophetic band Yahweh's spirit (רוח) will overcome Saul, who will then engage in prophetic ecstasy as the "prophetic group" (חבל נביאים) do, and "become another [or a different] man" (v. 6). All of this curious behavior—out of character for Saul—signals that God is with Saul (v. 7). Yahweh's presence with Saul gives him sufficient strength to do whatever is needed. What Samuel refers to here is a sign of God's special designation of Saul.[8]

---

several activities, which taken together are collectively called 'prophesying.' . . . by all accounts such behavior is highly contagious, as Saul himself discovers." See also Grabbe, *Priests*, 67, 110-11; Zevit, *Religions of Ancient Israel*, 499; Albertz, *Israelite Religion*, 2:479.

Another phrase for such a prophetic group occurs in 1 Sam 19:20, in the episode in which Saul "prophesies" (i.e., becomes ecstatic) in a negative way. The phrase is להקת הנביאים, meaning "the band of prophets," apparently synonymous with חבל נביאים, particularly in that both phrases emphasize the group as featuring group ecstasy as a characteristic prophetic activity. McCarter (*1 Samuel*, 329) notes that "[T]he activity of the company [להקת הנביאים] is prophecy, that is, group ecstasy . . . animated by the spirit of God. . . , which spreads contagiously to each newly arriving troop of Saul's emissaries in its turn."

[7] מתנבאים is a *hithpa'el* participle masculine plural absolute of נבא. This study agrees with the commentators who regard מתנבאים as "prophetic ecstasy" or "ecstatic frenzy." See Hutton, *Charisma and Authority*, 88-91; McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 182; Uffenheimer, *Early Prophecy*, 364; Lindblom, *Prophecy*, 48; Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel*, 77; and also the study by K.-P. Adam, "'And He Behaved like a Prophet among Them" (1 Sam 10:11b)," *WO* 39 (2009): 3-57.

[8] A similar situation takes place when Moses encourages Joshua not to be afraid. Moses has summoned Joshua before all Israel and tells him that Yahweh will be with him (Deut 31:7-8),

1 Samuel 10 begins with the anointing of Saul by Samuel, identified in 1 Samuel 9 as a "seer" (ראה) (vv. 9, 11, 18, 19), a "prophet" (נביא) (v. 9), and a "man of God" (איש האהים) (vv. 6, 10). Samuel confirms the anointing with a rhetorical question to Saul, הלוא כי־משׁחך יהוה על־נחלתו לנגיד ("Has Yahweh not anointed you as ruler over his inheritance?") (v. 1).[9] S. R. Driver indicates that the LXX preserves a longer text than the MT of 1 Sam 10:1, which he regards as original.[10] Therefore, it is necessary to put the longer version of 1 Sam 10:1 of the LXX into discussion to see how Samuel confirms the anointing of Saul in terms of Saul's responsibilities as king of Israel: καὶ σὺ ἄρξεις ἐν λαῷ κυρίου καὶ σὺ σώσεις αὐτὸν ἐκ χειρὸς ἐχθρῶν αὐτοῦ κυκλόθεν ("You shall reign over the people of Yahweh and you shall save them from the hands of their enemies all around") (v. 1). Samuel's confirmation affirms Saul's legitimacy as king and his responsibility to protect his people from "their enemies all around." After the anointing, Samuel responds to Saul's concern about the missing donkeys he has been looking for, noting that for his father the missing donkeys have been a worry. Instead, Saul's absence is now his father's concern. In addition, Samuel predicts the special events that will occur when Saul leaves to return home, and his prediction is fulfilled, just as Saul's "servant" (נער) says, כל אשׁר־ידבר בוא יבוא ("whatever he says certainly comes true") (1 Sam 9:6), as they were on their way to visit

---

and with Yahweh's re-commissioning of Joshua with the divine presence (Josh 1:5, 9), Joshua learns that he has nothing to be afraid of.

[9] S. R. Driver notes that the rhetorical question beginning with הלוא כי is "a good Hebrew expression" which can also be found in 2 Sam 13:28 (הלוא כי אנכי צויתי אתכם, ["Have I not myself commanded you?"]). See Driver, *Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel with an Introduction on Hebrew Palaeography and the Ancient Versions and Facsimiles of Inscriptions and Maps* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 77-78.

[10] Driver, *Samuel*, 78.

Samuel with their query.[11] The key element of what Samuel just said to Saul lies in the divine inspiration marked by the presence of Yahweh's spirit. The spirit empowerment Samuel predicts in 1 Sam 10:6 and reiterates in 10:10 represents charismatic endowment, since charisma is a gift coming exclusively from Yahweh.[12]

What Samuel tells Saul involves three events, representing three signs. According to Samuel, Saul can do whatever he wishes once he experiences these signs (1 Sam 10:7).[13] According to the tradition, Saul indeed meets the חבל נביאים and exhibits spirit possession from Yahweh (10:9-13). Saul becomes ecstatic when he is possessed by Yahweh's spirit, which elicits a proverb, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (10:12), in a positive sense.[14] The implication is

---

[11] When Saul and his "servant" enter the town to visit Samuel, some girls they met advise them that Samuel is on his way to the shrine for a sacrifice (1 Sam 9:11-14). Before they meet Samuel, Samuel had received a revelation from Yahweh about Saul and Yahweh's concern for the oppression of the people by the Philistines. Yahweh instructed Samuel to anoint Saul to be a "ruler" (נגיד) over Israel so that he could save Israel from the "hands of the Philistines" (9:16). When they meet, Samuel already knows what is on Saul's mind, so he invites Saul (and his servant) for the sacrificial meal and tells Saul that he will let him know whatever he needs to know the following morning (9:18). In addition, Samuel implies that Saul will become the one that Israel depends upon, even though Saul says that he is not up to the task, as implied by Samuel (9:20-21). Samuel, with divine revelation, does have his prediction come true.

[12] Hutton (*Charisma and Authority*, 88-91) has an elaborate discussion of 1 Sam 9:1-10:16 on Saul and the spirit of prophecy. He convincingly describes spirit empowerment as a charismatic endowment.

[13] For a detailed analysis of the sign and the three events, see McCarter, *I Samuel*, 182-83; Birch, "Samuel," *NIB* 2:1042-43.

[14] The proverb also appears in 1 Sam 19:24 in a similar context but with an opposite meaning. David M. Gunn argues that the context of the occurrence in 10:11 is positive, meaning Saul gains affirmation of the people witnessing his prophetic ecstasy, and that the one in 19:24, on the contrary, is negative, meaning Saul obtains nothing but disapproval from the people watching him losing his dignity. See Gunn, *The Fate of King Saul* (JSOTSup 14; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1980), 63. This seems to reflect different perceptions of the character of the strange behavior during ecstasy, taken as divine approval by some and as "undignified behavior" by others.

that once Saul is charismatically endowed, that is, possessed by Yahweh's spirit, he can do whatever is necessary.

What is a "prophetic group" (חבל נביאים)? What is the difference between the "prophetic groups" (חבל נביאים) and the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים)? The "prophetic group" (חבל נביאים) is characterized in 1 Sam 10:5 as featuring dramatic activities through musical instruments, such as harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre, together with ecstatic behavior. Rhythmic music seems to be an aide to elicit prophetic ecstasy, as with Elisha in 2 Kgs 3:15-20. Above all, Yahweh's spirit is a deciding factor in authenticating Saul (10:6). The tradition states that the חבל נביאים, as well as the להקת נביאים, "act ecstatically" (מתנבאים) (10:5; cf. 10:6, 10, 13), as they enter ecstasy through the presence of Yahweh's spirit. We can easily identify the ecstatic activity through Yahweh's spirit with charismatic endowment, as when Elisha replies to Elijah's question before Elijah's ascent about what he wants from Elijah, Elisha merely says, ויהי־נא פי־שנים ברוחך אלי ("Let a double portion of your spirit [fall] upon me") (2 Kgs 2:9). Elisha knows very well that God's "spirit" (רוח) is a deciding factor for becoming a prophet, and, therefore, he is seeking special prophetic authority and capacity from receiving a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit.[15] Elijah also knows very well that the deciding affirmation is given exclusively by Yahweh, so he responds to Elisha bu noting that his quest is a difficult one (2:10).

As for the spirit and "prophecy," there is a parallel to 1 Sam 10:10 in Num 11:25, in which Yahweh "took some of the spirit (רוח) that was on [Moses] and put it on the seventy elders; and when the spirit (רוח) rested upon them, they became ecstatic (ויתנבאו)" (also 11:26). What

[15] Elisha's request of a "double portion" (פי־שנים) recalls the legal terminology of Deut 21:17, which gave the first born son a right to receive פי־שנים of his father's inheritance. Although it means "two-thirds" in Zech 13:8, "a double portion" has a relevant meaning here for 2 Kgs 9. See Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB 11; Garden City: Doubleday, 1988), 32, and the discussion below in Chapter Five.

also intrigues us is that the verb, ויתנבאו, is the same as that legendary account in 1 Kgs 18:29, which describes the 450 prophets of Baal being in ecstasy to evoke their deity to respond and prove that Baal is a genuine god. Another example of group ecstasy in 1 Kings 22 involves about 400 prophets, under the leadership of Zedekiah ben Chenaanah who engages in groups ecstasy (v. 12), claiming the presence with them of Yahweh's spirit (v. 24). According to 1 Sam 10:6, ecstasy can happen to anyone, even Saul, if Yahweh casts his spirit on him. It confirms the account of why Samuel tells Saul that when he meets the "prophetic group" (חבל נביאים) who are in ecstasy, he will fall into it when Yahweh's spirit possesses him (10:6). The narrator in 1 Sam 10:9 indicates that Saul meets the "prophetic group" (חבל נביאים) as Samuel predicted and that Yahweh's spirit comes to Saul who becomes ecstatic himself as well. The narrator presents Samuel as a thoughtful mediator between Yahweh and the people. The activity of the "prophetic group" (חבל נביאים) in 1 Sam 10:5-12 shows that their inspiration comes with the help of music and that Yahweh's spirit is engaged in connection with ecstasy.[16] Apparently, ecstasy is their major activity, and it seems to differentiate them from the later "sons of the prophets" (בני הנביאים), as the traditions do not describe the "sons of the prophets" (בני הנביאים) in terms of group ecstasy, although their leader, Elisha, is described as making use of a mucisian, presumably for help in achieving ecstasy, in 2 Kgs 3:15-19.[17]

---

[16] McCarter indicates that the "prophetic group" (חבל נביאים), whose leader is Samuel, are recipients of divine inspiration and that their ecstatic group behavior is supernormal. "Expressions of possession by the spirit of God," besides, "must have included singing and dancing to the accompaniment of such musical instruments" as listed in 1 Sam 10:5. See McCarter, *I Samuel*, 182.

[17] The sources do not explicitly describe the prophetic activity of the "sons of the prophets" (בני הנביאים) as involving ecstasy, which leads Wilson (*Prophecy and Society*, 141) to conclude that "there is really no evidence to indicate that they were ecstatics." Group ecstasy does appear again, however, with the 400 prophets described in 1 Kings 22.

In contrast, the "sons of the prophets" (בני הנביאים) seem to be basically sedate and are primarily associatd with the Elijah-Elisha cycle.[18] Elisha is closely related to the "sons of the prophets" (בני הנביאים), as is Samuel with the "prophetic group" (חבל נביאים). According to 1 Sam 19:20, Samuel is likewise the leader or head of the "band of the prophets" (להקת הנביאים), a prophetic group basically parallel to the "prophetic group" (חבל נביאים).[19] As for Elisha, he is, functionally, also the "father" of the "'sons' of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים),[20] who seem to live together in communal groups, as is implied also in 2 Kgs 4:38-41, where Elisha commands his servant (נער), who is one of בני־הנביאים, to prepare food to feed the hungry "prophets" during a famine. In 1 Samuel 19 Samuel is without doubt a "prophetic" director leading the "band of the prophets" (להקת הנביאים) to fall into ecstasy through Yahweh's spirit. In 2 Kgs 4:38-41 Elisha plays the role of "father" and also that of a "bringer of life," doing another wonder work which rescues that family from a threatened death.[21]

---

[18] Wilson observes that "the use of the title 'sons of the prophets' . . . is restricted to Ephraimite narratives describing prophetic activity in Israel during the reigns of Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram (1 Kgs 20:35; 2 Kgs 2:3, 5, 7, 15; 4:1, 38; 5:22; 6:1; 9:1)." Wilson thus concludes that the phrase seemingly has been used for a relatively short period of time (ca. 869-842 B.C.E.). See Wilson, *Prophecy and Society*, 140.

[19] McCarter (*I Samuel*, 329) notes that the prophets in the description of the episode are a group over whom "Samuel is presiding."

[20] Robert Wilson (*Prophecy and Society*, 140) indicates that the בני נביאים "was governed by a leader [such as Elisha] given the title 'father' (*'āb*), and upon the death of the leader, the title was transferred to another prophet (2 Kgs 2:12; 6:21; 13:14)." Therefore, Elisha, a "leader" of the בני נביאים in a sense, is a metaphorical "father" of the prophetic group. For a detailed discussion of the title בני הנביאים and the relationship between it and its leader, see A. Haldar, *Associations of Cult Prophets*, 134-44.

[21] Brueggemann states that in the episode of 2 Kgs 4:38-41 Elisha shows his divine power by saving "the sons of the prophets" from being poisoned to death. One of the purposes is to attest to his uncommon power. Another purpose is to attest that "the Omride kings are ineffective in their public responsibility" during the famine-drought circumstance. However, Elisha, according to the tradition, is "capable of turning curse to blessing." See Brueggemann, *1*

Obviously, we can see that there is a leader or mentor of the prophetic groups in the scriptural references. What is lacking is that the tradition does not tell us how Samuel or Elisha—or anyone else (note Zedekiah ben Chenaanah in 1 Kings 22)—becomes a leader of a prophetic group. Nor do the sources tell us very much about the structure of the prophetic group, apart from indications of communal life in a variety of locations. There is no narrative about how a prophetic leader comes about for a prophetic group. All we find is that Samuel presides over the "band of the prophets" (להקת הנביאים) and Elisha "fathers" the "sons of the prophets" (בני נביאים), and that Elijah also is identified as a "father" for Israel by Elisha: "My father, my father! Israel's chariotry and horsemen." (אבי אבי רכב ישׂראל ופרשׁיו) (2 Kgs 2:12). The prophetic groups may represent a kind of institutionalization of prophecy and may resort to group ecstasy, which is easily routinized, though it is not specified with regard to the "sons of the prophets." There is, however, the reference to one member of the "sons of the prophets" who carried out the anointing of Jehu (2 Kgs 9:1-13), being identified as "crazy" (משׁגע), implying odd behavior such as ecstasy. Also, the "sons of the prophets" seem more like an associated guild, whose members are called "sons." Therefore, the question remains, Does the Elijah-Elisha succession have any relationship to the character of the prophetic groups? We can ponder two related issues: (1) prophetic succession, take Elijah and Elisha for example, can be presented as God's special initiative (though there is no recorded actual anointing of Elisha, no pouring out of oil over his head, though of course there is the functional parallel of Elijah casting his mantle on Elisha; 1 Kgs 19:19), or (2) one might read between the lines that the designation of Elisha as a fulfilling successor—therefore potentially a greater prophet—comes from the supporters of the Elisha legend for whom Elisha is putatively a greater figure than Elijah in the competition of prophetic

---

& 2 Kings, 325.

grandeur. Indeed, the Elisha tradition has many signs of being competitive with the Elijah tradition, as will be discussed below.

2. The Prophetic Groups in the Time of Elisha

Elisha, unlike Elijah, is closely associated with the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים).[22] In the traditions of the Hebrew Bible, the prophetic groups are presented as a number of geographically separate yet affiliated groups, but with no discernible unifying structure. The interactions between (Elijah and) Elisha and the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) right before Elijah's translation into heaven assume that Elisha (and perhaps even Elijah also) must have had a close relationship with those groups in various locations, with Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho being mentioned in 2 Kings 3-4.[23] Elisha was with some of them, at least, as a superior (2 Kgs 6:1). But this is never said explicitly of Elijah; in the tradition Elijah does not interact with any of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים). The "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) from Bethel and Jericho respectively have foretold Elisha of his master's being taken up by Yahweh. How they

[22] בני־הנביאים, literally, means "the sons of the prophets." בן in Hebrew means "son," indicative of "a member of a guild, class, or order." Cogan and Tadmor maintain that the prophetic groups mentioned in the episode come out "as loosely organized brotherhoods living together in the towns of northern Israel, and are referred to mostly in the Elisha story cycle." They suggest that the prophetic groups "are not associated with local shrines . . . and are probably to be distinguished from the prophets consulted by the Omride kings (e.g., 1 Kgs 22:6)." Brueggemann believes that בני־הנביאים apparently were set up as an "informal group that stood outside normal social translations." They are a group "peculiarly open to invasions of the spirit that lived together under the discipline of a leader, at different times including Elijah and Elisha." Brueggemann's analysis follows Robert Wilson's comment that the בני־הנביאים "were presumably peripheral individuals who had resisted the political and religious policies of the Ephraimite kings and who had therefore been forced out of the political and religious establishments." (Though this would not fit with the 400 prophets cited in 1 Kings 22.) Besides, Wilson states that the בני הנביאים "sometimes lived together (2 Kgs 6:1) and shared common meals (2 Kgs 4:38-41) but were also capable of living independent lives (2 Kgs 4:1)." See Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 31; Brueggemann, *1 & 2 Kings*, 294; Wilson, *Prophecy and Society*, 141, 202.

[23] Other groups may have gathered around Elisha in Samaria (2 Kings 5)

knew of the imminent event is another matter, as is how they are related to (Elijah and) Elisha. A surface reading of this episode shows that the Elijah-Elisha combination must have been renowned among the prophetic groups so that they can recognize both of them. Besides, the narrative assumes that the prophetic groups had some access to what was supposed to happen. Be it the prophetic instincts or divine channels, the unusual appearance of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) themselves (see 1 Kgs 20:35-42, cited above), and their special interest in (Elijah and) Elisha, together with being recruited to offer oracles and engage in anointing, suggests something like a training or apprenticeship group. The tradition about Elisha's "servant" (נער) and/or "attendant" (משרת) together with Elisha's presiding over activities of the prophetic groups, together with mention of members of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) who deliver oracles, further support the role of a master with his subordinates, a situation that could encourage individual prophets to emerge.

The account of the expectations indicated in the narrative of Elijah's preparation for his ascent suggests that the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) played a role in the hagiographic elaboration of the accounts of Elijah and Elisha. Elijah is not the only person who knows about his coming ascent; Elisha knows and expects it as well—in the narrative—so that he does not accept Elijah's repeated request to stay behind at various places along the route from Gilgal (2 Kgs 2:1) to the Jordan. What intrigues us is that there are more than Elijah and Elisha who anticipate Elijah's ascent: at least two groups of "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) are described as present with Elijah and Elisha, and—in the narrative—they already anticipate Elijah's ascent and they tell Elisha about it (vv. 3, 5). That the בני־הנביאים and Elisha all anticipate Elijah's ascent demonstrates the capacity of such a group to be associated with generating legends. (Note that 2 Kgs 8:4-6 is another instance.)

Elisha's close relations with the prophetic groups are found especially in 2 Kgs 4:1-7, 38-41, 42-44; and 6:1-7. In each episode Elisha is regarded as the head of the group. In 2 Kgs 4:1-7 a widow of one of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) "cried out" (צעקה) to Elisha concerning a crisis which would turn her sons into (debt-)slaves, given the indebtedness her deceased husband left for them. She calls her dead husband a "servant" (עבד) of Elisha and supposes that Elisha, as a leader for her husband, can find a way for her and her family to get rid of debts which threaten to lead to her two children being taken away from her. By describing her husband as a "servant" (עבד) of Elisha, the widow implies that the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) are under the leadership of Elisha. In the account, Elisha assumes his responsibility and is portrayed as demonstrating his authority by performing the miracle in having the mysteriously appearing oil ceaselessly fill as many jars as were available to her. The widow clears the family's debts with the profits from the sale of oil. The narrative begins with the widow addressing Elisha with her concern and concludes with her coming to recognize that he is truly a "man of God" (איש האלהים) (4:7), a title used primarily for the man of God from Judah (1 Kings 13), for Elijah, and especially for Elisha.[24]

In 2 Kgs 4:38-41 another legend illustrates Elisha's role of caring for the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) by, again, performing miraculous deeds, particularly in times of hardship. The location is Gilgal. The setting is that the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) are sitting

[24] Although the episode of the widow of one of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) begins with her crying out to Elisha, the "leader" of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים), a dialogue, in which the "focus of attention," as Hobbs points out, "falls upon Elisha, the man of God, not upon Elisha the prophet," follows. The continuous dialogue between the widow and Elisha proves that "her obedience to the man of God is constant." Besides, as Hobbs concludes, "what [the man of God] commands is done, even without his presence." See Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 46.

before him, supposedly for instruction (4:38),[25] as the elders of the exilic community at Tel-Abib would sit before Ezekiel for divine instruction (Ezek 8:1; 14:1; 20:1).[26]

In 2 Kgs 4:38 Elisha's unnamed "helper" (נער) appears. Out of his concern for the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים), Elisha commands "his helper" (נערו) ("his servant," 2 Kgs 4:38) to set out a pot and cook some stew for the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) so as to feed them during a time of famine. On hearing Elisha's command, the "helper" (נער), as the narrative refers to "one of them," goes out into the fields and gathers vegetables. He also gathers some extraneous elements that are added to the stew. The stew is cooked and ready for eating—Elisha's commands about setting out a pot, cooking the stew, and feeding the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) immediately follows, demonstrating his authority. But, when the members of the group taste it, they find the stew to be poisonous. They turn to Elisha and "cry out" (צעקו) to the "man of God" (איש האלהים) for help, as did the widow in the aforementioned passage (4:40). It is a matter of life and death as the stew made to feed them for life may turn out to be killing them: "There is death in the pot!" (מות בסיר) (2 Kgs 4:40).

Elisha's first reaction is to command them to "get" (לקח) (2 Kgs 4:41) some flour. Elisha throws the flour into the stew to purify it as he threw the salt into the spring of water to purify the water (2 Kgs 2:21), and he has a person (supposedly his נער) "serve" (יצק) the stew to the people.

D. The Succession of Elijah by Elisha: The Request for "Family" Primacy and the Roles of the Prophetic Assistants, the נער and the משרת

Succession represents continuity. Household succession depends mostly on inheritance, based on blood relationship. In other words, birthright decides inheritance. There was, in ancient

[25] John Gray's translation "and the sons of the prophets [בני־הנביאים] were in session before him" carries this tone. See Gray, *I & II Kings*, 499.

[26] Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 58.

Israel, a special concern for the inheritance rights of the oldest living son, who is supposed to have the advantage of a "double portion" (פי־שנים) of the inheritance, as noted in Deut 21:17.[27] Hence, when Elisha asks a favor from his master, Elijah, he requests a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit, by which he seemingly claims the status of the first-born and the legitimate privileges of the prophetic heritage of Elijah. In other words, Elisha wants to be the first-born of Elijah's "sons of the prophets," so to speak.[28]

Obviously, Elisha has no blood relation with Elijah; his request is symbolic in that respect. Claiming the (adoptive) sonship of a prophet in order to verify one's legitimate prophetic status is not new in this case. The Hebrew Bible has the phrase בני־הנביאים, literally, "the sons of the prophets." According to Robert Wilson, the expression, such as "son of . . ." or "sons of . . ." is a frequent reference in "membership in a group or guild"; therefore, these need be no doubt that "sons of the prophets" was a designation applied to members of some sort of prophetic group.[29]

---

[27] Deut 21:17 is a regulation on the protection of the firstborn son, particularly the one born of the mother despised by her husband. Verse 17 stipulates that the firstborn son shall get a "double portion" of the inheritance and that this is the right of the firstborn son. Literally, the Hebrew phrase פי שנים means "two mouths." Jeffrey H. Tigay construes that the interpretation found in some ancient translations which consider this phrase as referring to two shares of the estate "is consistent with the fact that in some parts of the ancient Near East a man's estate was divided into shares equal to one more than the number of his sons; his chief heir received two of these shares and the others each received one." Another probability, as Tigay suggests, is the phrase also appears in Zech 13:8, meaning "two-thirds." Therefore, the stipulation here "may mean that the firstborn inherits two-thirds of the estate." The study assumes a "double portion" for it, though "two-thirds" is perhaps another likelihood. See Tigay, *Deuteronomy* (JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 195-96.

[28] Scripture does not mention Elijah as connected with a prophetic band or "the sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים), apart from their presence just before his ascension with mention of their interaction with Elisha, not Elijah.

[29] Wilson points out that the phrase בני־הנביאים "is restricted to Ephraimite narratives describing prophetic activity in Israel during the reigns of Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram (1 Kgs 20:35; 2 Kgs 2:3, 5, 7, 15; 4:1, 38; 5:22; 6:1; 9:1)" and accordingly "seems to have been employed for a relatively brief period of time (ca. 869-842 B.C.)." What intrigues us is his

In addition, Benjamin Uffenheimer regards the "sons of the prophets" of 2 Kgs 2:3, 5 not just as apprentices but as "disciples."[30] In brief, it stands to reason that either translation ("sons of the prophets" or "disciples of the prophets") fits with prophetic apprenticeship.

1 Kings 19 opens with Elijah's life being severely threatened by Queen Jezebel. Following the debacle at Mount Carmel for the representatives of Baal (and Asherah), Elijah chooses to flee for his life when he learns of Jezebel's pronouncement of a death sentence for him. Jezebel's promotion of the Baal worship in Israel, as described, would obviously be thwarted by an action such as that associated with Elijah. So Jezebel's threat points to one of the aspects regarding the worshippers of Baal.[31] Following her threat, Elijah seems to feel defeated in the Elijah-Jezebel/Yahweh-Baal contest, even though he had triumphed in 1 Kings 18.

According to the narrative, Elijah runs away from the northern kingdom's jurisdiction, southwards, accompanied only by his "boy"/"servant" (נער) (1 Kgs 19:3). His flight is so intense that it is described in four verbs to show the hastiness: he is frightened, flees immediately for life, comes to Beersheba, and then leaves his "boy"/"servant" (נער) behind as he proceeds further south. This series of actions is symbolic of a series of renunciations. Not only does Elijah leave Israel, the territory of his mission, and Judah, representative of Yahweh's land, but when he

---

further indication that the title "is particularly identified with the activities of Elisha." For more detailed analysis, see Wilson, *Prophecy and Society*, 140-41; also Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 31.

[30] Uffenheimer, *Early Prophecy*, 409.

[31] Note H. L. Ellison's interesting observation that "[I]f in fact [Jezebel] really hoped to kill Elijah, she would hardly have put him on his guard, and it is difficult to think that Elijah, with his keen instinct for the heart of a matter, would not have realized this. We should rather see in her words a defiant challenge to Elijah, her claim that she had not been defeated after all. The sequel suggests that Elijah suddenly realized that she was correct, that his victory was a merely external matter that had not touched the heart of the people." See Ellison, *The Prophets of Israel: From Ahijah to Hosea* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1969), 32.

reaches the southernmost part of Judean territory (Judg 20:1; 1 Sam 3:20), he also leaves his "boy"/"servant" (נער) behind him and enters the wilderness by himself. The entry into the wilderness from the promised land is metaphoric of his cutting himself from all relationships, and reversing Israel's history as if it needed a new beginning. And his wish to die marks the culmination of all his renunciations.[32] Elijah is abandoning his prophetic responsibility, having left his "boy"/"servant" (נער) behind within the Judean territory, gone farther into the wilderness all by himself, and "prayed that he might die" (1 Kgs 19:4).

A triumphant champion of Yahwism is now so desperate that he is begging Yahweh to take away his life in his despair. Ironically, though, the story of his frustration and fear are understandable. In the narrative, Elijah has just led Israel to shun the great religious peril in the northern kingdom's toleration of Baal worship and brought his people back to what he regards as the right track of faith in Yahweh. But here comes another peril that would cost him his life. His frustration justifiably grows out of the fact that the one who should have felt defeated with her prophets slaughtered is still capable of challenging the one supposedly celebrating an overwhelming victory. Moreover, his fear (1 Kgs 19:3) is rooted again in the sense that he exaggeratingly feels that he alone is left (1 Kgs 19:10, 14; cf. 2 Kgs 1:15). After his triumph he has to encounter a personal peril and threat. Is that a reward for what he has done for Israel and Yahweh? What is at stake in being a Yahwistic prophet? To "save" or not to "save" Yahwistic faith is always a problem![33]

---

[32] Walsh, *1 Kings*, 266.

[33] Therefore, this study is sympathetic with DeVries's observation (*1 Kings*, 235) that "Elijah interprets Jezebel's personal attack on him as the end of his ministry" and that Elijah's "dismissal of his servant at Beersheba, the southernmost limit of Yahweh's land, signifies that he is abandoning it altogether."

The existence of Elijah's "boy"/"servant" (נער) as "left behind" also raises the possibility that there was a potential prophetic apprenticeship going on under Elijah, with the "boy"/"servant" (נער) having a significant role—beyond "pouring water over the hands of Elijah," as with Elisha, in 2 Kgs 3:11. On two occasions Elijah's "boy"/"servant" (נער) appears in the Elijah cycle. Elijah's "boy"/"servant" (נער) is first mentioned in the narrative following the contest on Mount Carmel. After slaughtering the 450 prophets of Baal at the Wadi Kishon, Elijah now comes to King Ahab and foretells the coming of the rain after three years' drought (1 Kgs 18:1, 41). Meanwhile, no sooner has he prayed for rain by crouching on the ground and putting his face between the knees (18:42) than he instructs his נער to go to observe any change of weather, until "a cloud as small as a man's hand" is visible from the west (18:43-44). Then the "boy"/"servant" (נער) is bidden to deliver a message to King Ahab to go down the mountain before being caught by the sudden, heavy rain.

Like Joshua in Exod 24:13, the presence of Elijah's "boy"/"servant" (נער) at Mount Carmel is initially invisible. That he is unnamed and previously unmentioned signifies nothing more than his formal insignificance. When Elijah climbs to the top of Mount Carmel, the "boy"/"servant" (נער), obviously, is with him there. The "boy"/"servant" (נער) is at Elijah's service. But subsequently he is not merely a servant/attendant; he is more of an apprentice in delivering the message to the king. Yet, for DeVries, he is there atop Carmel to witness Elijah's satisfaction in perceiving "the tumult of rain under an as yet cloudless sky."[34] And soon the נער is urged by Elijah to get up to a higher point so that he can get a better view of the approaching weather (1 Kgs 18:43). Seven times the "boy"/"servant" (נער) has been asked by his master to observe the sky for any probable change in weather, and nothing has changed until the seventh

[34] DeVries, *1 Kings*, 217.

round of queries when the "boy"/"servant" (נער) sees a small cloud the size of a man's palm. Then Elijah the mentor is sure that Yahweh's oracle in the beginning of the chapter is going to be fulfilled. Indeed the rain comes down in a "heavy downpour" (1 Kgs 18:45). (That the prophecy has been fulfilled here reminds the reader of the Zarephath widow's words to Elijah: "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of Yahweh is truly in your mouth" [1 Kgs 17:24]). And so now, with the rain on its way, the "boy"/"servant" (נער) is entrusted with a message for King Ahab (v. 44).

The second mention of Elijah's "boy"/"servant" (נער)—probably the same person—is in the following episode of Elijah's flight for his life. But the "boy"/"servant" (נער), left behind in Beer-sheba, is never mentioned thereafter, signifying a time of transition for Elijah.

As indicated above, Elijah's flight for his life is symbolic of his renunciations of his prophetic mission. But Yahweh does not let Elijah get his own way. His mission is not finished yet and cannot be finished by his own will. Prophets typically are reluctant to accept their calling, feeling inadequate, but they are not allowed to set the call aside that easily. With the tension of the dramatic effect of this episode Elijah wishes to die, yet Yahweh had sent a messenger to feed him twice on his way to the theophany at the mountain of God at Horeb. The irony here is that the prophet wants to die merely because he thinks that he has borne "too much" (רב) (1 Kgs 19:4), and, besides, he says he is "no better than [his] forebears" (1 Kgs 19:4),[35] as if it all

[35] Choon-Leong Seow reminds us that the "forebears" (אבות), literally, "fathers," probably "refers, not to his ancestors per se, but to his predecessors in the prophetic ministry." In other words, Seow indicates that in spite of his marvelous success on Mt. Carmel in killing Jezebel's prophets of Baal and turning Israel to Yahweh, Elijah does not think that he is any better than his "vocational predecessors" (that is, אבות) after all. Seow further suggests that Elijah likely "has in mind Moses, who also complained to the Lord in the wilderness that his burden was too heavy to bear alone, and so he asked the Lord to let him die (Num 11:14-15)." See Seow, "Kings," *NIB* 3:140.

depended on him. But it is Yahweh, his "boss," who keeps sustaining him by feeding him again. In 1 Kings 17 Yahweh sent ravens to feed him and later assigned a widow of Zarephath to supply him because he was doing what he had been commanded to do. In this episode, he has seemingly abandoned his mission; he just wants to die because he finds no way out. Yahweh, however, feeds him again, and this time he sends a "messenger" (מלאך), that is, an "angel," to feed him.[36]

Elijah's route of flight is somewhat of a reversal of Israel's proposed path of entry into the settled land promised by Yahweh, a path they are said to have set aside because of difficulties. After successfully fleeing for his life and ironically unsuccessfully seeking death, now Elijah encounters God directly and receives a challenge to continue his prophetic task. Inquiring of Elijah as to his current status, Yahweh opens their conversation with a question, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" (מה־לך פה אליהו) (1 Kgs 19:9), carrying a tone of reproachment, though at the same time it offers an opportunity for the dialogue that follows, as in Gen 3:9-11 and 4:9.[37] As a Yahwistic prophet, Elijah is supposed to be in the land promoting the cause of Yahweh instead of hiding himself in a cave at Mount Horeb.

Now Elijah clearly fires away with his reasons for abandoning his mission. Three accusations he lays against his fellow Israelites: forsaking Yahweh's covenant, tearing down

---

[36] Obviously, Yahweh has been continually showing his care for Elijah. In 1 Kings 17, Elijah is commanded to protest against Ahab, then Yahweh tells him to hide where Ahab cannot find him. As the draught becomes serious, just as he has prophesied, Elijah goes to the territory of Sidon where Yahweh has appointed a widow to sustain him. Now, after he has done a great job by making Israel confess that Yahweh is God and by killing Jezebel's prophets (as she is said to have killed Yahweh's prophets), he gets nothing but a crisis in which he may lose his life. He even asks Yahweh to end his life, for he is no better than his forebears. Yahweh does not listen to Elijah; instead, he saves his life. The irony shows in Yahweh's care for Elijah as the scenario of the Elijah cycle goes through to the higher climax. Elijah is disappointed at this point; Yahweh strengthens his confidence in Yahweh's control of human history for Yahweh regards Elijah as still his servant no matter how discouraged and defeated he may feel.

[37] Cogan, *I Kings*, 452.

Yahweh's altars, and killing Yahweh's prophets (1 Kgs 19:10). The fact that Elijah deserts his duty is excused by his being deserted by his people, arguing that he alone is left. Although it is Jezebel who threatens to take his life from the beginning, her threat somehow indicates that her influence is still efficacious.[38]

Elijah's charges filed with God against his people, arguing that they "have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword," and "I alone am left!" (19:10, 14), make God out to be a loser. But can the response of the people negate Elijah's prophetic mission? Indeed, according to the tradition, the altars of Yahweh at Mount Carmel had been broken (18:30). The worshipping of Baal indicates that the people do not altogether keep the covenant that formulated the relationship between Yahweh and the people and that the people no longer follow the stipulations that they had long ago agreed to in accepting the covenant.[39]

---

[38] Compare the occasion at the time of the subsequent Jehu coup when Jezebel is thrown out of the window by the eunuchs that serve her and dies without a proper burial (2 Kgs 9:30-35). We may have every reason to agree with Kissling's critique of Elijah's "hollowness" because "Jezebel's threat seems full of pretense." Kissling maintains that "Elijah has just experienced in a most dramatic way both the protection of Yahweh (17:2-16) and his awesome power (18:38, 46)" and that "Elijah has himself just proved that Baal is powerless." Besides, "Israel has apparently been won over to his side." Therefore, it is hard for the reader to imagine that Elijah could so easily be frightened by Jezebel's threat without knowing that Jezebel could have more easily had him killed instead of sending a messenger to menace him. DeVries suggests that Jezebel sends a messenger to threaten Elijah in order to make him run for life in fear, which would already be a victory for her. Kissling follows DeVries's line and concludes that "Elijah is evidently so afraid of Jezebel that he does not even realize the element of bluff in her threat." Elijah should have, according to Kissling, "realized the bluff behind sending a messenger with such a threat and not sending a military or police force or going herself to confront him." Kissling further argues that Elijah's hollowness appears in his intimidation so that he fails to stand up to Jezebel. Such an experience, as Kissling indicates, "has brought some self-awareness to Elijah about the partially illusory nature of his own self-confidence;" therefore, "Elijah's claim to 'stand before' Yahweh" may seem hollow to us. See Kissling, *Reliable Characters*, 100-102; DeVries, *1 Kings*, 235.

[39] Volkmar Fritz's words are worth noting here: "The altar is the only legitimate place for sacrifice; since the meaning of sacrifice is expiation, cultic practice and thus a reconciliation with Yahweh are no longer possible after the destruction of the altars." See Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings,* 198.

Elijah's action in repairing the altar at Mount Carmel (1 Kgs 18:30) symbolizes his efforts to restore the broken relationship between his people and Yahweh. It is a metaphor of reconciliation. He takes twelve stones, each presumably representing one of the tribes of Israel, whose name has been given to Jacob as a sign of the covenant (Gen 35:10-12). Then Elijah rebuilds the altars "in the name of Yahweh." Accordingly, he reinstates the worship of Yahweh even under the inroads of the worship of Baal (and Asherah).

Concluding his charges against his people, Elijah emphasizes that "I alone am left" (ואותר אני לבדי) (1 Kgs 19:10, 14; cf. 18:22: "I am the only prophet of Yahweh left" [אני נותרתי נביא ליהוה לבדי]), with an emphatic first person pronoun. It is not difficult for us to infer that such complaints, together with the stress just mentioned, reveal Elijah's "fundamental egoism."[40] Indeed, Elijah first lets go of the egoism from the earlier narrative of the contest at Mount Carmel as he makes a statement to the people that "I am the only prophet of Yahweh left" (18:22) in which he highlights himself with the first-person pronoun, completely ignoring the fact that there are at least one hundred prophets Obadiah has hidden in a "cave" (מערה) (18:4, 13) from Jezebel, and ignoring the seven thousand faithful cited by Yahweh (1 Kgs 19:18).[41]

Yahweh responds to Elijah's three accusations with three tasks, which are to be implemented in his return to his prophetic mission. Metaphorically, Yahweh has just refused

---

[40] Walsh (*1 Kings*, 273) comments that such an argument "deepens our impression that behind Elijah's complaints about the Israelites' crimes against Yahweh lies a more fundamental egoism: Elijah feels that he himself has been mistreated." Elijah's stress on the first pronoun is intended to elicit attention to the hardships he has been going through. Walsh's comment more or less depicts Elijah's psychological status.

[41] Walsh's comment is worth quoting here so that we can get a better picture of the discussion in the study: "It is as if Elijah does not consider people who hide from Jezebel in caves to be worthy of the name prophet. Yet, ironically, Elijah himself [1 Kings 19] is hiding from Jezebel in a cave! And indeed he no longer calls himself, as he did in 18:22, 'a prophet of Yahweh.' The omission reflects his renunciation of his calling." See Walsh, *1 Kings*, 273.

Elijah's resignation. Instead, Yahweh's command sounds almost like a busy pre-retirement program for Elijah, the final missions to complete his career. He still has a long way to go before he finishes, and the "road not taken" earlier but now designated by Yahweh is to anoint Hazael as King of Aram, to anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king of Israel, and to anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah to succeed him as a prophet (1 Kgs 19:15-17). As a "retirement gift," God's command for him to anoint his successor signifies the present continuity of Elijah's prophetic role. While the first two anointing tasks are remarkable, the last one is of the most significance and is appropriately given priority, whatever the danger of royal opposition.[42] Yahweh has already selected a successor to take Elijah's place, and Elijah is instructed to convey that to Elisha, unlike Joshua who enters the narrative long before being designated as the successor. Elijah has just left his "boy"/"servant" (נער) in the land of Yahweh, implying his dismissal of the "boy"/"servant" (נער) as an apprentice and potential successor. Now Elijah is assigned a new prophetic apprentice under his instruction, with the candidate designated by Yahweh himself, as also in the case of the Moses-Joshua succession.[43]

---

[42] In the text Elijah is to anoint Elisha as his replacement, תחתיך (1 Kgs 19:16), explicitly meaning that Elisha is to be Elijah's successor in the prophetic role. This verse is Elisha's debut in the tradition, and comes through the command of Yahweh. The action of anointing, as Wesley J. Bergen argues, focuses on the verb משׁח in its subject instead of its object. He points out that "[A]nointing is an action done *by* Moses (Exod 28:41; 29:7, 36) or Samuel (1 Sam 9:16; 15:1; 16:3), rather than an action done specifically *to* priests or kings." The reason for Elisha's being anointed is because this is how prophets symbolically confer authority. In this way, "Elisha is the only prophet ever anointed because he is the only prophet whose authority rests upon his being the legitimate successor of another prophet." Bergen's analysis is pertinent (though ignoring Isa 61:1), particularly as to why Elisha is divinely appointed as Elijah's prophetic successor through anointing. See Bergen, *Elisha and the End of Prophetism* (JSOTSup 286; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 47.

[43] In both traditions it is Yahweh who initiates the successor issue while Moses and Elijah display their impatience in being Yahweh's agents. Num 27:12-14 contain Yahweh's announcement of Moses' impending death caused by his enigmatic rebellion against him. Moses is allowed to see the promised land from a mountain of the Abarim range before he passes away.

According to the tradition, the three concluding acts of anointing by Elijah do not take place in a strictly literal sense. It is the successor, Elisha, who announces to Hazael his coming investiture as king over the Arameans (2 Kgs 8:7-15).[44] Elijah is far from any contact with Hazael. Neither is Elijah involved in the anointing of Jehu ben Nimshi as King of Israel. The anointing of Jehu takes place through one of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) (2 Kgs 9:1), instructed by Elisha and described also as הנער הנביא (v. 4), who has been sent to Jehu to pour oil on his head (2 Kgs 9:1-15). The peculiar phrase הנער הנער הנביא (19:4) in this context is translated variously as "the attendant, the prophet's attendant,"[45] "the young man, the prophet's young man,"[46] or "the boy, the young prophet."[47] The "indirect" anointing is carried out by a young prophet/servant of the "established" prophet, Elisha, acting by command of his prophetic mentor, and who is subsequently described as a "madman" (מׇשׁגע) by Jehu's comrades (19:11). The

---

Then, in Num 27:15-17, Moses appeals to Yahweh about someone who can continue his task in leading Israel into the promised land. Verse 18 states that Yahweh appoints Joshua as Moses' successor. In Elijah's case, he is tired of being Yahweh's prophet and asks to die. Yahweh does not grant his wish but does command him to anoint Elisha as his successor, thereby emphasizing the importance of completing the assigned prophetic tasks.

[44] A visit of Elisha, the man of God, to Damascus is presented in the tradition in 2 Kgs 8:7-15. It is no surprise that there is such a report. What strikes us is Elisha's prophetic message that in addition to the death of King Ben-hadad, Hazael, Ben-hadad's one-time messenger to Elijah, will become king and will greatly threaten Israel's existence. Cogan and Tadmor remind us that the anointing of Hazael and Jehu are included in 1 Kgs 19:15-18 and that "it is Elijah who is commanded to repair to Damascus to anoint the king, and the explanation is offered that the Aramaean wars are wars of divine chastisement: seven thousand of those who did not bow down to Baal will survive (v. 18)." For them the story is a secondary formation. Besides, they argue that "1 Kgs 19:15-18 looks like the opening of a story whose continuation is missing; the Elisha story, on the other hand, proceeds without any prior divine instruction." For a further discussion, see Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings,* 90-93.

[45] Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 101.

[46] Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 107.

[47] Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 234.

anointing is taken as valid because he, as a messenger, delivers the words of Yahweh, apparently immediately welcomed by Jehu and his junior officers.

No matter what discrepancies occur here concerning Elijah's mission to anoint two kings, Elisha's involvement in these two investitures confirms the continuity with Elijah's prophetic duties through his designated successor, Elisha, the most decisive of the anointings. Just as Moses' major duty is to lead Israel's exodus into the promised land, yet the duty is fulfilled by Joshua, his successor, so is the completion of Elijah's mission effected by Elisha. Elijah carried out the essential initial task; Elisha followed through. And now we are ready to turn our attention to the narrative concerning Elijah's encounter with Elisha and the symbolic anointing by means of Elijah's casting his mantle over Elisha.

Elisha's first appearance in 1 Kgs 19:19-21—beyond the mention in 1 Kgs 19:16—must have impressed all with his plowing with twelve yokes of oxen, and then slaughtering one yoke of oxen for a farewell meal, which reminds us of Saul in 1 Sam 11:6 where he leaves his cattle and symbolically cuts up one yoke of the oxen and receives the "spirit" (רוח) of Yahweh to be enabled to lead a war against the Ammonites.[48] Elisha's plowing with "twelve yoke of oxen ahead of him" (19:19) is legendary. The number twelve, of course, carries a theological significance, recalling of the twelve tribes of Israel (Gen 35:22; 49:28). Similarly, Elijah repairs the damaged altar at Mt. Carmel with twelve stones (18:30-32), and Elisha plows with the unparalleled but symbolic twelve yoke of oxen. It also recalls the twelve "pillars" (מצבה) Moses

[48] DeVries, *1 Kings*, 239. We cannot ignore Gray's argument (*I & II Kings*, 413) that this was an ordinary "run-rig" operation involving twelve separate teams and twelve separate plow-men vastly reducing what is a spectacular feat by Elisha, a prefiguring of his potential—his "predisposition"—for special leadership. See the section on shamanism in Chapter Three..

used for the twelve tribes of Israel (Exod 24:4)[49] and the twelve parts of the Levite's concubine sent throughout the boundary of Israel (Judg 19:29). Unlike Elijah, whose introduction to his first appearance indicates he is a man of no standing,[50] Elisha is presented as a farmer with amazing resources and ability.

Elijah anoints Elisha symbolically by throwing over him his mantle—the token of Elijah's potentially transferable spiritual power (cf. 2 Kgs 2:8, 13-14). Elijah's mantle is first mentioned in 1 Kgs 19:13, where he uses it to wrap his face in the midst of theophanic glory. Elisha immediately recognizes the significance of Elijah's action as an investiture of prophetic service. Therefore, in our narrative, Elisha leaves his living behind him, runs after Elijah to request a brief delay, and then goes back home for a farewell celebration. He then follows after Elijah and becomes his attendant (וישׁרתהו) ("and he [Elisha] attended him [Elijah]") (1 Kgs 19:21). Apparently, Elijah was quiet during his mantle-casting action. Elisha requested Elijah to allow him time to bid his parents farewell, after which he would follow Elijah.[51] Doubtless Elisha expects to be severed from his home life, which brings to mind Yahweh's summons to

---

[49] Even though stone pillars are regular divine symbols in Canaanite shrines and the Bible condemned them frequently (see Exod 34:13), Exod 24:4, as William H. C. Propp (*Exodus 19-40*, 293) notes, "is quick to explain, 'for Israel's twelve tribes'—not for the gods." For the probable functions of the twelve "pillars" (מצבה), see Propp's analysis in *Exodus 19-40: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 2A; New York: Doubleday, 2006), 293-94.

[50] Note Ellison's argument (*Prophets of Israel*, 29) that the lack of a patronymic suggests that Elijah comes from "a family of no standing." In addition, Elijah's dress (2 Kgs 1:8) implies that he is "a poor tiller of the ground or more probably a shepherd."

[51] Cogan (*I Kings*, 455) argues that Elisha understands the significance of Elijah's throwing his mantle over him, so his request for a farewell to his parents "contributes to the characterization of Elisha," in which Elisha is "the caring and compassionate father to the Sons of the Prophets."

Abraham (Gen 12:1-3).[52] Nevertheless, Elisha's determination to follow Elijah is indicated as he concludes his request for a delay, with "I will follow you" (19:20).[53] Elijah's response, "Go back, what have I done to you," implies that Elisha should think about the implied commitment. Elisha holds a big feast and then goes after Elijah and attends him, i.e., becomes an apprentice.[54] Going after Elijah and leaving his plowing behind is a metaphor of Elisha's cutting himself off from his ordinary world and choosing to follow in Elijah's steps as a (potential) prophet.

Elisha should himself grasp the meaning of the symbolic anointing with the mantle.[55] Perhaps what Elijah means in his response is to emphasize that the summons is now up to Elisha; it is his response. It is not up to Elijah to persuade him. The summons by the prophet is ultimately from God, not from Elijah.[56] Nevertheless, Elisha delays. Elisha's response to his

---

[52] DeVries (*1 Kings*, 239) suggests that while Elisha knows very well that Elijah's call is one that will cut him off from his regular way of life, Elisha's request to kiss his parents farewell is a "delaying element," which stirs up purposely "Elijah's challenge that Elisha make up his mind (v. 20)."

[53] Cogan (*I Kings*, 455) argues that Elisha understands the significance of Elijah's throwing his mantle over him, so his request for a farewell to his parents "contributes to the characterization of Elisha" in which Elisha is the "caring and compassionate father to the sons of the prophets."

[54] Cogan (*I Kings*, 455) reminds us that Elisha's attending Elijah is similar to Joshua's serving Moses for years prior to being appointed as his successor (cf. Exod 33:11; Num 11:28; Josh 1:1).

[55] Cogan infers that the two imperatives are more forceful than the rendition of single imperative, such as that of NRSV or NJPS and that Elijah seeks to test Elisha's commitment. Besides, Cogan also suggests that Elijah's reply "For what have I done to you?" represents a challenge in which he denies that the throwing of the mantle over Elisha has any special (personal?) significance such as a demand to respond to him. See Cogan, *I Kings*, 455.

[56] Walsh (*1 Kings*, 279) implies that Elijah's reply could be either a refusal of Elisha's request or a permission. However, he suggests that "it is more likely that Elijah intends the question literally."

calling is quite different from that of Moses and Jeremiah.[57] He first accepts it orally and then, understanding Elijah's demand, follows through on his commitment after a brief delay.[58]

The relationship between Elijah and Elisha is clearly defined by the word וישׁרתהו, referring to a personal apprenticeship. In short, Elisha, after the symbolic anointing, has now become Elijah's "attendant" (משׁרת). The term signifies a more solemn responsibility for Elisha than the role of the "servant" (נער), as with the servant whom Elijah left behind in Beer-Sheba (1 Kgs 19:3), though the semantic ranges of the two terms seems to overlap. The reference to Elijah's "boy"/"servant" (נער) may well suggest a previous potential prophetic apprenticeship was going on under Elijah's instruction (1 Kgs 18:42-44). And Elijah's leaving his "boy"/"servant" (נער) behind him (1 Kgs 19:3) could represent a prelude to his abandoning his prophetic service. Whatever the case, it did not take long for Yahweh to restore Elijah's responsibility by commanding him to anoint Elisha as his successor. The present task of Elisha as Elijah's "attendant" (משׁרת), therefore, is to serve his master and to learn from Elijah's Yahwistic heritage. And Elisha's apprenticeship, which goes beyond literally "pouring water over the hands of Elijah" (2 Kgs 3:11), will soon be fulfilled and confirmed in 2 Kings 2:1-15.

---

[57] One of the key differences between Elisha's response to the probable prophetic calling and that of Moses and Jeremiah lies in Elisha's active attitude that seems to accept the calling without affirmation of their inadequacy. One of Moses's major excuses is his inability of speech (כבד־פה וכבד לשׁון) (Exod 4:10); Jeremiah employs a similar defense (לא־ידעתי דבר) (Jer 1:6) as an objection. Both encounter Yahweh's replies as contradictions (Exod 4:11-12; Jer 1:7). For further comment, see Thomas B. Dozeman, *Commentary on Exodus* (ECC; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2009), 143; Propp, *Exodus 1-18*, 210-12; Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah: Exile & Homecoming* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998), 24-27; Robert P. Carroll, *Jeremiah: A Commentary* (OTL; London: SCM Press, 1986), 94-101.

[58] In short, this succinct narrative of Elisha's calling can be appropriately concluded with Walsh's words (*1 Kings*, 280): "Elisha's action, therefore, combines elements of separation from his old life, cultic thanksgiving upon undertaking the new, and ritual solidarity with 'the people' among whom he will pursue his prophetic service." Even though the commitment is apparently immediate, the actual following after Elijah is delayed.

The Hebrew word משרת, used to describe both Elisha vis-à-vis Elijah and that of unidentified other assistants of Elisha, deserves more elaboration here. As mentioned above, Elisha is closely associated with prophetic groups known as the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים). On their joint journey to the Jordan, where Elijah symbolically handed off his role to Elisha in the area where Moses had ceded to Joshua, Elijah is of course present but only Elisha engages with the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים). Elisha must have had a close relationship with those groups in the various stopping points in the journey. Such a relationship is never mentioned for Elijah. The "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) specifically from Bethel and Jericho—perhaps also from Gilgal (though not specified), have foretold to Elisha his master's being taken up by Yahweh. How they knew of the imminent event is not mentioned, nor is there any reference to a previous relationship between Elisha and these prophetic groups. A surface reading of this episode indicates that the Elijah-Elisha combination and their relationship must have been already known by the various prophetic groups. Be it special prophetic awareness or divine channels, the appearance of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) connects with their considerable importance in the subsequent stories about Elisha.[59]

The prophetic groups and Elisha as well are expecting that something unusual is about to happen with Elijah, who, however, first has some unfinished business with Elisha. Elisha seems

[59] Note 2 Kgs 8:4-6, in which Gehazi, Elisha's "servant" (נער), is having a conversation with the king of the Northern Kingdom about the "great things" (הגדלות) Elisha has done. When Gehazi mentions Elisha's bringing life back to a deceased boy, a Shunammite woman's son, both the woman and the child appear in front of them, ready to appeal to the king for her loss of property during the seven-year famine. 2 Kgs 8:1-6 indeed is a sequel to the Shunammite woman's story in 4:8-37, and Elisha, "the man of God" (8:2) exhibits in 8:1 foreknowledge of future events just as he does in 7:1 and "continues to aid his patroness from Shunem and warns her of the ensuing famine." The Shunammite woman is subsequently in a good position to make a claim for the return of her lost property, aided by the tales of Elisha's extraordinary deeds as conveyed by Gehazi to the king, which put her in good stead. See Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 87-88.

to be well aware of that as well, so he does not accept Elijah's request to stay behind on their journey from Gilgal (2 Kgs 2:1) to the other side of the Jordan. What intrigues us is that there are others than Elijah and Elisha who anticipate Elijah's ascent: at least two groups of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) are close at hand, before Elijah and Elisha have crossed the Jordan.

Elisha's close relations with the prophetic groups are also found in 2 Kgs 4:1-7, 38-41, 42-44; and 6:1-7. In these episodes, already reviewed above in another context, Elisha is regarded as the head of the group. The episode of the widow of one of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) in 2 Kgs 4:1-7 reveals Elisha's authority through his miracle and the recognition of him as an "man of God" (איש האלהים) (4:7). In 2 Kgs 4:38-41 another legend, discussed above, illustrates Elisha's role of caring for the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) by, again, performing miraculous deeds, particularly in times of hardship. In this episode, Elisha's command about setting a pot, cooking the stew, and feeding the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) is immediately followed as a demonstration of his authority.

What particularly concerns us in this last mentioned legendary episode (2 Kgs 4:38-41) is the reference to Elisha's "servant" (נער). This unnamed "servant" (נער), according to the narrative, is also described as "one of them" (4:39), suggesting that Elisha has various "servants" (נערים) at his service. But the following passage, 2 Kgs 4:42-44, including another of the prophet's miraculous deeds, mentions an "attendant" (משרת) of Elisha and describes the interaction between them. In this legendary episode, the "man of God" (איש האלהים) is offered food as a present and he commands his "attendant" (משרת) to distribute it to them, supposedly the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) of the previous verses. This time the command encounters an objection on the grounds that the unnamed "attendant" (משרת) doubts that the quantity of food he now has is sufficient for the number of persons present. Confronting the objection from his

"attendant" (משרת), Elisha reiterates the command and adds words of Yahweh to reinforce his prophetic authority. Only after the explicit divine oracle has been delivered by the prophet are the prophet's wishes followed. And the miraculous feeding occurs according to the command of Yahweh. What is the overall role of the unnamed "servant" (נער) and the unnamed "attendant" (משרת) in the Elisha circle? Clearly in 2 Kgs 4:38-41 and presumably in 2 Kgs 4:42-44 the unnamed "servant" (נער) and "attendant" (משרת) of Elisha are among the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים).[60]

Another legendary narrative in which the terms "servant" (נער) and "attendant" (משרת) are used alternatively occurs in 2 Kgs 6:8-23. The passage records how Elisha's powers protect Israel from Aram's attacks. Once the king of Aram finds out that it is Elisha who thwarts his war plans, he directs his army to capture Elisha. When the army comes to surround the town of Dothan, where Elisha resides, Elisha's unnamed "attendant" (משרת) is frightened and turns to his master for help. The verse that describes this situation uses the terms "servant" (נער) and "attendant" (משרת) interchangeably in reference to the same person (6:15). Most importantly, we are now ready to engage the actual transfer of charismatic leadership from Elijah to Elisha, the primary focus of Chapter Five.

[60] Burke O. Long maintains that the key element for setting vv. 42-44 apart from vv. 38-41 is "the divine oracle and its function in portraying the disparity between Elisha's and others' view of reality." For details see B. Long, *2 Kings* (FOTL 10; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1991), 64.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ELIJAH-ELISHA SUCCESSION AS AN EXAMPLE OF CHARISMATIC SUCCESSION

Before we enter the main focus of this present study and explore the Elijah-Elisha succession, one thing we shall bear in mind is that the Elijah-Elisha cycle, according to Martti Nissinen, belongs primarily to its "present literary contexts with a complex editorial history."[1] In addition, the evaluation of Weber himself on Elijah and Elisha cannot slip away from our attention, especially as Weber's theory about charisma and institution building, as applied in an analysis of the prophetic succession by Elisha of Elijah, is a main focus of this study. So it is very appropriate to first review Weber's own discussion of the prophets Elijah and Elisha so as to see how Weber himself describes the connections between the two prophets under review.

A. Elijah and Elisha in Max Weber's *Ancient Judaism*

Elijah was, in Weber's judgment, presented particularly as a miracle worker, just like Moses. Both "performed private healing miracles as well as political ones, especially military, rain-making, and dietary miracles," and both, "scrutinized the will of God and offenses against

---

[1] See Nissinen, "Prophets and Prophecy in Joshua-Kings: A Near Eastern Perspective," in *Israelite Prophecy and the Deuteronomistic History: Portrait, Reality, and the Formation of a History* (ed. Mignon R. Jacobs and Raymond F. Person, Jr.; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 127. This article is helpful in understanding the literary contexts and original sources of the ancient Israelite prophetic traditions recorded in Joshua-Kings (basically the Deuteronomistic History) in particular, with Elijah and Elisha as two of the major players in the traditions. As for the complications of the literary history that is presented in the Elijah-Elisha cycle, some recent contributions are worth noting as especially pertinent to this study, though their results vary: Jyrki Keinänen, *Traditions in Collision*: *A Literary and Redaction-Critical Study on the Elijah Narratives 1 Kings 17-19* (PFES 80; Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society and Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001); Susanne Otto, *Jehu, Elia und Elisa*; Bernhard Lehnart, *Prophet und König*; Matthias Köckert, "Elia: Literarische und religionsgeschichtliche Probleme in 1Kön 17-18," in *Der Eine Gott und die Götter: Polytheismus und Monotheismus im antiken Israel* (ed. Manfred Oeming and Konrad Schmid; ATANT 82; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 2003), 111-44; Dagmar Pruin, *Geschichten und Geschichte: Isebel als literarische und historische Gestalt* (OBO 222; Fribourg: Academic Press and Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006).

him," thereby providing what "became the special service of the professional leaders of Yahwism."[2] In terms of the prophetic groups, the Nebiim, Elisha was "the last master of the guild." Elisha was:

> . . . quite typical of professional sorcery as found in legends of Indian and other magicians. Those magic tales, including those transmitted of Elijah, "permit us to recognize that" the Nebiim, like all such ecstatic sorcerers, partially were sought after as medicinemen, partially as rain makers. Partially, however, they acted, like the Indian naga and the most comparable dervishes, as field chaplains and probably also directly as crusaders.[3]

Weber also affirms that "the ecstatic Nebiim under the leadership of Elisha . . . appear far more tempered than in the Saul and Samuel tradition."[4] Yet he also considers Elisha as acting at times as "an ecstatic sorcerer." He was a free "prophet" (נביא) whose "professional Nabi ecstasy was only partially politically oriented" and who, engaged non-Israelites as well, i.e., "had no national Israelite character."[5] Elisha made his services available to various Aramaeans, such as King Ben-Hadad (a rival of Ahab), Naaman (suffering from leprosy), and Hazael, who was encouraged by Elisha to seek the crown.[6] In general, Weber regards Elijah and Elisha as professional Yahwistic miracle workers.

---

[2] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 166.

[3] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 97

[4] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 101.

[5] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 101-2.

[6] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 102. Weber also states that Elisha, though an ecstatic, belongs to the category of נביאים "who shunned any exploitation of ecstatic charisma for profit," especially in his affliction with leprosy of his "student," Gehazi, for accepting compensation from Naaman. Besides, in Weber's opinion, "[t]he ancient mass ecstatic Nebiim were, doubtlessly, an essentially North Israelite phenomenon, partially derived from Phoenician, partially from Canaanite Baal cults" (192). Weber finds that one of the differences between prophets from the South and the North lies in the practice of ecstasy. For further analysis regarding Elisha and ecstasy, see *Ancient Judaism*, 205-6, 220-21.

Elijah was somewhat distinctive, however. In terms of his background, Elijah, "the typical individual prophet . . . the deadly enemy of Baal ecstasy, hails from Gilead and is a typical migratory nomad. Elisha, the mass ecstatic, was, according to tradition, a peasant."[7] A difference between Elijah and those identified by the older title, "man of God," who was a "Roeh [ראה] who commanded magical powers,"[8] according to Weber, is found in the report that Elijah "addressed his oracles, at least in part, to the politically interested 'public' and not alone to the authorities: kings or elders."[9] As such, "Elijah is the first specifically 'clerical' figure of Israelite history."[10] "In contrast to the ecstasy charms of the Baal Nebiim," especially in 1 Kings 18, Elijah's manner becomes impressive mainly because "he used no means other than the plain imploration of Yahwe[h] by prayer."[11] Elisha, on the other hand, is particularly associated with ecstasy and "the organized schools among the Northern Nebiim" from whom "[t]he miracle stories included in the Book of Kings derive."[12]

Elijah's solitude, as Weber indicates, lies partly in the role he played as he mostly delivered a prophecy of doom, which did not earn any profit for him. Yet Elijah, according to Weber, along with other prophets of doom were the "greatest ideologists of Yahwism …who knew no consideration whatsoever and . . . accomplished their tremendous effects." [13] As to his

---

[7] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 193.

[8] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 106.

[9] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 108.

[10] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 108.

[11] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 108.

[12] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 195.

[13] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 109.

importance in the tradition, note that Elijah was described by Ahab as "a mischief maker and a destroyer of the people."[14] The main reason for the role Elijah played in this aspect is that he was known as the prophet "most passionately possessed by the angry spirit of Yahweh" with a conspicuous example in his triumphant ordeal against the rival Baal prophets, at Mount Carmel.[15] So Elijah, "the typical individual prophet," was a "deadly enemy of Baal ecstasy."[16] Elisha, in contrast, is associated with the Nebiim, "the charismatic ecstatics serving orgiastic mass cults . . . [having] organized themselves into guilds or schools. The Nabi schools of Elisha, and those of earlier times, are local examples."[17] And these Northern Nebiim, so closely associated with Elisha, also strongly influenced the shape of the tradition:

> The miracle stories included in the Book of Kings derive from the organized schools among the Northern Nebiim. Part of the Elijah account and, likewise, the probably pre-Deuteronomic first revision of the stories of the prehistoric seers, Samuel, above all, show that there existed circles which indeed withdrew not only from courtly but likewise from school-organized prophetic influence.[18]

Weber's contrasting descriptions of Elijah and Elisha and his judgment of reshaped traditions, led him to emphasize the differences between the two rather than the similarities or the specific continuity of Elijah and Elisha. This may be the reason that he fails to discuss the process and character of the transfer of prophetic authority from Elijah to Elisha. He may also have been influenced by the argument by Gustav Hölscher whose very important work on

---

[14] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 109.

[15] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 109-10. Weber (*Ancient Judaism*, 331) regards Elijah as "the first prophet known to have stood up to the king as a prophet of doom."

[16] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 193.

[17] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 192.

[18] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 195.

prophecy appeared in 1914,[19] well in time to influence Weber, though he has no apparent citation of Hölscher.[20] Hölscher argued that "Was über ihn [Elijah] erzählt wird, ist fast durchweg sagenshaft; zu einem guten Teil sind es Erzählungen, die ursprünglich an Elisa haften und erst nachträglich auf ihn (Elijah) übertragen sind. . . . [D]as meiste, was über ihn [Elijah] berichtet wird, ist ungeschichtlich."[21] If Weber basically concurred, he may not have wanted to deal with what the leading contemporary scholar of prophecy regarded as legendary and unhistorical tradition. Furthering this inference is Weber's comment:

> The biased tradition of the Nebiim brought him at least indirectly into connection with the Nabi-school of Elisha, which still retained a traditional character. Elijah has been made into a magician of the type of Elisha only by legend and by the endeavor of this epigonus of the ancient Nebiim to pose as Elijah's successor, an endeavor which even in the tradition shows as ambitious "straining."[22]

B. The Initial Designation of Elisha

The exploration of some decisive elements of the Elijah-Elisha succession starts in earnest in 2 Kings 2, where Elijah is taken from Elisha's presence and ascends into heaven in a whirlwind accompanied by fiery chariots. The issue was whether or not Elisha would be aware of what happened; if he actually saw this strange phenomenon, Elisha would receive a "double portion" (פִּי־שְׁנַיִם) of Elijah's spirit (2 Kgs 2:9-13). Other narratives related to this charismatic succession will also be put into discussion and analysis.

---

[19] Gustav Hölscher, *Die Profeten: Untersuchungen zur religionsgeschichte Israels* (Leipzig: Hindrichs, 1914).

[20] Note Webers's comment (*Ancient Judaism*, 425): "For ancient Israelite religion, modern Protestant, especially German, scholarship is acknowledged to be authoritative to this day." (Weber's "essays on Ancient Judaism appeared originally in . . . 1917-1919"; *Ancient Judaism,* ix.) Hölscher's work was the "latest word" at the time of Weber's writing.

[21] Hölscher, *Die Profeten*, 177.

[22] Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 108.

2 Kings relates the transfer of spiritual power from Elijah to Elisha. The account begins with (1) the story of Elijah's journey, together with Elisha, from Gilgal to Bethel then to Jericho, and finally to the banks of the Jordan. In the reported conversation during this journey, already at Gilgal, the starting point, Elijah suggests that Elisha wait there. Again at Bethel, where they encounter a group of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) who advise Elisha that Elijah is about to depart (this world), Elijah asks him to remain there. However, they continue on to Jericho, where there is another group of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) who also advise Elisha that Elijah is about to depart. And again Elijah asks Elisha to remain there, but they continue on together to the bank of the Jordan River itself, followed at a discrete distance by 50 of the "sons of the prophets" (witnesses to be). Throughout, Elisha insists on accompanying Elijah. (2) Elijah strikes the Jordan River with his rolled-up mantle, the waters divide, and Elijah and Elisha proceed to walk across on dry land to the other side. (3) During this special crossing Elijah and Elisha converse: Elijah asks what he can do for Elisha. Elisha responds by asking for a "double portion" (פי־שׁנים) of his (Elijah's) "spirit" (רוח). Elijah replies that the precondition for this transfer is that Elisha "sees" (ראה) him as he is taken. (4) Elijah and Elisha continue conversing, having crossed the river bed, but a fiery chariot and fiery horses suddenly appear and the two are separated. Elisha sees Elijah ascend into heaven in a whirlwind and cries out with the great epithet "my father, my father—[metaphorical mentor]—Israel's chariotry and its horsemen" (אבי אבי רכב ישׂראל ופרשׁיו). (5) At this point Elisha grabs his garments and tears them apart (associated with mourning for the dead). (6) Elisha then picks up Elijah's mantle, returns to the Jordan, and strikes the water, asking, "Where is Yahweh, the God of Elijah indeed?" Thus challenged, the waters of the river part and Elisha crosses back over the Jordan on dry ground. (7) The group of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים), having observed all this from a distance on

the other side, announces that "the spirit of Elijah (רוח אליהו) has come to rest upon Elisha," and proceeds to meet Elisha and do obeisance to him!

In addition, (8) the group says that they have 50 "able-bodied men" (אנשים בני־חיל) ready to look for Elijah, who may have been carried off by the "spirit/wind" (רוח) of Yahweh and left on a mountain top or in a valley. (Note that they did not see the fiery chariots, etc.) Elisha says that that is not necessary, but they insist and search for three days without finding any trace of Elijah, just as Elisha said would happen. This is a second confirmation of Elijah's prophetic role having shifted to Elisha. The following narratives about Elisha, with many general parallels with Elijah stories, provides another kind of confirmation of the transfer. Note that this is the first and only such transfer mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, as we will discover with the stories of Gehazi's inability to take on the power or character of Elisha.

Before the ascent, Elijah walked with Elisha from Gilgal, through Bethel and Jericho, in both of which latter two places a group of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) appeared, as well as on the bank of the Jordan. A group of fifty of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) were eyewitnesses that Elisha parted the Jordan River, as Elijah had done, and they acclaimed that the "spirit" (רוח) of Elijah had come to rest on Elisha. This account concludes the Elijah cycle and, at the same time, begins the Elisha cycle. The following section of this present study will focus on Elisha's succession to Elijah and the decisive constituents of the one and only clear successful prophetic succession in the tradition of the Hebrew Bible. The narratives show both continuities between Elijah and Elisha, in terms of their prophetic activities, and some contrasts.

The Elisha cycle, as presented in the tradition, contains legends that attract our attention. We wonder what kind of prophetic powers Elisha was assumed to have as he performed his prophetic role. Worth quoting here is Gerhard von Rad's interpretation of Elisha as a prophet:

> What was Elisha's office? To what tasks was he called as a prophet? The sources are in no doubt about the answer: he was a worker of miracles. He made iron float, made a spring of water wholesome, struck an enemy army with blindness, healed a leper, even brought a dead man back to life, and so on. Nowhere in the Old Testament are so many miracles crowded into so brief a space, and nowhere is such open pleasure taken in the miraculous, or such sheer delight shown at the repeated and astonishing proofs of the prophet's *charisma*. This means, of course, that Elisha's own person occupies the center of the stage much more than was the case with Elijah. But "person" in this context does not carry the same full meaning as in our modern speech. Elisha's possession of a *charisma* which gives him the power to perform miracles is the real subject of the stories.[23]

Von Rad's picture of Elisha as a "charismatic" prophet with a lot or miracles offers us a clear introduction for understanding the successor of Elijah. Before entering the discussion of the successful succession by Elisha to Elijah, we have to be attentive to just how this prophetic succession is described.

According to the tradition, the "word of Yahweh" finally comes to Elijah at Mount Horeb, inquiring of him about his reason for being there (1 Kgs 19:9b, 13), and with each inquiry Elijah answers to Yahweh with the same complaint (19:10, 14). He complains that it is the Israelites, instead of Jezebel, who are seeking to take his life away after they, again, instead of Jezebel, "have killed Yahweh's prophets with the sword," and Elijah, at the moment, states that he is the only prophet, of Yahweh—perhaps the only true devotee—left alive ("I alone am left!") (ואותר אני לבדי) (19:10, 14).[24] Elijah seems to complain in saying he is the only prophet left alive, the only

---

[23] Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2:27.

[24] Syntactically, the clause "I alone am left!" (ואותר אני לבדי) means that Elijah is the only prophet left alive because the preceding clause is "the Israelites . . . killed [Yahweh's] prophets with the sword." Cogan (*I Kings*, 453) indicates that the same point was made by Elijah at Mount Carmel (cf. 18:22), in which he neglected the one hundred prophets whom Obadiah had reportedly saved from Jezebel's slaughter (18:13). Gray (*I & II Kings*, 410) regards Elijah's complaint as a "typical case of hyperbole for the sake of emphasis, which is common in Semitic thought and speech." Fritz (*1 & 2 Kings*, 198) holds that Elijah's protestation over his aloneness emphasizes that he is the "only remaining prophet of Yahweh" due to the "general persecution of the worshipers of Yahweh" which "stresses his significance and elevates his personal status."

one being zealous for Yahweh. His prophetic career has led him to a sense of isolation, though God rejects that analysis.[25] Yahweh does not reply directly to Elijah's complaint; he tells Elijah to go out of the cave and "stand on the mountain before Yahweh (ועמדת בהר לפני יהוה) " (v. 11). The expression "stand before" in Yahweh's command recalls the self-introduction of Elijah to Ahab in 1 Kgs 17:1, "As Yahweh the God of Israel lives, *before whom I stand*" (אשר עמדתי לפניו) (*emphasis* added; cf. 18:15).[26] The phrase "standing before Yahweh" included in Elijah's "mission statement" represents, as Dharamraj indicates, a claim of "intimacy with and obedience to [Yahweh]";[27] now, Elijah receives a command from Yahweh to "stand before Yahweh." Yahweh's command seems to remind Elijah that he should stand before him and again be a genuine prophet instead of lamenting all the time, particularly when he is fleeing for his life (and, ironically, begging Yahweh to take his life away). The point of Yahweh's command seems to be:

---

[25] Marsha C. White may be correct in the suggestion that Elijah's protest about his aloneness portrays him as self-conscious and does not necessarily indicate that he "cannot bear to be like others"; on the contrary, it suggests that Elijah's protest "would logically proceed from a wish for company." See White, *The Elijah Legends and Jehu's Coup* (BJS 311; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 6-7. B. Long (*1 Kings*, 200) has a similar analysis regarding Elijah's lament over aloneness so that the commission in Yahweh's reply indicates that Elijah "cannot simply flee his prophetic calling (vv. 10, 14; cf. Jeremiah 15; 20; Jonah); he is to be part of the eventual end to this ideological conflict between Yahweh and Baal." In other words, Elijah will soon have fellowship for his prophetic role through anointing Elisha as his successor.

[26] Dharamraj (*Prophet like Moses*, 9) suggests that the phrase אשר עמדתי לפניו is an expression that brings out an "asseverative force." She reminds us that Elisha uses the phrase אשר עמדתי לפניו with the same force in 2 Kgs 3:14; 5:16. Leah Bronner points out that the phrase "before whom I stand" (אשר עמדתי לפניו) is a significance expression "characteristic of both Elijah and Elisha," both of whom used it. Besides, she suggests that the expression is "apparently peculiar to Elijah and Elisha and disappeared after their age from prophetic speech." See Bronner, *The Stories of Elijah and Elisha as Polemics against Baal Worship* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 29-30. Uffenheimer (*Early Prophecy*, 467) indicates that the phrase is one of several that link the Elijah and Elisha cycles. James S. Ackerman points out that "standing before Yahweh's presence" seems to be specific to the prophetic office (see also 1 Kgs 18:15; 2 Kgs 3:14; 5:16; Jer 15:19). Ackerman, "Satire and Symbolism in the Song of Jonah," 223.

[27] Dharamraj, *Prophet like Moses*, 9

"Elijah, you are a prophet. Do what you are supposed to do. Stop complaining and getting upset!"

The theophany Elijah is experiencing is dramatic, and a meticulous reading of Yahweh's appearance to Elijah as described in 1 Kgs 19:11-12 recalls the connection of this event with the theophany to Moses in Exodus 33-34, in which Yahweh "passed by" (עבר) Moses, who was able to see only Yahweh's backside (Exod 33:19, 22-23; 34:6).[28] Yahweh had appeared to Moses on the mount with thunder and lightning and descended in fire (Exod 19:16-25). In the theophany to Elijah, there is a great wind, then an earthquake and even a fire, but, according to the narrator, Yahweh is not in any one of them. We may be intrigued by the "sound of sheer silence" (קול דממה דקה)[29] which comes next in the theophany (1 Kgs 19:12). When Elijah is aware of the "sound of sheer silence," he knows very well that the divine presence, at this point, is now in the solitary prophet's company and is about to speak. Elijah experiences the presence of Yahweh, says Fritz, "only in the hardly audible murmur."[30] Fritz comments that Yahweh's self-revelation is mysterious and that the silence as presented in the theophany to Elijah is "appropriate to the nature of God and to the experience of God through his word"; the main reason is that Yahweh

---

[28] Jesse C. Long, Jr., *1 and 2 Kings* (CPNIVC; Joplin, Miss.: College Press, 2002), 221.

[29] Cogan holds that the NRSV's rendering of the phrase קול דממה דקה as "a sound of sheer silence" is a "successful approximation of the assonance of the Hebrew text." He points out the terms "sound" and "silence" are seemingly contradictory and occur together in the phenomenon described by Eliphaz in Job 4:16, where "there is silence, yet I heard a sound" (דממה וקול אשמע). In the theophany at Mount Horeb, Elijah experiences an utter silence after the storm, from which comes a sound; Yahweh is speaking to him through the "sound of sheer silence." Cogan further points out that the tradition sets up the "desired mode of discourse between the prophet and the divine presence." See Cogan, *I Kings*, 453. For a detailed comparison between 1 Kgs 19:12 and Job 4:12-16 regarding the terms "sound" and "silence," see Dharamraj, *Prophet like Moses*, 77-80.

[30] Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 198.

can be recognized "only in the silence that focuses the individual on himself or herself and on the act of listening."[31] All Elijah can do now is cover his face with his mantle in front of his company—Yahweh—whom he should not actually see. Ironically, the one who just complained that he was the only prophet left alive is now afraid of "seeing" his divine company. Elijah's covering his face from the divine presence is reminiscent of Moses' similar action preceding the first theophany he experienced at Mount Horeb (Exod 3:6). Both figures are presented as believing that they are not allowed to actually see Yahweh, unless they prefer to lose their life (see Jacob in Gen 32:30; Moses in Exod 33:20; Gideon in Judg 6:22; Manoah in Judg 13:22; Isaiah in Isa 6:5).[32]

Following the silence, Yahweh speaks again, which may be what the silence is leading to, and this time he repeats the question of 1 Kgs 19:9, asking Elijah what he is doing there. The question implies that Elijah, as a Yahwistic prophet, should not be there doing things that do not fit with his prophetic task. Elijah's reply to this is a repetition of 1 Kgs 19:10, after which Yahweh commanded Elijah to come out of the cave for the theophanic encounter. This time Yahweh replies to Elijah with another command in which he gives Elijah a new, threefold assignment: "you shall anoint (ומשחת) Hazael as king over Aram, and Jehu . . . you shall anoint (תמשח) as king over Israel, and Elisha . . . you shall anoint (תמשח) as prophet in your place (לנביא תחתיך)" (1 Kgs 19:15-16).

---

[31] Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 198.

[32] Cogan (*I Kings*, 453) suggests a difference between the theophanies in the cases of Elijah and Moses. The concern in the Moses case was viewing Yahweh, while in the Elijah cases it is "hearing [Yahweh] in all his power." Sarna (*Exodus*, 215) indicates that no human being is allowed to "penetrate the ultimate mystery of God's Being"; even Moses could only have a possible glimpse of the divine reality. For a detailed discussion of Exod 33:18-23, see Childs, *Exodus*, 595-97.

Elijah seemingly wanted to end his life and his prophetic role, but Yahweh does not allow him to retire (1 Kgs 19:15-16). On the contrary, Yahweh is described as helping Elijah to fulfill the prophetic role through his (symbolic or real) anointing of several persons representing change. In the tradition, previous prophets had been charged with anointing a royal successor (1 Sam 9:16; 10:1; 16:1-13), but here Elijah is charged with anointing not only a new king for Israel but also a new king for Aram as well as his own prophetic successor.[33] Elijah's flight to preserve his life ends up with a kind of pre-retirement list of steps, including, most importantly, designating a successor for the continuation of his prophetic mission. In other words, it is a divine assignment for Elisha to be Elijah's prophetic successor and to continue the work that Elijah had thought to abandon. Elijah accepts the threefold assignment and starts to accomplish it beginning with the last—and most personal—of the specific tasks, which is the symbolic anointing of Elisha who, after various pre-departure steps, begins his new life by becoming an attendant for Elijah (וישרתהו) (1 Kgs 19:21). Elisha, however, does not have a significant role in the narratives until 2 Kings 2, the very end of Elijah's activities.

C. The Apprenticeship of Elisha

Elisha appears in the narrative as Yahweh's designated successor to Elijah. But the narrative says that Elisha began by serving Elijah as an attendant; he does not engage in any prophetic activity until after the translation of Elijah. He is an apprentice who first has something to learn from being with Elijah. He presumably needs some training or discipline for this divine appointment. The narrator continues the account of Elijah's threefold assignment with the report of Elijah's encounter with Elisha which concludes 1 Kings 19, but that action sequence requires

[33] Anointing, as Cogan (*I Kings*, 454) indicates, represents "a sign of investiture and was restricted to kings and priests"; prophets, however, "were never anointed," but that ignores Isa 61:1 as a second literary example.

Elijah to have left from Mt. Horeb, the site of the theophany, and returned to the realm of the northern kingdom so as to "anoint" Elisha who is residing in Abel-Meholah in the upper Jordan Valley. At Elijah's first sight of him, Elisha is plowing with a legendary but symbolic team of twelve yoke of oxen, indicating that Elisha is a remarkably vigorous young man and already carrying out legendary behavior. Apparently, Elisha comes from a well-off (peasant) farming family, whereas Elijah, by contrast, has but a modest, somewhat enigmatic background. 1 Kings 17 only notes that Elijah is a Tishbite (תשבי), a term reminisces of the תושב, "day laborer," and a sort of "resident outsider from Gilead" (מתשבי גלעד).[34] Elisha, however, appears plowing with the unsurpassed twelve yoke of oxen (1 Kgs 19:19), implying that Elisha comes from a very prosperous family and is associated with all Israel.[35] When Elijah finds Elisha, the former, according to the tradition, passes by the latter and, as the main point of this episode is made, tosses his mantle (אדרתו) over the latter (19:19).[36] Elisha, having now the mantle of Elijah,

---

[34] C. F. Burney renders מתשבי גלעד as "of the sojourners of Gilead" and suggests that the Hebrew תושב refers to a "foreigner dwelling in the midst of Israel, and . . . seems to denote residence of a more fortuitous or transitory character" (cf. Gen 23:4; Ps 39:13; 1 Chr 29:15). For Burney, Elijah was a "foreigner who had been sojourning, probably merely for a short time, in the region east of Jordan." See Burney, *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Kings with an Introduction and Appendix* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903), 215-16. James A. Montgomery and H. S. Gehman translate מתשבי as "of the settlers of" and indicates that the rendering is a "strange expression." See Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Kings* (ed. Henry Snyder Gehman; ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1951), 296. See also W. F. Albright, *The Biblical Period from Abraham to Ezra* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 65, who describes Elijah as "a displaced person (*toshab*) from Gilead" (65), and note Albertz's interpretation (*Israelite Religion*, 1:151), that Elijah was "one of the 'underprivileged' (*tōšābīm*) who had no land."

[35] Sweeney as well notes that the twelve pairs of oxen are an indication that Elisha was a man of wealth who would give up his current life to follow and serve Elijah. He further points out that the number "twelve" reminds us of the twelve tribes of Israel represented by the twelve stones Elijah set up at Mount Carmel (1 Kgs 18:31) and the "twelve oxen" that Saul cut up to summon Israel to deliver the besieged city of Jabesh Gilead (1 Sam 11:1-11); see Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 233.

[36] DeVries (*1 Kings*, 239) observes that Elijah's mantle is a "token of spiritual power." 2

leaves (עזב) his oxen and runs after Elijah with a request to kiss his parents goodbye before following him (19:20).[37] Elisha doubtless knows what the tossing of the mantle signifies and something about who Elijah is.[38] He seems to have made up his mind to follow Elijah and all he needs currently is to pay his respects to his parents and hold some farewell ceremonies.

Elijah's response to Elisha's kiss-goodbye request (1 Kgs 19:20) seems curious, for the response, "Go back, for what have I done to you?" (לך שוב כי מה־עשׂיתי לך), does not sound either permissive or critical.[39] It seems rather a challenge for Elisha to consider the significance of the action. It is hard to see why Elijah would be displeased with Elisha's request, given that Elisha says that he will follow Elijah after bidding his parents farewell. The syntax of the sentence does not seem to give clues for permission either, so we have difficulty deciding the precise meaning of Elijah's response. Is this intentional ambiguity that allows various interpretations for Elijah's intentions, or does it only obscure the meaning of the text? At any rate, the concluding verse of this episode includes a sentence showing that Elisha "returns" (שׁוב) and hosts a great meal using the oxen—or at least two of them—presumably indicating that he is bidding farewell to his old

---

Kgs 2:8, 13-14 clearly shows the symbolic meaning.

[37] Note the first three verbs referring to Elisha in 1 Kgs 19:20 which appear ina sequence of time and also of significance. The first verb, which is also the first word of the verse, is ויעזב ("he left"), followed by the other two in sequence of time: וירץ ("he ran") and ויאמר ("he said"). The first verb indicates that Elisha "left" (or "abandoned") his oxen and then "ran" after Elijah before he "said" that he needed to kiss his parents goodbye. Bergen (*End of Prophetism*, 50) maintains that Elisha responded to the tossing of the mantle by abandoning his oxen and following Elijah, but it was not that simple.

[38] Note the symbolic casting of cloaks under the feet of Jehu, the newly acclaimed king, by his subordinates (2 Kgs 9:13).

[39] See Georg Fohrer, *Elia* (2[d] ed.; ATANT 53; Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1968), 20; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 233.

life and welcomng his new one with Elijah.[40] The final sentence of the concluding verse tells us that "he arose and went after Elijah and attended him" (ויקם וילך אחרי אליהו וישׁרתהו) (19:21).[41] The concluding word of the chapter indicates that Elisha ends up assisting Elijah; in other words, Elisha is Elijah's "attendant" (מׁשׁרת).[42]

In addition to 1 Kgs 19:21, which indicates that Elisha attended Elijah, 2 Kgs 3:11 describes something of the role that Elisha had as an attendant to Elijah, prior to the ascent of Elijah. For 2 Kings 3 discusses an Israelite-Judean-Edomite joint campaign against Moab, during

---

[40] Worth quoting here is Albertz's interpretation of 1 Kgs 19:19-21: "Only in the ninth century did individual prophets and prophetic groups with no ties to the institution emerge. . . ; such prophets had largely detached themselves from ties of kinship and profession (I Kings 19.19-21) in order to earn their living as itinerant miraculous healers, exorcists, or oracle-givers." He also points out that the prophets related to his interpretation include Ahijah of Shiloh (1 Kgs 14:1-16), the man of God from Judah (1 Kings 13) and the unnamed prophet of Bethel (1 Kgs 13:11-32), Micaiah ben Imlah (1 Kings 22), Elijah (1 Kings 17), and Elisha (2 Kgs 2:19-25; 4:8-17; 5); the prophetic bands in 1 Kgs 20:35-42 and around Elisha (2 Kgs 4:1-7, 38-44; 6:1-7) are also included. See Albertz, *Israelite Religion*, 1:151, 316.

[41] Cogan (*I Kings*, 455) notes that Elisha's attending Elijah is reminiscent of Joshua's serving Moses for a while before being appointed by Yahweh to be his successor (cf. Exod 33:11; Num 11:28; Josh 1:1). In addition, see White, *Elijah Legends*, 8, for a connection between Elisha as Elijah's "attendant" (מׁשׁרת) and Joshua as servant of Moses, an important point for comparative study.

[42] Gray astutely comments that "Elisha's slaughter of the yoke of oxen and his cooking them in fire made from the tackle is a symbol of his break with the old life, and the meal is his rite of integration with Elijah, and his way of engaging his people in his new enterprise." In other words, Elisha clearly knows that Elijah's tossing the mantle over him signifies that he has to follow Elijah and start a new life. Elisha's determination to follow Elijah is indicated by the big meal he hosts, signifying a full farewell. See Gray, *I & II Kings*, 413-14. Kissling (*Reliable Characters*, 152) states that Elisha's actions of attending Elijah "indicate that he makes a clear and decisive break with the past in order to follow Elijah." For a further analysis of Elisha "als Diener [מׁשׁרת] Elias," see Susanne Otto, *Jehu, Elia und Elisa*, 222. Sweeney remarks that וישׁרתהו in usage is typically related to royal domestic service (Gen 39:4; 2 Sam 13:7), priestly service (e.g., Exod 28:35; Num 3:6; 1 Kgs 8:11), the service of messengers to Yahweh (Psalm 103), and Joshua's service to Moses (Exod 24:13; 33:11; Num 11:28). Like others cited above, he compares Joshua as Moses' assistant and successor with Elisha as Elijah's assistant and successor (cf. 1 Kgs 19:3). See Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 233-34.

which the armies got lost and sought divine help. One of the "servants" (עבדים) of Jehoram, king of Israel, responding to the inquiry of King Jehoshaphat of Judah: "Is there not a prophet of Yahweh here from whom we can seek Yahweh's advice?" reports the presence of Elisha, "who poured water on the hands of Elijah" (אשר־יצק מים על־ידי אליהו),[43] seemingly a modest but symbolically important role. But this connection proves sufficient for the three kings to explore guidance through Elisha. One of Jehoram's servants added in response that Elisha, who was Elijah's personal attendant, was at hand and available (3:11). On hearing this, Jehoshaphat concludes that "the word of Yahweh is with him" (3:12). So the three kings proceed to inquire of Yahweh through Elisha (3:12).

Elisha, having known what the three kings were requesting of him, is not about to help the king of Israel without some concessions, so he says, "Go to your father's prophets or to your mother's prophets" (2 Kgs 3:13). Elisha's attitude toward Jehoram is quite different from that of Elijah when encountering the Israelite kings, Ahab and his successor son, Ahaziah. For example, after challenging Ahab about the lack of rain, Elijah is advised by God to go into hiding. (He does not flee, as in the Jezebel case!) Elijah disappears, at Yahweh's command. In 2 Kings 1, a "messenger/angel" (מלאך) of Yahweh tells Elijah to confront Ahaziah's "messengers" (מלאכים) (1:3), who then report back to King Ahaziah. So Ahaziah sends a captain with a unit of fifty soldiers to fetch Elijah, but Elijah summons a heavenly fire that consumes them. The same thing

[43] Hobbs points out that there is no other reference in the Hebrew Bible to "pouring water on the hands." 2 Kgs 3:11 is the only occurrence of this phrase. Nevertheless, it well defines the relationship between Elijah and Elisha. See Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 36. Gray's comment further identifies Elisha as Elijah's personal attendant. He indicates that "the pouring water over one's hands, e.g., after a meal, is still a gesture of deference among the Arabs, as of a servant to his master, a son to his father, or a host to his guest." See Gray, *I & II Kings*, 486. Bernhard Lehnart suggests that 2 Kgs 3:11 shows that Elisha is Elijah's "attendant" (משרת): "Innerhalb der weiteren Elischa-Überlieferung wird Elija noch einmal in 2 Kön 3,11 erwähnt; Elischa zeigt sich dort als sein Diener." See Lehnart, *Prophet und König im Nordreich Israel*, 178, 357.

happened to the second group of fifty sent to fetch Elijah. With the third group, the captain first begged Elijah for mercy, and again a "messenger/angel" (מלאך) of Yahweh advised Elijah to go to Ahaziah and not to be afraid for his life (1:15). In both cases, Elijah did as he was told by Yahweh. Elisha, however, is rather different in this matter in 2 Kings 3 and acts boldly with the king(s).

The king of Israel, nevertheless, repeats his suspicion that Yahweh is handing the three kings over to Moab. Elisha replies to the king of Israel that it is only because of the presence of King Jehoshaphat that he would consider inquiring of Yahweh regarding this campaign.[44] Then Elisha requests a musician to play music for him so that he can get inspired by the "hand of Yahweh" (יד־יהוה) through the music (3:15).[45] Here, Elisha, unlike the members of "the sons of

[44] Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, plays a pivotal role both in 1 Kings 22 and 2 Kings 3. In the portrayal of both events, he is not only a political ally of Israel but also the first to request a "true prophecy" from Yahweh's prophet, verified at the time of the prophecy's fulfillment. (Cf. 1 Kgs 22:4 and 2 Kgs 3:7, 1 Kgs 22:7 and 2 Kgs 3:11 for the thematic similarities between the two events.) The story line of both events depends upon Jehoshaphat's participation. See Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 49-50. As for the "true prophecy," however, Raymond Westbrook discusses the issue in regard to 2 Kings 3. Westbrook points out two unsolved mysteries in the biblical account, viz., why Israel abandoned the attack and how Elisha made a failed prophecy, intimating victory, which was not actually a false prophecy. He further suggests that Elisha would rather see Israel's campaign fail because of his "potent hostility to King Jehoram." But, as Westbrook indicates, there is no need for Elisha to "offer a deliberately false prophecy. Such a tactic was possible on the part of YHWH, but would have been explicitly stated, as in the case of the prophet Micaiah in 1 Kgs 22:19-23." Westbrook concludes that by using ambiguous language "Elisha made a true prophecy: it was the misfortune, or misguidedness, of King Jehoram, that he failed to interpret the words of the prophecy correctly." For the details, see Westbrook, "Elisha's True Prophecy in 2 Kings 3," *JBL* 124 (2005): 530-32.

[45] Weber indicates that the music mentioned in 2 Kgs 3:15 is used as a "means of evoking ecstasy." Elisha's being possessed through music is similar to that of the prophetic band (חבל נביאים) Saul was told he would meet at the "hill of God" (גבעת האלהים) (1 Sam 10:5). They will come down from the shrine of the hill with music playing in front of them. Then they "will be in a prophetic ecstasy" (מתנבאים), or, as Abraham Heschel interprets, the verb התנבא means "to behave in an uncontrolled manner." He further points out that the verb "is applied to the wild prophets of Baal" (1 Kgs 18:28-29) in addition to King Saul (1 Sam 18:10; 19:24). Samuel predicted that Saul would also be possessed by the "spirit of Yahweh" (רוח יהוה) and then would

the prophets," apparently engages in ecstasy as a prelude to his oracle.

Aided by the musician Elisha delivered a carefully worded oracle, having experienced "the hand of Yahweh" upon him (2 Kgs 3:16-19). The phrase "thus says Yahweh" appears twice in this oracle (3:16, 17), and what is significant in the oracle is that Yahweh will "deliver Moab into your [pl.] power" (ונתן את־מואב בידכם) (3:18), presumably referring to the three kings led by King Jehoram. Now Jehoram's suspicion means nothing when Elisha prophesies that Yahweh will hand Moab over to the three kings, though Jehoram failed to grasp the ambiguous language.

D. The Successful Transfer of the Spirit from Elijah to Elisha (the Double Inheritance)

In the Scripture tradition, Elijah and Elisha do not appear together again, after 1 Kings 19, until the transferal text in 2 Kings 2. The tradition does not advise us about the time in between these two chapters. 1 Kings 20 does not engage the Elijah cycle, and in 1 Kings 21 Elijah alone appears to Ahab and curses him in the name of Yahweh in the Naboth episode, after Naboth was murdered through the initiative of Jezebel (1 Kgs 21:17-24),; no assistant is mentioned. Elijah himself is not even mentioned in the account of Ahab's demise in 1 Kings 22. In 2 Kings 1 Elijah appears—again alone-- in stark opposition to the Omride dynasty, now in the person of Ahaziah, Ahab's son who succeeded to the kingship after Ahab's death.[46] The only mention of Elijah and Elisha that relates to the narrative gap leading up to their shared appearance in 2 Kings 2 is the

---

fall into a prophetic ecstasy once he met the prophetic band (10:6). The prophetic ecstasy, according to Samuel's prediction, would turn Saul into "another man" (איש אחר). See Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 45; Hertzberg, *Samuel*, 85; Heschel, *The Prophets* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 406; Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 97.

[46] Ahab's death marks the decline of the Omride dynasty, and Ahaziah's reign marks not only its "inactivity and ineffectiveness" but its "brevity" as well. For further analysis related to the Elijah cycle, the disobedience of King Mesha of Moab in regard to Israel at Ahab's death, and a sudden decline of the Omride dynasty, see J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 274-75.

reflection in 2 Kgs 3:10, as noted above, in which a courtier of the Israelite king refers to "Elisha son of Shaphat, who poured water on the hands of Elijah," as a commendation of Elisha as a possible prophet of Yahweh, someone of whom the kings could inquire, i.e., as qualified in that he was associated with Elijah as a personal attendant. In the tradition, however, Elisha is a silent, unidentified presence. But Elisha was with Elijah at least to some extent, according to 2 Kgs 3:10.

1. Elisha Witnesses Elijah's Ascent

The first chapter of 2 Kings contains several episodes that demonstrate Elijah's continuing prophetic authority and power after he had complained to Yahweh about his prophetic career in 1 Kings 19. The significance of this demonstration, particularly right before the report of Elijah's ascension in the following chapter and the successful transfer of power to Elisha, is that it indicates that Elijah continues as a powerful prophet, such that a successor who embodies the spirit of Elijah could also be a powerful prophet.

2 Kings 1 concludes with the royal succession after Ahaziah's death: Ahaziah's younger brother, Jehoram, succeeded to the throne as Ahaziah himself had no living sons (2 Kgs 1:17-18). This royal succession that closes 2 Kings 1 serves as a warm-up for the following chapter, which includes a prophetic succession by divine designation, quite different from royal succession by kinship, together with the two disruptive royal successions that were to be carried out by Elijah..

The account of the one and only successful prophetic succession in the Israelite tradition reaches a peak with Elijah and Elisha's itinerary from Gilgal. The narrator does not explain why Elijah was visiting these places—Gilgal (2 Kgs 2:1), Bethel (2:2-3, 23), Jericho (2:4-5, 15, 18), and finally the banks of the Jordan River (2:6-8, 13), or why Elisha, after he is left alone without

Elijah, then visits Carmel and Samaria (2:25),[47] though it emphasizes Elisha's determination not to be left behind. Neither does the narrator indicate the significance of each location. However, as Joel S. Burnett indicates, Elijah and Elisha's itinerary suggests "anything but a random loose end"; he further suggests that "[T]he enumeration of these points on Elijah and Elisha's itinerary indicates, at the very least, a decisive concern for geography" in 2 Kings 2, connecting with places that are important in the early history of the people in the land under the leadership of Joshua and also connecting Elisha (and Elijah) with the prophetic groups that play such a prominent role in the career of Elisha. But above all Elisha wants to be with Elijah and to personally witness *how* his "master" (אדון) is taken away. Moreover, he has important favors to ask.

The deference shown by the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) in Bethel to both Elijah and Elisha indicates the master-apprentice relationship is recognized among the prophetic groups. They regard Elijah as Elisha's "master" (אדון), and they reveal the "secret" that Elisha's "master" (אדון) is about to be "taken away" (לקח) by Yahweh. Apparently, Elisha has earned respect from several of the prophetic groups, as the tradition shows from this point on. For the present, he is viewed by them as a genuine apprentice. Also, the tradents for the Elijah-Elisha tradition may well come from the prophetic groups.

At the final stop before reaching the Jordan, where the decisive action will take place, Elijah yet again commands Elisha to stay in Jericho and not go with him to the River Jordan, but Elisha refuses for the third time and last time (2 Kgs 2:6). So the "two of them" (שניהם) reach the

[47] It looks like Elisha's agenda with the prophetic groups, followed by an ideal place—the Jordan—for initiating a new leadership regime, and then touching base with places especially associated with Elijah—is intended to embrace the whole of the northern kingdom, the locus of the primary activity of Elijah.

bank of the Jordan River. At this point, a group of "sons of the prophets" follows along as well but stands afar from them (2:7). When the "two of them" (שניהם) are standing by the Jordan River, Elijah rolls up his mantle with which he then strikes the river; the river is divided so that the "two of them" (שניהם) can cross on dry ground (2:8), with no further discussion of Elisha remaining behind. The group of the "sons of the prophets" (בני־הנביאים) who have stayed behind, remain within view, and presumably serve as eyewitnesses of Elijah's parting of the Jordan River, the crossing of the dry riverbed, and the continuation of the walk together on the other side.

After crossing the river, Elijah speaks to Elisha again, but this time not with a command but with a question. He asks Elisha "What can I do for you before I am taken from you?" (מה אעשׂה־לך בטרם אלקח מעמך) (2:9). Note that Elijah's question has a different emphasis than his prior requests that Elisha remain behind. This time Elijah shows his concern for Elisha, who has persevered with him. Doubtless Elijah knows very well that once he is taken away Elisha has to be a prophet on his own without Elijah's mentoring presence. Elijah seems to give Elisha an opportunity for a wish that Elijah will grant, if possible, and this time he surely keenly awaits Elisha's response. Elisha replies, "Please let me inherit a double portion of your spirit" (ויהי־נא פי־ שנים ברוחך אלי) (2:9), as he could thereby become a special "second" person for the apparently childless Elijah. Even a casual reading gives the impression that: Elisha wants Elijah to declare him the primary heir— with the eldest son's double portion—of his prophetic spirit, and perhaps Elisha apparently thinks that Elijah can directly allocate a double-portion of his spirit to Elisha. Elijah responds with a condition, as he himself cannot merely direct the apportionment of his God-given spirit. Elijah says, "Your request is difficult" (הקשׁית לשׁאול) (2:10), but "if you see me being taken away from you, so it will be yours; if not, it will not" (אם־תראה אתי לקח מאתך יהי־לך כן ואם־אין לא יהיה) (2:10).

Elijah tells Elisha that it is not he who can give his own spirit to whomever he wants; this fulfillment of the wish depends upon whether or not God allows Elisha to be an eyewitness of Elijah being taken away. In other words, if God so wills, it is apparently quite all right with Elijah that Elisha should receive a privileged double-portion of his spirit. But Elijah being taken up is not something that everyone can see; it is a special, restricted vision allowed by Yahweh. The nearby "sons of the prophets" who had the two of them in sight though from the other side of the river,, were not allowed to see Elijah being taken up. It is Yahweh alone who can make Elisha's wish come about; it is Yahweh who decides about any succession to Elijah's prophetic role, as it was specifically God's command in 1 Kings 19 that Elijah "anoint" Elisha as his (potential) successor. It is only Yahweh who can determine the completion of Elijah's action in casting his mantle over him in 1 Kings 19, just as in the case of Joshua being the successor to Moses. The principle of Yahweh alone includes Yahweh alone as marking his prophets.[48]

Several questions arise from the exchanges between Elisha and Elijah in 2 Kgs 2:9-10, with Elisha's request and Elijah's responses which need to be reviewed here in their full context. Why does Elisha ask for a "double portion" (פִּי־שְׁנַיִם) of Elijah's spirit instead of merely asking to receive his spirit, his prophetic "powers," or authority? What does a "double portion" (פִּי־שְׁנַיִם) mean in this context? Why is Elijah not able to determine directly if Elisha could get what he

[48] The Hebrew רוח represents God's controlling powers over "the waters" (המים) (Gen 1:2), symbolic of chaos, and it stands for a living life (Ps 104:29) and God's power of creation (Ps 104:30), and, above all, the "spirit of Yahweh" (רוח יהוה) points to the empowerment of a vital life as described in the case of Othniel (Judg 3:10), Samson (Judg 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14), Saul (1 Sam 10:6), David (1 Sam 16:13), and Elijah (1 Kgs 18:12). See Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (WBC 1; Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1987), 16-17; Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 60-150: A Commentary* (trans. Hilton C. Oswald; CC; Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg, 1989), 303; Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms III 101-150: Introduction, Translation, and Notes with an Appendix* (AB 17A; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday; 1970), 46; Soggin, *Judges*, 46, 235-36, 249-50; H. P. Smith, *Samuel*, 68, 145; and Gray, *I & II Kings*, 391.

wants?

As Hobbs indicates, Elisha's request for a "double portion" is manifest in "asking for the status of being the special, primary heir to the prophetic leader's role."[49] The Hebrew phrase, פי שׁנים, as Hobbs reminds us, points to "twice as much as any other heir, not double the amount Elijah had."[50] Brueggemann points out that although the "double portion" (פי שׁנים), according to Deut 21:15-17 (along with 1 Sam 1:5), refers to "one more portion than is normally distributed," as something done for the eldest son who has a special responsibility, Elisha's request is odd in the fact that Elijah's "spirit" (רוח) is not quantifiable as household or property inheritance; it is the "force and vitality, energy and authority of Elijah, none of which is not really quantifiable,"[51] though it is in a sense divisible, as with the "spirit" of Moses and the seventy elders plus two shared in the spirit of Moses (Numb 11:24-32).

Elijah's response to Elisha's asking, therefore, turns out to be less confident. Besides, another reason that Elisha did not ask directly for Elijah's prophetic "powers" or authority is primarily because, according to Fritz, Elijah's spirit connotes a "special gift, bestowed by God alone," and Elisha's request of a portion of his spirit suggests "its transfer is possible."[52] Cogan and Tadmor interpret "spirit" as representing nothing hereditary in personal quality; instead,

---

[49] Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 21.

[50] Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 21. Robert L. Cohn, applying a midrashic tradition that considers this פי־שׁנים of spirit as "expressing itself in Elisha's performance of sixteen miracles, twice the number of miracles . . . that Elijah performs," maintains that Elisha's פי־שׁנים refers to "two times the spirit of Elijah." Nachman Levine also interprets פי־שׁנים ברוחך as "twice as much as your spirit." For a detailed discussion, see Cohn, *2 Kings* (BO; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2000), 13; N. Levine, "Twice as Much of Your Spirit: Pattern, Parallel and Paronomasia in the Miracles of Elijah and Elisha," *JSOT* 85 (1999): 25.

[51] Brueggemann, *1 & 2 Kings*, 295.

[52] Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 235.

Yahweh is the source of Elijah's spirit.[53] Elisha's desire for a double portion of Elijah's spirit represents his knowledge of the source of Elijah's prophetic powers, and his asking for a portion of Elijah's spirit implies that its transmission from one person to another is possible.

Elijah, however, makes it clear to Elisha that any such transfer is conditional. It can only be granted by Yahweh allowing Elisha to be an exclusive eyewitness of Elijah's unique ascension. The "I" in Elijah's offer is fully dependent upon Yahweh, who is to take Elijah away in a fashion that no one can see without God's specific permission.

Elisha's request for a "double portion" (פִּי־שְׁנַיִם) of Elijah's spirit doubtless invokes the firstborn son's "double portion" (פִּי שְׁנַיִם) of the paternal inheritance as stipulated in Deut 21:17.[54] But the real significance is surely authenticating Elisha as the proper successor to Elijah. In traditional family law inheritance rights were to be determined by birth order, not by the personal preference of the father, whether in a monogamous or a polygamous household.[55]

---

[53] Cogan and Tadmor (*II Kings*, 32) further point out that in Elisha's request for a (double) portion of Elijah's spirit, Elijah, "like Moses, enjoyed a special relationship with [Yahweh], described in terms of a spirit transferable to others (cf. Num 11:16-17, 24-26)."

[54] As Bergen indicates, the interpretation of פִּי־שְׁנַיִם is ambiguous even though the topic has drawn much attention. There are two basic arguments, one of which alludes to Deut 21:17, as mentioned in this study. The other rendering is "two thirds," as in Zech 13:8, referring to a "more specific ratio of available power." Bergen maintains that the ambiguous meaning of פִּי־שְׁנַיִם does not obscure the probability that Elisha has less power than Elijah. See Bergen, *End of Prophetism*, 62-63, though it seems unnecessary to view this request by Elisha as anything more than establishing Elisha as the favored apprentice of Elijah, who, at least earlier, had one or more other assistants (1 Kings 18-19).

[55] As Tigay points out, the firstborn son in much of the ancient Near East "had the right to inherit a larger share of his father's estate than the other sons." Deut 21:15-17 is set up to "protect this right in circumstances where it might be overridden by extraneous factors." The law prevents the preference of the father for a younger son in favor of a particular wife in a polygamous family. The biological firstborn son's right of the "double portion" (פִּי־שְׁנַיִם) of inheritance is hereditary in his status merely because he is the "first fruit of his [father's] vigor" (v. 17). De Vaux also suggests that the law is a protection for the firstborn son against his father's favoritism. See Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 195-96; de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institution*

Metaphorically, Elisha wished to be the "firstborn son" among Elijah's potential attendants and so asks for a "double portion" of Elijah's "spirit," which basically means Elijah's prophetic inheritance.[56] In other words, Elisha made an earnest request to "be recognized and equipped as the true successor of Elijah."[57]

Elijah's prudent reply to Elisha's inquiry, which avoids his own role in granting such a request and refers the matter to Yahweh, reminds us that Moses shared a portion of his "spirit" (רוח) with 70 elders, at Yahweh's command. The purpose of sharing Moses' spirit with the 70 elders is to have them help Moses with the burden of leading the people (Num 11:16-17). The spirit of Moses plays a crucial role in this power-sharing program. It is, however, by the command of Yahweh rather than of Moses that Moses shares his leadership "spirit" with 70 elders during a difficult time when Israel complained that they had no meat for food (11:1-15). Moreover, Moses' death request in Numbers 11 is reminiscent of that by Elijah in 1 Kings 19. Moses' request is mostly caused by the heavy burden of leadership; he cannot take it anymore on his own.[58]

The tradition of Yahweh's distributing Moses' spirit with the seventy elders plus two,,

---

(trans. John McHugh; BRS; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1961), 42, 53.

[56] White also suggests that Elisha's asking for a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit is a request for the special inheritance that the firstborn son is entitled to. Besides, the firstborn son is also a successor to his father; therefore, Elisha claims to be not only the successor but also symbolically the firstborn son of Elijah's prophetic role. See White, *Elijah Legends*, 9.

[57] Gray, *I & II Kings*, 475.

[58] The heavily burdened leadership reminds us of Exod 18:13-27, which addresses a similar issue concerning the judicial responsibility faced by Moses. Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, "highly critical of the inefficient and tiresome procedure employed by Moses in judging the people," advised Moses to set up a judiciary by sharing the weight of his role with competent, God-fearing men from among the people (Exod 18:21). See Sarna, *Exodus*, 99-100.

mentioned above and in Chapter Four, is closely related to Elisha's request to share in Elijah's spirit, a request about to be granted.

As Elijah and Elisha were walking and talking, on the other side of the Jordan, suddenly "a chariot of fire and horses of fire" appeared and Elijah and Elisha were separated as Elijah went up into heaven in a whirlwind (2 Kgs 2:11). In other words, the private exchange of Elijah and Elisha ends with the appearance of the "chariot of fire and horses of fire."[59] The narrative affirms that Elisha saw Elijah being taken up and cried out, "My father! My father! Israel's chariotry and its horsemen!" (אבי אבי רכב ישׂראל ופרשׁיו) (2 Kgs 2:13). Elisha seems to understand that his wish is granted as he sees Elijah being taken up, so he shouts out for Elijah, signifying that he is an eyewitness to Elijah's being taken up. The narrative affirms that Elisha initially saw Elijah ascending in a whirlwind but eventually "he no longer could see him" (ולא ראהו עוד),[60] leaving further details unexplored.

2. Elisha's First Sign of Validation

Elisha's shout of "My father! My father!", his first response to the fiery spectacle

---

[59] Dharamraj, *Prophetic like Moses*, 183.

[60] That Elisha saw Elijah being taken up into heaven and then did not see him any longer is intriguing. Some commentators, such as Martin Buber, consider Elijah's ascension as death. Buber suggests that "[T]his death was in earlier Israelite days only in mythical stories about the ascension to heaven of God's beloved ones during their lifetime, Enoch's [Gen 5:24] and Elijah's [2 Kgs 2:3, 5, 9, 10], where we are also told of a 'taking,' and in the case of Elijah it is emphasized by a fourfold repetition." Zevit also regards 2 Kgs 2:5, 9 as verses that anticipate "the impending death of Elijah." Fritz suggests that Elijah's "end" is merely ascent into heaven instead of death or burial. Fritz holds that in contrast to Moses, "the greatest of the prophets so far" who "had to die in the land of Moab" and was buried by Yahweh without anyone knowing where his grave was (Deut 34:5-6), Elijah is "the only figure in the Hebrew Bible who enjoys this particular privilege" of being sent into heaven in a whirlwind. Fritz suggests that Elijah "ascends to immortality and thus lives on in the tradition, especially in the context of waiting for the end time." See Buber, *Prophetic Faith* (New York: Harper & Row, 1949), 201-2; Zevit, *Religions of Ancient Israel*, 491; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 235-36. The biblical narrator may have been interested only in the special treatment of Elijah an intentionally ambiguous regarding the details.

expresses his respect for and dependence upon Elijah[61] on the one hand and reminds us of his request to receive a "double portion" (פי־שנים) of Elijah's spirit (Deut 21:17) as if he were the eldest son of his "master" (אדון)[62] and "father" on the other. Once Elijah has disappeared from view, Elisha tears his own clothes into pieces, an expression of grief at Elijah's disappearance (cf. 1 Sam 4:12; 2 Sam 1:2; Job 1:20). After this act of mourning, Elisha then picks up the mantle Elijah had left behind and stands by the Jordan River. He strikes the water with the mantle and asks, "Where is Yahweh, the God of Elijah?" (2:14). Miraculously, the waters of the Jordan River are again parted, as happened with Elijah when the "two of them" crossed the Jordan on dry ground. Elisha "inherits" not only Elijah's mantle, which had been previously cast upon him as symbolic of anointing in 1 Kings 19, but also Elijah's prophetic powers, as demonstrated by dividing the waters of the river. Now, his wonder working in dividing the waters, with the Jericho group of "the sons of the prophets" presumably watching, has answered the question about whom Yahweh, the God of Elijah, has chosen, as the group cries out, "[T]he spirit of Elijah has come to rest on Elisha!" (נחה רוח אליהו על־אלישע) (2 Kgs 2:15). Hobbs indicates that Elisha's ability to replicate Elijah's wondrous work (2:8) confirmed the succession.[63] Hobbs further argues that Elisha's succession to Elijah is connected with that of Joshua to Moses, in which

---

[61] Gray, *I & II Kings*, 476.

[62] Fritz (*1 & 2 King*s, 236) points out that the title "My father!" is one of honor which reflects "Elisha's close relationship with the prophet as a 'disciple.'" Hobbs (*2 Kings*, 22) suggests the "double expression" of "My father!" can be interpreted as "the title of the leader of the prophetic group" and as a reference to "an interpreter of ecstatic utterances," which goes beyond the evidence.

[63] Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 22. Uffenheimer (*Early Prophecy*, 410) also reminds us that the ending of the episode of Elijah's ascent, 2 Kgs 2:13-15, contains two pieces of definite evidence that Elisha is undoubtedly the legitimate successor to Elijah: his ability to see his master's disappearance and his subsequent dividing the Jordan River with Elijah's mantle (vv. 8 and 14).

account Joshua is appointed by Yahweh to be the successor to Moses (Num 27:12-23) and is ordained by Moses with the result that he is "full of the spirit of wisdom" (Deut 34:9), such that Joshua is able to perform similar actions to some of those by Moses (Exodus 14; Joshua 3-4). Now Elisha is described as able to perform actions similar to those by Elijah (2 Kgs 2:13-14).[64] Elisha's miraculous re-crossing of the Jordan allows him to symbolically restart the entrance into the land under Joshua, but this time to redirect the life of the people (of the northern kingdom especially) in the paths of Yahweh alone.

As Elisha is an eyewitness of Elijah's ascension, so are the "sons of the prophets" from Jericho the eyewitnesses of Elisha's first wondrous work. Their presumed visual confirmation of the division of the Jordan validates Elisha's reception of Elijah's "spirit" (רוח)[65] The exclamation by the prophetic group, as mentioned, epitomizes a "charismatic acclamation" that would serve to confirm Elisha's new status of "charismatic leadership" of the prophetic groups.[66]

After affirming Elisha, the "sons of the prophets" came to meet Elisha and prostrated themselves before him to show their deference; their confession and obeisance are indicative of their recognition of Elisha's successful succession.[67] They showed their deference to the new

---

[64] Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 27. See also Judith A. Todd, "The Pre-Deuteronomistic Elijah Cycle," in *Elijah and Elisha in Socioliterary Perspective* (ed. Robert B. Coote; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 29.

[65] The other two are the test of "seeing" in 2 Kgs 2:10, 12 and the parting of the Jordan River in 2:14. See Todd, "Elijah Cycle," 29.

[66] As for "charismatic acclamation" as validation, see Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1125-27. Bendix (*Max Weber*, 305-6) describes charismatic leadership or domination, which distinguishes itself from other types of domination, in that "the leader himself has become the source of legitimate authority" through personal designation of a successor. In 2 Kings 2 the designation is accomplished at a prior level, that of Yahweh.

[67] White, *Elijah Legends*, 10.

prophet, even though they has not seen Elijah's ascent, so they tell Elisha that they have fifty "strong men" (בני־חיל) who can search for Elijah, which indicates that they cannot grasp just how Elijah disappeared (2 Kgs 2:16). They apparently did not think that Elijah had ascended but suspected that Elijah had somehow wandered off and disappeared, though the tradition does not offer any real information as to their views beyond the notion that "the spirit of the Lord has picked him up and set him down" in some strange place (2:16) where Elijah—or his body—might be found. Elisha declined their request at first but finally agreed to it after they had "urged him until he was ashamed" (2:17). After an intensive three-day search, the fifty "strong men" returned with a report of no success in locating Elijah. Although Elisha is not said to have given them any reason for the disappearance of Elijah, allowing the impression that Elijah has mysteriously disappeared, Elisha awaits their report back in Jericho. Elisha insists on reminding them, "Did I not tell you: 'Do not go'?" (2:18). Elisha's insistence shows that his emphasis on a mysterious disappearance, implying some uncommunicated action by Yahweh, remains viable. So the inability to locate Elijah anywhere added another level of validation of Elisha's succession.

3. Completing Assignments Given to Elijah

With the acclamation of the "sons of the prophets" as a testimony to Elisha's having received Elijah's spirit, as Elisha had requested, Elijah seems to have fully if indirectly accomplished the last part of his threefold assignment from Yahweh as recorded in 1 Kgs 19:15-16. Since Elijah had initially symbolically "anointed" Elisha by casting his mantle over him (19:19), the "anointing" is now completed by the divine bestowal of Elijah's spirit on Elisha (2 Kings 2), again involving Elijah's mantle. Yet Elijah's two other assignments in 1 Kings 19 remain to be addressed by Elisha for full confirmation of the succession. Elijah himself has not

dealt with anointing Hazael or Jehu, so that is apparently left in the hands of his former attendant and now successor, Elisha, who has been confirmed in 2 Kings 2 as a divinely approved successor. In order to "complete" his succession, Elisha will have to deal with anointing two new kings.

a. Anointing of Hazael

2 Kings 8 contains an intriguing story regarding the seriously ailing King Ben-Hadad of Aram sending a trusted official, Hazael, to inquire on his behalf of Elisha, conveniently present in Damascus at the time.[68] Elisha's power as a "man of God," i.e., a "prophet," had become known to the Aramean king, as mentioned in 2 Kings 5-6, 8. So reportedly the king sent his confidant, Hazael, to inquire of Elisha on his behalf.[69] Ben Hadad's question that Hazael brings to Elisha is "Will I recover from this illness?" (האחיה מחלי זה) (8:8).[70] To impress Elisha, Ben-Hadad sends along with Hazael a huge load of presents for Elisha, to encourage a favorable answer (8:9).[71] When Hazael comes into the presence of Elisha, backed up by forty camel loads

[68] There are various Ben-Hadads cited as king of Aram and the tradition does not give us a clear identification—the Ben-Hadad in 2 Kgs 8:7 could be the one in 2 Kgs 6:24 or the one in 1 Kgs 20:1-22. For further analysis, see Cogan, *I Kings*, 462; DeVries, *1 Kings*, 248-49; Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 78-79, 101; Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 78-79; Gray, *Kings*, 420-22, 529-30; Miller and Hayes, *History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 254, 263, 287; Dietrich, *Early Monarchy in Israel*, 150; Brad E. Kelle, "Ben-Hadad," *NIDB* 1:426-28; D. Matthew Stith, "Hazael," *NIDB* 2:751.

[69] Elisha is described as having a great reputation in Aram as we consider the healing of Naaman (2 Kgs 5:1-19) and the wars against Aram (2 Kgs 6:8-7:20).

[70] Cogan and Tadmor point out that Ben-Hadad's query has the same wording as Ahaziah's query which he addressed to Baal-zebub in 2 Kgs 1:2 (אם־אחיה מחלי זה). Ironically, King Ahaziah of Israel avoided Elijah in preference to an oracle from a foreign deity, whereas the foreign king knows very well of Elisha, viewed as the best source for an oracle concerning his recovery from an illness. See Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 25, 90. Hobbs indicates that Ben-Hadad's request echoes that of Ahaziah of Israel in 2 Kings 1 and that the two chapters have a thematic link. Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 101.

[71] The lavish gift comprises "forty camel loads." It is impressive, as Cogan and Tadmor

of gifts, he deferentially identifies his patron, the Aramean king, as "your son," i.e., as a subordinate of Elisha. And he puts the question to Yahweh, i.e., Elisha, on the king's behalf, "Will I recover from this illness?"[72] Elisha supplies the desired answer for Ben-Hadad, "Go and say to him, 'You will recover.'" But Elisha adds an aside to Hazael, to the effect that "Yahweh has shown me that he will surely die" (והראני יהוה כי מות ימות) (8:10). In other words, Elisha'a reply is intentionally deceptive for King Ben-Hadad, given the aside to Hazael.

Elisha's oracle[73] in 2 Kgs 8:10 can be read as including two contrasting prophetic messages for two different persons, although the immediate recipient in each case is Hazael, the messenger from King Ben-Hadad. The first part of the response contains the message for the king regarding his illness. It provides assurance of the king's recovery. However, the following message, for Hazael alone, makes the whole oracle duplicitous. One might argue that if the contents of the oracle are treated separately the oracle does not contradict itself at all. The initial oracle is a prediction concerning Ben-Hadad's recovery from his illness. It is Elisha's reply to the king's inquiry. Ben-Hadad, perhaps, might well recover from the present illness, if only rather briefly The private, second oracle conveys another revelation, one of King Ben-Hadad's death. The context in which these two messages are put together does not presume a causal relationship between them. That is, conceivably, one could argue that there is no contradiction, in that

---

remind us, in comparison with the somewhat modest gift King Jeroboam's wife brought to Ahijah in 1 Kgs 14:3. See Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 90.

[72] Cogan and Tadmor indicate that the usage of "your son King Ben-Hadad" counts as courtly courtesy. Ben-Hadad considered Elisha as a man of God, a superior, upon whom he relied for recovery from the illness. See Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 90.

[73] Notice that Hazael's mission is to "inquire of יהוה through [Elisha]" about King Ben-Hadad's recovery (2 Kgs 8:8) and that Hazael does not directly ask Elisha to inquire of Yahweh (2 Kgs 8:9). So Elisha's oracle in 2 Kgs 8:10, indeed, includes his response to Ben-Hadad and Yahweh's response to the inquiry. See Cohn, *2 Kings*, 60-61.

Ben-Hadad could recover from the present illness but yet die of some unnamed cause, and there is no necessary formal contradiction.[74] But at best it is a very restricted oracle, an oracle for a day or so. However, having delivered the basically contradictory oracles, Elisha, the "man of God," as Hazael lingers in his presence, weeps. This prompts Hazael to venture another query, "Why is my master (אדני) weeping?" Elisha responds to Hazael's query and says that it is because he knows that Hazael will effect harsh cruelties on the Israelites (8:12),[75] which puzzles Hazael, as he represents himself as lowly, unable to effect such a "great thing." Elisha's response to Hazael's demurral, perhaps what Hazael was waiting to hear, is another oracle, viz., "Yahweh has shown me (הראני יהוה) that you will be king of Aram" (8:13), which is both an invitation to regicide and in conformity with Yahweh's assignment to Elijah in 1 Kgs 19:15. Hazael then reports Elisha's first message to King Ben-Hadad. But the very next day he again visits Ben-Hadadis and proceeds to suffocate Ben-Hadad, who died; so Hazael became king in his place (2 Kgs 8:14-15).[76] Elisha's oracle was a symbolic "anointing" of Hazael as king over

---

[74] Paul J. Kissling has a detailed discussion specifically on 2 Kgs 8:10 as to whether Elisha lies in the oracle. He cites earlier scholars' comments on this verse and includes several different opinions in his discussion; see Kissling, *Reliable Characters*, 168-70.

[75] Worth noting in verse 12 are the Hebrew verbs concerning Hazael's barbaric violence, devastation, and humiliation to Israel in Elisha's utterance: תעשׂה ("you will act"), תשׁלח באשׁ ("you will burn"), תהרג ("you will kill"), תרטשׁ ("you will mutilate"), and תבקע ("you will savage"). Hobbs indicates that this is stereotypical language used to describe the horrors of battle in the ancient Near East. No safety could be found from the havoc and the excesses of the victor (cf. Lam 5:6-22; Hos 10:14; 14:1; Nah 3:10). Cogan and Tadmor remind us that the description of Hazael's rampage is similar to that in Amos 1:3, 13; Hazael's victories over Israel are recorded in 2 Kgs 10:32; 13:7. See Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 102; Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 91.

[76] The Ben-Hadad in 2 Kings 8, who in Elisha's second, private oracle, would actually die rather than recover, might have lost his life in the war against Ahab in 1 Kings 20 if Ahab had not pardoned him to live. The Ben-Hadad in 1 Kings 20 was captured by Ahab, yet when he sent his servants to beg Ahab for his life, Ahab agreed to let Ben-Hadad live even though his decision was, according to the tradition, against the will of Yahweh. If the Ben-Hadad in 2 Kings 8 is identified with the one in 1 Kings 20, then the one in 2 Kings 8 "should" have been killed in 1

Aram. In this sense he accomplished the first of the two remaining tasks that had been assigned to Elijah, further establishing himself as Elijah's successor.

b. Anointing of Jehu

Following the account of the usurper Hazael, who came from a non-royal line and whose introduction in the Biblical tradition is mainly because of his "anointing" by Elisha, as successor of Elijah, the narrative now takes us to another "stage of the story history" in which Elisha completes the "anointing" assigned to Elijah by arranging, though in this case through a delegate from among "the sons of the prophets," the actual anointing of another usurper as king over Israel, i.e., Jehu, apparently also from outside the royal lineage.[77] The oracular formula in the announcement, "Thus says Yahweh, 'I anoint you king over Israel'" (כה־אמר יהוה משחתיך למלך אל־ישׂראל), followed by an actual anointing, clearly indicates that Yahweh supplies the anointing power. The physical anointing, however is performed by an apprentice prophet who says more than he was specifically authorized to say and then immediately flees the scene, as instructed.[78] Jehu certainly finds it sufficient basis for action, which is the key response, and neither Jehu nor his junior officers is put off by the shared characterization of the young apprentice as a "crazy" person (2 Kgs 9:11).[79]

As the junior officers welcome the report of the oracle contact, exclaiming "Jehe is king"

Kings 20. He survived the defeat; however, he—or at least a Ben-Hadad—does die in 2 Kings 8.

[77] Hobbs, *2 Kings* 105-6.

[78] Elisha himself was probably too conspicuous a figure to be able to go discretely to Ramoth-Gilead, and "fleeing" the scene after delivering the oracle is reminiscent of the instructions to the Man of God from Judah in 1 Kings 13.

[79] As mentioned above, there is another example of a formal oracle given by a member of "the sons of the prophets" in 1 Kgs 20:35-42.

(מלך יהוא) (v. 13), providing their validation of the anointing, their exclamation quickly leads to the campaign against King Joram of Israel, with King Ahaziah of Judah caught up in the same web of replacement.

Soon Jehu shifts with his followers back to Jezreel, kills King Joram of Israel and mortallywounds King Ahaziah of Judah (vv. 24, 27). Worth noting is Jehu's reply to Joram's inquiring greeting, "Is it peace, Jehu?"; Jehu's reply is rather a rebuttal: "What peace can there be as long as there are the harlotries (זנוים) of your mother Jezebel and her many sorceries (כשפיה)?" (v. 22).[80] Jezebel, the leading survivor from the time of Ahab, turns out, to no one's surprise, to be another target of Jehu's revolt.

The scene between the two opponents occurs when Jehu comes to Jezreel, where Jezebel is residing. Even though she knows that Jehu has killed Joram and Ahaziah, Jezebel prepared herself as the queen mother and sarcastically greets Jehu from the palace window with "Is it peace (השלום), you Zimri, murderer of your master?" (9:31), identifying Jehu with an earlier regicide of the time prior to her husband's dynastic line. Jehu is not afraid of Jezebel at this point and continues his "cleansing" by gaining the support of some eunuchs of Jezebel and commanding them to throw her down from the window. They do as Jehu has ordered, and Jezebel dies, trampled by the chariot horses. Jehu went into the palace and celebrated, then he finally gave an order to actually bury Jezebel, the "cursed woman," because, after all, "she was the daughter of a king" (9:34). But they could find only fragments of her body (9:35), and no actual burial is mentioned. Jehu's conclusion after Jezebel's death (2 Kgs 9:36-37) invokes

[80] Cogan and Tadmor point out that "[h]arlotry is the standard biblical metaphor for abandoning [Yahweh] to take up the ways of foreign gods (e.g., Exod 34:16; Lev 17:7; Deut 31:16; Judg 2:7)." Therefore, Jezebel's "harlotries" may refer to a "contempt in which Israel held pagan practice, seen as suffused with improper sex and magic." See Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 110.

Yahweh's curse against the house of Ahab in Elijah's prophecy (1 Kgs 21:19-24).

Uffenheimer is right in his suggestion that the two verses of 2 Kgs 9:36-37 "provide a breathing spell" that bridges to the beginning of the following chapter, in which Jehu continues to kill the remnant of the house of Ahab.[81] Jezebel died in Jezreel, where her plot against Naboth took effect. And now, in the beginning narrative of 2 Kings 10, there appear in Samaria seventy descendants of Ahab under the care of local rulers. The rulers choose to kill the seventy sons of Ahab instead of standing up against Jehu because they know very well that "two kings [Joram and Ahaziah] could not withstand him" (v. 4). Jehu infers that that this slaughter complies with the "word of Yahweh" which Elijah had pronounced against the house of Ahab (v. 10). Accordingly, the narrator reports that Jehu has liquidated the house of Ahab in Jezreel (v. 11).

The following episodes report Jehu's overthrowing of the Baal cult in Israel, which starts with duplicity followed by a massacre. The credit Jehu has earned from the narrator is that "Jehu eradicated the Baal from Israel" (v. 28) although he himself is charged with repeating the sins of Jeroboam I by allowing people to worship the golden calves in Bethel and in Dan (v. 29). Yahweh, however, noting Jehu's religious zeal, promises him that his house will hold the throne until the fourth generation of his sons (v. 30).[82] Jehu accomplishes some goals of the "Yahweh alone" party by eliminating the house of Ahab and overthrowing the Baal cult from Israel. The narrator is successful in telling us that Elisha's succession to Elijah is clearly confirmed by

---

[81] Uffenheimer, *Early Prophecy*, 445.

[82] Albertz suggests that Ahab brought apostasy to Israel through his marriage to Jezebel, which "was further heightened when to the idolatrous worship of Yahweh was added an open cult of Baal." Jehu, however, "brought an improvement, by exterminating the hated Baal cult root and branch" (2 Kgs 10:18-27). 2 Kgs 10:30 marks Yahweh's grant for Jehu that he would have the "promise of a dynasty which once again gave the northern kingdom a degree of stability." Albertz, *History of Israelite Religion*, 2:396.

Elisha's completing the anointing assignments with the anointing—somewhat indirectly—of Jehu. But the direct charge was to Elijah, not Elisha. Elijah left the two royal anointings for Elisha's attention and they proved to be important for the authentication of Elisha as his successor. These actions allowed Elisha to complete the assignments and to establish the associated importance of having a capable successor to assist in demanding and decisive steps in Yahweh's guidance of Israel.

4. Elisha's Validation Though Duplication of the Miracles of Elisha

Since Elisha has inherited a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit, as confirmed by his division of the Jordan and the recognition of him by the "sons of the prophets," and in that he has also completed the threefold assignment for his "master" by "anointing" Hazael as king of Aram and Jehu as king of Israel, we shall turn to the narratives to see what additional powers of Elijah are actually also demonstrated by Elisha. Specifically, this study emphasizes, in parallel, two instances in which Elisha shows his prophetic power in miraculous acts that are remarkably similar to actions ascribed to Elijah.

a. Restoration of Life to a Deceased Sole Son: 1 Kgs 17:17-24 and 2 Kgs 4:18-37

In Shunem there was a "great lady" (אשה גדולה) who showed Elisha hospitality by providing an occasional meal while he was passing through the area. Subsequently, she proposed to her husband that they prepare a nice, furnished upper chamber for the convenience of Elisha, whom she identified by the unique title, "a *holy* man of God" (איש אלהים קדוש) (2 Kgs 4:9-10, *emphasis* added). Her husband consented, so soon there was a guest room that could be a resting place for Elisha whenever he came through their area while going about in his circuit.

On one of his visits there, he has a curious conversation with her carried on through Gehazi, his servant and intermediary. Apparently responding to her generous hospitality, and

discretely conversing with her by using Gehazi as the go-between, Elisha offers to intervene on her behalf with the king or the commander of the army. The great lady's response is "I am living in the midst of my people," indicating that she does not need any help from the king or the army commander (2 Kgs 4:13). Elisha, apparently having exhausted his ready suggestions, then consults his servant, Gehazi, "What (is there) to do for her?" (ומה לעשות לה). Gehazi replies, "Alas, she has no son and her husband is elderly" (אבל בן אין־לה ואישה זקן) (v. 14). So Elisha, the "*holy* man of God," as she had uniquely identified him (v. 9), has Gehazi summon the great lady again and this time Elisha addresses her directly, telling her that at this time in the coming year she would be holding a son. The great lady had made no such explicit request and invoking, as it were, the "too good to be true" rule, tells Elisha, "Please, my lord, man of God, do not deceive your maidservant" (אל־אדני איש האלהים אל־תכזב בשפחתך) (2 Kgs 4:16). Indeed, the woman did have a son by the appointed time.

One day, when the boy was out in the fields with his father, he told his father that his head hurt. His father had a servant take him to his mother, and as he was sitting on her lap the young boy died (וימת) (v. 20). She said nothing to her husband but took the boy to Elisha's sleeping chamber. She left him there and closed the door. Then she alerted her husband to send her a servant and a she-ass for a quick visit to "the man of God on Mt. Carmel" (v. 22). Her husband was surprised at the timing of the visit, as it was "neither New Moon nor Sabbath," She replied simply, "shalom," and rushed off to see Elisha, reminding him, after first dodging the issue, that she had not actually requested a son but had said, in response to Elisha's declaration, "Do not mislead me!" (לא תשלה אתי), using a different expression than earlier (v. 28) to convey her concern, "don't raise my hopes falsely." Elisha then immediately discerned the difficulty and instructed "his servant" (נערו) (v.12), Gehazi, to hurry to Shunem with Elisha's staff, stopping for

nothing, and then to "put my staff on the boy's face" (v. 29).[83] Meanwhile, the boy's mother told Elisha that she would not leave Elisha's side, so Elisha "got up and went after her" to Shunem (v.30). Gehazi had preceded them and had followed Elisha's instructions, but with no response. He then started back and met Elisha (and the boy's mother), advising Elisha that he had gotten no response from the boy. Elisha's power did not work through his staff when handled by Gehazi, so Elisha hurried on to his guest room at the lady's house, closed the door, and prayed to Yahweh, the "great lady" no longer clinging to his heels. He then stretched himself out over the boy and felt some warmth. Elisha got up, walked about the room a bit, and then stretched himself over the boy again. The boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes. Elisha then instructed Gehazi to summon the Shunammite lady and told her to "pick up your son." She entered the room, "did obeisance to Elisha, lifted up her son, and left" (v. 37).

This episode of life-restoration by Elisha in Shunem, as the tradition presents it, parallels a somewhat similar episode in the Elijah cycle. Faced with drought in Israel, God advised Elijah to take refuge in Zarephath of Sidon, where God had selected a widow to feed him (1 Kgs 17:7-9). The local widow had but a minimal supply of foodstuff, yet nonetheless Elijah told her to proceed with food preparation, as God would provide her with flour and oil until the end of the drought (v. 14), providing a miraculous feeding. The widow followed Elijah's advice, and Elijah, the widow, and her son—her only child—had an enduring supply of flour and oil. After a while, however, the widow's son became sick and eventually could no longer breathe. The widow then identifies Elijah as "a man of God," and asks, "What have I done to you, O man of

[83] Note the suggestion by Duane L. Christensen ("Gehazi," in *ABD* 2:926) that the command to place Elisha's staff on the child's face was "perhaps as a symbol of authority to prevent the possible burial before Elisha's arrival," as opposed to the common notion, followed in this study, that Elisha's staff itself might be sufficient to revive the boy.

God, that you have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance and kill my son?" She fears that some unmentioned wrongdoing on her part has led to her son's death--divine punishment (v. 18). Elijah responds, merely saying, "Give me your son (v. 19). Elijah then carries him to the upper chamber, where he was staying, and placed the boy on his own bed. He made a complaint prayer to the Lord, then stretched himself out over the boy three times, praying to the Lord to restore the child's life/breath (נפש) to his body (v. 21). The Lord heard Elijah, "and the child's life/breath (נפש) returned to his body and he came to life (ויחי)" (v. 22). "Elijah then took the child and brought him down from the upper chamber to the main house and gave him to his mother, saying, 'Look, your son is alive.'" (v. 23). The woman then told Elijah, "Now I do know that you are a man of God and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is true" (v. 24). The two miracles validated Elijah for her.

The restoration episode for the son of the great lady in Shunem is generally parallel with that in Zarephath. Elisha has inherited a "double portion" of Elijah's "spirit," as confirmed again by demonstrating a similar miraculous deed with his prophetic power, even though the Elisha story has rather more emphasis on the wonder-working elements and less emphasis on prophetic prayer. In another episode, Elisha duplicates the miraculous feeding by Elijah in Zarephath.

b. Multiplication of Food (2 Kgs 4:42-44)

On an occasion when a man from Baal-shalishah came to "the man of God" (Elisha)] bringing some of the first fruits of the harvest—twenty loaves of barley bread—and some grain, "the man of God" tells his unnamed "attendant" (משרת) to prepare the food for the men there, about one hundred by count.[84] But his "attendant" (משרת) replies that the food supplied is not

[84] Hobbs (*2 Kings*, 49) suggests that the theme of the episode is "generosity," which functions as an instrument to attest Elisha's inherited power from Elijah for the prophetic office.

enough for one hundred men to share. The response of the anonymous "attendant" (משרת) seems to be a challenge to Elisha's authority.[85] Elisha, however, repeats his command, "Give it to the people and let them eat," adding "for thus says Yahweh, 'they shall eat and have some left'" (v. 43). The "attendant" (משרת) does as Elisha commanded. That "they ate and had some left over," confirming the word of Yahweh—and the power of Elisha (v. 44) as a wonder-worker.[86] The multiplication by /Elisha is again on a grander scale than that by Elijah.

c. The Special Case of Gehazi and his lack of Predisposition

Whereas two other examples of attendants of charismatic, "prophetic" leaders who are identified by name in the Biblical tradition, i.e., Joshua as attendant to Moses and Elisha as an attendant to Elijah, concern attendants who became successors, the case of Gehazi, the third attendant or servant who is identified by name, is rather different. He also differs from Joshua and Elisha in never being explicitly identified in the Hebrew Bible as an "attendant" (משרת), although that term is used in connection with some anonymous assistants of Elisha (2 Kgs 4:43; 6:15). Gehazi is only given the title "servant (נער) (2 Kgs 4:12, 25; 5:20; 8:4).

Three narratives of the Elisha cycle directly involve Gehazi, the only prophetic "servant" (נער) identified by name in the Books of Kings: first is the story of the "great lady" (אשה גדולה) of Shunem (2 Kgs 4:8-37); second is the story of Elisha's healing of the Aramean Naaman's leprosy (5:1-27); the third is the report of Gehazi's conversation with an Israelite king about Elisha's

---

[85] Hobbs (*2 Kings*, 49) regards the unnamed servant's response as an "objection" to Elisha's command, in that Elisha's "generosity" is not sufficient for one hundred people.

[86] Gina Hens-Piazza, in a theological and ethical analysis, comments that Elisha proclaimed God's word in front of kings but he himself "must *be* God's word." In addition, Elisha (2 Kgs 4:42-44) does "minister effectively among the people" mainly because it offers "a powerful lesson on how God's word must be ministered to the people." See Hens-Piazza, *1-2 Kings* (AOTC; Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 2006), 255.

"great happenings" (2 Kgs 8:1-6), again featuring the great lady of Shunem. But both the narratives centering on the great lady of Shunem (2 Kgs 4:8-37) and the account of the healing of Naaman (2 Kgs 5:1-19) explicitly describe Gehazi as lacking "qualifications" even character-wise, such that he could not be a worthy successor to Elisha as prophet. Gehazi, although Elisha's assistant who was given significant responsibility, is not a viable candidate to become Elisha's successor.

Gehazi, as mentioned, is the one person who accompanies Elisha in his prophetic role and who is identified by name.[87] He is often designated as a "servant" (נער). Gehazi, as a "servant" (נער) of Elisha, reminds us of the role Elisha played in the Elijah cycle, in which Elisha is the only one among the "attendants/servants"[88] associated with Elijah who is identified by name,

---

[87] Others, unnamed, who are associated with Elisha include a "messenger" (מלאך) (2 Kgs 5:10), sent to Naaman, an "attendant" (2 Kgs 4:43), an "attendant/servant" (2 Kgs 6:15) , a "servant" (נער; 6:17), and even "a member of the company of prophets" (אחד מבני הנביאים) (9:1), but there is no further information in the text as to their personal identity, though conceivably Gehazi could have been involved in some of these instances. For discussion of Gehazi as Elisha's נער, see Lehnart, *Prophet & König*, 296.

[88] A "servant" (נער) who assisted Elisha appears in two episodes of the Elisha cycle, each time unnamed. We also know that Elijah has at least one "servant" (נער), also unnamed. The first occurrence is in 1 Kgs 18:41-46, where Elijah tells his "servant" (נער) to watch for the possibility of rainfall after the victory at Mount Carmel. There was an extended interchange between Elijah and his unnamed "servant" (נער); v. 44 tells us that Elijah has commanded this unnamed "servant" (נער) seven times to look for any sign of coming rain until finally the "servant" (נער) replied that he had seen a small cloud rising from the sea, an indication that rain was coming. And he is also entrusted with a message for Ahab (v. 44). The episode of Elijah's fleeing for his life contains another occurrence of an unnamed "servant" (נער) (19:1-9). On the way to Mount Horeb, he left the "servant" (נער) behind in Beer-sheba (v. 3). This might or might not refer to the same "servant" (נער). Elisha first appears in 1 Kgs 19:16, as part of Yahweh's reply to Elijah's complaint by identifying Elisha as the man to anoint as his successor, a man who also became his attendant. Besides, Elisha is described as someone "who poured water on the hands of Elijah" (אשר־יצק מים על־ידי אליהו) (2 Kgs 3:11), which means that Elisha was Elijah's personal servant. See Gray, *I & II Kings*, 486. Susanne Otto indicates that, apart from 1 Kgs 19:21, 2 Kgs 3:11 is the only occurrence in the Elisha cycle that mentions Elisha "als Diener Elias"; see Otto, *Jehu, Elia, und Elisa*, 222.

though Elisha is not identified as a "servant" (נער), but rather as an "attendant" (משרת), in that Elisha "attended him" (וישרתהו) after Elijah had cast his mantle upon him (1 Kgs 19:21).

Gehazi plays a crucial role in the Elisha cycle, such that, given his prominence in the narratives, he seems a potemtial successor in the tradition of Joshua and Elisha. Gehazi, identified only as Elisha's "servant" (נער) (2 Kgs 4:12, 25; 5:20; 8:4), is portrayed as an invaluable intermediary for Elisha in his interaction with the great lady of Shunem. He explains to Elisha that the great lady, who was not responsive to offers of royal or military help, is without a son. Gehazi subsequently serves as the one who is charged by Elisha with proceeding ahead with Elisha's staff in an attempt to revive the boy by touching him with Elisha's staff—the son's status not yet being clear to Elisha (2 Kgs 4:27), though the narrative describes to son as already dead (2 Kgs 4:20).

Gehazi is positively portrayed in the conversation between the Shunammite woman and Elisha, and we need to examine his role in deetail. He advises Elisha as to what is lacking in the great lady's life and subsequently is sent ahead as a surrogate with Elisha's own staff to minister to the sick or deceased son of the "great lady" of Shunem,[89] who, together with her husband, had

[89] The adjective "great" in Hebrew (גדולה), according to Cogan and Tadmor (*II Kings*, 56), refers to "persons of esteem and status . . . who may have achieved their positions due to wealth," therefore, a "great woman" in the Shunammite woman story is also a "wealthy woman." Tamis Hoover Rentería translates the phrase אשׁה גדולה as a "woman of influence" after indicating that "the woman predicted is not poor, nor is she a widow; however, she feeds and shelters the prophet and allows him to solve a problem that she shares with all Israelite women, regardless of their social class." Rentería, however, is hardly correct here; it is a problem only for women who are barren or who bear only daughters. See Rentería, "The Elijah/Elisha Stories: A Socio-cultural Analysis of Prophets and People in Ninth-Century B.C.E. Israel," in *Elijah and Elisha in Socioliterary Perspective* (ed. Robert B. Coote; Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars, 1992), 104.

In addition, the phrase "great woman" or "great lady" (אשׁה גדולה) represents a stark contrast to the slavery debt episode (2 Kgs 4:1-7) immediately preceding the story of the Shunammite woman. In the previous episode, the one who pleads to Elisha is a poor widow, whose husband was a "member of the company of prophets." Her husband died and left nothing but debt that might make her two children become (debt-)slaves. The poor and helpless widow,

offered special hospitality by inviting Elisha (and, by implication, Gehazi) to stop over in a specially constructed roof chamber of her house, whenever Elisha was in the area (2 Kgs 4:8-31). She had told her husband that Elisha was a "holy man of God" (איש אלהים קדוש) (4:9),[90] so, the "great (גדולה) lady" suggests, let us make a "small" (קטנה), furnished roof chamber to accommodate him when he is passing through (4:10). And it does not take long for the "great lady" to provide that special room. After a while, Elisha is apparently thinking that he should give something back to recognize the generosity of the "great woman," so he asks his "servant" (נער) Gehazi to summon the "great lady" and speaks with her through Gehazi as an intermediary. The three-way conversation is mainly about what kind of help Elisha might offer her in return.

Elisha starts the conversation by commanding Gehazi to invite the "great lady" to join them. When she appears, Gehazi serves as an intermediary; he is the go-between for her with Elisha, even though she stands "in front of him" (לפניו) (4:12).[91] Elisha's first query, as conveyed

---

compared to the "great woman" who is not in any pressing economic need (see below), got Elisha's help through his powers to get abundant oil less her children become debt slaves. Both women, whether poor and helpless or "great," attain great help from Elisha. Elisha's powers engage people of a variety of socio-economic status.

[90] The generosity of the "great woman" shows not only in her having Elisha for meals whenever he passes on the way but also in her and her husband having a furnished roof chamber constructed for him because she "knows" (ידע) that Elisha is a "*holy* man of God" (איש אלהים קדוש) (4:8-10). 2 Kgs 4:9 is the only verse where the phrase איש אלהים קדוש occurs. Cohn (*2 Kings*, 28) indicates that the woman is generous to Elisha, and that she takes the initiative without Elisha asking or her husband suggesting. Cogan and Tadmor (*II Kings*, 56) argue that Elisha's comportment as a "holy man of God" may have "somehow alerted the Shunammite woman to special qualities that set [Elisha] apart . . . from the typical man of God of that period." Bergen (*End of Prophetism*, 92) argues that the mention of potential hospitality on the part of the "great woman" precedes her "explicit description of Elisha's holiness" and that the focus of her speech in v. 9 lies in the term ידעתי ("I know"), which conveys the woman's recognition of the only prophet or man of God referred to as "holy" in the Hebrew Bible. The story suggests, but does not state, that the great lady had some expectations of reciprocity. Clearly, the narrative indicates that Elisha thought that there should be some reciprocal act of kindness on his part.

[91] Rentería's brief analysis of Gehazi as an intermediary and his comparison between

by Geazi, is, "what may be done for you?" suggesting "speaking on your behalf to the king or to the army chief" (4:13), but she replies that she is not in any pressing need; she lives "among [her] own people," apparently referring to her social status.[92] Then Elisha asks Gehazi, the intermediary, what can be done for her in acknowledging her hospitality, Gehazi suggests advises Elisha that "Alas, she has no son and her husband is elderly" (4:14). Elisha understands Gehazi's suggestion, and after having Gehazi summon her, he tells the "great woman" directly, "At this season, *in due time* (כעת חיה), you shall embrace a son" (4:16; *emphasis* added). However, the woman apparently considers the pronouncement a potential deception, something hard to

---

Elisha's interactions with the widow of a "member of the company of prophets" (4:1-7) and with the "great woman" ("Elijah/Elisha Stories," 104-5) elicits another comparison in this study. In the widow story, there is no intermediary between the widow and Elisha; they talk directly to each other, and it is the widow who initiates the conversation. In the story of the Shunammite woman, the interaction scene happens in the woman's house, and Gehazi makes his debut. Gehazi is an intermediary for Elisha, according to the tradition, and he is in the roof chamber when he begins the conversation about what might be offered in recognition of the woman's hospitality. Gehazi is the first partner in the conversation before the "great woman" is invited to join at Elisha's request. The comparison in this study shows that Elisha knows very well how to deal discreetly with a woman. See also Mark Roncace, "Elisha and the Woman of Shunem: 2 Kings 4.8-37 and 8.1-6 Read in Conjunction," *JSOT* 91 (2000): 114, for a close analysis of Gehazi as an intermediary in delivering words between Elisha and the "great woman."

[92] Rentería ("Elijah/Elisha Stories," 104-5) maintains that Elisha's question to the "great woman" concerning the king or the army chief, who at the time may have been Jehu, is indicative that Elisha can serve as mediator between her and the king or the army chief. The response of the "great woman" that בתוך עמי אנכי יֹשֶׁבֶת ("I am living among my own people"; 2 Kgs 4:13) is an indication that "her interests are family- or clan-oriented." Cogan and Tadmor (*II Kings*, 57) have a similar view that her "polite refusal of the offer is explained by her being well cared for by her family and clan." But note that Wesley J. Bergen regards the woman's reply as a "recognition of her own superior status to Elisha," for she refuses Elisha's offer to "mediate human political power to her (v. 13)." Moreover, Bergen suggests that she makes a claim for "access to any influence that she needs" in the area she lives. When she mentions "my people" (עמי), the emphasis is "my" instead of "his" (Elisha's). Bergen concludes that "she can get what she wants without him." See Bergen, *End of Prophetism*, 95-96. Hobbs (*2 Kings*, 51) considers the response of the "great woman" as "one of complete security," even though she in 2 Kgs 8:1-6 encountered a radical change of her fortunes and needed royal intervention. Cohn (*2 Kings*, 29) argues that the woman "exposes [Elisha's] offer as unrelated to her happy circumstance which calls for no special privilege."

believe—apparently too good to be true.[93] In addition, Gehazi, a responsive "servant" (נער) of Elisha in 2 Kings 4, is subsequently active to protect his master from the impulsive action of the woman who brushed aside the enquiries of Gehazi, sent on ahead by Elisha, who observed her apparent distress, to check with her as to her welfare and the welfare of her family. She, however, went straight to "the man of God on the mountain" and clasped his feet. Elisha tells Gehazi to ignore this apparent breach of propriety and acknowledges her bitter distress., which he needs to tend to. Though she had initially said that "all is well" (שׁלום) (4:26), in response to Elisha's greetings conveyed through Gehazi, her actions indicated that all was not well.

The Shunammite woman announced that she had not asked for a son and had emphasized that Elisha not deceive her about having a son. She was not like Hannah, the mother of Samuel. Rather, upon hearing the promise from Elisha, she had feared that it would not come to pass

---

[93] Cogan and Tadmor indicate that the phrase "in due time" (כעת חיה) occurs in only two places in the Hebrew Bible: Gen 18:10, 14 and 2 Kgs 4:16. Both the idiom and the prediction from Elisha remind us of the story of Abraham and Sarah in Gen 18:1-15; 21:1-2 when both are old and their son, Isaac, is born "in due time" (כעת חיה; Gen 18:10, 14). The story of the Shunammite woman indicates that the husband of the "great woman" is old and they have no son. The connection of both stories in which the antagonists are old but will get a son from a divine prediction is clear. For more analysis of the idiom, see Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 57; Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis* (JPSTC; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 130. Besides, it is one of Yahweh's company that grants the child of promise to Abraham and Sarah (Gen 18:10); in the story of the Shunammite woman, it is the prophet, instead of a divine being in the former case, who promises the "great woman" a son. Yael Shemesh's analysis is that Elisha's promise of a child reveals that Elisha gets involved in "the realm that, in the biblical view, is the exclusive province of the Lord." What Elisha says about the promise of a child (2 Kgs 4:16) is very similar to what the angel says to Abraham (Gen 18:14). See Yael Shemesh, "'I Am Sure He Is a Holy Man of God' (2 Kgs 4:9): The Unique Figure of Elisha," in *And God Said, "You Are Fired": Elijah and Elisha* (ed. Mishael M. Caspi and John T. Greene; North Richland Hills, Tex.: Bibal Press, 2007), 38.

In both stories, moreover, each child of promise is once threatened to be taken away or is really taken away: God tests Abraham by ordering him to "offer [Isaac] . . . as a burnt offering" in the land of Moriah" (Gen 22:2) and the son of the "great woman" does die of an unknown sickness (2 Kgs 4:20). Isaac stays alive because God intervenes for life just when Abraham is ready to kill his only son (Gen 22:10-12), and the son of the "great lady" is revived by Elisha. Both stories relate a matter of life and death.

(4:16). Yet she had ended up with an infant boy. But then the child of promise died, and she rushed to solicit help from Elisha at Mount Carmel (4:18-25). She travels in a hurry to Mount Carmel without even telling her husband the reason for her visit. She just tells her husband that she is paying a brief visit to the "man of God," and her husband responds that it seems an unusual time for a visit to the prophet. She merely replies with שׁלום to her husband's query about her visit to Elisha, implying that there is really nothing out of the ordinary (4:23). The husband is not able to help in this situation.

When she got to Mount Carmel, Elisha did not know that the woman's son had died until she "came to the man of God at the mountain, . . . caught hold of his feet," and told him: "Did I ask my lord for a son? Did I not say, 'Do not mislead me (לא תשׁלה אתי)?'" (4:27-28).[94] Then Elisha urges Gehazi to go immediately to the woman's house carrying Elisha's personal "staff" (משׁענת) and to lay his staff on the child's face, presumably hoping the child will then recover (4:29). Elisha's command reminds us that Elisha used Elijah's cloak to exercise powers, copying what Elijah had done before he was taken up into the heavens in a whirlwind (2 Kgs 2:8-14). The apparent assumption underlying Elisha's command to Gehazi is that his staff might well have reviving power even in the hands of Gehazi, somewhat as Elijah's mantle had power when used by Elisha. This implies the possibility of a kind of transferable power from Elisha to Gehazi, as with the transfer of power from Elijah to Elisha. So there is a kind of test of the transferability of power that is involved as a secondary matter. One notes, however, that the "great lady" is insistent that Elijah himself also proceed to her house, apparently having much more confidence in Elisha than in Gehazi even when Gehazi bears Elisha's staff. Gehazi did as

[94] The verb שׁלה, according to Cogan and Tadmor (*II Kings*, 58), "is part of the patois of north Israel which permeates the prophetic literature in Kings." Hobbs (*2 Kings*, 52) indicates that תשׁלה ("to deceive") rarely occurs in biblical Hebrew texts—only in 2 Chr 29:11 and here.

he was told, but the child did not respond (4:31). The staff, separated from Elisha's presence, had no particular reviving power. Whatever Elisha had in mind, Gehazi's use of Elisha's staff is ineffective. Elisha himself has to be present; but once Elisha appears the staff is not mentioned again. The emphasis is shifted to God,[95] as Elisha "prays" (התפלל) (4:33) to Yahweh, in the very first reference to such prayer in the Elisha cycle,[96] and then engages in full body contact with the

[95] The "staff" (משענת) of Elisha reminds us of the "staff" (מטה) of Moses and that of Aaron. Staffs are symbolic of magical powers derived from Yahweh. In Moses' case, his staff can be turned into a snake (as can Aaron's staff; see Exod 7:8-12; note that the magicians of Egypt can do the same), which is a kind of magic that Yahweh shows to Moses in response to Moses' resistance to his divine call, a step that confirms that Yahweh's powers are with Moses, and that evokes belief from the Israelites in Yahweh (Exod 4:1-5). Moses also uses his staff to divide the Re(e)d See (Exod 14:16), to bring water forth from the rock (Num 20:2-13), and, above all, to lead Egypt into a series of plagues with an extra staff of Aaron (Exod 7:14-8:19; 9:22-10:20). All these events are initiated at Yahweh's command. However, Moses cannot demonstrate powers with his staff without Yahweh's command; Yahweh is the prerequisite of Moses' powers associated with his staff. The staff of Moses, therefore, is also called the "staff of God" (מטה האלהים) (Exod 4:20; 17:9), meaning that the staff is invested with miraculous powers from God, to whom it belongs. For משׁענת and מטה, see Marc Zvi Brettler, "Staff," *NIDB* 5:370; Brevard S. Childs, *Exodus*, 77-78, for Moses' resistance; for the staff of God, see Sarna, *Exodus*, 23; Propp, *Exodus 1-18*, 216, and 227-29 for further discussion of the relationship between Moses and God through "Moses' staff" and "God's staff."

[96] The Elisha cycle records two occasions in which Elisha prays: the first occasion is for the woman's dead child; the other is for a vision, when Elisha prays that Yahweh open the eyes of his "servant" (נער) to see "horses and chariots of fire" filling the mountain in the crisis brought on by the Arameans, and then again that Yahweh close the eyes of the enemies so that they are blind, unable to recognize Elisha's residence (2 Kgs 6:15-18). In the other miraculous events Elisha has not been described as praying; instead, he challenges Yahweh when his master is taken up (2:14), "curses" in Yahweh's name to injure the forty-two youths (ילדים; 2:24—note that the text has נערים for the same group of "youths" in verse 23, and for a further discussion of the נערים, see Joel S. Burnett, "'Going Down' to Bethel: Elijah and Elisha in the Theological Geography of the Deuteronomistic History," *JBL* 129 [2010]: 295). Elisha has a musician play music for him to let Yahweh's spirit fill him (2 Kgs 3:15-16), and, above all, commands a widow of a member of the company of the prophets to fill the vessels with oil with no mention of Yahweh's name (4:1-7). Elisha, in contrast to Elijah, who has always followed the "word of Yahweh" (דבר יהוה), is very active and independent in working miracles. He does not cry out to Yahweh to revive the Shunammite woman's dead child as Elijah did for the widow's dead son (1 Kgs 17:21), though he does pray. Elisha, as in the case of Elijah, dares to challenge kings when he is angry with them (2 Kgs 3:14; 7:1). Above all, Elisha, according to the tradition, never complains to Yahweh about his prophetic duties as does Elijah (1 Kgs 19:9b-10, 13b-14). The

dead child. The child responds and comes to life during the second attempt, and Elisha summons the mother to come and pick up her child (4:36-37).[97]

What further draws our attention, however, is that Gehazi does not manage to wield power even while using Elisha's staff, as Elisha had apparently hoped. Gehazi, who had been particularly helpful to Elisha in the course of the discussion about what Elisha could do for the "great lady" in return for her hospitality, had to advise Elisha that "the boy [now הנער] has not awakened" (4:31). In addition, twice in the earlier episode Elisha uses Gehazi as an intermediary with the "great lady" (4:12, 15).[98] And at the end of the "great lady" context, Elisha commands

---

occasions of praying seem to portray Elisha as having more confidence than Elijah in demonstrating his personal powers, even though the powers possessed by both are from Yahweh. As for Elisha's praying, Hobbs suggests that Elisha, admitting Gehazi has failed to take over his power to revive the dead child, has to seek the divine aid on his own so that "the tension begins to be resolved." Brueggemann indicates that Elisha first prays to Yahweh, meaning that he "pled for Yahweh's action" before he himself acts. Fritz argues that the important aspect of prayer is that "it is Yahweh alone, as the Lord of creation, who can give back life." Brueggemann suggests that that is why Gehazi, not reported as praying, was not successful in reviving the dead child by placing Elisha's staff on the boy; the "magical" act needed to be based on prayer. See Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 48; Brueggemann, *1 & 2 Kings*, 324; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 251-52.

[97] Note the reaction of the "great lady" when she "lifts up" (נשׂא) the child, just now returned to life: "She came and fell at [Elisha's] feet, bowing to the ground" (4:37). Rofé (*Prophetical Stories*, 31) reminds us that Elisha, at this point of the episode, is finally "restored to his lofty position as a Holy Man of God" after reviving the child, as if Elisha "found it difficult to converse with her." That is why his final words with the "great lady" are שׂאי בנך (v. 36). In "lifting up the [resurrected] child" she is ready to pay obeisance to the prophet Elisha, who first announced to her the child of promise without any response of gratitude on her part, according to the tradition, and who now restores the deceased child as again the promised child. Hobbs reminds us that the action of the "great woman," a gesture of praise and gratitude, is in stark contrast to "her initial scolding of the prophets," i.e., Elijah. See Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 53. Regarding the faith of the "great lady" in 4:36-37, see also Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 252.

[98] Although Gehazi serves in the Shunammite woman's story as an intermediary between Elisha and the "great woman" in connection with Elisha's attempts to acknowledge the woman's generosity, Cohn reminds usthat the "great woman" replies directly to Elisha with a refusal of his offer even though Gehazi, as commanded, has summoned the "great woman" to stand in front of Elisha and then delivers Elisha's words to her. Cohn suggests that the woman's direct response to Elisha implicitly resists "the distance Elisha has tried to establish between them" through using

Gehazi for a final time to act as the intermediary: "Call the Shunammite woman" (קרא אל־השׁונמית הזאת) (4:36). When she came, Elisha finally addresses her directly, "Lift up your son" (4:36), and she receives her son, revived from death. Gehazi serves here as an effective intermediary for Elisha in engagement with the "great lady," but not in engagement with the special powers of God. Gehazi, so far, is a competent attendant but he is not someone who can be a successor in the prophetic role. Elisha is the exception.

In a subsequent context Gehazi fails altogether. Note the story of Elisha's healing of the Aramaean general, Naaman, who had become a "leper" (מצרע) (2 Kgs 5:1).[99] In this second story, Gehazi is described as inadequate in a fundamental way in terms of even being an attendant of Elisha, let alone the possibility of being a successor. He again appears as Elisha's "servant" (נער) (v. 20) in the account of Elisha's healing of Naaman, a "great man" (איש גדול) somewhat parallel to the "great lady" (אשׁה גדולה) of 2 Kings 4, serving as the chief commander of the Syrian army (5:1). And the victory (תשׁועה)[100] of this Aramean "great man" (איש גדול) over Israel, according to the tradition, had actually come as a gift from Yahweh.[101] But the presenting issue is that

---

Gehazi as an intermediary. See Cohn, *2 Kings*, 29. The "great lady" is not impressed by Gehazi, especially when Elisha is at hand.

[99] The "leprosy" (צרעת) in the Old Testament, particularly as discussed in Leviticus 13-14, is no longer believed to refer to the condition more explicitly known as Hansen's disease. The term צרעת in the Hebrew Bible may refer to a variety of skin diseases, which explains why Naaman, as a "leper," continues to keep his important position without excluding himself from social contact. See John J. Pilch, "leprosy," *NIDB* 3:635-37.

[100] See Gray, *I & II Kings*, 504, for his suggestion that תשׁועה is a variant of ישׁועה.

[101] J. Long argues that the clause in 2 Kgs 5:1, "by him Yahweh has given victory (תשׁועה) to Aram," is part of the "underlying tension" established in the story of the healing of Naaman's "leprosy." 1 Kings 22 refers to a battle in which Aram defeated the alliance of Judah and Israel at Ramoth Gilead. Ahab is killed, as Yahweh had revealed through his prophet, Micaiah (1 Kgs 22:29-40; cf. 20:42; 21:19). If the victory mentioned in 2Kgs 5:1 refers to 1 Kings 22, then what is the role Naaman plays in the battle at Ramoth Gilead? Even though Josephus in *Antiquities of*

Naaman is a "leper" (5:1) and urgently seeks healing. The beginning of 2 Kings 5 suggests that Naaman's king is convinced that it will not be difficult for him to attain favor from Yahweh by using traditional channels, i.e., appeals to the Israelite king, presumably now beholden to him. Note that Elisha had come to Naaman's attention through the remark of a young Israelite female captive who had been placed in the service of Naaman's wife. The young girl told her mistress that "the prophet in Samaria" could cure Naaman of his "leprosy." And, with the approval of the Aramean king, even a letter of introduction from the Aramean king to the Israelite king (intimating that the king somehow could heal a leper), Naaman proceeds together with an impressive array of gifts. But the Israelite king is aghast at receiving the letter, as he himself has no power to heal. However, Elisha heard of the situation and intervenes, advising the king of Israel to send Naaman to him, so that Naaman may "learn that there is a prophet in Israel" (5:8). Elisha does not, however, personally receive Naaman, who is awaiting him backed up by an impressive array of gifts (v. 5). Elisha only responds by sending a messenger to advise Naaman that he can be cured by bathing seven times in the Jordan, a suggestion that left Naaman totally unimpressed and, as the tradition notes, rather furious. Nonetheless, Naaman's servants persuade him to follow the prescribed cure, which he does, and, indeed, Naaman became "clean." He returned to Elisha, "the man of God," and "stood before him" praising the one genuine God, the

---

the Jews claims that it is Naaman who killed Ahab, Scripture does not provide any basis for it. J. Long suggests that "Yahweh's role in an Aramean victory over Israel (1 Kings 22)," at the same time, "establishes the broader parameters of the story." J. Long further points out that the "underlying tension" has become a motivation for the story to move on, and the "young girl," a captive from Israel, strengthens this tension. According the tradition, Naaman owns the "young girl" who works for his wife. J. Long indicates that "these features vilify Naaman" especially as "this Aramean hero becomes an 'unclean' leper." The victory granted by Yahweh to Aram, perhaps particularly through Naaman, adds complexity to the Naaman story, which will lead us to see Gehazi's shortcomings. See J. Long, *1 and 2 Kings*, 318-19; Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 63, for Josephus' claim.

God of Israel, and presses Elisha to accept a gift in recognition of this great power of the God of Israel. Elisha declines; he is not a prophet for hire. God heals freely (v. 26). Then, as confirmation of Naaman's new convictions, Naaman requests some of the local soil, that he might continue to honor the God of Israel on the deity's own soil, while in Aramaean territory. Naaman also asks forgiveness for having to appear in the temple of the Aramean god, Rimmon (5:15-19). Elisha dismisses him with the words, "Go in peace."

After Naaman had traveled some distance toward Damascus, Gehazi enters the story. Earlier, Elisha had strongly asserted his independence as a prophet by rejecting the gift that Naaman offered;[102] Gehazi, the "servant" (נער) of Elisha (2 Kgs 5:20), acts very differently. Aware of the impressive gifts offered by Naaman, he decides, says the tradition, to run after Naaman with a concocted story. Gehazi, having managed to catch up with Naaman and his retinue, tells Naaman that his master (אדון) had sent him for some assistance because "two young men, Ephraimites, from the sons of the prophets" (שני־נערים מהר אפרים מבני הנביאים) have arrived and are in need of a talent of silver and two sets of clothing. Naaman then offered the silver and the clothing, together with two of his servants to carry them back with Gehazi, who, upon returning took the "gifts" and set them "in the house" (v.24), apparently his own quarters.

He then presented himself to Elisha, who inquired as to where he had gone. Gehazi

---

[102] Elisha's rejection of Naaman's offer of a generous reward for the healing indicates that prophetic authority and powers are not for sale. Elisha clearly manifests that he is not a "professional" or paid prophet (cf. Jer 6:13; Ezek 22:25; Amos 7:12). See Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1-20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 21A; New York: Doubleday, 1999), 430; Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 22A; New York: Doubleday, 1997), 461-62; Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Amos: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 24A; New York: Doubleday, 1989), 773-74. Besides, Hobbs reminds us that Elisha's refusal is "particularly remarkable, since the story is set in a time of famine (4:38; 7:1-20)." See Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 66.

replied, saying that he hadn't gone anywhere. But Elisha, who had discerned what had happened, accuses him of seeking a personal reward for what God had done in healing Naaman. Elisha announced that Gehazi and his descendants would have Naaman's "leprosy" forever, and Gehazi departs from him as a "leper" (vv. 25-27).[103]

Gehazi does not appear in the account of the Naaman episode until after the healing and the impressive offer to his "master" (אדון) (5:20), who declined all the presents from Naaman. Gehazi thinks, as represented in the story, that "[A]s Yahweh lives (חי־יהוה), I will run after [Naaman] and get something out of him" (5:20). Ironically, the clause "as Yahweh lives" was used by his master, Elisha, when he rejected Naaman's gifts in verse 16. Both the "master" (אדון) and the "servant" (נער) employ the same phrase to introduce their response to the same situation, but in opposite directions. Gehazi succeeds in getting what he wanted from Naaman through lying, but from Elisha he got a curse for his lying. Gehazi, as his "reward," himself gets the "leprosy" of which Naaman had been cured. The leprosy that has left Naaman, as it were, now clings to Gehazi and, what is worse, his descendants as well "forever" (5:27-28).

So Elisha demonstrates his powers in multiple ways, as he not only effectively cleanses Naaman but also discerns Gehazi's greedy deception of Naaman without being present (5:26). Gehazi's disqualification in this second episode is greater than his inability to channel the power of Elisha's staff in dealing with the "great lady's" son. Not only does he show himself greedy, he also underestimates his master's powers. Having been Elisha's "servant" (נער) for some while,

---

[103] Gray's analysis of the name "Gehazi" (גחזי and גיחזי) is interesting, as he refers to Arabic *jaḥid* ("no good, avaricious"), which he suggests might be a "reflection of the incident in 5.20ff., where Gehazi extorts the reward which Elisha had waived." Gray, *I & II Kings*, 495—though Gehazi only asked for a modest portion of what Naaman is said to have brought with him. As for the meaning of the name Gehazi, the correspondence of Hebrew /*z*/ and Arabic /*d*/ does not easily fit. Another possible explanation of גיחזי is suggested by comparison to Arabic *jaḥaza*, used of "protruding (eyes)"; see גיחזי, *HALOT* 1:189.

Gehazi should have known more about what his "master" (אדון) was capable of. Unfortunately for him, he caves in to greed and lies to his "master" (אדון)! He is now even more disqualified as any sort of potential successor to the role of Elisha; he has no proper predisposition or attitude. The narratives clearly show him to be unworthy. Whatever was possible with Moses and Joshua and with Elijah and Elisha is not possible for Elisha and Gehazi. Elisha is apparently to remain the only person in ancient Israel who is described as becoming a direct prophetic successor and no further possibilities are mentioned in the Hebrew Bible.

In his final appearance in the tradition, 2 Kgs 8:1-6, though still identified as "the servant of the man of God" (נער איש־האלהים), all Gehazi—apparently no longer afflicted by "leprosy"—can do is retell, at the king's request, "the wonderful things that Elisha has done" (2 Kgs 8:4). He draws on his recollection of the great things that Elisha has done, as he tells of Elisha's reviving the great lady's son. At that point, the great lady herself, having returned from seven years of sojourning among the Philistines because of a seven-year drought, as recommended by Elisha (כדבר איש האלהים) (2 Kgs 8:2),[104] appears at the palace. Having been away from home for seven years, she now returns and petitions the king for the restoration of her property (v. 3). Just as Gehazi is telling the king about how Elisha resurrected the dead child, the child's mother, the Shunammite woman, appears with the child at court and is identified by Gehazi (v. 5).[105] The abiding capacity to speak of Elisha's "great deeds" (גדלות)—famous people

[104] Cogan and Tadmor (*II Kings*, 87) suggest that Elisha exhibits, with the prediction of the seven year famine, foreknowledge of future events. Elisha had continued to help the Shunammite woman by warning her of the impending famine. Elisha's reputation even aids her when she petitions the king for the restoration of her property rights.

[105] Cohn maintains that the presence of the Shunammite woman and her son at this point "confirms for the king the truth of Gehazi's testimony." Cohn further argues that Gehazi has an unusually positive image in 2 Kgs 8:1-6 by telling the king about Elisha's גדלות which leads the king to support Elisha's arrangement. For further discussion, see Cohn, *2 Kings*, 55-56.

he has known—is still providing status for Gehazi. And he is effective, as the unnamed king, under the impact of Gehazi's recital and the great lady's return with her son, takes steps to restore the Shunammite woman's property.[106] That the Shunammite woman is capable of appealing to the king in person for property restoration reminds us that when Elisha offered to use his royal influence on her behalf, she could decline Elisha's offer, stating that she was in a comfortable economic condition (2 Kgs 4:13). The Shunammite woman did directly seek the restoration of her dead son (4:18-37), and now she makes a successful claim for the restoration of her property (8:16) after a seven year absence. The great lady of Shunem emerges as more effective and more powerful than Gehazi.

Gehazi now disappears from the tradition and nothing further is heard about him, all in keeping with the inference that, Gehazi, the נער of Elisha who plays such an important role in the Elisha traditions, twice disqualified himself from being any sort of potential successor to Elisha's prophetic role. He continued for a while as a teller of tales, drawing on his former status as Elisha's servant. He becomes like the "servant" (נער) that Elijah left behind at Beer-sheba (1 Kgs 19:3), no longer directly involved in the activity of his master.

E. Summary

With the exploration and interpretation above, we have a rather comprehensive picture regarding the prophetic succession of Elisha to Elijah. Since prophecy is not portrayed in the Hebrew Bible as stable and predictable, i.e., it is not portrayed as becoming routinized, the application of Weberian category of charismatic leadership helps us understand the uneven

---

[106] According to Norman K. Gottwald, there are indications that we meet "a marvel story within a marvel story" in 2 Kgs 8:4-6, and this genre, in terms of the plot structure analysis, "sometimes functioned as testimony in advocacy hearings before authorities to secure the socioeconomic entitlements of Israelites who had been unjustly treated." See Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible in Its Social World and in Ours* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1993), 119.

history of prophecy and prophetic succession—note the failure of Gehazi as compared to Joshua and Elisha—particularly in the matter of succession. In short, charismatic leadership shows its originality and unpredictability, its institutionalizing capacity and its disruptive capacity—what Walter Brueggemann labels as destabilizing power--in the fascinating story of prophetic leadership, and in particular in the intriguing story of the successful transfer of charismatic leadership in ancient Israel in the traditions about Elijah and Elisha.

Chapter Six

Summary and Conclusion

A starting point for this study was Max Weber's insistence on the important connection of charisma and institution building, a perspective adopted in this study even if moderately modified by accepting Reinhard Bendix's differentiation between charismatic authority and charismatic leadership, as presented in Chapter Two. Indeed, the Israelite "judges" (שופטים) (temporary military leaders) and prophets offer exemplary charismatic leaders who understood God as the ongoing, in a sense, routinized power. But we also examined especially the charismatic establishment of authority, i.e., a "ruler" (נגיד) or a "king" (מלך), who represented—frequently only briefly, in spite of the expectation of hereditary continuity—institutionalized power with more-or-less orderly succession through heredity, in spite of occasional palace intrigues, most famously in the succession of David by Solomon). The main focus of the study was an analysis of the careful way in which the tradition described the process of charismatic succession in the case of Moses and Joshua and that of Elijah and Elisha, a process that reflected an intensive apprenticeship (Chapter Five), We examined that process in light of the carefully researched ethnographic parallels found in the shamanic tradition (Chapter Three?).

At the same time, Israel's tradition of charismatic initiation of authority had, especially in the northern tradition, a conditional element. The installation of a king, e.g., Saul, had the implication of duration, but Samuel described the installation as in actuality conditional: "Yahweh has torn the kingship over Israel away from you and has given it to another who is worthier than you" (1 Sam 16:28), though Saul continued as king until his death in battle. In response to Solomon, whose "heart turned away fromYahweh, the God of Israel (1 Kgs 11:9),

God directly announced to him that "I will tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your servants," following Solomon's death (1 Kgs 11:11-12), though not the whole kingdom (v. 13). In regard to Jeroboam, who became Jeroboam I, ruler of the northern kingdom, Ahijah, a prophet from Shiloh, reports God's designation of him as a king, for whom, "if you will walk in my ways and do what is right in my sight. . . . I will be with you and I build for you a lasting dynasty (בית־נאמן) just as I built for David" (1 Kgs 11:38). But there are conditions that lead to disruption, as discussed in Chapter Five. As indicated, charisma is associated with institution building, but in ancient Israel, at least, the Israelite prophets are also associated with what Walter Brueggemann describes as destabilization.[1]

Part of the disruption or destabilization was that charismatic leaders, i.e., prophets, could both anoint kings and dismiss kings. Charismatic leadership is inherently unstable, whereas society prospers with stability. Charismatic leadership, as differentiated by R. Bendix from charismatic authority, was important in that the charismatic leader's role as an innovative and corrective presence, has difficulty in replicating itself. We see this in having but two major instances in the history of Israel: Moses being succeeded by Joshua, though not in all respects, and Elijah being succeeded by Elisha, demonstrated in detail. R. E. Clements is convincing in his emphasis on the "individuality" and "creativeness" of prophecy, i.e., the capacity to be innovative, which resists institutionalization,[2] as mentioned in Chapter One. It is quite striking, therefore, that there is only one clear example of immediate prophetic succession, that of Elijah and Elisha, the unique transfer that has been the focus of this study. As Joseph Blenkinsopp noted,

---

[1] Walter Brueggemann, *Texts That Linger, Words That Explode: Listening to Prophetic Voices* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000).

[2] Clements, "Max Weber," 102.

the Elijah-Elisha succession also provided "a basic paradigm" for charismatic succession in later tradition, such as the Gospels.[3] Therefore, this present study, with its analysis of the difficulties of direct prophetic succession, seeks to contribute both to the study of ancient Israelite prophecy and also to the understanding of the continual tension between charisma and institutionalization. Charismatic leadership in Israel both contributed to institutionalization, as with the Davidic kingship, but with only one clear example in regard to prophecy. The description of that succession is tself interactive with the description of the Moses-Joshua succession.

Whatever the actual realities may have been, the sources present a carefully described process by which someone (Joshua/Elisha) could become the successor of a charismatically summoned leader (Moses/Elijah), involving a process of apprenticeship that offers many parallels with what ethnographers have noted in regard to shamanism.

In ancient Israel it seemed to be much more difficult to routinize charismatic leadership in contrast with charismatically based authority, as noted by Bendix. So the Elijah-Elisha cycle, with its carefully presented succession not only by anointing and divine approval but also through the virtual duplication of action, is especially worthy of study. It is also interesting that the Elijah-Elisha cycle, through the example of Gehazi's limitations and greediness (as with the sons of Samuel), also gives the impression that the Elijah-Elisha succession would not be repeated. If there were to be a continuation of Elijah to Elisha to someone else, it would have been Gehazi. Gehazi was the most active and most frequently named assistant of all the prophetic assistants or associates of Elijah or Elisha. But Gehazi, who was Elisha's intermediary in many situations, was not suitable for succession. The narratives are quite insistent on both his importance and his limitations. Elisha was the one and only direct prophetic successor. This

[3] Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet*, 116.

realization was not part of the original expectations of the study, but it was emphatically expressed in the sources. Subsequent prophets might have a significant helper, as with Jeremiah and Baruch. But, even though Jer 43:3 reports that some of those opposed to Jeremiah's advice accused Jeremiah of being dominated by Baruch, such that there was some confusion as to who was the master and who was the assistant.

The importance of charismatic leadership relates to generating fresh possibilities and innovative change, thus ultimately new institution building, as became clear in the course of this study. Although there has been little in the way of close scholarly attention to the curious situation and the elaborate process involved in the presentation in Kings of the succession of Elisha to the prophetic work of Elijah, with many commentators drawn off into an assessment of who was primary and who was secondary, we cannot avoid exploring the significance of charismatic leadership being successfully transferred and the difficulties involved in continuation, with the constant danger of substituting heredity for the special qualities recognized, as it were, by divine designation. The uniqueness and the underlying difficulty of succession, as emphasized through the accounts of Gehazi's shortcomings, are very instructive for religious communities that seemingly place confidence in divine designation, but find it much more convenient to trust in routinization. Note Hans von Campenhausen's study, cited in Chapter Two, of the problems experienced in the early Christian community, which chose to stress such matters as apostolic succession.[4]

Analysis of the Elijah-Elisha succession is revelatory as to the difficulty of direct succession in charismatic leadership, the inherent fragility of such leadership, and the long-term necessity of some form of institutionalization, though a process fraught with difficulties and

[4] Von Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority*, 56-85.

shortcomings as that institutionalization may experience. As the narratives about the prophets and the installation of kings illustrates, charisma gives, and charisma takes away. Charisma contributes to institution building and it also contributes to destabilization. That, doubtless, is the beauty of charisma, which if genuine charisma, as for Weber, is based on divine designation, a special gift indeed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ackerman, James S. "Satire and Symbolism in the Song of Jonah. Pages 213-46 in *Traditions in Transformation: Turning Points in Biblical Faith*. Edited by Baruch Halpern and Jon D. Levenson. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1981.

Adam, Klaus-Peter. "'And He Behaved like a Prophet among Them' (1Sam 10:11b)." *Die Welt des Orients* 39 (2009): 3-57.

Ahlström, Gösta W. *The History of Ancient Palestine*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1993.

Albertz, Rainer. *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period*. Translated by John Bowden. 2 vols. Old Testament Library. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1994.

———. Elia: *Ein Feuriger Kämpfer für Gott*. Biblishe Gestalten 13. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlasgsanstalt, 2006.

Albright, W. F. *The Biblical Period from Abraham to Ezra*. New York: Harper & Row, 1963.

Alter, Robert. *Genesis: Translation and Commentary*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1996.

Andersen, Francis I., and David Noel Freedman. *Amos: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 24A. New York: Doubleday, 1989.

Anderson, A. A. *2 Samuel*. Word Biblical Commentary 11. Dallas: Word Books, 1989.

Basilov, Vladimir N. "Chosen by the Spirits." Pages 3-45 in *Shamanic Worlds: Rituals and Lore of Siberia and Central Asia*. Edited by Marjorie Mandelstam Blazer. Armonk and London: New Castle Books, 1997.

Batto, Bernard F. Slaying the Dragon: Mythmaking in the Biblical Tradition. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1992.

Beentjes, Pancratius C. *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew: A Text Edition of All Extant Hebrew Manuscripts and a Synopsis of All Parallel Hebrew Ben Sira Texts*. Supplements to Vetus Testamentaum 68. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006.

Bendix, Reinhard. "Reflections on Charismatic Leadership." Pages 17-25, 206-7 in Charisma, History, and Social Structure. Edited by Ronald M. Glassman and William H. Swatos, Jr. Contributions in Sociology 58. New York: Greenwood Press, 1986.

———. *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait*. With a New Introduction by Guenther Roth. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977.

———. *Elisha and the End of Prophetism*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 286. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999.

Berger, Peter L. "Charisma and Religious Innovation: The Social Location of Israelite Prophecy." *American Sociological Review* 28 (1963): 940-50.

Birch, Bruce C. 1998. "The First and Second Books of Samuel: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections." Pages 947-1383 in vol. 2 of *The New Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*. Edited by Leander E. Keck. 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994-2002.

Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Prophecy and Canon: A Contribution to the Study of Jewish Origins*. University of Notre Dame Center for the Study of Judaism and Christianity in Antiquity 3. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame, 1977.

———. *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*. Library of Ancient Israel. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1995.

———. *A History of Prophecy in Israel*. Revised and enlarged edition. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1996.

Boling, Robert G. *Judges: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 6A. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975.

Botterweck, G. Johannes, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Translated by J. T. Willis et al. 15 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974-2006.

Brettler, Marc Zvi. 2009. "Staff." Pages 370 in Volume 5 of *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld. 5 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 2006-2009.

Bright, John. *A History of Israel*. 4th ed. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2000.

Bronner, Leah. *The Stories of Elijah and Elisha as Polemics against Baal Worship*. Leiden: Brill, 1968.

Brown, J. P. "The Mediterranean Seer and Shamanism." *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 93 (1981): 374-400.

Brueggemann, Walter. *The Prophetic Imagination*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978.

———. *First and Second Samuel*. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. Louisville, Ky.: John Knox Press, 1990.

———. 1998. "The Book of Exodus: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections." Pages 675-981 in vol. 2 of *The New Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*. Edited by Leander E. Keck. 12 vols. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1994-2002.

———. *A Commentary on Jeremiah: Exile & Homecoming*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998.

———. *1 & 2 Kings*. Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary. Macon, Ga.: Smyth and Helwys, 2000.

———. *Texts That Linger, Words That Explode: Listening to Prophetic Voices*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2000.

Brueggemann, Walter, and Davis Hankins. "The Affirmation of Prophetic Power and Deconstruction of Royal Authority in the Elisha Narratives." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 76 (2014): 58-76.

Buber, Martin. *The Prophetic Faith*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949.

Burnett, Joel S. "'Going Down' to Bethel: Elijah and Elisha in the Theological Geography of the Deuteronomistic History." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129 (2010): 281-97.

Burney, C. F. *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Kings with an Introduction and Appendix*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903.

———. *The Book of Judges: With Introduction and Notes*. 2d ed. London: Rivingtons, 1930.

Buss, Martin J. "The Social Psychology of Prophecy." Pages 1-11 in *Prophecy: Essays Presented to Georg Fohrer on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday, 6 September 1980*. Edited by J. A. Emerton, 1-11. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1980.

Campbell, Antony F. *Of Prophets and Kings: A Late Ninth-Century Document (1 Samuel 1-2 Kings 10)*. Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 17. D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1986.

Von Campenhausen, Hans. *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries*. London: Adam & Charles Black, 1969.

Carmichael, Calum. *The Spirit of Biblical Law*. Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1996.

Carmody, Denise L., and John T. Carmody. *Shamans, Prophets, and Sages: A Concise Introduction to World Religions*. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1985.

Carroll, Robert P. "The Elijah-Elisha Sagas: Some Remarks on Prophetic Succession." *Vetus Testamentum* 19 (1961): 400-415.

———. *When Prophecy Failed: Cognitive Dissonance in the Prophetic Traditions of the Old Testament*. New York: Seabury Press, 1979.

———. *Jeremiah: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. London: SCM Press, 1986.

Cartledge, Tony W. 2009. "Nazir, Nazirite." Pages 241-42 in Volume 4 of *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld. 5 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 2006-2009.

Caspi, Mishael M., and John T. Greene, eds. *And God Said, "You Are Fired": Elijah and Elisha*. North Richland Hills, Tex.: Bibal Press, 2007.

Childs, Brevard S. *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary*. Old Testament Library. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster, 1974.

Christensen, Duane L. "Gehazi." Pages 926 in vol. 2 of *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. 6 vols. Edited by David N. Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

Clegg, Stewart. *Power, Rule and Domination: A Critical and Empirical Understanding of Power in Sociological Theory and Organizational Life*. Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975.

Clements, Ronald E. *One Hundred Years of Old Testament Interpretation*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976.

———. "Max Weber, Charisma and Biblical Prophecy." Pages 89-108 in *Prophecy and Prophets: The Diversity of Contemporary Issues in Scholarship*. Edited by Yehoshua Gitay. Society of Biblical Literature Semeia Studies. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1997.

———. 1998. "The Book of Deuteronomy: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections." Pages 269-538 in vol. 2 of *The New Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*. Edited by Leander E. Keck. 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994-2002.

Coats, George W. *Exodus 1-18*. Forms of the Old Testament Literature 2A. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999. [ckck 174-78 for the prophetic messenger speech]

Cody, Aelred. *A History of Old Testament Priesthood*. Analecta biblical 35. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969.

Cogan, Mordechai. *I Kings*. Anchor Bible 10. New York: Doubleday, 2001.

Cogan, Mordechai, and Hayim Tadmor. *II Kings*. Anchor Bible 11. Garden City: Doubleday, 1988.

Cohn, Robert L. *2 Kings*. Berit Olam. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2000.

Coote, Robert B. 1998. "The Book of Joshua: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections." Pages 553-719 in vol. 2 of *The New Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*. Edited by Leander E. Keck. 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994-2002.

Coote, Robert B., ed. *Elijah and Elisha in Socioliterary Perspective*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992.

Craigie, Peter C., Page H. Kelley, and Joel F. Drinkard, Jr. *Jeremiah 1-25*. Word Biblical Commentary 26. Dallas, Tex.: Word Books, 1991.

Crenshaw, James L. *Prophetic Conflict: Its Effect upon Israelite Religion*. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1971.

Cross, Frank Moore. *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973.

Czaplicka, M. A. *Aboriginal Siberia: A Study in Social Anthropology*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1917.

Dahood, Mitchell. *Psalms III 101-150: Introduction, Translation, and Notes with an Appendix*. Anchor Bible 17A. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday; 1970.

DeVries, Simon J. *1 Kings*. Word Biblical Commentary 12. Waco, Tex.: Word, 1985.

Dharamraj, Havilah. *A Prophet Like Moses?: A Narrative-Theological Reading of the Elijah Stories*. Paternoster Biblical Monographs. Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2011.

Dietrich, Walter. *The Early Monarchy in Israel: The Tenth Century B.C.E.* Translated by Joachim Vette. Biblical Encyclopedia 3. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007.

Dozeman, Thomas B. 1998. "The Book of Numbers: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections" Pages 1-268 in vol. 2 of *The New Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*. Edited by Leander E. Keck. 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994-2002.

———. *Exodus*. Eerdmans Critical Commentary. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2009.

Driver, S. R. *Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel with an Introduction on Hebrew Palaeography and the Ancient Versions and Facsimiles of Inscriptions and Maps*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913.

Drury, Neville. *The Elements of Shamanism*. Shaftesbury, Dorset: Element Books, 1989.

DuBois, Thomas A. *An Introduction to Shamanism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Eichrodt, Walther. *Theology of the Old Testament*. Translated by J. A. Baker. 2 vols. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961-1967.

Eliade, Mircea. *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. Translated by Willard R. Trask. Bollingen Series 76. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964.

Eisenstadt, S. N., ed. *Max Weber on Charisma and Institution Building: Selected Papers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.

Ellison, H. L. *The Prophets of Israel: From Ahijah to Hosea*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1969.

Eng, M. *The Days of Our Years: A Lexical Semantic Study of the Life Cycle in Biblical Israel*. Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 464. New York: T & T Clark, 2011.

Eslinger, Lyle M. *Kingship of God in Crises: A Close Reading of 1 Samuel 1-12*. Bible and Literature Series 10. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985.

Fohrer, Georg. *Elia*. 2. *Überarbeitete und Erweiterte Auflage*. Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments 53. Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1968.

———. *History of Israelite Religion*. Translated by David E. Green. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1972. Translation of *Geschichte der Israelitischen Religion*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1968.

Freund, Julien. *The Sociology of Max Weber*. Translated by Mary Ilford. New York: Pantheon Books, 1968.

Fritz, Volkmar. *1 & 2 Kings*. Continental Commentaries. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2003.

Furst, Peter T. "Introduction: An Overview of Shamanism." Pages 1-28 in *Ancient Traditions: Shamansim in Central Asia and the Americas*. Edited by Gary Seaman and Jane S. Day. Boulder, Colo.: University Press of Colorado, 2007.

Gerbrandt, Gerald Eddie. *Kingship according to the Deuteronomistic History*. Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series, 87. Atlanta, Scholars Press, 1986.

Gertz, Jan Christian. "Tora und vordere Propheten." Pages 187-302 in *Grundinformation Altes Testament: eine Einführung in Literatur, Religion und Geschichte des Alten Testaments*. Edited by Jan Christian Gertz. Uni-Taschenbücher 2745. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006.

Golden, Jonathan M. *Ancient Canaan and Israel: New Perspectives*. Understanding Ancient Civilizations. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Abc-Clio, 2004.

Goodman, Felicitas D. *Ecstasy, Ritual, and Alternate Reality: Religion in a Pluralistic World*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1988.

———. *Where the Spirits Ride the Wind: Trance Journeys and Other Ecstatic Experiences*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1990.

Gottwald, Norman K. *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985.

———. *The Hebrew Bible in Its Social World and in Ours*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993.

Grabbe, Lester L. *Priests, Prophets, Diviners, Sages: A Socio-Historical Study of Religious Specialists in Ancient Israel*. Village Forge, Pa.: 1995.

Gray, John. *I & II Kings*. 2d fully revised edition. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970.

Gregory, Russell. "Irony and the Unmasking of Elijah." Pages 91-152 in *From Carmel to Horeb: Elijah in Crisis*. Edited by Alan J. Hauser. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 85. Bible and Literature Series 19. Sheffield: Almond Press, 1990.

Greenberg, Moshe. *Ezekiel 21-37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 22A. New York: Doubleday, 1997.

Greenspoon, Leonard J. "The Origin of the Idea of Resurrection." Pages 247-321 in *Traditions in Transformation: Turning Points in Biblical Faith*. Edited by Baruch Halpern and Jon D. Levenson. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1981.

Gressmann, Hugo. *Moses und seine Zeit: Ein Kommentar zu den Mose-Sagen*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1913.

Grim, John A. *The Shaman: Patterns of Religious Healing among the Ojibway Indians*. Civilization of the American Indian Series. Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989.

Gunn, David M. *The Fate of King Saul*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 14. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1980.

Gunneweg, Antonius H. J. *Mündliche und schriftliche Tradition der vorexilischen Prophetenbücher als Problem der neueren Prophetenforschung*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959.

Haldar, Alfred. *Associations of Cult Prophets among the Ancient Semites*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1945.

Halpern, Baruch. *David's Secret Demons: Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2001.

Harstad, Adolph L. Joshua. Concordia Commentary: A Theological Exposition of Sacred Scripture. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004.

Hauser, Alan. J., and Russel Gregory. *From Carmel to Horeb: Elijah in Crisis*. Edited by Alan J. Hauser. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 85. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1990.

Havrelock, Rachel S. "A Double Portion of Your Spirit." Pages 55-80 in *And God Said, "You Are Fire": Elijah and Elisha*. Edited by Mishael M. Caspi and John T. Greene. North Richland Hills, Tex.: Bibal Press, 2007.

Heller, Roy L. *Power, Politics, and Prophecy: The Character of Samuel and The Dueteronomistic Evaluation of Prophecy*. Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 440. New York: T&T Clark, 2006.

Hens-Piazza, Gina. *1-2 Kings*. Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 2006.

Hentschke, Richard. *Die Stellung der vorexilischen Schriftpropheten zum Kultus*. Berlin: Toepelmann, 1957.

Herrmann, Siegfried. *Ursprung und Funktion der Prophetie im alten Israel*. Opladen: Westdeutscher, 1976.

Hertzberg, Hans Wilhelm. *I & II Samuel: A Commentary*. Translated by J. S. Bowden. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964.

Heschel, Abraham J. *The Prophets*. New York: Harper & Row, 1962.

Hobbs, T. R. *2 Kings*. Word Biblical Commentary 13. Waco, Tex.: Word, 1985.

Hölscher, Gustav. *Die Profeten: untersuchungen zur Religionsgeschichte Israels*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1914.

Hoppe, Leslie J. "Elijah and the Prophets of Baal." *The Bible Today* 41 (2003): 348-53.

Hutton, Robert. *Shamans: Siberian Spirituality and the Western Imagination*. London: Hambledon and London, 2001.

Hutton, Rodney R. *Charisma and Authority in Israelite Society*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1994.

———. *Fortress Introduction to the Prophets*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2004.

Janzen, Waldemar. "Withhoding the Word." Pages 97-114 in *Traditions in Transformation: Turning Points in Biblical Faith*. Edited by Baruch Halpern and Jon D. Levenson. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1981.

Japhet, Sara. *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1993.

Jenni, Ernst, and Claus Westermann. Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament. Translated by M. E. Biddle. 3 vols. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1997.

Jepsen, Alfred. *Nabi—Soziologische Studien zur alttestamentlichen Literatur und Religionsgeschichte*. München: Beck, 1934.

Jeremias, Jörg. *Kultprophetie und Gerichtsverkündigung in der späten Königszeit Israels*. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1970.

Jobling, David. *1 Samuel*. Berit Olam. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1998.

Johnson, Aubrey. *The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1962.

Jones, Gwilym. H. *1 and 2 Kings*. 2 vols. New Century Bible. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1984.

Käsler, Dirk. *Max Weber: An Introduction to His Life and Work*. Translated by Philippa Hurd. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.

Keel, Othmar, and Christoph Uehlinger. *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*. Translated by Thomas H. Trapp. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1998.

Keinänen, Jyrki. *Traditions in Collision: A Literary and Redaction-Critical Study on the Elijah Narratives 1 Kings 17-19*. Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 80; Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society and Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001.

Kelle, Brad E. "Ben-Hadah." 2006. "Hazael." Pages 426-28 in Volume 1 of *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld. 5 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 2006-2009.

King, Philip J., and Lawrence E. Stager. *Life in Biblical Israel*. Library of Ancient Israel. Lousville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Kissling, Paul J. *Reliable Characters in the Primary History: Profiles of Moses, Joshua, Elijah and Elisha*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 224. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996.

Këhler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden: 1994-1999.

Köckert, Matthias. "Elia: Literarische und religionsgeschichtliche Probleme in 1Kön 17-18." Pages 111-44 in *Der Eine Gott und die Götter: Polytheismus und Monotheismus im antiken Israel*. Edited by Manfred Oeming and Konrad Schmid. Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments 82. Zürich: Theologischer, 2003.

Kraus, Hans-Joachim. *Psalms 60-150: A Commentary*. Translated by Hilton C. Oswald. Continental Commentaries. Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg, 1989.

Lamb, David T. *Righteous Jehu and His Evil Heirs: The Deuteronomist's Negative Perspective on Dynastic Succession*. Oxford Theological Monographs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Lang, Bernhard. "Max Weber und Israels Propheten: Eine kritische Stellungnahme." *Zeitschrift für die Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 36 (1984): 156-65.

Larsen, Stephen. *The Shaman's Doorway: Opening Imagination to Power and Myth*. Rochester, Vt.: Inner Traditions, 1998.

Leithart, Peter J. *1 & 2 Kings*. Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brazos Press, 2006.

Lehnart, Bernhard. *Prophet und König im Nordreich Israel: Studien zur sogenannten vorklassischen Prophetie im Nordreich Israel anhand der Samuel-, Elija- und Elischa- Überlieferungen*. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 96. Leiden, Germany: Brill, 2003.

Levine, Baruch A. *Leviticus*. JPS Torah Commentary. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.

———. *Numbers 1-20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 4. New York: Doubleday, 1993.

———. *Numbers 21-36: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 4A. New York: Doubleday, 2000.

Levine, Nachman. "Twice as Much of Your Spirit: Pattern, Parallel and Paronomasia in the Miracles of Elijah and Elisha." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 85 (1999): 25-46.

Lindblom, Johannes. *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*. Revised edition. Oxford: Blackwell, 1963.

Lods, Adolphe. *Israel: From Its Beginnings to the Middle of the Eighth Century*. Translated by S. H. Hooke. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1932.

Long, Burke O. "2 Kings III and Genres of Prophetic Narrative." *Vetus Testamentum* 23 (1973): 337-48.

———. "Social Dimensions of Prophetic Conflict." Semeia 21 (1981): 31-54. [Hutton, 133]

———. *2 Kings*. Forms of the Old Testament Literature 10. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.

Long, Jesse C., Jr. *1 and 2 Kings*. College Press NIV Commentary. Joplin, Miss.: College Press, 2002.

Lundbom, Jack R. *Jeremiah 1-20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 21A. New York: Doubleday, 1999.

Malamat, Abraham. "Charismatic Leadership in the Book of Judges." Pages 152-68 in *Magnalia Dei: The Mighty Acts of God, Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Memory of G. Ernest Wright*. Edited by Frank Moore Cross, Warner E. Lemke, and Patrick D. Miller, Jr. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976.

Matthews, Victor H. *Social World of the Hebrew Prophets*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2001.

Mauchline, John. *1 and 2 Samuel*. New Century Bible. London: Oliphants, 1971.

McCarter, P. Kyle, Jr. *I Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 8. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1980.

Meyers, Carol. *Exodus*. New Cambridge Bible Commentary. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Milgrom, Jacob. *Numbers*. JPS Torah Commentary. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990.

Millar, William R. *Priesthood in Ancient Israel*. Understanding Biblical Themes. St. Louis, Mo.: Chalice, 2001.

Miller, J. Maxwell "The Elisha Cycle and the Accounts of the Omride Wars." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 85 (1966): 441-54.

Miller, J. Maxwell, and John H. Hayes. *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986.

Miller, Patrick D. *The Religion of Ancient Israel*. Library of Ancient Israel. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2000.

Montgomery, James A. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Kings*. Edited by Henry Snyder Gehman. International Critical Commentary. Edingurgh: T&T Clark, 1951.

Mowinckel, Sigmund. *Psalmenstudien*. Vol. 3. Kristiania: Jacob Dybward, 1923.

———. *The Spirit and the Word: Prophecy and Tradition in Ancient Israel*. Edited by K. C. Hanson. Fortress Classics in Biblical Studies. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2002.

Muilenburg, James. "The 'Office' of the Prophets in Ancient Israel." Pages 74-97 in *The Bible in Modern Scholarship*. Edited by J. Philip Hyatt. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1965.

Meyers, Carol. *Exodus*. The New Cambridge Bible Commentary. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Narby, Jeremy, and Francis Huxley, eds. *Shamans through Time: 500 Years on the Path to Knowledge*. New York: J. P. Tarcher/Putnam, 2001.

Nelson, Richard D. *First and Second Kings*. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. Atlanta: John Knox, 1987.

———. *Deuteronomy*. Old Testament Library. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2002.

———. 2006. "Aaron, Aaronite." Pages 1-2 in Volume 1 of *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld. 5 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 2006-2009.

Neville, Drury. *The Elements of Shamanism*. Shaftesbury, Dorset: Elements Books, 1989.

Niditch, Susan. *Judges: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2008.

Nissinen, Martti. *Prophets and Prophesy in the Ancient Near East*. With Contributions by C. L. Seow and Robert K. Ritner. Writings from the Ancient World 12. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003.

———. "Prophets and Prophecy in Joshua-Kings: A Near Eastern Perspective." Pages 103-148 in *Israelite Prophecy and the Deuteronomistic History: Portrait, Reality, and the Formation of a History*. Edited by Mignon R. Jacobs and Raymond F. Person, Jr. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013.

Noort, E. "Joshua: The History of Reception and Hermeneutics." Pages 199-215 in *Past, Present, Future: The Deuteronomistic History and the Prophets*. Edited by Johannes C. de Moor and Harry F. van Rooy. Leiden: Brill, 2000.

Noth, Martin. *The History of Israel*. Translated by Stanley Godman. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958.

———. *Numbers: A Commentary*. Translated by James D. Martin. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968.

———. *Könige I: 1-16*. Biblicscher Kommentar, Altes Testament. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1968.

O'Brien, Mark. "The Portrayal of Prophets in 2 Kings 2." *Australian Biblical Review* 46 (1998): 1-16.

———. "Prophetic Stories Marking a Story of Prophecy." Pages 169-188 in *Israelite Prophecy and the Deuteronomistic History: Portrait, Reality, and the Formation of a History*. Edited by Mignon R. Jacobs and Raymond F. Person, Jr. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013.

Oppenheim, A. Leo. *Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization*. Rev. ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977.

Osswald, Eva. *Falsche Prophetie im Alten Testament*. Tübingen: J. C. Mohr, 1962.

Otto, Rudolf. *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational*. Translated by John W. Harvey. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1923.

Otto, Susanne. *Jehu, Elia und Elisa: Die Erzählung von der Jehu-Revolution und die Komposition der Elia-Elisa-Erzählungen*. Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten Testament 248. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2001.

———. "The Composition of the Elijah-Elisha Stories and the Deuteronomistic History." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 27 (2003): 487-503.

Overholt, Thomas W. "Thoughts on the Use of 'Charisma' in Old Testament Studies." Pages 287-303 in *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honor of G.W. Ahlström*. Edited by W. Boyd Barrick and John R. Spencer. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 31. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1984.

———. *Prophecy in Cross-Cultural Perspective: A Sourcebook for Biblical Researchers*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986.

———. *Channels of Prophecy: The Social Dynamics of Prophetic Activity*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989.

———. "Elijah and Elisha in the Context of Israelite Religion." Pages 94-111 in *Prophets and Paradigms: Essays in Honor of Gene M. Tucker*. Edited by Stephen Breck Reid. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 229. Shefield: Sheffield Academic, 1996.

Perlitt, Lothar. "Mose als Prophet." *Evangelische Theologie* 31 (1971): 588-608.

Petersen, David L. "Max Weber and the Sociological Study of Ancient Israel." Social Inquiry 49 (1979): 117-49.

———. *The Roles of Israel's Prophets*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 17. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1981.

———. "Ecstasy and Role Enactment." Pages 279-88 in *The Place is Too Small for Us: The Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarship*. Edited by Robert P. Gordon. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1995.

———. "Defining Prophecy and Prophetic Literature." Pages 33-46 in *Prophecy in Its Ancient Near Eastern Context: Mesopotamian, Biblical, and Arabian*

Perspectives. Edited by Martti Nissinen. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000.

———. *The Prophetic Literature: An Introduction*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2002.

———. "Prophet, Prophecy." Pages 622-648 in vol. 4 of *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. 6 vols. Edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld. Neshville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 2009.

Pilch, John J. 2008. "Leprosy." Pages 635-37 in Volume 3 of *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld. 5 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 2006-2009.

Polzin, Robert. *Samuel and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History, Part Two: 1 Samuel*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989.

Propp, William H. C. *Exodus 1-18: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* Anchor Bible 2. New York: Doubleday, 1999.

———. *Exodus 19-40: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 2A. New York: Doubleday, 2006.

Pruin, Dagmar. *Geschichten und Geschichte: Isebel als literarische und historische Gestalt*. Orbis biblicus et orientalis 222. Fribourg: Academic Press and Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006.

Quell, Gottfried. *Wahre und falsche Propheten: Versuch einer Interpretation*. Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1952.

von Rad, Gerhard. *Old Testament Theology*. Translated by D. M. G. Stalker. 2 vols. New York: Harper & Row, 1962-1965.

———. *The Message of the Prophets*. Translated by D. M. G. Stalker. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.

Rehm, Merlin D. "Levites and Priests." Pages 297-310 in vol. 4 of *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. 6 vols. Edited by David N. Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

Rentería, Tamis Hoover. "The Elijah/Elisha Stories: A Socio-cultural Analysis of Prophets and People in Ninth-Century B.C.E. Israel." Pages 75-126 in Elijah and Elisha in Socioliterary Perspective. Edited by Robert B. Coote. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1992.

Riboli, Diana. *Tunsuriban: Shamanism in the Chepang of Southern and Central Nepal*. Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 2000.

Rice, Gene. *Nations under God: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Kings*. International Theological Commentary. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1990.

Ringgren, Helmer. *Israelite Religion*. Translated by David Green. Brown Judaic Studies. London: SPCK, 1966.

Rofé, Alexander. *The Prophetical Stories: The Narrative about the Prophets in the Hebrew Bible, Their Literary Types and History*. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1988.

Römer, Thomas C. "Moses, Israel's First Prophet, and the Formation of the Deuteronomistic and Prophetic Libraries." Pages 129-148 in *Israelite Prophecy and the Deuteronomistic History: Portrait, Reality, and the Formation of a History*. Edited by Mignon R. Jacobs and Raymond F. Person, Jr. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013.

Rösel, Hartmut N. *Joshua*. Historical Commentary on the Old Testament. Leuven: Peeters, 2011.

Roncace, Mark. "Elisha and the Woman of Shunem: 2 Kings 4:8-37 and 8:1-6 Read in Conjunction." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 91 (2000): 109-27.

Rowley, H. H. "Was Amos a Nabi?" Pages 185-203 in *Festschrift Otto Eissfeldt Zum 60. Geburtstage 1. September 1947*. Edited by Johann Fück. Halle an der Saale: M. Miemeyer, 1947.

Rustow, Dankwart A. *A World of Nations: Problems of Political Modernization*. D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1967.

Sanders, James A. "Hermeneutics in True and False Prophecy." Pages 21-41 in *Canon and Authority: Essays in Old Testament Religion and Theology*. G. W. Coats and B. O. Long, eds. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977.

Sarna, Nahum M. *Genesis*. JPS Torah Commentary. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.

———. *Exodus*. JPS Torah Commentary. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991.

Sasson, Jack M. *Jonah: A New Translation with Introduction, Commentary, and Interpretations*. Anchor Bible 24B. New York: Doubleday, 1990.

Schäfer-Lichtenberger, Christa. *Josua und Salomo: Eine Studie zu Autorität des Nachfolgers im Alten Testament*. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 58. Leiden: Brill, 1995.

Schneider, Tammi J. 2006. "Abimelech." Pages 12-13 in Volume 1 of *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld. 5 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 2006-2009.

Scott, R. B. Y. *The Relevance of the Prophets: An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets and Their Message*. Rev. ed. New York: Macmillan, 1968.

Seitz, Christopher. "The Prophet Moses and the Canonical Shape of Jeremiah." *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 101 (1989): 3-27.

Seow, Choon Leong. 1999. "The First and Second Books of Kings: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections." Pages 1-295 in vol. 3 of *The New Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*. Edited by Leander E. Keck. 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994-2002.

Van Seters, John. *The Life of Moses: The Yahwist as Historian in Exodus-Numbers*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1994.

Shemesh, Yael. "'I Am Sure He Is a Holy Man of God' (2 Kgs 4:9): The Unique Figure of Elisha." Pages 15-54 in *And God Said, "You Are Fired."* Edited by Mishael M. Caspi and John T. Greene. North Richland Hills, Tex.: Bibal Press, 2007.

Sheppard, Gerald T. "True and False Prophecy within Scripture." Pages 262-82 in *Canon, Theology and Old Testament Interpretation: Essays in Honor of Brevard S. Childs*. Edited by G. M. Tucher, David L. Petersen, and Robert R. Wilson. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988.

Shils, Edward. "Center and Periphery." Pages 117-31 in *The Logic of Personal Knowledge: Essays Presented to Michael Polanyi on His Seventieth Birthday*. London: Rutledge & Kegan Paul, 1961.

———. "Charisma, Order, and Status." *American Sociological Review* 30 (1965): 199-213.

———. *The Constitution of Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972.

———. *Center and Periphery: Essays in Macrosociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1975.

Skehan, Patrick W., and Alexander A. Di Lilla. *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: A New Translation with Notes, Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 39. New York: Doubleday, 1987.

Smith, Henry Preserved. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Samuel*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1977.

Smith, W. Robertson. *The Prophets of Israel and Their Place in History to the Close of the Eighth Century B.C.* London: Adam and Charles Black, 1912.

Soggin, J. Alberto. *Judges: A Commentary*. Translated by John Bowden. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980.

Soulen, Richard N., and R. Kendall Soulen. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. 3rd edition. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Spencer, John R. "Aaron." Pages 1-6 in vol. 1 of *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. 6 vols. Edited by David N. Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

Stith, D. Matthew. 2007. "Hazael." Pages 751 in Volume 2 of *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld. 5 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 2006-2009.

Sweeney, Marvin A. *I & II Kings*. Old Testament Library. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2007.

———. "Prophets and Priests in the Deuteronomistic History: Elijah and Elisha." Pages 35-50 in *Israelite Prophecy and the Deuteronomistic History: Portrait, Reality, and the Formation of a History*. Edited by Mignon R. Jacobs and Raymond F. Person, Jr. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013.

Tedlock, Barbara. "Divination as a Way of Knowing: Embodiment, Visualization, Narrative, and Interpretation." *Folklore* 112 (2001): 189-97.

Tigay, Jeffrey H. *Deuteronomy*. JPS Torah Commentary. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996.

Todd, Judith A. "The Pre-Deuteronomistic Elijah Cycle." Pages 1-35 in *Elijah and Elisha in Socioliterary Perspective*. Edited by Robert B. Coote. Atlanta: Scholars, 1992.

Tönnies, Ferdinand. *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundbegriffe der reinen Soziologie*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970.

Toorn, Karel van der. *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007.

Uffenheimer, Benjamin. *Early Prophecy in Israel*. Translated by David Louvish. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1999.

de Vaux, Roland. *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*. Translated by John McHugh. Biblical Resource Series. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1961.

Volz, Paul. *Prophetengestalten des Alten Testaments*. Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1949.

De Waal Malefijt, Annemarie. *Religion and Culture: An Introduction to Anthropology of Religion*. London: Macmillan, 1968.

Walsh, Jerome T. *1 Kings*. Berit Olam. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1996.

Weber, Max. *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. Edited with an introduction by Talcott Parsons. Translated by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1947.

———. *Ancient Judaism*. Translated and edited by Hans H. Gerth and Don Martindale. New York: Free Press, 1952.

———. *The Sociology of Religion*. Introduction by Talcott Parsons. Foreword by Ann Swindler. Translated by Ephraim Fischoff. Boston: Beacon, 1963.

———. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. 2 vols. Edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.

Wellhausen, Julius. *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*. Preface by W. Robertson Smith. Translated by J. Sutherland Black and Allen Menzies. New York: Meridian Books, 1957.

Wenham, Gordon J. *Genesis 1-15*. Word Biblical Commentary 1. Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1987.

Westbrook, Raymond. "Elisha's True Prophecy in 2 Kings 3." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 124 (2005): 530-32.

Westermann, Claus. "שׂרת." Pages 1405-7 in vol. 3 of *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Edited by Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann. Translated by Mark E. Biddle. 3 vols. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1997.

White, Marsha C. *The Elijah Legends and Jehu's Coup*. Brown Judaic Studies 311. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997.

Williams, James G. "The Social Location of Israelite Prophecy." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 37 (1969): 153-67.

Willner, A. R., and D. Willner. "The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Scince* 358 (1965): 77, 84. [re definition of Charisma; ckck Hutton, 130, n53]

Wilson, Bryan R. *The Noble Savages: The Primitive Origins of Charisma and Its Contemporary Survival. Berkeley: University of California Press*, 1975.

Wilson, Robert R. "Prophecy and Ecstasy: A Reexamination." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 98 (1979): 321-37.

———. *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980.

———. "Current Issues in the Study of Old Testament Prophecy." Pages 38-46 in *Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honour of Herbert B. Huffmon*. Edited by John Kaltner and Louis Stulman. London: T&T Clark International, 2004.

Wolf, Margery. "The Woman Who Didn't Become a Shaman." *American Ethnologist* 17 (1990), 419-30.

Würthwein, Ernst. "Amos-Studien," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 62 (1949/1950): 10-51.

Zevit, Ziony. *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallactic Approaches*. London: Continuum, 2001.