

ARE THE PROPHETS OPPOSED TO THE PRIESTS OR DO THEY STAND WITH THE PRIESTS?

After asserting that "there has never been any doubt about the close relation between the cult and postexilic prophecy" Vawter says "The Book of Ezekiel . . . is once again recognized as substantially the work of a prophet who was intensely involved with the Zadokite priesthood and its Law of Holiness and who could not conceive of an Israel in which the cult did not have a central place. (Vawter, pp. 113, 114)

" . . . for some while now it has been fairly generally agreed in biblical circles that the differences between priestly and prophetic religion had been greatly exaggerated through a misguided scholarly 'Protestantization' of prophetism in the 19th century, though we still do find authors maintaining that the opposition of the pre-exilic prophets to cult was an opposition in principle, to a ritualistic system that had no roots in the authentic Yahwistic tradition. (Vawter, p. 115)

"The direction of the presumption has now shifted, as historical and form critical studies have pointed to the need for synthesis after a generation of atomization. The antiquity of the cult, of the law, of the covenant concept, and the like, make it far more likely that the prophets should have had at least a normal Israelite's share in cultic concerns than that they should have stood in opposition to it. (Vawter, p. 115)

"The newer perspective in which prophetism is being viewed is, in part, a reaction to the evolutionism and arbitrary historicism that have become associated, rightly or wrongly, with the name of Julius Wellhausen. As is true in most reactions, there have occurred undoubted excesses and exaggerations.²¹ the classical prophets were not cult prophets; their religion did differ from the priestly Torah; they did utter new words that altered the tradition. All this must be gladly admitted. At the same time, however, it can undoubtedly be better understood the more it is now related to the other Israel that was itself, in its own way, also prophetic. (Vawter, p. 118)

Cf. Georg Fohrer, "Remarks on Modern Interpretation of the Prophets," in *Journal of Biblical Literature* 80 (1961), pp. 309-19.

Whether or not the account which the sources give of Samuel is historical, the combination of priest and prophet in one person was felt by the narrators to be quite normal and appropriate. (Lindblom, p. 79)

Mowinckel has shown that in later times members of the Levite class appeared as prophets, and that, in particular, the temple singers were often endowed with prophetic gifts. As a result of the penetrating researches of this scholar there can be little doubt that prophets belonged to the permanent staff of the Jerusalem temple. . . . The statement in Ps. lx.8(cviii.8): 'God has spoken in his sanctuary,' is not an empty phrase but a simple statement of fact. What God has spoken is without doubt an oracle delivered by a temple prophet. (Lindblom, p. 80) However, Lindblom goes on to point out that the prophets were not always bound to the sanctuaries and the cult, but lived their own life apart from the sacred places. There are different types and classes of prophets. Samuel is represented as a priest, a fact which proves that there was not definite dividing-line between priest and nabis. Priestly and prophetic qualities could very well be combined in the same person. (Lindblom, p. 82)