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Antecedents of the Monarchy in Ancient Israel

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INTRODUCTION

One of the remarkable facts which confronts the student of Israel's history is the relatively late date at which the institution of the monarchy was adopted. When Saul was acclaimed king of Israel (1 Sam. xi. 15) *c*. 1020 BC there were well-established monarchies in the surrounding countries, some of which had been in existence for centuries. But in Israel there was a deeply-rooted antagonism to this innovation, an attitude which in a less blatant form was to continue throughout the whole period of the monarchy. It would not be an overstatement of the case to maintain that the monarchy, especially in Judah, was always a qualified conception; there was never the degree of absolutism reflected in other neighbouring kingdoms.

The purpose of this article is to survey briefly the relevant factors which led up to the inevitable plea of the Israelites to 'make us a king to judge us like all the nations'. (1 Sam. viii. 5.). These factors may be considered under four headings:—

I. THE SITUATION AT THE TIME OF ISRAEL'S ENTRY INTO CANAAN

a. In Canaan. When the Israelites crossed the Jordan in the last decades of the thirteenth century BC, they entered a land where there was a fairly uniform system of government. The unit was the fortified city-state, the population of which rarely exceeded three thousand. These were concentrated in the coastal plain and other low-lying areas, and each one was usually ruled by a king[1] who was subject to the dominating power, Egypt. It was part of the policy of the Pharaohs to permit petty rivalries between these cities in order to discourage any concerted action which might endanger Egypt's interests. In the period immediately before the Israelite invasion there was a considerable increase in the number of these city-states, which had the effect of further reducing their relative strength, already sapped by Egyptian mismanagement. The book of Joshua outlines battles in which numbers of these kings were involved (e.g. Josh. viii. 23; ix. 1 ff.; x. 3 ff.; xi. 1 ff. etc.). In a number of instances these kings were slain, their cities were destroyed and subsequently occupied by the Israelites. Judges i lists a considerable number of cities that successfully resisted during the initial period of occupation and many of these were not incorporated into Israel for several decades or even centuries (e.g. Jerusalem, 2 Sam. v. 6 ff.). Thus the Israelites not only encountered this type of government when they entered the land, but considerable areas of the land in which they settled were still dominated

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by city-kings in their fortresses. A treaty was made with the four cities of the Gibeonite confederacy (Josh. ix. 1 ff.) and it is likely that other cities where the Israelites found ethnically related groups in occupation were similarly assimilated. Shechem, whose capture is nowhere reported but which appears in Joshua xxiv as the rallying point of the tribes, has

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[1] Martin Noth, *The History of Israel* (second edition, 1960) in a footnote on p. 152 maintains that there is evidence to suggest that occasionally these cities were ruled by an aristocracy.

often been cited in this connection. However, the influence of the Canaanite conception of the monarchy seems to have been very slight upon Israel, apart from the clearly atypical instance of Abimelech (Jud. ix).

b. Israel's Neighbours. Our concern here is not with the major powers of Egypt and Assyria, nor with the Hittite Empire which finally collapsed *c*. 1200 BC. In each of these there were established monarchies in which the king was the representative, if not the embodiment, of the gods. Our interest rather is in those small states, notably Edom and Moab, who settled in their territories about half a century before the Israelite invasion, and Ammon, which was formed *c*. 1230-1200 BC.

(i) Edom. Genesis xxxvi. 31 notes: 'And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.' A series of kings are mentioned in the following verses (cf. 1 Chron. i. 43-51) but there appears to be no family connection between them and they are connected with different cities. H. M. Orlinsky[2] detects similarities to the lists of judges in Judges x. 1-3; xii. 8-15 and suggests that an Edomite 'king' was a 'mere chieftain with extraordinary powers of a provisional and local nature'. W. F. Albright[3] on the other hand, regards the kings of Edom (and Moab and Ammon) as 'much more than tribal emirs', an attitude which finds support in the Biblical tradition. If these Edomite 'kings' were equivalent to the 'judges' of Israel it would be difficult to account for this.

(ii) Moab. It must be confessed that we know very little about the origin of the monarchy in Moab; it appears as an established fact when the Israelites sought a passage through Moabite territory (Num. xxii. 4 cf. xx. 14). Judges iii. 12 ff. provides further evidence during the period of the Judges. The suggestion of M. Noth[4] that there may have been several minor kings ruling simultaneously in Moab is difficult to prove or refute with our present, limited knowledge. What does seem clear is that some kind of monarchy was established in Moab at least two centuries before its emergence in Israel.

(iii) Ammon. Modern archaeology has revealed that Ammon (as also Moab and Edom) encircled its territory by a series of small fortresses, which is itself a witness to some kind of centralized authority (cf. Num. xxi. 24 b.). The impact of Ammon upon Israel was slight in this early period, due to the former's relative isolation. But in Ammon there is another instance of a group which, emerging upon the stage of history in the same period as Israel, soon organized itself into a state.

It must not be imagined that these kingdoms were large or powerful. Eglon, the king of Moab (Jud. iii) enlisted the aid of Ammon and Amalek for his expedition which occupied a relatively small area of Israel. In Judges xi we read that Jephthah, with the support of a minority of the tribes, speedily repulsed the Ammonite threat. What is of significance to note is that these groups, which bore in many ways a resemblance to Israel, adopted a monarchical form of government in the early stages of their national existence.

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[2] H. M. Orlinsky, *Ancient Israel*, 1954, 60.
[3] W. F. Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity* (second edition, 1957), 289
[4] Martin Noth, *op, cit*., 155.

Brief mention may be made of two Amorite kingdoms east of the Jordan which were subdued by the Israelites. Sihon, whose kingdom centred on Heshbon, and Og, king of Bashan (Num. xxi. 2I-35; Josh. xii. 1-6) appear as city-kings typical of the area west of the Jordan who had extended their power over considerable areas. It is likely that, because of the absence of Egyptian influence and interference, these kingdoms presented a more formidable obstacle to the Israelites than did the city-states west of the Jordan. The victory over these two kings was viewed as highly important in subsequent ages (Pss. cxxxv. 11, cxxxvi. 19; Am. ii. 9).

II. THE REASONS FOR ISRAEL'S CONSERVATISM

John Bright comments that the 'monarchy was an institution totally foreign to Israel's tradition',[5] a verdict which most scholars would accept. We have already noted that the monarchy, particularly in its early stages, was a qualified conception. There seems to have been something in the nature of a compromise at this time, for the king was acclaimed by popular vote, an echo of the old tradition. Even after a hundred years of rule by three kings we note that Rehoboam presented himself at Shechem for the acclamation of the northern tribes—which was not so readily forthcoming as was obviously anticipated (1 Kings xii. 1 ff.; cf. 2 Kings xi. 117 ff., xxi 24). There are a number of factors which will help us to understand such a conservative attitude:—

a. A Love of Independence. This was a heritage which had its origin in the patriarchal age, when Israel's ancestors lived a simple life which required a minimum of organization. This tended to emphasize the value of the individual, which appears in sharp contrast to the situation in the city-states of Canaan, where there was a division between the rulers and the bulk of the populace, the latter being little more than serfs. Democracy, as a word, was not found in the vocabulary of Israel, but its essence was revealed in action and attitude. The members of the tribe formed a brotherhood, and while they accepted the leadership of an individual for a definite purpose in a time of crisis (as happened so frequently in the period of the Judges), generally speaking they rebelled against any restriction of their personal liberty. This spirit characterized Israel throughout its history. When the building operations of Solomon caused a shortage of man-power and native Israelites were drafted into the labour-gangs (1 Kings v. I3)[6] bitter resentment was aroused which contributed materially to the disruption of the kingdom (1 Kings xii).

Many other instances of this sturdy independence, with a consequent disregard for authority, could be instanced. The soldiers of Saul did not hesitate to withstand him over what they considered the injustice to be meted out to Jonathan (1 Sam. xiv. 45), while the northern tribes rebelled against David because they had been slighted (2 Sam. xix. 40 ff.), a rebellion which David crushed by the prompt use of his own army of mercenaries (xx. 6, 7).

This attitude, so deeply ingrained in the Israelite way of life, which was to prove a major factor in resistance to the adoption of the monarchy, finds expression in the words of T. H. Robinson:[7] 'Except in her conception of religion Israel had no greater gift to offer to the world than this, a truly democratic theory of the relation between the government and the governed.'

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[5] John Bright, *A History of Israel*, 1960, 166.

[6] cf. 1 Kings 1x. 15 which states that Israelites were exempted from the levy. In the light of 1 Kings xii. 4 it seems best to regard the earlier reference as accurate. Possibly there is a chronological dislocation, and the principle enunciated in ix. 15 may have been set aside as the demand for labour increased.

[7] T. H. Robinson, *Palestine in General History* (1929 Schweich lecture), 41-44.

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b. Israel's Tribal Structure. From the fore-going it may be assumed that any co-operation of the tribes must be on the basis of equality and not the domi nation of one tribe over another. In a time of crisis, Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali responded to the challenge of the Manassite Gideon (Jud. vii. 35), but there is no evidence to suggest that, once the Midianite invasion was beaten back, Gideon's power extended beyond the borders of his own tribe, while the querimonious demand of Ephraim revealed only too plainly the inter-tribal jealousy (Jud. viii. 1 ff.). Similarly, Abimelech's authority does not appear to have covered more than a part of Manasseh and Ephraim.

The reference made to Ephraim's jealousy may be supplemented by the narrative in Judges xii. 1 ff., where they react in a similar way to Jephthah following his repulse of the Ammonites. Gideon had turned away their wrath by a soft answer, but Jephthah met it with firm words which precipitated a clash of the two tribes. This resulted in the decimation of Ephraim and was to have important consequences. Up to this point Ephraim had been the strongest single tribe, which made it unlikely that she would ever accept the rule of an individual from another tribe, a point amply illustrated by the examples noted above. But conversely, due to inter-tribal jealousy, it was equally unlikely that the other tribes would ever have accepted the rule of an Ephraimite. So the weakening of Ephraim was a step, albeit a small one, in preparation for the monarchy. It is not without significance that when a king was eventually chosen he was from the tribe of Benjamin, which was too small to occasion any inter-tribal jealousy (1 Sam. x. 20). In the next reign, that of David, Judah became the strongest single tribe, and the old tribal animosities re-asserted themselves.

c. Israel's Conception of Yahweh. The importance of the earlier points must not be minimized, but they do not give the whole reason why Israel was so late in adopting the monarchy. After all, groups which appear to be related to the Israelites, and which came from a similar semi-nomadic background, formed themselves into kingdoms long before the time of Saul. Undoubtedly, one of the weightiest reasons for the resistance to the acceptance of a king in Israel was a religious one. Their tradition spoke of Yahweh, the God who was active in the realm of history. He had brought them out of the land of bondage (Ex. xx. 2); He had given them a land to possess (Num. xiv. 8, 9; Josh. i. 2 ff. etc.); He was their Ruler (Jud. viii. 23). As W. F. Albright has pointed out, 'Tradition uniformly emphasizes both the religious character of the bond between the tribes and the existence of a central sanctuary at Shiloh…'[8,9] This strong religious bond which centred on the sovereignty of Yahweh revealed in His mighty acts on their behalf, acted as a powerful centripetal force in the period of the Judges. Thus when the majority in Israel made their demand for a king, it met with strong resistance from a small but influential minority on the grounds that it was an act of apostasy, a rejection of Yahweh and a tacit denial of His power to help in the contemporary crisis. (1 Sam. viii. 7, xii. 12, 19).[10]

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[8] W. F. Albright, *op. cit.*, 281.

[9] Martin Noth, *op. cit.*, 91-95 considers that the central sanctuary was first at Shechem (Jos. xxiv. 1), then at Bethel (Jud. xx. 18) and finally at Shiloh.

[10] These verses need not be interpreted as indicating that the monarchy was outside the will of Yahweh for Israel. Later on, in the case of David, there is the choice of a man 'after God's own heart'. The point is that the attitude of the people in their demand for a king was wrong, it was in spirit a rejection of Yahweh.

III. THE FACTORS WHICH BROKE DOWN THIS CONSERVATISM

a. Modification of the Tribal System. In Canaan, before the arrival of the Israelites, the unit was the city and its environs, although there was always the possibility of united action by several such city-states (e.g. Josh. x. 3 ff.). As the

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Israelites settled down in the land there was a tendency for this fragmentation to re-appear, and the dispersal of the members of the tribe into small communities scattered over a wide area obviously tended to weaken the sense of tribal unity. This must not be over-emphasized, for as we have already noted, the tribes did act in concert when the situation demanded it. We note rather a tendency in this period, when, in a new environment, the Israelites adopted a new way of life, with new customs, often taken from the Canaanite communities which remained in the land. Their life would be increasingly governed by local considerations, economic and judicial as well as social.[11] That such a change occured can be clearly seen in the books of Judges and 1 Samuel. The authority of Gideon centred upon Ophrah (Jud. viii. 27, ix. 5.); that of Abimelech upon neighbouring Shechem. The rulers of Succoth and Penuel show their local independence in refusing the request of Gideon for provisions (Jud. viii. 4-9). The complete break-down in the local tribal structure is revealed in the case of Jabesh-gilead (1 Sam. xi. 1 ff.) where the city appears as a completely independent unit, unsupported by its own tribe, making a frantic but general appeal for help to all Israel.

b. External Pressure. Throughout this period Israel was surrounded by hostile neighbours, who from time to time invaded and occupied portions of her territory. The books of Judges and 1 Samuel give us details of these engagements. It is clear that generally speaking, only relatively small areas of Israel were concerned, which allows us to view the chronology of the Biblical narratives as relative rather than absolute. The two exceptions to this are the events of Judges iv, v in which six Israelite tribes participate, another four being censured for their non-participation, and the Philistine invasion late in the period.

For almost two centuries the territory of Israel was subject to these incursions by her enemies, and in these successive crises 'the Lord raised them up judges' to save them 'out of the hand of their enemies…' (Jud. ii. 18). It has become customary to describe these as 'charismatic individuals' i.e. those who are manifestly the recipients of the Divine favour in their saving, liberating actions. These men (and Deborah!), having completed their immediate mission, continued to exercise authority, almost as dictators, until their deaths. With the exception of Gideon, the authority of the judges was not transmitted to their progeny. They have been linked with the *Shupetim* of Phoenicia and the *Suffetes* of Carthage, and their function has been likened to that of the Roman consuls, although all these officials were part of highly complex organizations, unlike the rudimentary organization in Israel.

It was the exigencies of the situation which led to the rise of the judges to the place of individual leadership. This must be connected with the decline of any effective organization within the tribe. Thus when an emergency arose, the existing structure being unable to cope, there was the cry for an individual to assume the functions of leadership; integrating, organizing and directing the resistance to the invaders. Once the immediate danger was

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[11] An account of the transition from tribal structure to city consciousness may be found in Jobs. Pedersen, *Israel, Its Life and Culture*, E.T. 1926 I-II, 32-38.

removed the situation reverted to normal. However, a situation was to arise that placed the future of the whole nation into jeopardy and the need for an individual to meet such a critical situation crystallized into a demand for a king, a person with a more absolute and permanent authority than that exercised by any of the previous judges.

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It is apparent that the Philistines came very close to subjugating Israel completely. It is interesting (but possibly pointless!) to conjecture how different the history of the world would have been had Israel not ultimately triumphed in this life and death struggle. Egypt and Assyria were both fully occupied with their own problems during the major portion of the twelfth century BC, and Israel and the Philistines were left to engage in this conflict that was to have such a decisive effect upon the future history of the world. Most of the advantages lay with the Philistines. Of Aegean stock, they had long experience of highly-organized military tactics, whereas in Palestine organization was at a minimum. They settled in the coastal plain adjacent to Egypt, their five cities, modelled on the Greek city-state, combining on occasion for their military campaigns. The Philistines enjoyed a local monopoly of the manufacture of iron weapons and implements which they exploited to the full. Israel, emerging from the Late Bronze Age, was ruthlessly denied the use of this metal (1 Sam. xiii. 19-21).

Archaeology, as well as the Biblical record, indicates how real was the threat to the very existence of Israel. The fertile plain of Esdraelon was secured to the Philistines by the capture of Beth-shan, which effectively terminated the influence of Egypt in Palestine, and equally as effectively thrust a wedge between the Israelite tribes. The Samson narratives (Jud. xiii-xvi) provide some background for the extension of Philistine influence in the Shephelah, a process which found its conclusion in the complete displacement of the tribe of Dan, the remnants of which were forced to migrate northwards (Jud. xvii, xviii). These incidents reveal the increasing friction between the two nations which led on to two major engagements at Aphek, in which the Israelite army proved no match for the well-trained and well-equipped Philistines.[12] (1 Sam. iv). Archaeological evidence sets the destruction of Shiloh at *c.* 1050 BC and we may reasonably infer that this, the visible centre of the tribal organization, was the target of the Philistines following their victory (cf. Jer. vii. 12, xxvi. 6). There are indications that the land was occupied, although the difficult terrain would make any absolute control out of the question. Garrisons were established at strategic points, as suggested by 1 Samuel x. 5 ; xiii. 3, 23.[13]

Many of the leaders in Israel, realizing their predicament, must have seen the necessity for a supreme commander of their nation's scattered and depleted forces, someone who had an authority comparable to the kings of the surrounding nations. So the request for a king, in conscious imitation of their neighbours, is made to Samuel, the chief representative of Yahweh. This is, in itself, a witness to the tenacity of the old ideals, for in spite of the urgency

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[12] It is of interest to note that David's standing army of mercenaries contained considerable contingents of Philistine troops, e.g. the 600 men from Gath and their captain Ittai (2 Sam. xv. 18, 19) and probably the Cherethites and Pelethites also. It was this new conception of an army, in which the tribal levies occupied a secondary role, that undoubtedly saved the kingdom for David in the two insurrections of his reign (2 Sam. xv-xviii-note especially xvii. 8, 10; 2 Sam. xx).

[13] A similar situation obtained after the death of Saul. The kingdom of Ish-baal and Abner appears to be confined to Transjordan with Mahanaim as its capital (2 Sam. ii. 8); David was king over Judah, almost certainly under Philistine suzerainty (note how swiftly they intervened when he was anointed king over all Israel, 2 Sam. v. 17 ff.). It is likely that the remainder of Israelite territory was under the general control of the Philistines.

of the crisis, this matter must be determined through Yahweh's representative. Samuel himself, who at an earlier period had secured some temporary relief from the inroads of the Philistines (1 Sam. vii. 5 ff.) was debarred because of his age, and his sons were incapable of such leadership (1 Sam. viii. 1-3). So the choice fell upon Saul, the son of Kish. His appointment maintained a link with the past, as the request for a king was specifically 'that he may be our judge' (1 Sam. viii. 5). But, in fact, a new era had begun in Israel.

IV. PARTICULAR ISSUES

Up to this point we have been concerned with general issues. But before

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completing our study one further line of thought must be pursued. It is to examine the records of some of the judges in order to determine how far they may be said to have anticipated the monarchy in the power they wielded.

a. Gideon. Of crucial importance is the interpretation placed upon Judges viii. 22, 23, where Gideon is invited to become ruler over Israel, an office which differs markedly from the normal position of a judge in that it is hereditary. A superficial reading of the text would conclude that Gideon refuses the request, but scholarship on this particular issue is not unanimous.

(i) There is the view that regards this incident as an anecdote indicating an antagonistic attitude to an already existing monarchy. This appears to be the view of M. Noth, although he concedes that 'it fairly reflects an attitude that was current among the tribes of Israel before the rise of the monarchy'.[14]

(ii) A second group, accepting the historicity of the whole incident, hold that kingship was offered to Gideon and refused. Thus R. de Vaux, '….Gideon expressly refused a permanent authority.'[15]

(iii) In others there is the hint of a qualification concerning the second half of the incident viz. Gideon's refusal to the monarchy. John Bright, who rather idealizes the influence of the Amphictyonic League, writes: 'This he is said flatly to have refused—and in language thoroughly expressive of the spirit of early Israel.'[16] Similarly T. H. Robinson: 'It is quite true that he is represented as definitely refusing the monarchy…'[17] The textual discussion underlying this qualification is dealt with in detail by G. F. Moore,[18] who holds that verse 23 'appears to date from the last age of the kingdom of Israel', reflecting a spirit antagonistic to the monarchy in a turbulent, anarchistic age. Both G. F. Moore and T. H. Robinson, representing a majority of scholars, hold that Gideon, in fact, accepted the kingship.

(iv) More recently G. Henton Davies, in a paper first presented to the Winter Meeting of The Society for Old Testament Study, 1963 and subsequently printed in *Vetus Testamentum*,[19]

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[14] Martin Noth, *op. cit.*, 165.
[15] R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, E.T. 1961, 93.
[16] John Bright, *op. cit.*, 158.
[17] T. H. Robinson, *A History of Israel*, 1938, I 150.
[18] G. F. Moore, *Judges* (ICC), 229 ff.
[19] G. Henton Davies, art. 'Judges viii. 22-23', *VT* xiii. 2, 151-157.

having given a concise summary of contemporary scholarship, makes the interesting suggestion that Gideon's refusal was, in reality, 'an acceptance couched in the form of a pious refusal with the motive of expressing piety and of gaining favour with his would be subjects'. This he supports by an examination of the three other incidents, the 'anonymous refusal' of Exodus iv. 13 f. and the transactions of Genesis xxiii and 2 Samuel xxiv. That Gideon exercised many of the functions of a typical Oriental monarch has often been pointed out:[20] his use of the ephod-oracle (Jud. viii. 27); his use of jewellery and royal raiment (viii. 26); the creation of a harem (viii. 30); the assumption that his sons would succeed him; the wrangling about the succession of Abimelech and Jotham; even the reference to the kingly stature of Gideon and his brothers (viii. 18), all these serve to indicate the position which Gideon held.[21] Professor Davies' view (he acknowledges an indebtedness to Professor J. M. Mauchline for the suggestion) eliminates the practice of textual surgery and provides a reasonable interpretation of the incident.

b. Jotham. His importance in the context of this discussion is as a possible claimant to the position of his father Gideon. Assuming the historicity of the fable of Judges ix. 7-21,[22] we may believe that its purpose (in the light of the explanation of verses 16-20) is not a condemnation of the monarchy as such but a protestation that in Abimelech, a worthless person, the Shechemites have

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chosen the wrong person to rule over them. The parable and his subsequent flight indicate that Jotham regarded himself as the right person, but the opportunity to prove this never presented itself.

c. Abimelech. Mention has already been made that the case of Abimelech can hardly be viewed as an anticipation of the Israelite monarchy, its connections are rather with the Canaanite city-state. The true judges in Israel owed their position to their character and achievements in delivering their people, but Abimelech was merely an opportunist. He appealed to the prejudices of the dominantly Canaanite population of Shechem (for he was the son of a woman of Shechem) to help him against the seventy sons of Gideon (Jud. ix. 1-5) a stratagem that was to rebound in the later rebellion of Gaal who inferred that Abimelech was only a half-breed Shechemite (ix. 28)! Abimelech ruled over the cities of Shechem, Beth-millo, Arumah and Thebez—a rule that was not without its difficulties—witness the independence of the men of Shechem (viii. 23) and its sequel in their revolt (viii. 28). Abimelech's kingdom, secured by guile and maintained by force for three turbulent years, was terminated by his death. It was hardly more than an incident in the period of the Judges and its main point of interest is not in connection with the monarchy, but as illustrating the tensions existing between the original inhabitants of the land and the Israelites.

d. Jephthah. Jephthah was an adventurer like Abimelech who, as a result of his success in repulsing the attacks of the Ammonites, secured some form of rule over the Gileadites (Jud. xi). The exact nature of this authority is not clear, but in any case it died with him, for he had no son (xi. 34). The comment on Jephthah by T. H. Robinson would apply equally to

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[20] The present writer summarized these in a paper read to the Tyndale Fellowship in July, 1962.

[21] It is not easy to understand the attitude of John Bright (*op. cit.*, 158 footnote) that nothing in judges viii or ix justifies the conclusion that Gideon actually accepted the kingship.

[22] G. F. Moore, *op. cit.*, 246, does not regard it as historical.

Abimelech; '…a single personal ruler hardly makes a monarchy, for it does not make a real change in the constitution of the political order.'[23]

Of the cases noted above, that of Gideon is clearly most relevant to our discussion. The Midianite invasion was a crisis which thrust an individual into a position of authority and leadership that is unique in this period; it was to be transmitted in some form to his descendants. The action of Abimelech brought a speedy end to any possibility of a continuation of a Gideonite 'dynasty'. Clearly the situation had not been reached when a king could be accepted in Israel. The Midianite threat shaded into insignificance when compared with the prolonged domination of the Philistines, when the whole of Israel (and not a minority of the tribes) was deeply involved. Lesser animosities were forgotten (cf. 1 Sam. vii. 14b) and a deep-seated antagonism to a centralized authority, partly the result of the conception of Yahweh as king, partly the in heritance of its tribal structure, was overcome. This was the situation which led inevitably to the establishment of the Monarchy.

One final post-script may be added, since the monarchy, for the major portion of its course, was a divided monarchy. The links which bound Judah and Israel together were notoriously brittle, and even in the so-called United Monarchy there are ominous signs of dissension. The antecedents of this may also be noted during the period of the Judges. Quite apart from the geographical factors which made for the isolation of Judah, there was a barrier between south and north caused by the unreduced Jebusite fortress of Jerusalem, and other strongholds in the Aijalon valley.Later on in the period, the Philistine pressure

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which caused the Danite exodus also tended to isolate Judah from any effective co-operation with the northern tribes. The Song of Deborah, in which the tribes of Simeon and Judah are not mentioned, witnesses to this isolation. The sanctuaries at Hebron and Beer-sheba, with their patriarchal associations would tend to minimize the importance of the ark-sanctuary of the Amphictyony at Shiloh. These subtle processes, extending over a period of a century, together with the latent hostility of the northern tribes at Judah's pre-eminence under David, are sufficient to account for the basic disunity which appears in the subsequent history.[24]

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[23] T. H. Robinson, *op. cit*., 150 (footnote).
[24] It is only fair to indicate that many scholars would hold that this lack of unity has its origin in the pre-Conquest period, with the Judah/Simeon tribes, together with the Kenites etc., entering the land quite independently of the main invasion across the Jordan by the 'Joseph' tribes, a view which, for reasons which cannot be entered into here, I do not hold.