

A Study on the Phenomenon of the Proclamation of God's Words through Intermediaries¹

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Abstract

God's words were proclaimed outwardly through prophets. Even though they were spoken through people acting as His agents, they were considered to be spoken by Him directly to people in the form of God spoke as such. But in Deuteronomy 5 and Exodus 20, the means by which this phenomenon of speaking through others took on the form of speaking indirectly through intermediaries. This study

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focuses on the change in the method of conveyance and explores the theological and theological background ramifications of such change. And we start by examining the content of Deuteronomy 5. The Incident depicted in the passage assumes the Israelites' limitation on approaching God and the special authority bestowed on those whose work involved God's word and transmitting it. As to the limitation man has, which surfaced from the aforementioned passage, we arrived at the conclusion that man cannot achieve salvation on his own, by looking at Genesis 2-3, and cannot establish anything of value and standards on his own. With the construction of the second temple, there arose the need to restudy the statutes that dealt with peace and security of the nation and the need to educate people of God's word. With the rise of this historical necessity came the need to give God's word and teachers of the word authority based on the personality of Moses and the incidents at Mount Horeb. The system of the intermediary-based conveyance of God's word is a product of the effort of trying to tie a holy document to an historical event and thereby bestowing special authority to it. Taking for granted that special authority is accompanied when an intermediary like Moses speaks to people on behalf of God, this seems to be the system produced at the start of the construction of the second temple.

- Keywords

mediation of God's Word, documentation of the Word, limitation of the people, authority of God's Word, authority of the educator of God's Word

I. Introduction

In the books of the Prophets God usually proclaims His words through intermediaries. In the most parts of the Old Testament, we see this form of proclamation of God's words through intermediaries used: God said like this (כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה). Even though God spoke through intermediaries in the Old Testament, according to the custom of the time, it was understood as God speaking directly to His people.

But scriptures like Deuteronomy 5 (=Exod. 20) and Exodus 32-34, for different reasons (In Deut. 5, because of the fear of the people and in Exod. 32-34, due to the peoples sin), point out that God had to use intermediaries like Moses, relying on indirect means, through intermediary sources, to speak to people. These scriptures mark the transition from direct proclamations of words to ones made through intermediaries. This study will examine the historical background and theological cause and meaning of this transition.

Unfortunately, I was not able to find any prior studies on this subject. Instead I will try to review the concepts contained in the Old Testament relative to the issue at hand and use them in my study (see sec. 2). And then examine two related scriptures (see sec. 3): Deuteronomy 5 (see Exod. 20) and Exodus 32-34 (see Deut. 9-11). Then the study will continue with the examination of the thought of the time that effected such transition (see sec. 4) and further examine its historical and societal causes (see sec. 5) and theological significance, and the authority of God's word (see sec. 6).

II. Concept of the Intermediary Acts and Prior Studies

The acts of intermediaries between God and people have age-old origins. The intermediary acts of priests have been thought to have existed since ancient times. In First Samuel 1 we see Hana in agony praying to God for an answer and also see high priest Eli just answering in a matter-of-fact professional tone, God has granted your prayer. This was the chief priest's intermediary benediction.

In contrast, there was a system in the Old Testament days where priests spoke for God.² This was a variation of the intermediary type what was in existence back then and we cannot pinpoint its origin. In old Israel, they had a more developed intermediary system, which included intercessory prayer and words. We also have a record of there being the activity of prophets at least since 8th century B.C. This also was a type of proclamation of intercessory words by intermediaries. This kind of speaking God's word through intermediaries was not considered an act of people in the middle between God and people but rather God speaking directly to them in the Old Testament.

There have been a few studies on the intermediary system in conjunction with research on the life of Moses.³ Commentaries on Deuteronomy and Exodus have touched on this subject but there has not been any study on the intermediary-involved conveyance of God's word, but Catholic theologian G. Braulik, in his commentary, posits,

2 This system of speaking in someone's stead is in reality speaking through an intermediary. Yet this kind of act of speaking through intermediaries did not seem like one that put God's word in print form.

3 E. Aurelius, *Der Fürbitter Israels. Eine Studie zum Mosebild im Alten Testament* (Coniectanea Biblica OT Series 27; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1988), 1-7, 203-210; E. Otto, *Mose. Geschichte und Legende* (München: C.H.Beck, 2006).

God has introduced the intermediary church position to use it as a tool to educate people,⁴ but there have rarely been any cases where any church position or formulation of tradition was created to benefit any particular class of people. Even if there happened to be any of them created, it would not be permanent unless there had been consensus among people at large. We see a lot of proof of the intermediary-involved conveyance of God's Word in the Bible and it is proof that it has indeed garnered comprehensive consensual support from people.

III. Study on the Intermediary-Involved Conveyance of God's Word

We see numerous instances that prove existence of the intermediary-involved conveyance of God word. Deuteronomy 5:22-23 (see Exod. 20:18-21)⁵ talks about the intermediary-involved conveyance of God's word, other than the Ten Commandments. At first glance, it seems to be a point where the intermediary-involved conveyance of God's Word first occurred in the Bible and therefore, will deal with it first. We also see in Exodus 32-34 (see Deut. 9-11)⁶ the Ten Command-

4 G. Braulik, *Deuteronomium* (NEB 15; Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1986).

5 If we compare Deuteronomy 5:(22), 23-30, (31-33) with Exodus 20:18-21, it looks as if the verses in Exodus have adopted the content of the aforementioned verses in Deuteronomy 5 and changed and shorten it to fit their content. For detailed comparison, see the statements from Korea Old Testament Society's fall conference statements issued "The Preliminary Stage of the Intermediary-Involved Conveyance of God's Word" on September 22, 2017.

6 For the comparison of Exodus 32-34 and Deuteronomy 9-11, see the statements issued "The Final Stage of the Intermediary-Involved Conveyance of God's Word" at Korea Old Testament Society's fall conference. It looks like Deuteronomy 9-11 adopted the content of Exodus 32-34 and shorten and changed it to fit their need. The book of Exodus borrowed Israel's sin of being a stiff necked people (עם־קשה־עַרֶף) from the regulations in Deuteronomy.

ments being conveyed in the same mode. With it, we now see all God's Words being having conveyed in this mode of conveyance. In other words, we now see Exodus 32-34 as a text where the institution of the system of the intermediary-involved conveyance is firmly in place.⁷

1. Analysis of Deuteronomy 5:23-33

Deuteronomy 5:23-33 deals with an event where Moses speaks on behalf of God and the following verses retell the incident involving the proclamation of the Ten Commandments: while the mountain was ablaze with fire (Deut. 5:23a) and from the fire (Deut. 5:24av). It created fear among the Israelites: This great fire will consume us. (Deut. 5:25). This fear caused them to ask for someone to speak God's Word to them: (Therefore) Go near and listen to all that the LORD our God says. Then tell us whatever the LORD our God tells you. (Deut. 5:27).

This event clearly shows that there was an intermediary-involved conveyance of God's Word, but it is not clear as to what the theological implications or the historical background of it were.⁸ There are two things that are implied here. First, it is implied that the fear of the Israelites prevented them from being in a place where they could hear God's Word (see sec. 4). Second, thanks to Mount Horeb and the intermediary acts of Moses, special authority has been granted to God's Word itself and the person (people involved in areas such as proclaiming, teaching, recording and the oral transfer of God's Word)

7 In addition, there are Deuteronomy 5 (Exodus 20), Exodus 19, Exodus 24 and others.

8 Prior studies tried to tie to the callings of prophets. See T. Veijola, *Deuteronomy*, trans. by Jin-Hee Won (Seoul: Dong-Yeon Press, 2010), 232-238, 248-249. He makes connections with DtrP.

(see sec. 6).

Then Yahweh grants the Israelites' request (Deut. 5:28) and then explains that the purpose of Moses intermediary role was to have the Israelites exalt God and get blessings from Him (Deut. 5:29), and the story ends with the Israelites going back to the tabernacle.

2. Analysis of Exodus 32-34

1) Structure of Exodus 32-34

Placed between the command to build the movable temple (Exod. 25-31) and the actual construction of it (Exod. 35-40) is a story of the Israeli community committing sin and the forgiveness of it, and it interrupts the flow of the two. His forgiveness of the sins of the Israelites was a grace⁹ given to them previous to the tabernacle construction, and needs to be mentioned beforehand. Therefore, the story of the Israelites committing a sin and being forgiven of it needs to be placed between God's command to build the tabernacle and the actual building of it.

The story of Israelites committing their sin and subsequent forgiveness given by God could have ended in Exodus 32:14,¹⁰ but there was the introduction of the event depicting the destruction of the idol and the tablets (Exod. 32:15-20). The writer of Exodus saw the two events,

9 In the orally transmitted story of Mount Sinai, there are many different accounts of Israel's recovery from the grand downfall to being exiled: permission on covenant-making (Exodus 19:3-8 and Exodus 24:3-8), on worship (Exodus 24:9-11), on entry to the temple (Exodus 25-31 and 35-40) and on the transmission of His word (Exodus 32-34) and others.

10 Exodus 32:1-14 on 'sin (Exodus 32:1-6) - proclamation of judgment (Exodus 32:7-10) - petition for forgiveness (Exodus 32:11-13) - God's relenting (Exodus 32:14)' comprises a consummated event structure.

the destruction of the golden calf and the destruction of the two tablets, as carrying the same meaning. Therefore, the story of the Israelites' sin and the subsequent forgiveness by God (Exod. 32:1-14) was seen as carrying the same effect as the destruction of the two tablets with the Ten Commandments written on them, and subsequent rewriting of the Ten Commandments (Exod. 34).

2) Conditions for Revelation

There seems to be an awkwardness in the flow of the events and things described in Exodus 32-34 because there are more things described than the two events, the destruction of the two tablets and the rewriting of the Ten Commandments, mentioned in the aforementioned chapters. Included in the chapters are the report of the people's repentance (Exod. 33:1-4, 5-6), and various traditions regarding revelation (Exod. 33:7-11, 12-17, 18-23).

3) Rewriting of the Ten Commandments

In chapter 34 of Exodus, Yahweh tells Moses to prepare two stone tablets (Exodus 34:1). The purpose of it was to have two new tablets for the ones destroyed previously. Moses had to prepare two new stone tablets and go up to the top of the mountain (Exod. 34:21). No one among the people could go up the mountain with him (Exod. 34:3). Moses, following God's instruction, went up the mountain (Exod. 34:4).

The scripture tells us that there was the establishment of the covenant before Yahweh's issuance of the Ten Commandments. Unlike the traditional covenantal format, here, He proclaims the Ten Commandments without any mention of the second party to the

covenant (Exod. 34:10, 11-13).

Then He gives detailed descriptions of the Ten Commandments (Exod. 34:14-26). Then He tells Moses to write down these words! (Exod. 34:27a). He reminds him that the reason for it was that, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and Israel. According to His instructions, Moses wrote the covenant law, that is, the Ten Commandments, on the tablets (Exod. 34:28). The first set of the Ten Commandments were proclaimed by Him personally but now they were proclaimed through Moses in a secondhand fashion, thus finalizing the process of Him speaking through an intermediary.

4) Contents of the Ten Commandments

Unlike Deuteronomy 5 and Exodus 20, all the content of Exodus 34:14-26 deals with sacrifice.

- (1) Do not worship any other god.
- (2) Do not make cast idols.
- (3) Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
- (4) The first offspring of every womb belongs to me.
- (5) Six days you shall labor, but on the seventh day you shall rest.
- (6) Celebrate the Feast of Weeks with the firstfruits of the wheat harvest.
- (7) Celebrate the Feast of Ingathering at the turn of the year.
- (8) Do not offer the blood of a sacrifice to me with anything containing yeast!
- (9) Bring the best of the firstfruits of your soil to the house of the LORD your God.

(10) Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk!

The first and second commandments are similar to (or the same as) and the third (Feast of Unleavened Bread), fifth (Sabbath), sixth (Feast of Weeks), seventh (Feast of Ingathering), and eight commandments (Passover) are about the religious festivals and the fourth (first offspring) and ninth commandments (firstfruits) are about festivals and the related offerings, and the tenth commandment is sacrificial in nature and is about the prohibition of (violent) religion and social customs. All of them are sacrificial in nature.

5) Mid-Point Summary: The Formation of Exodus 32-34 and Their Purpose

The main content of Exodus 32-34 is about the destruction of the first set of the Ten Commandments, that was destroyed, and the second set of the Ten Commandments that was given indirectly through Moses. Through this proclamation, all the words of God are now spoken through intermediaries. This can be thought of as saying that all Israelites need to be under the authority of God's law.

At the same time, another purpose is intentionally being served by placing Exodus 32-34 between Exodus 25-31 and Exodus 35-40. First, in order to build the movable temple (tabernacle) (Exod. 35-40) the people needed to be purified from their sin. That had been done in Exodus 32:1-14. In other words, the goal to purify Israelites from the past mistakes and sins had been accomplished. Since the purification was already achieved, to insert the part that tells the story of the destruction of the tablets and rewriting of the Ten Commandments was to justify the existence of an agenda that is not natural. The rewriting

of the Ten Commandments presupposes God's forgiveness. In another respect, to enjoy His forgiveness presently and in the future, people needed to obey the commandments. This provisional blessing of forgiveness implies that the assurance of the blessing is incumbent upon people obeying the commandments.

Second, it is surmised that the story about the movable temple (tabernacle) (Exod. 25-31; Exod. 35-40) is a priestly document and the story about the rewriting is a Deuteronomic document.¹¹ This suggests the unification of the two documents and also intimates their forming of a relationship. Priests' activities mainly centered around the temple, but to impose on people sacrificial laws they needed sources of power like the words of God and the personality of Moses. At the same time, in order to enforce the law, Deuteronomists needed the sources of power like ones that come from observance of festivals, rules of sacrifice, and customs that obligated people come to the temple to celebrate festivals, and authority allowed by tradition that made them able to garner obedience to authorities, even though that made the people bear responsibilities. This coming together of the priesthood and Deuteronomists was the result of the time of the age and needed to put together the story of the construction of the mobile temple and the rewriting of the Ten Commandments through an intermediary.

Third, there are elements of possibility and impossibility in the acts of the Israelites following God's commandments. This expresses the inherent limitation on the part of man in producing unconditional forgiveness and the need of them to be under the power of established rules. These facts resulted in them accepting their limitations in meet-

11 L. Perlitt, *Bundestheologie im Alten Testament* (WMANT 36; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1969), 85-86.

ing face to face with God and receiving His revelation directly. (Exod. 33:7-11). After being grouped with the story of the movable temple (tabernacle) (Exod. 25-31; Exod. 35-40), these limitations were thought to be practically the same in effect to the restrictions on the entry to the temple; therefore, Exodus 33:7-11, 18-23 seem to represent a later work.

IV. Theological Background of the Exile¹² : Man's Limitation Shown by the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

As told above, the two sides of the story of God speaking through intermediaries (Deut. 5 and Exod. 20) were highlighted: man's limitation and the authority of God's Word. People's limitations lead to the reflection on the period of exile. There were rising voices of people from the upper echelon of the society desperately pointing to their limitations. Especially, they pointed out that people could not make any rules of value and need to be placed under the power of God's law.

In Genesis 2 God made the Garden of Eden and also planted trees, including the Tree of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life.¹³ He then told

12 For exilic theological tendency, see Werner Ustorf, "Exiles and Exotic Intruders: Christians in Britain," *Madang: Journal of Contextual Theology* 5 (March 2006), 1-14; Dong-Gu Han, "Jacob's Experiences of God(= Gotteserfahrung) at Bethel," *Madang: Journal of Contextual Theology* 26 (December 2016), 1-13.

13 For recent studies, M. Wette, *Die biblische Urgeschichte: Redaktions- und theologiegeschichtliche Beobachtungen zu Genesis 1,1-11,26* (BZAW 265; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1998); M. Arneth, *Durch Adams Fall ist ganz verderbt ...: Studien zur Entstehung der alttestamentlichen Urgeschichte* (FRLANT 217; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007).

them that they could eat from any tree, except from the Tree of Good and Evil, but the Scripture does not tell us the reason for this prohibition.¹⁴ If God forbade such an act against prevailing tradition, then He was pursuing another meaning to the one provided by prevailing tradition.

1. Meaning of Knowing Good and Evil

The content of Genesis 2 is related to that of Genesis 3 which deals with the violation of God's command and the resulting expulsion from paradise. The prohibition of Genesis 2:17 has a meaning of its own, but it was through the event of the breaking of God's command in Genesis 3 that its meaning was fully realized. In other words, the Tree make you know of Good and Evil (עץ הדעת טוב ורע) in Genesis 2:17 was seen as the tree makes you wise (העץ להשכיל) in Genesis 3:6.

Rad says, good to eat is an animalistic impulse, and looked good to eat is a more defined impulse, and looked good enough to make you wise is the ultimate temptation. Based on I John 2:16, He interpreted them as the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does.¹⁵ Westermann saw this temptation as a type of lust that can arise in a communal life setting, like the tenth commandment of the Ten Commandments.¹⁶

14 Until now our studies depend on the briefly mentioned von Rads Commentary on Genesis. G. von Rad, *Das erste Buch Mose, Genesis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964), 85-6. He gave great latitude in interpreting the meaning of the Tree of Good and Evil. He limited this freedom by banning one thing.

15 von Rad, *Genesis*, 96.

16 C. Westermann, *Genesis* (BK 1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981-1983), 339-340.

These interpretations ask questions from a human perspective and neglect to look into the historical backgrounds of things. The people behind the scenes are the ones who have had the painful experiences of being ousted from paradise and yearning to get back into it. To look at Genesis 2:17 and 3:6 from this perspective, that is, from the perspective of the spirit of Israelites in exile, gives rise to the conclusion that people are without the ability to acquire salvation and cannot make laws or place value on things by themselves. Thus, trying to do things without considering the source of their salvation is a crime of a foolish kind and impossible.

2. Implication of Making Law and Value Judgment

Genesis 3:1-5 gives another motive for the commission of the first crime by man. It reveals itself in the serpent's act of temptation. The serpent asked the woman, Did God really say, "you must not eat from any tree in the garden?" (Genesis 3:1b) and tried secretly to nullify God's command. The woman said to the serpent, "we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, you must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die." (Gen. 3:2-3) The woman changed the content of God's command while trying to correct the serpent's error. Von Rad said, Man had moved to a place where he was able to make law on his own.¹⁷ It was the intention of the serpent.

Now, the serpent reveals his true intent and asserts that what God told her was not true. You will not surely die (Gen. 3:4). And he goes on to further assert that he knows God better than man: "when you

¹⁷ von Rad, *Genesis*, 94.

eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (Gen. 3:5). This assertion lures man to stand in a neutral position to judge God’s commands rather than from a position of strict obedience. The essence of his seduction was that man could have abilities like those of God. Von Rad saw the ability of knowing good and evil is not the enhancement of the ability itself but the self-determination in making value judgment in what is good and what is bad.¹⁸ From now on, man tries to decide what is good and what is bad on his own and be God himself. Bonhoeffer says man, with the concept of oneness and his faith in it as weapons, became the Lord over God from the place of defying the word of God.¹⁹

Johannes Hessen, based on his experience under the Nazi regime, in his book titled *Theory of Value*, warns of a person making value judgment on worth and standards by himself.²⁰ Once worth and standards garner the support of the public, it attains power and in turn demands absolute obedience (or absolute acceptance) from people. When this happens, the person becomes a little god, becoming more than a prideful man, and in order to make such value judgment on worth and standards, he pursues a lifestyle of a deity. He forces people to treat things of human as something that is best, which you attain at the end, and which is everything there is in the world. To him, worth and standards are not something from without, but something from within and carries the danger of making things into something ab-

18 *Ibid.*, 95.

19 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation, Fall and Temptation*, trans. by Hee-Suk Moon (HyenDae New Series 71; Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1976), 61.

20 J. Hessen, *Lehrbuch der Philosophie*, 3 Bde. (München: Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, 1947-1950: Bd. 1: Wissenschaftslehre. 1947. Bd. 2: Wertlehre. 1948. Bd. 3: Wirklichkeitslehre. 1950), 144-153.

solute and not something relative.

3. Mid-Point Summary

God's interdiction against eating the fruit of good and evil indicates the foolishness on man's part and the impossibility of him attempting to do anything by himself without God, and also warns that where there is an attempt to make value judgment on something with regard to its worth and value there will be the danger of making himself an absolute figure. These restrictions make it clear that people indeed need to be placed under God's word.

It is not easy to firmly decide on the issue of the self-determination of worth and standards. Genesis 2-3 is the work of a Yahwist, despite a lot of additions later on, during exile or at the time of returning from exile.²¹ The individual and political thought that says, One cannot self-determine worth, becomes meaningful when it is placed between Jeremiah's the impossibility of self-achieved salvation and the post-exilic legislation of God's laws. These three elements argue for the impossibility of self-achieved salvation and self-determination and the need to place oneself under the standards that come from without.

V. Historical Background of the Post-Exilic Period

1. National Reconstruction at the Time of the Return of the Exiles

Israel gained independence when Persia conquered Babylon. The

21 Ch. Levin, *Der Jahwist* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993).

decrees by Darius (Darius II) (see Zech. 1:2-4; 6:3-5) started the period of independence for the Israelites (first year of King Darius=538 B.C.). This was followed by the Israelites return to the land of Palestine. They were allowed to keep their own religion. The Bible tells us Judah gained independence, but became a Persian colony in reality. Therefore, Judah after the exile became a sort of a community of worshippers that was like a semi-sovereign nation and they could not reestablish themselves as a nation of a sovereign people, or establish a nation as a colonized people.

Under these circumstances, their temple took a central place in their worship and lifestyle. Although limited or partial in effect, it took on the role of unifying the whole Jewish lifestyle. It is probable that Darius proclaimed the return of temple articles when he defeated Babylon (539 B.C.), sent the Jewish people back to their land under the leadership of governor Sheshbazzar, and permitted them to reconstruct the temple (Zech. 1:7-11). Therefore, it is even possible that they started making sacrifices on the ruined ground, before taking steps to build their temple. And it is reasonable to speculate that they began the construction by merely digging some ground to mark out the base structure of the temple. The real construction began after 18 years in time, and after four more years (6th year of King Darius=515 B.C.; see Zech. 6:15) the temple was finally finished.

2. Tasks before the Temple Community

After the construction of the temple, there were a lot of tasks left for the Judaic community (the one that came up after the original kingdom of Judah) to do, but there seemed not to be a lot they could do in

reality. First, it seems likely that they had to do what was necessary as a colonized nation. Next, it is possible they had to maintain their national identity and had to unify the divided groups.

For the former, it is probable that they had to maintain national security and made sure tribute was paid properly as required, among others. At times, it is also possible they had to gather forced labor and also to send some people as warriors if need arose.

For the latter, it is probable they focused on rebuilding the sacrificial system. Although the sacrificial rules introduced in Leviticus 1-5 might have taken a long time to develop, it is likely that they were refined in the postexilic period.

The letters of prophets, which reflect the changing historical circumstances of the postexilic period, give information on the revision of various sacrificial forms. Ezekiel 44: 9-14 tells about the roles of the Levites. They were given the roles of keeping the gates, helping with temple work (Ezek. 44: 11, 14), helping with temple work includes killing the sacrifices of the burnt and fellowship offerings. (Ezek. 44:11) This scripture tells us the conflict between priests and Levites was resolved and a cooperative term was reached. This coincides with situational changes in the post-exilic period. In the post-exilic period, the work of government was likely focused on sacrifices. With the influx of sacrificial-related work, it is probable, came the need for help from Levites and the need to make the sacrificial work a professional kind, and these pressing issues prompted the need for training of job-related professionals. Therefore, the assistant role to the priests was granted to Levites and tithes were given them, eventually helping to resolve the relationship conflict during the period in exile.

Ezekiel 44: 15-31 further lays down rules on priests. The important

tasks that priests had to carry out were, as stated in Ezekiel 44: 23, teach people what is consecrated and what is not (see Lev. 17-26) and let them know what is pure and impure (see Lev. 11-15 and Deut. 14).

We can get more information on the professionalization of sacrificial work in Haggai. The information is given in a question and answer format between priest and questioner.

If a person carries a consecrated meat in the fold of his garment, and that fold touches some bread of stew, some wine, oil or the food, does it become consecrated? The priests answered, no. Then Haggai said, "If a person defiled by contact with a dead body touches one of these things, does it become defiled?" Yes, the priest replied, it becomes defiled (Hag. 2:12-13).

In Malachi, scathing remarks were directed at the improper ways of making sacrifices. You placed defiled food on my altar (Mal. 1:7aa), When you bring blind animals for sacrifice (Mal. 1:8aa) When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals (Mal. 1:8av; see 13as, 14av) so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! (Mal. 1:10av). And he asked people to make proper sacrifices. (Mal. 1:11)

The task before the people in the post-exilic period was to recheck the national and social unrest that arose due to the lack of national authority. Therefore, although the documentation during this period was limited to that concerned with the sacrificial system, the intent to settle the unrest was in place. To settle the unrest, all the people, including officials, needed to be put under God's law. First, they needed to be educated about the statutes regarding sacrifices, and the people responsible for the task were priests and Levites.

3. Change in the Meaning of Law

The Israelites in the early part of the post-exilic period tried to modify the nation's traditional religious statutes. This was probably the only thing the post-exilic community could do at that time, and they considered it as the only way to reorganize the nation. Probably, these religious statutes had begun garnering the status equivalent to the national law of Persia. For example, before this status was bestowed, people who violated the statutes, for example, not giving tithes or not keeping the Sabbath, could not be prosecuted, but rather just be put out of the community in disgrace. Now, fully enforceable power of prosecution was on their side.

Therefore, Israel's religious statutes in this post-exilic period gained fully enforceable power equivalent to national law. It can be surmised that this change in the status for religious statutes had a significant impact on the transition to the intermediary-involved conveyance of God's word.

This legalization of religious statutes occurred at the early stage of Israel's national existence in the post-exilic period, and later socio-ethical statutes began to assume the power of law.

VI Religious Thoughts on the Intermediary-Involved Conveyance of God's Word

1. Authority of the Intermediary

This highlighting of the limitations of the Israelites tells of their need

to be placed under God's law and this act of highlighting continued during the post-exilic period. With documentation of God's word during the transitional period of their national existence, there arose an acute social issue that needed to be dealt with. The need to teach on the issue of religious sanctification surfaced. This attested to the need of bestowing authority on those who were responsible for teaching God's word. To effectively teach God's word, those who were involved in it needed to be given some level of authority, somewhat commensurate with that given to Moses at Mount Horeb. Religious holiness that was expected of people was clearly cited in the teachings. This made it clear the need to empower the teachers of God's word. There is no evidence there was a systematic teaching mechanism in place in the post-exilic period, but considering circumstantial evidence, it is an undeniable historical fact that there were needs for a systematic teaching mechanism and the real empowerment of religious leadership.

An intermediary with authority like one that Moses had possessed two things: the authority of Moses as a chief prophet and the role of granting the authority of Moses on the system of proclaiming and teaching the written word of God.

2. (Appendix) Origin of the Mysterious Document: The Book of the Law Was Found When People Were Repairing the Temple

A holy document attains its holy status when it is tied to a holy or original event.²² Ancient books enjoy higher value when they have a

22 J. Leipoldt & S. Morenz, *Heilige Schriften. Betrachtungen zur Religionsgeschichte der antiken Mittelmeerwelt* (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1953), 28.

mysterious origin. Ancient documents show a similar phenomenon. For example, we can see the same thing enfolding in *The Letter of the Dead*. He (King) found the Book of the Law while fixing the temple.²³ The story of finding the Book of Law was depicted as a very astonishing event in 2 King 22: Hilkah the high priest said to Shaphan, the secretary, I found the Book of the Law in the temple of the LORD (2 King 22:8).

A. F. Puukko saw this story to be the work of post-exilic writers who frequently used the report writing style.²⁴ They drew a relationship from the story of Josiah's reform to the theological idea that Josiah based his reform on the law. According to Wellhausens basic theory that says, that the reform occurred during the reign of King Josiah and the document called Deuteronomy was made after studying all the results.²⁵ It would be impossible to argue that the Book of the Law found in Yahweh's temple was Deuteronomy, or an original version of Deuteronomy. But what is more convincing is that it is a literary device which is used to turn the story into an authoritative one by attaching it to an amazing event.²⁶ Moses speaking God's word is the same type of literary device which ties it to the authority of the word.

23 J. Leipoldt & S. Morenz, *Heilige Schriften*, 28.

24 A. F. Puukko, *Das Deuteronomium* (BWAT 5; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1910), 24-25. See L. Horst, "Etudes sur le Deuteronomie," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* XVII (1894), 14-22.

25 J. Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* (Berlin: Druck und Verlag von G. Reimer, 1905⁶), 9.

26 L. Perlitt, *Bundestheologie im Alten Testament*, 9. The scenes on 2 Kings 22-23 had a purpose in establishing foundations for the utility of Deuteronomy when Deuteronomy was being finished by not forsaking Mosaic origin.

3. Attachment (Controversy Regarding the Levels of Revelation) (Num. 12: 2-8)

The Book of Numbers tells about the conflict between responsible revelators and other (non-textual) revelators in regard to the forms of revelation.²⁷ In other words, it tells about the hierarchy of revelation (Num. 12: 2-8).²⁸ Aaron, who represented the line of chief priests and Miriam, who represented the line of prophets, decried by saying, Moses' revelation enjoys special, authoritative status, "Has the LORD spoken only through Moses?" and "Hasn't he also spoken through us?" They argued that all revelations are the same and they all come from God.

In the background of this event lies the conflict between the textual revelation, like the Law of Moses, and the non-textual revelation, like typical revelations, in the post-exilic period. Due to the lack of national authority, various religious groups proposed different ways of reaching salvation. Each of these varied ways of revelation contended for its superiority and nurtured the ground for contention. The superiority was first affirmed when it was tied to the personality of Moses and the original authority the tie bestowed. Number 12 says God talked to Moses face to face (Num. 12:8aa; see Exod. 33:11; Deut. 34:10). Sec-

27 God's revelation can generally be divided into two: First, His revelation revealed through His words; second, His revelation given through non-documental means like sacrifice, vision, dreams, tongues, prophecy, prayer, and praise.

28 We can see a similar conflict in Numbers 16:3: "You have gone too far! The whole community is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is with them. Why then do you set yourselves above LORD's assembly?" For the historical background see, F. Ahuis, *Autorität im Umbruch. Ein Formgeschichtlicher Beitrag zur Klärung der literarischen Schichtung und der zeitgeschichtlichen Beiträge von Num 16 und 17* (CTM 13; Stuttgart: Calwer, 1983).

ond, in contrast to the ambiguity of prophetic revelations, the written form of revelation gives clarity that is beyond doubt. God did have covert talk with Moses, but talked to him face to face. Yahweh's words were always clearly conveyed (Num. 12:8ab). Through it, the superior authority and clarity the words of God in written form was stressed.²⁹ And the story ends with God chastising those who ignored the superiority of revelatory words (Num. 12:8b).

4. Authority Based on the Tie to a Primal Event

Deuteronomy 5 mentions the covenant at Mount Horeb. By mentioning the covenant at Mount Horeb and thereby attributing the origin of the statutes in Deuteronomy (Deut. 5 and the Ten Commandments and the statutes in Deut. 12-26) to God, the statutes attain the elements of legitimacy and dignity. At the same time, by being tied to a primal event, they will earn the quality of everlastingness and permanency and possess resulting authority by virtue of their being primal statutes.³⁰ Moses speaking God's word on His behalf earned special authority that extends beyond human limitation by being linked to Mount Sinai of Exodus 20 and Mount Horeb of Deuteronomy 5.

29 The Old Testament testifies to the diverse ways the usefulness and authority manifest: ① Calling of Ezekiel (Ezek. 1-3): understandable words. ② Deuteronomy 30:11-15: His words nearby. ③ Isaiah 59:21: His words on His lips. ④ Distinction of His word (Isaiah 55:8-13).

30 Dong-gu Han, *Interpretation of the Old Testament* (Seoul: B&A Press, 2004), 155-172, especially 166-168.

VII. Conclusion

In Deuteronomy 5 (Exod. 20) and Exod. 32-34, God speaks to the Israelites indirectly through Moses. This points to the limitation they had in approaching God directly. God's ban on eating the fruit from the Tree of Good and Evil signifies man's inability to achieve his salvation and tells that he cannot establish something of value and standards on his own. And to maintain peace on the land they rewrote various statutes in conjunction with the construction of the second temple and put the post-exilic community under God's law, and there arose a heightened sense of need to educate them of God's law.

The change in God's speaking to the Israelites through a primordial personality named Moses as an intermediary served as a needed literary device to achieve the agendas of temple-building community of the time. This literary device bestowed upon God's word and those whose work deals with His word the special authority of Moses (and the incident at Mount Horeb).

The Korean Church and society are to seek and follow the values the social norms and principles approve, regardless of blood and regional ties; the society must move forward based on a principle.

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