

THE OLD TESTAMENT  
LATTER PROPHETS  
IN THE HISTORY OF REDEMPTION  
(BACKGROUND, INTRODUCTION, SURVEY)

PRE-EXILIC

OBADIAH, JOEL, JONAH, AMOS, HOSEA, ISAIAH,  
MICAH, NAHUM, ZEPHANIAH

EXILIC

JEREMIAH/LAMENTATIONS, HABAKKUK, DANIEL, EZEKIEL

POST-EXILIC

HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, MALACHI

~

Professor: Stephen T. Hague  
Email: [stephenhague@hotmail.com](mailto:stephenhague@hotmail.com)  
Contact: 443-467-0695

SHORT TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I. OT PROPHETS &amp; PROPHETISM: BACKGROUND AND HERMENEUTICS</b> .....	<b>16</b>
A. BACKGROUND TO OT PROPHECY & REDEPTIVE-HISTORICAL THEMES.....	16
B. THE HERMENEUTICS OF OT PROPHECY: “ALL THE PROPHETS TESTIFY” (ACTS 10:43).....	199
<b>II. ASSYRIAN PERIOD PROPHETS: PREXILIC (845-605 B.C.)</b> .....	<b>229</b>
A. OBADIAH עֲבַדְיָהּ (JUDAH/BABYLON ~ 840 OR 586) .....	229
B. JOEL יוֹאֵל (JUDAH ~ 835-820) .....	238
C. JONAH יוֹנָה (JUDAH/NINEVEH ~785-775).....	251
D. AMOS עָמוֹס (ISRAEL ~ 760-750).....	269
E. HOSEA הוֹשֵׁעַ (ISRAEL ~ 750-715) .....	286
F. ISAIAH יִשְׁעִיָּהוּ (JUDAH ~ 740-685) .....	313
<b>COLUMN THREE</b> .....	<b>357</b>
G. MICAH מִיכָה (JUDAH ~ 735-690).....	380
H. NAHUM נְחֻמִּים (JUDAH ~ 650-612).....	390
I. ZEPHANIAH צְפַנְיָהּ (JUDAH ~ 630/640-CA.622).....	399
<b>III. NEO-BABYLONIAN PERIOD PROPHETS: EXILIC (605-538 B.C.)</b> .....	<b>409</b>
A. JEREMIAH יֵרֵמְיָהוּ AND LAMENTATIONS (648-585/62) .....	409
B. HABAKKUK חַבְבַּקּוּק (JUDAH ~ 609-605) .....	468
C. DANIEL דָּנִיֵּאל (BABYLON ~ 605-530) .....	475
D. EZEKIEL יְחִזְקֵאל (BABYLON ~ 597-570).....	502
<b>IV. PERSIAN PERIOD PROPHETS: POSTEXILIC (538-400 B.C.)</b> .....	<b>542</b>
A. HAGGAI חַגַּי (JUDAH ~ 520).....	544
B. ZECHARIAH זְכַרְיָהּ (JUDAH ~ 520) .....	555
C. MALACHI מְלָאכִי (JUDAH ~ CA. 475-450 OR 433) .....	582
<b>V. ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN BACKGROUNDS TO THE OT</b> .....	<b>594</b>
A. SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS OF A.N.E. PEOPLES .....	594
B. SUMMARY OF A.N.E. GODS AND THEIR CONSORTS .....	638
C. SUMMARY OF A.N.E. CULTURES’ SALIENT FEATURES.....	655
<b>VI. APOLOGETIC VALUE OF BIBLICAL PROPHECY</b> .....	<b>656</b>
<b>VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY(SELECT)</b> .....	<b>656</b>
A. ACADEMIC REFERENCES .....	656
B. ANCIENT ISRAEL AND THE A.N.E. ....	657
C. ARCHEOLOGY .....	659
D. BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIAS/DICTIONARIES/ATLASES.....	660
E. BIBLE STUDY, HERMENEUTICS, PREACHING .....	660
F. BIBLICAL/SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY .....	661
G. CONCORDANCES .....	662
H. CURRENT ISSUES AND APOLOGETICS.....	663
I. ETHICS .....	664
J. ESCHATOLOGY.....	665
K. GRAMMARS.....	665
L. HISTORICAL-CRITICISM.....	665
M. HISTORY-WRITING AND THE OLD TESTAMENT .....	666
N. IDOLATRY .....	666
O. LANGUAGE (AND HEBREW) .....	666
P. LEXICONS .....	666
Q. LINGUISTICS.....	667
R. LITERARY STRUCTURES .....	667
S. OT INTRODUCTION .....	667
T. SURVEYS.....	667
U. TEXTUAL CRITICISM.....	668
V. PROPHETS BACKGROUND .....	668
W. SURVEYS OF OT.....	669
<b>VIII. SELECTIVE INDEX</b> .....	<b>670</b>

COMPLETE TABLE OF CONTENTS

**I. OT PROPHETS & PROPHETISM: BACKGROUND AND HERMENEUTICS ..... 16**

A. BACKGROUND TO OT PROPHECY & REDEMPTIVE-HISTORICAL THEMES ..... 16

1. *Jesus is both the hope and the bringer of redemption* ..... 17

2. *Resurrection: the fulfillment of the promise and eschatos* ..... 22

3. *The covenant and its promises are spiritual [and material]* ..... 25

See “ ..... 25

a) The unity of the covenants in the history of redemption ..... 25

b) The two covenants: creation and redemption ..... 27

c) The two interacting levels of the covenant-promises: conditional/unconditional ..... 29

d) Was the covenant-promise of the land fulfilled by God? ..... 31

e) Paradigms, types, and the eschatos by Christopher Wright ..... 33

f) The prophets and the (spiritual) promises ..... 35

g) Spiritual Israel: “They are not all Israel who are of Israel . . .” ..... 37

4. *Israel and the mission of God to the nations* ..... 40

5. *Eschatological metaphors for Messiah Jesus* ..... 45

6. *Creational eschatology of the pre-fall, pre-redemptive epoch: perfection and probation* ..... 46

7. *Redemptive eschatology of the post-fall, redemptive epoch: redemption and kingdom* ..... 48

8. *Captivity and Exodus: exile and remnant, return and restoration* ..... 49

9. *The broad structure of redemption-restoration: dwelling-presence of God restored* ..... 49

10. *Structuring, binary themes of the Bible* ..... 49

Redemption-history and eschatos/consummation ..... 49

a) Type and antitype ..... 50

b) Promise and fulfillment ..... 50

c) Old covenant and new covenant ..... 50

(1) Covenants ..... 51

(2) More new themes under the prophetic sun ..... 53

d) Law and gospel-grace: judgment and hope ..... 54

e) Israel and the church: one people of God under grace ..... 55

f) Universalism versus particularism (nationalism) ..... 55

g) Creation, exodus-redemption, judgment, rest, and the renewal all things: ἀποκατάστασις and παλιγγενεσία ..... 56

(1) Creation and redemption ..... 56

(2) Rest and restoration ..... 57

(3) New creation (re-creation & renewal): ἀποκατάστασις and παλιγγενεσία ..... 58

h) “The law and the prophets” and the covenants ..... 60

(1) OT correspondence between the law and the prophets ..... 60

(2) NT correspondence between the law and the prophets ..... 61

(3) Wisdom, law, and covenant texts in the OT ..... 61

i) Literal and fuller sense ..... 72

j) The prophets and wisdom ..... 72

11. *The central themes of redemption-restoration* ..... 72

a) The law and the spirit of the law, the law and the gospel of grace, and circumcised hearts ..... 72

b) Internalization of the law ..... 73

c) The covenant-promise and the new heart ..... 73

12. *Body-metaphors of redemption in the OT prophets* ..... 75

13. *Disintegration: spiritual and mental fragmentation of divided heart (insanity)* ..... 77

14. *Integration: mental and spiritual wholeness of undivided heart (sanity)* ..... 78

15. *The end of the world (as we know it)* ..... 81

a) “Day of the Lord” (יִוֵם־יְהוָה) ..... 82

b) The παρουσία (parousia) of God: Christ’s appearing and revelation ..... 84

c) The millennial morass and madness: in essentials, unity, in nonessentials liberty, and in all[most] things charity85

(1) Millennial chart by Williamson ..... 99

(2) Eschatology Comparison ..... 101

d) Primary OT texts of the eschatos (and “millennium”) ..... 114

e) Prefiguration: inter-textuality, inner-textuality, figural representation ..... 117

f) The Adversary Satan in the prophets ..... 119

16. *Prophetic indictments (of Israel’s myths and idols)* ..... 121

a) Prophetic dissent (from our myths and idols) ..... 121

(1) Christianity, culture, literacy, and biblical prophetic ..... 121

(2) Christ and culture paradigms ..... 125

(3) Populist dissent, prophetic dissent, reformation, and the reclaiming culture model ..... 135

b) Technology and eschatology ..... 138

c) Religion and revelation: Realpolitik and Vox populi ..... 139

d) OT prophets as reformers and reformers as prophets ..... 142

17. *Israel and the Mission of God to the Nations* ..... 143

18. *YHWH’s prophets versus pagan prophets* ..... 143

a)	Hebrew expressions for OT prophets.....	143
	(1) אֱבִירָא – God’s spokesman.....	143
	(2) רֹאֵה – God’s visionary.....	143
	(3) חֹזֵה – God’s seer.....	143
	(4) “My servants the prophets,” “messengers” of God.....	144
	(5) “Schools” of prophets?.....	144
	(6) “Sons” (בְּנֵי) of the prophets.....	145
b)	Moses is the paradigmatic prophet: holiness, righteousness, and glory.....	145
c)	Tests of prophets: validation criteria from Deut 13, 18, 29.....	147
	(1) Prophet may produce signs and wonders (Deut 13:1-2).....	147
	(2) Prophet must agree with previous revelation (most important) (Deut 18:15).....	147
	(3) Prophet must speak in the name of the Lord (Deut 18:20-21).....	148
	(4) Predictions may be visibly fulfilled (Deut 18:22).....	148
	(5) Subjective spiritual discernment (Deut 29).....	148
	(6) Negative nature of the tests.....	148
d)	Pagan, false prophets.....	149
	(1) Hebrew titles for false prophets.....	149
	(a) soothsayers (רֹגֵז, רֹגֵזָה, סֹסֵק).....	149
	(b) diviners (שֹׁחֵז, סֹסֵק).....	149
	(c) sorcerer (רֹשֵׁעַ m., רֹשֵׁעָה f.).....	149
	(2) Prophesied in name of god or idol (Deut 18:20).....	149
	(3) Falsely claimed to receive messages from the Lord (Deut 18:21-22).....	149
	(4) Ceased to be true prophets.....	149
	(5) A comparison of true and false prophets.....	149
	(6) Pagan eschatology and prophecy: false but sometimes “real” prophets.....	151
19.	<i>Receiving &amp; relaying God’s revelation</i> .....	153
a)	Prophetic call.....	154
b)	Prophetic consciousness - real humans not automatons.....	154
c)	Prophetic office.....	154
d)	Prophetic activities and human response.....	154
e)	Prophetic emotion or “ecstasy”?.....	155
f)	External voice - audible, understandable voice from God.....	156
g)	Internal voice - not audible, internal revelation from God.....	156
h)	Opening of eyes - to see spiritual realities.....	156
i)	Visions, pictures - pictorial revelation.....	156
j)	Angels – as conveyors of divine revelation.....	156
k)	Women prophets in the Bible.....	156
l)	Music of the OT prophets.....	157
m)	Primary issues and purposes of prophecy.....	158
	(1) Primary prophetic issues.....	158
	(2) Primary prophetic purposes.....	158
n)	Conveying message to divinely appointed recipients.....	159
	(1) Brief oral statements and rejoinders - various forms.....	159
	(2) Patriarchal blessing - declarations regarding future.....	159
	(3) Descriptions of visions - figurative pictures described.....	159
	(4) Symbolic actions - object lessons for hostile audiences.....	159
o)	Foretelling (prediction) and “forth-telling”.....	159
20.	<i>The development of messianic prophecy in the Pentateuch</i> .....	162
21.	<i>Primary messianic forms of OT prophecy</i> .....	173
22.	<i>Statistics on OT prophecy from Payne</i> .....	174
23.	<i>Foreign nations in OT prophecy by Payne</i> .....	177
24.	<i>Prophets in their order in the MT and LXX</i> .....	180
25.	<i>Prophets in their context in the Hebrew Bible</i> .....	180
26.	<i>Dating the OT prophets</i> .....	186
27.	<i>Geography of the prophets</i> .....	193
28.	<i>Poetry of the prophets: God’s messengers</i> .....	194
29.	<i>Old Testament parallelism review from poets/poetics lecture</i> .....	196
30.	<i>Cessation of OT prophecy: after 400 B.C. no more prophets</i> .....	197
a)	The entire OT was written and available.....	198
b)	God’s will for 400 year interval between prophecies of Messiah and his coming as added confirmation.....	198
31.	<i>Prophets and prophecy in the New Testament</i> .....	198
a)	A new period of prophecy/prophesying.....	198
b)	Significance of prophecy in NT is entirely clear.....	198
c)	References to OT prophets.....	198
d)	Select and major predictions in NT.....	199
e)	Texts of the advancing kingdom.....	199
f)	Cessation of NT prophecy when Word-revelation completed.....	199
B.	THE HERMENEUTICS OF OT PROPHECY: “ALL THE PROPHETS TESTIFY” (ACTS 10:43).....	199
1.	<i>Primary interpretive considerations for prophetic literature</i> .....	199

a)	Do careful grammatical-contextual-theological exegesis.....	199
b)	Determine to whom or what passage addresses .....	199
c)	Importance of historical background.....	200
d)	Unusual (unique) type of literature .....	200
e)	Start at right place: from what is clear and simple .....	200
f)	Recognize specific divine purposes .....	200
g)	Recognize figurative language, “literal” meaning in pictures .....	200
h)	Recognize principle of progressive revelation .....	200
i)	Recognize divine oversight of Bible’s contents .....	200
j)	Predictive, though not exclusively predictive .....	200
k)	Prediction needs special treatment (p. Error! Bookmark not defined.) .....	200
l)	Note the occasional ambiguity of person addressed: shifts .....	200
m)	Distinguish general principles from specific prediction.....	200
n)	Determine single or multiple fulfillment (series of events)(?) .....	200
o)	Note that some predictive prophecy is symbolical (spiritual) .....	200
p)	Note fulfillment citations in NT: πληρωθη.....	200
q)	Note the perspective of the prophecy, predictions relate to purposes of prophecy.....	200
r)	Note that predictive prophecy sometimes used terminology that is now “culturally dated” .....	200
s)	Note conditional predictions: parallel predictions with opposite conditions attached, individual conditional predictions, one feature may be conditional though the whole is unconditional.....	200
2.	<i>Summary of basic interpretive principles by Payne</i> .....	202
a)	Multiple fulfillment, double fulfillment, double sense, and telescoping .....	204
b)	Literal and fuller sense: authorial intention, univalence, polyvalence, sensus plenior, and the intentional fallacy.....	206
	(1) Sensus plenior .....	207
	(2) Univalence versus polyvalence .....	207
3.	<i>Primary principles in interpreting typology</i> .....	209
a)	Allegorizing, spiritualizing, and moralizing.....	209
b)	Proper scriptural figures in biblical typology.....	209
c)	Types of τυπος in the NT.....	221
4.	<i>Sum sum summary of standard divergent interpretations</i> .....	222
5.	<i>Naturalistic presuppositions &amp; explanations of OT prophecy</i> .....	222
a)	Three false categories.....	222
	(1) Mechanistic, naturalistic explanation, atheistic .....	222
	(2) Theoretical believers who deny God communicated.....	222
	(3) Believers who say God reveals through acts not words .....	223
b)	Denials of predictive prophecy .....	223
	(1) Began with Celsus in second century, Daniel written after the fact .....	223
	(2) To assert predictions have been intentionally fulfilled.....	223
	(3) To assert certain prophecies were not actually fulfilled .....	223
c)	Rise of historical criticism: division of Pentateuch and Prophets into sources.....	223
	(1) Unwillingness to believe prophecies could be made prior to events .....	223
	(2) Application of literary critical method .....	223
	(3) Form criticism and tradition-historical approach .....	223
d)	Sociological approach.....	223
e)	Derivation of prophetic movement from other ancient cultures.....	223
f)	A summary of critical folks and their “issues”.....	223
	(1) Eschatology, ethical monotheism, and prophecy .....	223
	(2) Temple worship and prophecy .....	224
	(3) Monarchy and prophecy.....	225
	(4) Wisdom and prophecy.....	226
	(5) Covenant law and prophecy .....	226
	(6) Ecstasy and prophecy.....	226
	(7) Apocalyptic and prophecy.....	228

**II. ASSYRIAN PERIOD PROPHETS: PREXILIC (845-605 B.C.) ..... 229**

A.	OBADIAH עֲבַדְיָהּ (JUDAH/BABYLON ~ 840 OR 586) .....	229
1.	<i>Title, author, and dates</i> .....	229
2.	<i>Historical-critical matters</i> .....	231
3.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	231
a)	The Day and Day of the Lord (יְוִם־יְהוָה) – Obad 15.....	231
4.	<i>Major themes: doom for Edom</i> .....	232
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	233
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition, genre</i> .....	233
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	233
a)	Judgment proclamation: Edom’s doom, Obad 1-9.....	233
b)	Judgment justified: Edom’s behavior, Obad 10-14.....	236
	(1) Violence against brothers: Obad 10-11 .....	236
	(2) Rejoicing over disaster of brothers: Obad 12-14.....	236
c)	Judgment proclamation: the nations’ doom on the day of YHWH, Obad 15-16.....	236

d)	Restoration proclamation: Israel's deliverance, Obad 17-21 .....	236
8.	<i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	237
a)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH .....	237
	(1) Who God is.....	237
	(2) What God has done .....	237
	(3) What God has promised .....	237
b)	Humankind and redemption .....	237
	(1) Worship of redeemed .....	237
	(2) Work of redeemed .....	238
	(3) Ethics of redeemed.....	238
B.	JOEL יוֹאֵל (JUDAH ~ 835-820) .....	238
1.	<i>Title, author, and dates</i> .....	238
2.	<i>Historical-critical matters</i> .....	239
a)	Interpretations of Joel 1-2 .....	239
	(1) Apocalyptic .....	239
	(2) Allegorical .....	239
	(3) Literal .....	239
3.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	239
a)	Day of the Lord (יְוֹם הַיְהוָה) .....	239
4.	<i>Major themes</i> .....	239
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	240
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition, genre</i> .....	240
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	241
a)	Locust plague brings judgment: Joel 1:1-12 .....	241
	(1) Locusts point to foreign invasion: Joel 1:1-12 .....	241
	(2) Call for religious leaders to lead repentance: Joel 1:13-14 .....	242
b)	Day of the Lord in locust plague announced: Joel 1:15-20.....	242
	(1) Provisions are ruined: Joel 1:15-17.....	242
	(2) Land is ruined: Joel 1:18-20.....	242
c)	Day of the Lord as invincible locust plague: Joel 2:1-27.....	243
	(1) Locust plague and drought: Joel 2:1-11 .....	243
	(2) Nation called to repentance: Joel 2:12-17 .....	243
	(3) Nation reassured of covenant-promise: Joel 2:18-27 .....	245
	(4) Nation reassured of promised Spirit: Joel 2:28-32 .....	246
	(5) Judgment of the nations reaffirmed: Joel 3:1-16 .....	248
	(6) Covenant-promise reaffirmed to God's people: Joel 3:17-21.....	248
8.	<i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	249
a)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH .....	249
	(1) Who God is.....	249
	(2) What God has done .....	249
	(3) What God has promised .....	249
b)	Humankind and redemption .....	250
	(1) Worship of redeemed .....	250
	(2) Work of redeemed .....	250
	(3) Ethics of redeemed.....	250
C.	JONAH יוֹנָה (JUDAH/NINEVEH ~785-775).....	251
1.	<i>Title, author, and dates</i> .....	251
2.	<i>Historical-critical matters</i> .....	252
3.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	254
a)	"Flee from the Lord" (1:3) .....	254
b)	"Who made the sea and the land" (1:9).....	254
4.	<i>Major themes</i> .....	255
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	256
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition</i> .....	256
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	260
a)	Disobedience to God's word leads to dire consequences: the descent of Jonah, the pagan sailors, and the Ninevites .....	261
	(1) God commanded him to "go" and preach against Nineveh: Jonah 1:1 .....	261
	(2) Jonah "descends" to Joppa to flee YHWH: Jonah 1:1-3 .....	261
	(3) Sailors allow Jonah to flee the Lord with them: Jonah 1:3-13 .....	262
	(4) Ninevite's were very wicked and were in danger of judgment .....	263
	(5) Jonah descends into despair at Nineveh's pardon .....	263
b)	Obedience to God's word leads to blessing: the ascent of Jonah, the pagan sailors, and the Ninevites .....	264
	(1) Jonah tells the sailors the truth and what to do: Jonah 1:10-12.....	264
	(2) The sailors obey the word of the prophet: Jonah 1:14-17 .....	264
	(3) Jonah prays to the LORD: Jonah 2:1-9.....	265
	(4) Ninevites repent in sackcloth at the prophet's word: Jonah 3:1-10.....	265
	(5) Jonah is angry at God's compassion: Jonah 4:1-11 .....	266
8.	<i>History of redemption themes in teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	267
a)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH .....	267

(1)	Who God is.....	267
(2)	What God has done.....	267
(3)	What God has promised.....	267
b)	Humankind and redemption.....	267
(1)	Worship of redeemed.....	267
(2)	Work of redeemed.....	268
(3)	Ethics of redeemed.....	269
D.	AMOS עָמוֹס (ISRAEL ~ 760-750).....	269
1.	<i>Title, author, and dates</i> .....	269
2.	<i>Critical matters</i> .....	270
3.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	270
a)	Pedestal of your idols (5:26).....	270
b)	Star of your god (5:26).....	270
c)	Consuming fire (7:4-5).....	270
d)	Builders' plumb line (7:7-9).....	270
e)	Basket of summer fruit (8:1-6).....	270
f)	Smitten sanctuary (9:1-4).....	270
g)	My people.....	270
h)	For three transgressions of . . . , even for four . . .	270
4.	<i>Major themes</i> .....	270
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	271
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition</i> .....	271
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	273
a)	Prophecies against the nations: Amos 1:3-2:3.....	274
(1)	Damascus: Amos 1:3-5.....	274
(2)	Gaza: Amos 1:6-8.....	275
(3)	Tyre: Amos 1:9-10.....	276
(4)	Edom: Amos 1:11-12.....	276
(5)	Ammon: Amos 1:13-15.....	277
(6)	Moab: Amos 2:1-3.....	277
b)	Prophecies against Judah & Israel: Amos 2:4-6:14.....	277
(1)	Prophecies against Judah: Amos 2:4-5.....	278
(2)	Prophecies against Israel and Judah: Amos 2:6-6:14.....	279
c)	Visions of judgment against Israel: Amos 7:1-9:10.....	280
(1)	Grasshoppers/locusts: Amos 7:1-3.....	280
(2)	Consuming fire: Amos 7:4-6.....	281
(3)	Builders' plumb line: Amos 7:7-9.....	281
(a)	An interjection: the repression of God's prophetic word (Amos 7:10-15).....	281
(4)	Basket of summer fruit: Amos 8:1-14.....	282
(5)	Smitten sanctuary and the altar: Amos 9:1-10.....	283
d)	Messianic promise of future blessing: Amos 9:11-15.....	283
8.	<i>History of redemption theme for teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	284
a)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH.....	284
(1)	Who God is.....	284
(2)	What God has done.....	285
(3)	What God has promised.....	285
b)	Humankind and redemption.....	285
(1)	Worship of redeemed.....	285
(2)	Work of redeemed.....	286
(3)	Ethics of redeemed.....	286
E.	HOSEA הוֹשֵׁעַ (ISRAEL ~ 750-715).....	286
1.	<i>Title, author, and dates</i> .....	286
2.	<i>Critical matters</i> .....	287
3.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	287
a)	My people.....	287
b)	They exchanged [their/my] Glory (4:7).....	288
c)	Out of Egypt I called my son (11:1).....	288
	Adoption is the essential meaning of redemption. The lost children are purchased through adoption. The homeless, the widow, the forsaken, the fatherless have been received into the home of God through his adopting them. See thoughts on home and homelessness (Biblical Theology syllabus). Those who were not a people have become the people of God! In the Messiah, we become the true children of God from all the nations.....	288
	➤ See.....	288
	➤ Spiritual Israel: "They are not all Israel who are of Israel . . ." p. 36.....	288
4.	<i>Major themes</i> .....	288
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	292
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition</i> .....	292
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	294
a)	The Lord instructs Hosea to marry: Hosea's wife of harlotry: Hos 1-3.....	294
b)	The Lord's charge against Israel: Israel's harlotries: Hos 4-5.....	297

	298
c) The Lord's response to Israel: Hos 6:1-13:16	298
(1) Repentance, not pretense, and mercy, not sacrifice: Hos 6:1-16	298
(a) Israel's prayer of pretense: comparison of Hos 6:1-3 and 14:1-6	299
(b) Mercy not sacrifice: Hos 6:4-7:16	302
(2) Reaping the whirlwind: Hos 8:1-10:15	303
(3) God's love, Israel's deceit: Hos 11:1-12:14	304
(4) God's judgment or Israel's repentance?: Hos 13:1-14:9	305
8. <i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i>	307
a) Revelation and redemption from YHWH	308
(1) Who God is	308
(2) What God has done	309
(3) What God has promised	310
b) Humankind and redemption	310
(1) Worship of redeemed	310
(2) Work of redeemed	311
(3) Ethics of redeemed	311
F. ISAAH יִשְׁעִיָהוּ (JUDAH ~ 740-685)	313
1. <i>Title, author, and dates</i>	313
2. <i>Critical matters</i>	316
3. <i>Distinctive words/phrases</i>	318
a) The "last day"	318
b) The splendor/glory of his majesty	319
c) The Branch of the Lord	320
d) Mountain of the Lord	320
e) Valley of Vision	321
f) Rahab	321
g) Blind and deaf	321
h) His strange work, alien task	321
i) Holy One	321
j) Your God	322
k) The first and the last	322
l) My servant	322
4. <i>Major themes</i>	323
5. <i>Major prophecies</i>	324
6. <i>Outline, structure/composition</i>	325
7. <i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i>	329
a) Judgment introduced: Isa 1-23	329
(1) Isaiah's call, commission, and vision: Isa 1-6	329
(2) The mountains of God as they represent (and correlate with) the presence of God in Paradise	333
(3) The correlations of these mountains:	335
(a) Geographic	336
(b) Theological	336
(4) Book of Immanuel, Ahaz's crisis with Syria: Isa 7-12	337
(1) Song of Praise: Isa 12:1-6	347
(2) Oracles against the nations: Isa 13-23	347
b) Judgment concluded: Isa 24-39	348
(1) The Apocalypse of Isaiah: Isa 24-27	348
(2) Five woes: Isa 28-33	351
(3) The eschatological capstone of chapters 28-33: Isa 34-35	354
(4) The historical appendix (transition): Isa 36-39	355
c) Comfort introduced Isa 40-56:8	358
(1) Comfort for the exiles: Isa 40-48	358
(2) The Suffering Servant Messiah: Isa 49-55	365
d) Comfort concluded: Isa 56:9-66:24	374
8. <i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i>	377
a) Revelation and redemption from YHWH	377
(1) Who God is	377
(2) What God has done	378
(3) What God has promised	379
b) Humankind and redemption	379
(1) Worship of redeemed	379
(2) Work of redeemed	379
(3) Ethics of redeemed	380
G. MICAH מִיכָה (JUDAH ~ 735-690)	380
1. <i>Title, author, and dates</i>	381
2. <i>Critical matters</i>	381
3. <i>Distinctive words/phrases</i>	381
a) Mountain of the Lord	381



b)	Origins from of old .....	381
c)	In the last days .....	382
4.	<i>Major themes</i> .....	382
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	382
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition</i> .....	382
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	383
a)	Judgment on Israel, Judah & false prophets: Micah 1:2-2:11 ~ doom .....	383
b)	Comfort for remnant: Micah 2:12-13 ~ hope .....	385
c)	Judgment on leaders & prophets: Micah 3:1-12 ~ doom.....	385
d)	Comfort for Gentiles & remnant: Micah 4:1-5:15 ~ hope.....	386
e)	Judgment on Israel and Judah: Micah 6:1-7:6 ~ doom.....	388
f)	Comfort for remnant: Micah 7:7-20 ~ hope.....	389
8.	<i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	389
a)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH .....	389
(1)	Who God is.....	389
(2)	What God has done.....	390
(3)	What God has promised.....	390
b)	Humankind and redemption.....	390
(1)	Worship of redeemed.....	390
(2)	Work of redeemed .....	390
(3)	Ethics of redeemed.....	390
H.	NAHUM נְחֻם (JUDAH ~ 650-612).....	390
1.	<i>Title, author, and dates</i> .....	391
2.	<i>Critical matters</i> .....	392
3.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	392
a)	“City of blood” (3:1).....	392
b)	“Your troops are all women” (3:13).....	392
4.	<i>Major themes</i> .....	392
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	393
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition</i> .....	393
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	393
a)	Nineveh’s Judge, Israel’s Savior: Nah 1:1-15.....	394
b)	Nineveh’s judgment and destruction, Israel’s deliverance and restoration: Nah 2:1-3:19.....	394
8.	<i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	397
a)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH.....	397
(1)	Who God is.....	397
(2)	What God has done.....	397
(3)	What God has promised.....	397
b)	Humankind and redemption.....	398
(1)	Worship of redeemed.....	398
(2)	Work of redeemed .....	398
(3)	Ethics of redeemed.....	398
I.	ZEPHANIAH צְפַנְיָהּ (JUDAH ~ 630/640-CA.622).....	399
1.	<i>Title, author, dates</i> .....	399
2.	<i>Critical matters</i> .....	399
3.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	400
a)	“Remnant of Baal ~ שְׂאֵר הַבַּעַל (1:4) .....	400
b)	“Remnant of Judah”~ בֵּית יְהוּדָה לְשְׂאֵרֵי (2:7), “Remnant of Israel” ~ שְׂאֵרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (3:13) .....	400
c)	“Great day of the Lord” .....	400
4.	<i>Major themes</i> .....	401
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	401
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition</i> .....	401
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	402
a)	The Word of YHWH: judgment & hope.....	402
(1)	Judgment against Judah (Jerusalem): Zeph 1:2-2:2.....	402
(2)	Hope for those who seek the Lord: Zeph 2:1-3 .....	403
(3)	Judgment against Philistia, Moab, Ammon, and Cush: Zeph 2:4-12 .....	403
(a)	WEST ~ Philistia: Zeph 2:4-5.....	404
(b)	EAST ~ Moab and Ammon: Zeph 2:8-11 .....	405
(c)	SOUTH ~ Cush (ancient Ethiopia): Zeph 2:12 .....	405
(4)	Hope for Judah’s remnant: Zeph 2:6-7.....	405
(a)	NORTH ~ Judgment against Assyria and hope for Judah’s deliverance: Zeph 2:13-15 .....	405
(5)	Judgment against Judah (Jerusalem): Zeph 3:1-8.....	406
(6)	Hope for Israel’s remnant: Zeph 3:9-20 .....	407
8.	<i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	407
a)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH.....	407
(1)	Who God is.....	407
(2)	What God has done.....	408

	(3) What God has promised.....	408
b)	Humankind and redemption.....	408
	(1) Worship of redeemed.....	408
	(2) Work of redeemed.....	408
	(3) Ethics of redeemed.....	409
<b>III.</b>	<b>NEO-BABYLONIAN PERIOD PROPHETS: EXILIC (605-538 B.C.).....</b>	<b>409</b>
A.	JEREMIAH יְרֵמְיָהוּ AND LAMENTATIONS (648-585/62).....	409
1.	<i>Title, author, and dates</i> .....	409
2.	<i>Critical matters</i> .....	412
3.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	412
a)	“The portion of Jacob” (10:16; 51:19).....	412
b)	“They dress the wound . . .” (8:11).....	412
c)	“The Branch” (23:5; 33:15).....	412
d)	“Balm in Gilead” (8:22).....	412
4.	<i>Major themes of Jeremiah and Lamentations</i> .....	412
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	413
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition of Jeremiah</i> .....	413
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes in Jeremiah</i> .....	414
a)	Jeremiah’s call: Jer 1.....	414
b)	Prophecies of judgment and hope to Israel/Judah: Jer 2-35.....	416
c)	Jeremiah’s suffering worsens: Jer 36-38.....	445
a)	Jerusalem falls into exile: Jer 39-45.....	450
d)	Prophecies of judgment to the nations: Jer 46-51.....	457
e)	Jerusalem falls into exile: Jer 52 appendix.....	460
8.	<i>Outline, structure/composition of Lamentations</i> .....	460
9.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes in Lamentations</i> .....	462
a)	Jeremiah’s lament: Lam 1.....	462
a)	YHWH’s anger: Lam 2.....	462
b)	Jeremiah’s lament and hope: Lam 3.....	463
c)	YHWH’s anger and mercy: Lam 4.....	463
d)	Jeremiah’s prayer: Lam 5.....	463
10.	<i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	463
a)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH.....	464
	(1) Who God is.....	464
	(2) What God has done.....	464
	(3) What God has promised.....	464
b)	Humankind and redemption.....	464
	(1) Worship of redeemed.....	464
	(2) Work of redeemed.....	465
	(3) Ethics of redeemed.....	465
B.	HABAKKUK חַבְבְּקֻד (JUDAH ~ 609-605).....	468
1.	<i>Title, author, and dates</i> .....	468
2.	<i>Critical matters</i> .....	469
3.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	469
a)	“How long, O Lord . . .” (1:2).....	469
b)	“The righteous will live by his faith” (2:4).....	469
c)	“He makes my feet like the feet of a deer”(3:19).....	469
4.	<i>Major themes</i> .....	469
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	470
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition</i> .....	470
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	470
a)	Habakkuk’s first prophetic lament: Hab 1:2-4.....	470
b)	The Lord’s first response: oracle of judgment: Hab 1:5-2:1.....	471
c)	Habakkuk’s second prophetic lament: Hab 1:12-17.....	471
d)	The Lord’s second response: oracle of judgment: Hab 2:2-4 and woe: Hab 2:6-19.....	471
e)	Habakkuk’s prayer: Hab 3:1-19.....	472
8.	<i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	474
b)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH.....	474
	(1) Who God is.....	474
	(2) What God has done.....	474
	(3) What God has promised.....	474
b)	Humankind and redemption.....	475
	(1) Worship of redeemed.....	475
	(2) Work of redeemed.....	475
	(3) Ethics of redeemed.....	475
C.	DANIEL דָּנְיֵאל (BABYLON ~ 605-530).....	475
1.	<i>Critical matters</i> .....	476

2.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	476
c)	“Seventy sevens”: Dan 9:20-27 .....	476
a)	“Ancient of Days”.....	476
b)	“Anointed One”: Dan 9:25.....	477
c)	“Son of Man”: Dan 7:13-14.....	477
d)	“Abomination of desolation”: שְׁקוּצֵימֵי קִשְׁתָּם.....	477
3.	<i>Major themes</i> .....	478
4.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	478
5.	<i>Outline, structure/composition</i> .....	478
6.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	481
a)	Exile to Babylon (Hebrew): Dan 1:1-2:4a .....	482
b)	Prophecies concerning the nations (Aramaic): Dan 2:4b-7:28.....	483
c)	Prophecies concerning the nations and Israel (Hebrew): Dan 8-12.....	487
7.	<i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	500
d)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH .....	500
	(1) Who God is.....	500
	(2) What God has done.....	500
	(3) What God has promised.....	500
e)	Humankind and redemption.....	500
	(4) Worship of redeemed.....	500
	(5) Work of redeemed .....	501
	(6) Ethics of redeemed.....	501
D.	EZEKIEL יְהוֹזָקָאֵל (BABYLON ~ 597-570) .....	502
1.	<i>Title, author, and dates</i> .....	502
2.	<i>Critical matters</i> .....	503
3.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	504
a)	“I am the Lord”: the covenant promise .....	504
b)	“Watchman”: צִפְּהָ.....	505
c)	“The Spirit lifted me up”.....	505
d)	Son of man.....	505
e)	“Set your face”.....	505
4.	<i>Major themes</i> .....	506
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	506
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition</i> .....	507
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	508
a)	Judgment: Ezek 1-32.....	508
	(1) Jerusalem would fall: Ezek 1-24 .....	508
	(2) Nations would fall: Ezek 25-32.....	520
	(a) Amon (east): Ezek 25:1-7 .....	520
	(b) Moab (south): Ezek 25:8-11.....	520
	(c) Edom (south): Ezek 25:12-14.....	520
	(d) Philistia (west): Ezek 25:15-17 .....	520
	(e) Tyre (west): Ezek 26:1-28:26.....	520
	(f) Sidon (west): Ezek 28:20-26.....	522
	(g) Egypt (south): Ezek 29:1-32:32 .....	522
b)	Redemption/restoration: Ezek 33-48.....	523
	(1) Jerusalem judged: Ezek 33.....	523
	(2) Nations would fall: Ezek 35; 38-39.....	523
	(3) Jerusalem restored: Ezek 34; 36-37; 40-48.....	530
8.	<i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	540
f)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH .....	540
	(1) Who God is.....	540
	(2) What God has done.....	540
	(3) What God has promised.....	540
b)	Humankind and redemption.....	540
	(1) Worship of redeemed.....	540
	(2) Work of redeemed .....	541
	(3) Ethics of redeemed] .....	541

**IV. PERSIAN PERIOD PROPHETS: POSTEXILIC (538-400 B.C.) ..... 542**

A.	HAGGAI חֲגַי (JUDAH ~ 520) .....	544
1.	<i>Title, author, and dates</i> .....	544
2.	<i>Critical matters</i> .....	545
3.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	545
a)	“Give careful thought”.....	545
b)	“I am with you”.....	545
c)	“I will shake the heavens and the earth” .....	546
d)	“Lord Almighty (of Hosts)”.....	546

4.	<i>Major themes</i> .....	546
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	547
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition</i> .....	547
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	547
a)	Exhortation to faith-faltering Judah: Hag 1:2-11 .....	548
(1)	First word of the Lord .....	548
b)	Obedience of Judah in rebuilding: Hag 1:12-15.....	549
c)	Encouragement of Judah: Hag 2:1-23 .....	550
(1)	Second word of the Lord.....	550
(2)	The third word of the Lord.....	552
(3)	The fourth word of the Lord.....	553
8.	<i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	554
a)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH .....	554
(1)	Who God is .....	554
(2)	What God has done .....	554
(3)	What God has promised .....	554
b)	Humankind and redemption.....	554
(1)	Worship of redeemed .....	554
(2)	Work of redeemed.....	554
(3)	Ethics of redeemed.....	555
B.	ZECHARIAH זְכַרְיָהּ (JUDAH ~ 520) .....	555
1.	<i>Title, author, and dates</i> .....	555
2.	<i>Critical matters</i> .....	556
3.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	556
a)	“Lord Almighty”.....	556
b)	“The Branch” .....	557
4.	<i>Major themes</i> .....	558
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	558
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition</i> .....	559
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	560
a)	The rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple: Zech 1-8.....	560
b)	The future (Messianic) restoration of Israel: Zech 9-14.....	571
8.	<i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	580
a)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH .....	580
(1)	Who God is .....	580
(2)	What God has done .....	580
(3)	What God has promised .....	580
b)	Humankind and redemption.....	581
(1)	Worship of redeemed .....	581
(2)	Work of redeemed.....	581
(3)	Ethics of redeemed.....	581
C.	MALACHI מְלָאכִי (JUDAH ~ CA. 475-450 OR 433) .....	582
1.	<i>Title, author, and dates</i> .....	582
2.	<i>Critical matters</i> .....	583
3.	<i>Distinctive words/phrases</i> .....	583
a)	“Lord Almighty (of hosts)”.....	583
b)	Covenant .....	583
c)	“Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated” (Mal 1:2-3).....	583
d)	“My messenger” (Mal 2:7; 3:1) .....	584
e)	“Guard yourself in your spirit” (Mal 2:16b).....	584
f)	“A refiner’s fire” (Mal 3:2b).....	584
g)	“The sun of righteousness” (Mal 4:2) .....	584
h)	“The prophet Elijah” (Mal 4:5).....	584
i)	Rhetorical questions and rhetorical answers .....	584
4.	<i>Major themes</i> .....	584
5.	<i>Major prophecies</i> .....	585
6.	<i>Outline, structure/composition</i> .....	585
7.	<i>Exposition and the history of redemption themes</i> .....	586
a)	God loves Israel, yet rejects the wicked ~ Mal 1:2-5 .....	586
b)	God rebukes unfaithful priests ~ Mal 1:6-2:9 .....	588
c)	God judges unfaithful Judah ~ Mal 2:10-16.....	589
d)	God sends his messenger before the Lord: repent! ~ Mal 2:17-3:12.....	590
e)	God judges the unfaithful and vindicates the faithful ~ Mal 3:13-4:3[3:19-21].....	591
f)	God sends the prophet Elijah before the Lord: repent! ~ Mal 4:4-6[3:22-24].....	592
8.	<i>History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling</i> .....	592
a)	Revelation and redemption from YHWH .....	592
(1)	Who God is .....	592
(2)	What God has done .....	592

(3)    What God has promised.....	592
b)    Humankind and redemption.....	592
(1)    Worship of redeemed.....	592
(2)    Work of redeemed.....	593
(3)    Ethics of redeemed.....	593
<b>V.    ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN BACKGROUNDS TO THE OT .....</b>	<b>594</b>
A.    SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS OF A.N.E. PEOPLES .....	594
1. <i>Amalekites/Amalek</i> .....	600
2. <i>Ammon/Ammonites</i> .....	601
3. <i>Amorites/Canaanites</i> .....	601
4. <i>Aram/Arameans/Syrian/Syrians</i> .....	602
5. <i>Canaan /Canaanites</i> .....	603
6. <i>Edom/Edomites</i> .....	605
7. <i>Egypt/Egyptians</i> .....	606
a)    Background to Egypt:.....	606
8. <i>Horites/Hivites</i> .....	614
9. <i>Hittites</i> .....	615
10. <i>Midian/Midianites</i> .....	618
11. <i>Moab/Moabites</i> .....	618
12. <i>Philistia/Philistines/Palestine</i> .....	619
13. <i>Persia/Persians</i> .....	621
a)    Chronology of the Persians.....	622
b)    Susah.....	626
14. <i>Phoenecia/Phoenecians</i> .....	627
15. <i>Mesopotamia: Sumerians, Akkadians, Assyrians, and Babylonians</i> .....	630
B.    SUMMARY OF A.N.E. GODS AND THEIR CONSORTS .....	638
1. <i>Sumerian pantheon</i> .....	638
2. <i>Egyptian pantheon: the four major cosmologies at four main cult centers</i> .....	639
a)    Heliopolis.....	640
b)    Memphis.....	641
c)    Hermopolis.....	641
d)    Thebes.....	641
3. <i>Levant pantheon</i> .....	642
a)    Canaanite religion and temple shrines.....	645
b)    Canaan and Israel: culture and religion.....	646
4. <i>Assyrian and Babylonian pantheons</i> .....	651
5. <i>Persian pantheon</i> .....	653
6. <i>A comparison of A.N.E. pantheons</i> .....	654
C.    SUMMARY OF A.N.E. CULTURES' SALIENT FEATURES.....	655
<b>VI.    APOLOGETIC VALUE OF BIBLICAL PROPHECY.....</b>	<b>656</b>
<b>VII.   BIBLIOGRAPHY(SELECT).....</b>	<b>656</b>
A.    ACADEMIC REFERENCES .....	656
B.    ANCIENT ISRAEL AND THE A.N.E. ....	657
C.    ARCHEOLOGY .....	659
D.    BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIAS/DICTIONARIES/ATLASES.....	660
E.    BIBLE STUDY, HERMENEUTICS, PREACHING .....	660
F.    BIBLICAL/SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY .....	661
G.    CONCORDANCES .....	662
H.    CURRENT ISSUES AND APOLOGETICS.....	663
I.    ETHICS .....	664
J.    ESCHATOLOGY.....	665
K.    GRAMMARS.....	665
L.    HISTORICAL-CRITICISM.....	665
M.    HISTORY-WRITING AND THE OLD TESTAMENT .....	666
N.    IDOLATRY .....	666
O.    LANGUAGE (AND HEBREW) .....	666
P.    LEXICONS .....	666
Q.    LINGUISTICS.....	667
R.    LITERARY STRUCTURES .....	667
S.    OT INTRODUCTION .....	667
T.    SURVEYS.....	667
U.    TEXTUAL CRITICISM.....	668
V.    PROPHETS BACKGROUND.....	668

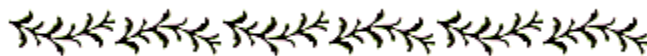
W. SURVEYS OF OT.....669

VIII. SELECTIVE INDEX ..... 670

## Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets

*Some introductory comments on procedure:*

1. Cross-references are sometimes given in the syllabus as helps in locating items. Some sections have preliminary material as follows:  
[for suggestions about further research, etc.]
2. The subheadings in the syllabus are not treated evenly, but this is not intended to imply less importance, but only limited time for a survey.
3. These printed notes are intended as a help in covering the material in class and for future study and teaching. Such notes are designed to be improved upon, for much of it is suggestive only. If you do not like to rely on the syllabus notes in class, then feel free to take notes, if that helps you stay focused and reflective.
4. The goal of frequently including sample texts in the syllabus is not for "proof-texting," but rather to show the diverse contexts in which particularly significant words and motifs are found. This may generally serve only to give you a quick survey of those texts, while occasionally highlighting important *features* in the history of those motifs, as well as their *development* in the history of redemption. It may thus sometimes suggest the theological unity of the Bible, despite the diversity of contexts in which those motifs and words are found.
5. I seek to strike a balance between lecture, free discussion and class involvement. Different learning preferences make it impossible to keep everyone happy. Some see academic study as impractical, always pushing to lower the content so as to make it more "practical." Others see academic study as a challenge or game. Some love class discussion, some loathe it. Discussion is very helpful for *reflection* and application, but we still must cover the material adequately. The important thing is that you come to better understand the overview and contents of the historical books. The material in the readings naturally overlaps with the syllabus. I try to avoid too much repetition, but the readings, the syllabus, and the final review are designed to have you cover the material from three vantage points: as reader, in-class listener/discusser, and as writer (final).
6. Classes will consist of reviewing the contents of the syllabus, discussion of salient points, and focusing on "retelling the story" in order to understand its *theology*. I am unabashedly concerned primarily with the redemptive-historical meaning of OT history (discussed below). I am also unreservedly enthralled by it. I hope you too will increase in wonder, and marvel in what God has done towards our redemption. The praise song which says, "Lord we love you for who you are not for what you have done," is turned on its head in the Bible. From beginning to end, we are called to love and praise him *for what he has done*. In fact, we discover who he is through what he has done, as revealed in scripture.



**"Sin began with acceding to the lie of the father of lies. Integrity begins with the implantation of truth in our inward parts and the reception of the love of the truth and the truth of love."<sup>1</sup>**

**An unholy world will never be won to Christ by an unholy church.<sup>2</sup>**

When any generation is content to rely upon its theological heritage and refuses to explore for itself the riches of divine revelation, then declension is already under way and heterodoxy will be the lot of the succeeding generation. The powers of darkness are never idle and in combating error each generation must fight its own battle in exposing and correcting the same.<sup>3</sup>

**IF WE FIND DULLNESS IN THE BIBLE IT IS BECAUSE OUR MINDS ARE HEAVY AND PREOCCUPIED; THEY HAVE BEEN LULLED TO SLEEP ON TRUTHS WHICH ANGELS DESIRE TO LOOK INTO, THIS IS**

<sup>1</sup> Murray, *Principles*, p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> Alcorn, *Christians in the Wake of the Sexual Revolution*, p. .

<sup>3</sup> From John Murray, "Systematic Theology" *WTJ*.

**NOT A MUSEUM OF SACRED ANTIQUITIES TO WHICH WE ARE LED, BUT THE WORD OF THE LIVING GOD, SPOKEN FOR THE GUIDANCE, COMFORT, AND REDEMPTION OF HUMAN LIFE. -TREVOR H. DAVIES, SPIRITUAL VOICES IN MODERN LITERATURE: THE LETTERS OF JAMES SMETHAM<sup>4</sup>**

Theology is a joyful intellectual task because the source of its task is the source of profoundest joy. (Tho. Aqu. ST 1-11 Q2-5). At the moment at which one feels one's theological endeavors becoming tedious and heavy, one may have forgotten that the center of the effort is the joy of God's presence – the ground of true happiness, the end of human despair. The God-inquiry furnishes the mind with its most radical challenge: God. It offers an unparalleled opportunity to think consistently, constructively, and fittingly about the One who gives life: this extraordinary, unduplicable being, God, who ultimately enjoys the penultimate goodness of creatures (Gen 1:18-31).<sup>5</sup>

**Although the problem is not evidenced uniformly throughout the country, it is certainly true that American seminaries and churches have tended to externalize the unity of theology by emphasizing the practice of ministry and, further, by defining practice in terms of the techniques of ministry. Again, it is not a universal problem uniformly evidenced, but the teachers of ministerial practice have been notoriously unable to deal with theological issues drawn from biblical, historical, or dogmatic theology and to apply these issues to contemporary situations. (There is also considerable irony in the frequently heard claim that the teachers of the so-called theoretical disciplines ought to make their courses more practical when the teachers of practice have difficulty working with theological categories.) Muller, Richard A. "The Study of Theology: From Biblical Interpretation to Contemporary Formulation" (*Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*, p. 553).**

Far too many Christians regard the Christian church merely as a clinic, a hospital, instead of realizing that it is more like a barracks. It is not a clinic. We are all suffering . . . feeling our own pulses and talking about ourselves, and our moods, and our subjective states. We have lost the concept of the army of God and the King of righteousness in this fight against the kingdom of evil. Forget yourself and your temporary troubles and ills for the moment and fight in the army.<sup>6</sup>



**In truth thou canst not read the scriptures too much;  
And what thou readest, thou canst not read too well;  
And what thou readest well, thou canst not too well understand;  
And what thou understandest well, thou canst not too well teach;  
And what thou teachest well, thou canst not too well live.**

**-Martin Luther**



**"None will ever be a good minister of the Word of God, except he first be a scholar [of the Word]."<sup>7</sup>**

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Solomon Goldman, *The Book of Books: An Introduction* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1948), p. 185.

<sup>5</sup> Oden, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, p. 377.

<sup>6</sup> Martin L. Jones, vol. 3, *Romans*, p. .

<sup>7</sup> Lints quotes Calvin, *The Fabric*, p. 161.

# I. OT PROPHETS & PROPHETISM: BACKGROUND AND HERMENEUTICS

## A. Background to OT prophecy & redemptive-historical themes

**“Eschatology is the crown of redemption.”<sup>8</sup>**

The world of the prophets ushers us into the realm of the *eschatos* – eschatology – for God’s word which created is given to God’s prophets to point to the future of redemption, either events, acts, attitudes, or to put it simply, it is the *latter* word of God speaking – the Creator God creates redemption and brings word of it through his prophets. His word throughout the prophets is not always predictive, but it does point forward, in so far as it points backward to remind of the former works of God, creation, redemption, promises, and warnings. That is, the prophetic word is retrograde and progressive, pointing forward to either repentance and forgiveness, rebellion and judgment, or indecision and rejection. As revelation unfolds in stages, it builds on what is known, assuming it, never contradicting previous revelation. Each further revelation is a reminder that redemption is not yet complete. The word of the prophets is “take stock, consider now – *remember* – and look ahead. Prepare for the next chapter, for it is about to open. The details may be obscure, but their reality will not be.”

The revelation of redemption all points to Jesus, the final revelation of God and the bringer of redemption. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus accomplished the hope of redemption. The return of Christ will bring the consummation of redemption, the *eschatos of the promises*. The hope of redemption is thus foreshadowed in the creation and realized in the resurrection (p. 22) and return of Jesus Christ.

Redemption is a divine procedure taking place in the form of time, in the form of history. Therefore, as such, it cannot be thought of without the implied idea of a terminus, a point of arrival.<sup>9</sup>

The perspective of the writing prophets is *eschatological*:<sup>10</sup>

1. recapitulates redemptive history
2. it is not mere repetition
3. nation of Israel, whole of creation

### **Biblical Theology:**

- See course-syllabus *OT Theology II: Prophets and Wisdom*.

In terms of the broad historical sweep of theology in the Bible, we can simply outline prophetic revelation as follows:

- ✚ Edenic *prophetic ministry* (also priestly and kingly) of Adam/Eve in studying, exploring, naming, interpreting creation
- ✚ Patriarchal period that included *prophetic roles/offices* of revelation of God’s word to his people
- ✚ The Law is given *prophetically* in the context of the formation of the nation of Israel
- ✚ The Former Prophets prophetically communicate God’s intentions to the world
- ✚ The Wisdom literature prophetically addresses all aspects of life lived under the Lordship of YHWH
- ✚ The Latter Prophets prophetically communicate God’s intentions for the world

Since the Rebellion, God’s intentions for the world are judgment and redemption: Redemption involves the whole of revelation (the word) as the whole gospel for the whole world for the whole person.

The overarching contexts of revelation must always be kept in mind: in simple form they cover



The Latter Prophets (pre-exilic, exilic, and Post-exilic) fit into the big picture of the biblical theology of redemption, and connect with all other stages of redemption-history. All prophetic revelation from the Garden onwards involves *forth-telling and for-telling* to God’s people and to all the nations. All prophetic revelation after

<sup>8</sup> Vos, *Eschatology*, p. 7.

<sup>9</sup> Vos, *Eschatology*, p. 6.

<sup>10</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, p. 172.



the Fall points to Jesus Christ and culminates completely in Him. Once Christ appears in the flesh and completes his work as a man in redeeming his creation, there is no more prophetic revelation until the final revelation of his *parousia* and the renewal of all things (pp. 56-58). As in the Garden of prophetic studying, exploring, naming, and interpreting creation the same activity will continue forever in the eternal new creation.

## 1. *Jesus is both the hope and the bringer of redemption*

➤ See creation/redemption, p. 56

Heb 1:1-3 – prophets, Son, Jesus is the true Prophet expected

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Matt 23:29-32 Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. 30 And you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our forefathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' 31 So you testify against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. 32 Fill up, then, the measure of the sin of your forefathers!

Lu 24:25-26 25 He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?"

May we take this as a sobering reminder that the prophets' words are God's word to us to believe.

**"Jesus is *the* prophet who renders all other prophets meaningful."  
Jesus is the "fullest prophetic word."<sup>11</sup>**

Mk 1:14-15 the time is *fulfilled* or see NRSV, NIV, etc

NIV After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

RSV Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel."

NASB And after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

The gospel of the whole Bible is the redemption of God's people, restoring them to his kingdom. His presence is restored to them. More than restored, for it now indwells them through his Spirit.

Col 1:16-19 – the center of the eschatos of all the ages is Jesus Christ.

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,

Rom 1:1-4 – God's gospel, the prophecy and the gospel promise

1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— 2 the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures 3 regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, 4 and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom 4:25 – Resurrection shows Jesus to be the Son of God (see resurrection below)

He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

**"Salvation history is the process of eschatology  
being worked out in the history of our world ."<sup>12</sup>**

OT prophecy of Christ – Christ is the eschatos – the goal of redemption, God incarnate is redemption for human beings. All prophecy points to his first coming – the second coming is consonant with the first, it is always consonant with the implicit assumption of the creator-redeemer's faithfulness to his promises

<sup>11</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching* p. 90

<sup>12</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, p. 79.

in the revelation of redemption. The second coming completes what was accomplished in the first coming. That is, OT prophecies always point to the first coming of Christ.<sup>13</sup>

2 Pet 3:2-7 I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles. 3 First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. 4 They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." 5 But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. 6 By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. 7 By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

Rev 11:15 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said:

"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."

1 Cor 15:28 When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

"Eschatology begins in the eternal purposes of God according to which 'he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love' (Eph 1:4)."<sup>14</sup>

- See Messianic prophecy, pp. 173-174.

(left) Resurrection of Christ by Dürer



<sup>13</sup> See Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, p. 93.

<sup>14</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, p. 89.

(below) Albrecht Dürer, the Nativity of Christ



**Blaise Pascal's Pensées (1660)** translated by W. F. Trotter (WWW public domain book): (see on predictions, pp. 159, 174, 200, 223 and "fortelling," p.159.)

727. During the life of the Messiah. Aenigmatis [An enigmatic riddle]. Ezek. 17.

His forerunner. Malachi 3.

He will be born an infant. Is. 9.

He will be born in the village of Bethlehem. Micah 5.

He will appear chiefly in Jerusalem and will be a descendant of the family of Judah and of David.

He is to blind the learned and the wise, Is. 6. 8. 29. etc.; and to preach the Gospel to the lowly, Is. 29; to open the eyes of the blind, give health to the sick, and bring light to those that languish in darkness. Is. 61.

He is to show the perfect way, and be the teacher of the Gentiles. Is. 55; 43. 1-7.

The prophecies are to be unintelligible to the wicked, Dan. 12; Hosea 14. 10; but they are to be intelligible to those who are well informed.

The prophecies, which represent Him as poor, represent Him as master of the nations. Is. 52. 14, etc.; 53; Zech. 9. 9.

The prophecies, which foretell the time, foretell Him only as master of the nations and suffering, and not as in the clouds nor as judge. And those, which represent Him thus as judge and in glory, do not mention the time. When the Messiah is spoken of as great and glorious, it is as the judge of the world, and not its Redeemer.

He is to be the victim for the sins of the world. Is. 39. 53. etc.

He is to be the precious corner-stone. Is. 28. 16.

He is to be a stone of stumbling and offence. Is. viii. Jerusalem is to dash against this stone.

The builders are to reject this stone. Ps. 117. 22.

God is to make this stone the chief corner-stone.

And this stone is to grow into a huge mountain and fill the whole earth. Dan. 2.

So He is to be rejected, despised, betrayed (Ps. 108. 8), sold (Zech. 11. 12), spit upon, buffeted, mocked, afflicted in innumerable ways, given gall to drink (Ps. 68), pierced (Zech. 12), His feet and His hands pierced, slain, and lots cast for His raiment.

He will rise again (Ps. 15) the third day (Hosea 6. 3).

He will ascend to heaven to sit on the right hand. Ps. 110.

The kings will arm themselves against Him. Ps. 2.

Being on the right hand of the Father, He will be victorious over His enemies.

The kings of the earth and all nations will worship Him. Is. lx .

The Jews will continue as a nation. Jeremiah.

They will wander, without kings, etc. (Hosea 3), without prophets (Amos), looking for salvation and finding it not (Isaiah).

Calling of the Gentiles by Jesus Christ. Is. 52. 15; 55. 5; 60. etc. Ps. 81.

Hosea 1. 9: "Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God, when ye are multiplied after the dispersion. In the places where it was said, Ye are not my people, I will call them my people."

728. It was not lawful to sacrifice outside of Jerusalem, which was the place that the Lord had chosen, nor even to eat the tithes elsewhere. Deut. 12. 5, etc.; Deut. 14. 23, etc.; 15. 20; 16. 2, 7, 11, 15.

Hosea foretold that they should be without a king, without a prince, without a sacrifice, and without an idol; and this prophecy is now fulfilled, as they cannot make a lawful sacrifice out of Jerusalem.

729. Predictions.- It was foretold that, in the time of the Messiah, He should come to establish a new covenant, which should make them forget the escape from Egypt (Jer. 23. 5; Is. 43. 10); that He should place His law not in externals, but in the heart; that He should put His fear, which had only been from without, in the midst of the heart. Who does not see the Christian law in all this?

730.... That then idolatry would be overthrown; that this Messiah would cast down all idols and bring men into the worship of the true God.

That the temples of the idols would be cast down, and that among all nations and in all places of the earth. He would be offered a pure sacrifice, not of beasts.

That He would be king of the Jews and Gentiles. And we see this king of the Jews and Gentiles oppressed by both, who conspire His death; and ruler of both, destroying the worship of Moses in Jerusalem, which was its centre, where He made His first Church; and also the worship of idols in Rome, the centre of it, where He made His chief Church.

731. Prophecies.- That Jesus Christ will sit on the right hand, till God has subdued His enemies.

Therefore He will not subdue them Himself.

732. "... Then they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, saying, Here is the Lord, for God shall make Himself known to all."

"... Your sons shall prophesy." "I will put my spirit and my fear in your heart."

All that is the same thing. To prophesy is to speak of God, not from outward proofs, but from an inward and immediate feeling.

733. That He would teach men the perfect way.

And there has never come, before Him nor after Him, any man who has taught anything divine approaching to this.

734.... That Jesus Christ would be small in His beginning, and would then increase. The little stone of Daniel.

If I had in no wise heard of the Messiah, nevertheless, after such wonderful predictions of the course of the world which I see fulfilled, I see that He is divine. And, if I knew that these same books foretold a Messiah, I should be sure that He would come; and seeing that they place His time before the destruction of the second temple, I should say that He had come.

735. Prophecies.- That the Jews would reject Jesus Christ, and would be rejected of God, for this reason, that the chosen vine brought forth only wild grapes. That the chosen people would be fruitless, ungrateful, and unbelieving, *populum non credentem et contradicentem*.\* That God would strike them with blindness, and in full noon they would grope like the blind; and that a forerunner would

go before Him.

736. *Transfixerunt*.\*(2) Zech. 12. 10.

\* Is. 65. 2. "A rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good."

\*(2) "They have pierced."

That a deliverer should come, who would crush the demon's head, and free His people from their sins, ex omnibus *iniquitatibus*;\* that there should be a New Covenant, which would be eternal; that there should be

another priesthood after the order of Melchisedek, and it should be eternal; that the Christ should be glorious, mighty, strong, and yet so poor that He would not be recognized, nor taken for what He is, but rejected and slain; that His people who denied Him should no longer be His people; that the idolaters should receive Him, and take refuge in Him; that He should leave Zion to reign in the center of idolatry; that nevertheless the Jews should continue for ever; that He should be of Judah, and when there should be no longer a king.

The relationship between Old and New is held together by their common witness to Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The Jesus of the Gospels, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse is the glorious Son of God, the eschatological Prophet, the hope of the ages: "I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and Morning Star" (Rev 22:16). Jesus came to bring the consummation, establish the kingdom of God, and fulfil all the promises of God (Acts 3:19-21). Reality, fulfillment, and hope lie in our glorious Lord.<sup>15</sup>

### ***The hope of redemption:***

As background to all of the themes under this subheading, are the themes of *hope* and *waiting*. The backdrop to all of redemption history is the hope of God's people who are waiting on God's redemption, whether it is personal, national, or particular. Waiting is not limited to either specific waiting for answered prayers, or just generalized waiting on the Lord in some spiritual sense. Waiting covers the entire range of hoping in the Lord. The focus of hope is on YHWH, not simply on particulars of blessing, etc. That is, though the hope may be about particulars, it would be a vain hope if not rooted in God himself. Thus, all waiting and hoping in the Lord is a looking God-ward, for God is the only source of real hope. This rests in the reality that God is actually present in history and humans. Without this covenant-presence, there could be no hope, for humans are finite, the world is "too much for us," and we are incapable of delivering ourselves, though we try. We despair of life when we have no ground for true hope. Hoping and waiting in biblical terms assumes the steadfast endurance that comes only from true *faith*. Hope is rooted in the *promises* of God which are rooted in the unchanging *character* of God, while God's *purposes* are rooted in his perfect *will*. His justice in all his purposes is executed with the perfections of his character, so that God's people can always rest assured that hope for justice will not be deferred forever. The promises of God are not always seen in each "historical event" from the vantage point of present life, but in the end all events will be seen as having worked out the redemptive promises of God. Even when hope is not specified, there is *expectancy*, for hope in God is *real* hope. In a culture saturated with the "prosperity gospel," we are inclined to view hope in strictly material terms (new job, housing, family, health, etc), yet hope subsumes these concerns in the broader realm of redemption and sanctification.

As Job cried out, "Though he slay me, yet will I hope (אִתִּי) in him; I will surely defend my ways to his face" (Job 13:15).

"Faith in the sovereignty of the covenant God, obedience to the restored law of Moses, patience to wait for a vision postponed, confidence in the ultimate vindication of their purposes in history, and expectation of the expansion of God's kingdom despite all signs to the contrary—these were the responses of Israel's finest sons and daughters in circumstances that tried them almost to breaking-point."<sup>16</sup>

***Hope in the prophets:*** In general, hope is about an attitude or a predisposition of heart and mind, whether of faith or futility. Hope in the prophets sometimes has no particular object in view, but often it is rooted in hope for the remnant's return from exile, or some other future hope. In several instances hope is deferred: Isa 5:7; 59:11; Jer

<sup>15</sup> VanGemeren, *Interpreting*, p. 92.

<sup>16</sup> D.A. Hubbard, "Hope in the OT," *TynBul*, 1983: 33-59. Quoted in Daniel Schibler, "קִוְיָ," *NIDOTE*, p. 895.

8:15; 14:19). This is similar to the theme of futile hope. For example, once the pre-exilic “point of no return” had been reached there was no real hope, because it was too late.

קוּהַ (*qwh* I, 7747) – to tarry, wait, hope. Found frequently in the Latter Prophets (29x). (Isa 5:2,4; 59:9; Jer 13:16). See Isa 5:4; 5:7; 8:17; 25:9; 26:8; 33:2; 40:31; 49:23; 51:5; 59:9, 11; 60:9; 64:2; Jer 3:17; 8:15; 13:16; 14:19, 22; Hos 12:7; Micah 5:6; Lam 2:16; 3:25.

חָכָה (*hkh*, 2675) – to wait, endure, expect, hope. Occurs 14x. See Isa 8:17; 30:18; 64:3; Hos 6:9; Hab 2:3; Zeph 3:8; Dan 12:12. The primary emphasis this verb has in the Latter Prophets is more “mere waiting” with expectancy and patience, rather than that of hope. The object of the verb determines whether the verb is rendered hope or waiting.

יָחַל (*yhl*, 3498) – wait, hope, endure, longing for. Occurs 48x in OT. True hope is always rooted in God. See Isaiah 42:4; 51:5; Jer 4:19; Ezek 13:6; 19:5; Micah 5:6; 7:7; Lam 3:21, 24, 26.

שָׁבַר (*šbr*, 8432) – test, investigate, hope, wait. Occurs 9x in OT. The intensive Pi form conveys hope and expectancy, as well as futile hope or waiting in vain.

Van Gemeren outlines hope in the Prophets:<sup>17</sup>

1. Anticipation of God’s rule
2. Universal acknowledgement of God’s rule and the eradication of idolatry
3. Revelation of God’s glory and splendor
4. Abolition of evil and tyranny
5. Sanctification of God’s name and the establishment of God’s kingdom on earth
6. Hope of immanent coming of the day salvation and judgment
7. Hope of salvation and the fulfillment of the promises

“The language of hope comes to expression when we recognize that the language of eschatology is the language of metaphor.”<sup>18</sup>



<p><b>Despair</b>                  don't hope                  don't wait                  for hope                  to arrive                  with its                  hands tied                  behind                  its back                  don't wait                  for waiting                  is conceding                  hope                  that is already                  too late.</p>	<p><b>Hope</b>                  don't despair                  don't let                  despair arrive                  to bind you                  hand and foot                  don't run                  to hide behind                  its back                  wait                  for hoping                  consigns death                  to despair                  before it's                  too late.</p>
---	---



## 2. Resurrection: the fulfillment of the promise and eschatos

Acts 2:23-24 – resurrection is central to eschatology and the history of redemption.  
 This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. <sup>24</sup> But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

<sup>17</sup> Van Gemeren, *Interpreting the Prophetic Word*, p. 94.  
<sup>18</sup> Van Gemeren, *Interpreting the Prophetic Word*, p. 94.

“The bodily resurrection is the justification of Jesus as the human son of God and is thus the basis of the justification of all who believe in him.”<sup>19</sup>

“The meaning of all the scriptures is unlocked by the death and resurrection of Jesus.”<sup>20</sup>

**The crown of creation is humankind.  
The crown of redemption is resurrected humankind.**

In the unfolding of revelation, resurrection is the remedy to the malady of the curse, thus the fulcrum of all redemption. This centerpiece of redemption is only very gradually seen in the OT, although it is has several dramatic highpoints (Elijah - 2 Ki 2:9-11 - see raising of the dead). Several important highlights include the assumption of Enoch (Gen 5:24). Contrast: Platonism, Gnosticism, Mysticism, Asceticism, and their devaluation of the body and life in this world.

Deut 34:6 – Moses

He buried him in Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no one knows where his grave is.

Nu 23:10 – Balaam’s *mashal*

Who can count the dust of Jacob  
or number the fourth part of Israel?  
Let me die the death of the righteous,  
and may my end be like theirs!”

Ps 16:10-11 because you will not abandon me to the grave,  
nor will you let your Holy One see  
decay. 11 You have made known to me the path of life;  
you will fill me with joy in your presence,  
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Ps 17:14-15 O LORD, by your hand save me from such men,  
from men of this world whose reward is in this life.  
You still the hunger of those you cherish;  
their sons have plenty, and they store up wealth for their children.  
15 And I—in righteousness I will see your face;  
when I awake, I will be satisfied with seeing your likeness.

Ps 49:15 But God will redeem my life from the grave;  
he will surely take me to himself. *Selah*

Ps 73:23,25-26 Yet I am always with you;  
you hold me by my right hand.  
25 Whom have I in heaven but you?  
And earth has nothing I desire besides you.  
26 My flesh and my heart may fail,  
but God is the strength of my heart  
and my portion forever.



Job 19:25-27

וְאָנֹכִי יָדַעְתִּי גִּבְרִי חַי וְאַחֲרָיוֹן עַל-עַפְרָי יָקוּם׃ 19:25  
 וְאַחֲרַי עֹרִי נִקְפֹּז־זָאֵת וּמִבְּשָׂרִי אֲחֻזָּה אֱלֹהִים׃ 19:26  
 אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי אֲחֻזָּה-לִּי וְעֵינַי רְאוּ וְלֹא-זָר כֻּלּוֹ כִּלְיִתִּי בַּחֲקִי׃ 19:27  
 25 I know that my Redeemer lives,  
 and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.  
 26 And after my skin has been destroyed,  
 yet in my flesh I will see God;  
 27 I myself will see him  
 with my own eyes—I, and not another.  
 How my heart yearns within me!

<sup>19</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, p. 83.

<sup>20</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, p. 54.

Vos says this is too obscure in the Hebrew to be sure of resurrection here, translating the  $\aleph$  in v. 26 as “outside my flesh.”<sup>21</sup> Buswell says the  $\aleph$  in verse 26 is the only difficulty, which should be translated *from* instead of “outside my flesh” or “without my flesh” (ASV 1901).<sup>22</sup> See RSV “from my flesh,” KJV “in my flesh.” Calvin believed strongly that Job was looking forward to the bodily resurrection.<sup>23</sup>

Isa 26:19 But your dead will live;  
their bodies will rise.  
You who dwell in the dust,  
wake up and shout for joy.  
Your dew is like the dew of the morning;  
the earth will give birth to her dead.



Isa 25:6-7 – death swallowed up forever  
6 On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare  
a feast of rich food for all peoples,  
a banquet of aged wine—  
the best of meats and the finest of wines.  
7 On this mountain he will destroy  
the shroud that enfolds all peoples,  
the sheet that covers all nations;

Dan 12:1ff – two sided resurrection here(?)<sup>2</sup> Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake:  
some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. <sup>3</sup> Those who are wise will shine like  
the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

1 Cor 15:52 in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead  
will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

Resurrection is *the* sign of the new age (the eschaton).<sup>24</sup>

### OT belief in life, salvation, and resurrection after death:

Gen 17:7 I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant (see p. 70) between me and you and your descendants after you for  
the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.

Gen 49:18 -- Jacob’s hope of salvation  
I look for your deliverance, O LORD.

Ex 3:6 Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his  
face, because he was afraid to look at God.

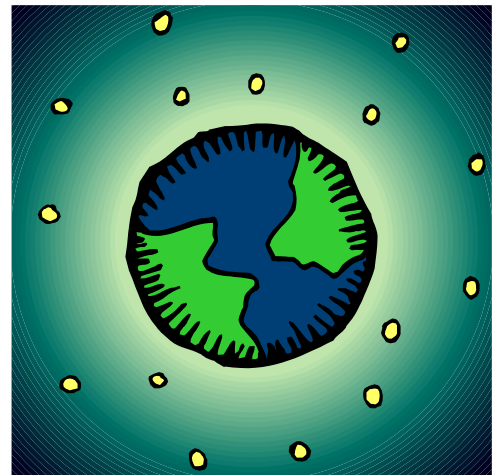
Deut 33:3 all the saints are in his hand  
Surely it is you who love the people;  
all the holy ones are in your hand.  
At your feet they all bow down,  
and from you receive instruction,

Num 23:10 Who can count the dust of Jacob  
or number the fourth part of Israel?  
Let me die the death of the righteous,  
and may my end be like theirs!”

Ps 34:22 The LORD redeems his servants;  
no one will be condemned who takes refuge in him.

Ps 116:15 Precious in the sight of the LORD  
is the death of his saints.

Ps 102:25-28 In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth,  
and the heavens are the work of your hands.  
26 They will perish, but you remain;  
they will all wear out like a garment.  
Like clothing you will change them  
and they will be discarded.  
27 But you remain the same,



<sup>21</sup> Vos, *Eschatology of the OT*, p. 25.

<sup>22</sup> Buswell, *A Systematic Theology*, part IV, “Eschatology,” p. 327.

<sup>23</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, II.X.19, pp. 445-446. See James Orr, “Immortality in the Old Testament,” *Classical Evangelical Essays*, pp. 253-265.

<sup>24</sup> VanGemeren, *Interpreting*, p. 90.



and your years will never end.

28 The children of your servants will live in your presence; their descendants will be established before you.

Ps 111:9 He provided redemption for his people;  
he ordained his covenant forever—  
holy and awesome is his name.

Ps 140:13 Surely the righteous will praise your name and the upright will live before you.

Isa 51:6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens,  
look at the earth beneath;  
the heavens will vanish like smoke,  
the earth will wear out like a garment  
and its inhabitants die like flies.  
But my salvation will last forever,  
my righteousness will never fail



The Lord always covenanted with his servants thus, “I will be your God, and you shall be my people” [Lev 26:12]. The prophets also commonly explained that life and salvation and the whole of blessedness are embraced in these words.<sup>25</sup>

Mtt 22:23-32 That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. 24 “Teacher,” they said, “Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and have children for him. 25 Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. 26 The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh. 27 Finally, the woman died. 28 Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?”

29 Jesus replied, “You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. 30 At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. 31 But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you, 32 ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.”

- See also Lu 20:27-38.
- See Kaiser, *Toward Rediscovering the OT*, pp. 141-144.
- See R.B. Gaffin, Jr. “Resurrection and Redemption: How Eschatology and the Gospel Relate,” *Modern Reformation*, Jan/Feb 1999, pp. 23-25.

“Just as the ‘new creation’ is not to be understood first and foremost in an individualistic sense, but as the eschatological turning point for the whole created order which began with the resurrection, so our own rebirth of the inner man (i.e., regeneration) is linked to the rebirth of not only our own outer man (i.e., bodily resurrection) but to the new world.”<sup>26</sup>

“We will not say that he leads a happy life who struggles long and hard through infinite difficulties, but he who calmly enjoys present benefits without feeling misfortune.”<sup>27</sup>

### 3. *The covenant and its promises are spiritual [and material]*

- [These notes should be included in both the Hermeneutics syllabus and the Pentateuch syllabus.]
  - See Calvin, *Institutes*, Book II, Ch. XI, pp. 436-449. Calvin seems to stress in 7-8 more discontinuity than is warranted between the OT/NT in regards to the law being written on the heart (based on Paul’s discussion in 2 Cor 3:6-11 of Jer 31:31-34), contrasting literal *versus* spiritual doctrine.
  - See A.Morrison, “Two Jerusalems” in *SCP Journal*, 2004.
  - See Exodus and the spiritualization of the exodus, p.
  - See C.J.H. Wright, *OT Ethics*, on the Land and Christian Ethics: complementary *paradigmatic, eschatological, and typological* interpretations, pp. 182-198.
  - See covenant promise, p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**  
See “
  - Spiritual Israel: “They are not all Israel who are of Israel . . .”, p. 37.

#### a) *The unity of the covenants in the history of redemption*

- See Robertson, *Christ of the Prophets*, pp. 173-184; *ibid.*, *Christ of the Covenants*, ch 3, “The Unity of the Divine Covenants,” pp. 27-52.
- See Hague notes on “The Marvelous Unity of the Bible” (of the history of redemption) in the Hermeneutics and Biblical Theology

<sup>25</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, p. 435.

<sup>26</sup> M. Horton, *Modern Reformation*, Jan/Feb 1999, p. 8.

<sup>27</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, p. 438.

course-syllabi.

One of the most important hermeneutical principles is the *unity* of the revelation of redemption: scripture is one unified testimony to God and his works of creation and redemption. Intrinsically, therefore, the covenants of creation and redemption entail the essence of that unity, forming a cohesive biblical theology. This is especially important to emphasize in a time when many see conflicting covenants between Israel and the church alongside distinct epochs of divergent modes of the works of God in redemption-history. God's covenant-promises are unified, since he is One Lord, and God's people are unified, since they are one people of God. Thus, the various covenants with individuals throughout the OT are but reminders and reaffirmations of the one unified covenant of redemption.

“The cumulative evidence of the Scriptures points definitely toward the unified character of the biblical covenants. God's multiple bonds with his people ultimately unite into a single relationship. Particular details of the covenants may vary. A definite line of progress may be noted. Yet the covenants of God are one.”<sup>28</sup>



*On the Marvelous Unity of the Bible from the Biblical Theology class syllabus:*

This unity is observed particularly in several major biblical themes:

***The creation theme:*** unifies the entire bible a history about God who creates and about God who re-creates through redemption. The promise of redemption is based on the fact of creation, since only God who created this universe could be the one to redeem his creation.

***The covenant theme:*** unifies the various people and periods with the assurance that the promise of redemption will be fulfilled, because God the Creator and Redeemer promised. His word is faithful and true and will come to pass since he bound himself to his promise. The covenant is the grounds (and context) for God's binding relation. His covenant is the guarantee of his promises. His promises are to redeem, to resolve the problem of our alienation from God.

***The redemption theme:*** unifies the period following the creation and fall of humanity. This redemption theme is the central meaning of the entire Bible. The fall into sin and rebellion against God resulted in a loss of God's presence. Sin broke the unmediated presence of God in the Garden of Eden. The promise of redemption was the promise of restoration to God and his presence.

The OT and the NT display a supernatural unity here, since both testaments are intrinsically about this restoration, and the means to that restoration. There are so many interwoven themes that correlate to this redemption-restoration that I can only mention a few here, but they all testify to the wondrous unity of the Bible:

- In Eden, the first Adam was given to have *kingly, priestly, prophetic* dominion over creation, yet he sinned against God's commands, and since then all born of Adam have sinned in Adam: “For as in Adam all die . . .” 1 Cor 15:22a
- In Israel, the Last Adam, Jesus Christ was given to fulfill the mandate of obedience given to the first Adam, and Jesus succeeded. All who are born anew in him have been given his righteousness: “Even so all who are in Christ Jesus will be made alive” 1 Cor 15:22b
- The OT hundreds of times predicted and foreshadowed a Messiah, a redeemer, a deliverer, as *Prophet, Priest, and King*. This trifold expectation was fully realized in Jesus, the true Prophet, true High Priest, and true King.
- This hope of *redemption* is patterned also on the exodus from Egyptian slavery theme that integrates the OT with the NT. The people of God will be delivered by God from the slavery to sin.
- The OT established the need for atonement for sin, redemption from alienation. The entire sanctuary-life of ritual and sacrifice represented this restoration to God's holy presence. There could be no redemption without atonement. The NT shows us that ultimately only a Messiah would be able to satisfy this need for atonement (and he did just that on the Cross of his death). As the Bible begins in the paradise of God's presence it ends with the future hope of paradise in God's presence. This hope is made possible by the death of Jesus Christ. It

<sup>28</sup> Roberston, *Christ of the Covenants*, p. 28.

is also made possible by his resurrection unto life, bodily. The resurrection of the dead is another major theme that unites the OT and the NT, for God will restore his creation through redemption. Final redemption will bring life everlasting. *Redemption is a new creation and a final exodus from sin.*

- The hope of the Messiah is at the heart of the entire Bible. This is the *gospel* hope that One would come and restore, to provide the requisite means to re-enter the Eden of God's presence, the one to justify unrighteous sinners, the one to fulfill all the promises of an eternal seed, an eternal home-land, and God's eternal presence. These three were represented throughout the OT in the promise of *progeny, prosperity, and sanctuary-presence* and are realized in the work of Messiah in the NT. The restoration to God's presence would require the grace of God, this is the gospel of justification by faith that Abraham knew as well as the apostle Paul knew.
- This is the very *gospel of God* which unites the OT and the NT.  
James 2:23-24 writes "And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,"<sup>b</sup> and he was called God's friend."<sup>24</sup> You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone."
- Jesus clearly proclaimed the *monumental importance* of the unity of revelation in

Lu 24:25-27 He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup>Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" <sup>27</sup>And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

Luke 24:44-45 He said to them, "**This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.**" <sup>45</sup> Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.



## b) *The two covenants: creation and redemption*

➤ See "Creational eschatology," p. 46, Creation order/ordinances:<sup>29</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Gen. 15:6

<sup>b</sup> Or *Messiah*; also in verse 46

<sup>29</sup> See J. Murray, "Creation Ordinances," *Principles of Conduct*, pp. 27-44.

**Creation Covenant:**

Prologue to Redemption Covenant. A covenant of confirmation, unrealized due to Adam's active disobedience. Covenant broken (Hos 6:7).

**Creation ordinances:**

- o Dominion over creation exercised through image of God in humanity. Innocence: earth/humanity blessed.
- o Fruitful monogamous procreation and stewardship/work.
- o Works of (first) Adam/Eve (Gen 1:26-28).
- o Principle of law. Creation ethic typifies Mosaic law.

**Characteristics:**

- o Unconditional, spiritual eternal blessings.
- o Relies on promises/character of God.
- o Procreational dimension: family, theocratic community.
- o Vocational dimension: cultivating, subduing, stewardship, cultural and pro-creational artistry. The master gardener reflects the Master Gardener as "world shaper" "architect of space."

**Distinctives:** Prepares for Redemption Covenant

- o Implicit. Divine initiative. Bilateral. Probationary. Preservative.
- o Mandate to obey: probationary aspects of conditional covenant (Eden/Presence/Life): temporal blessings/cursings.
- o Internal/external law of God. Indwelling of Holy Spirit.
- o Temporal/spatial non-soteriological "grace" known by all. Possible life eternal.
- o Established in paradise on earth (microcosm): sanctuary of the Presence.
- o Sign of the covenant: Sabbath denotes God is Lord of all.. Signifies "creation rest." Work is not slavery. Worship is preeminent.
- o Adam is federal head of all humanity. Patriarchal authority in family and creation.
- o Administered through one covenant.
- o Result of obedience: life.
- o Preservation, development of image of God in humanity. Image of God privileged humanity over creation: dominion
- o "Dominion" reflects sinless subjection to God.
- o Eschatos for humanity is sinless, perfect unmediated communion with God and each other.
- o Guardians of the sanctuary: *priestly* functions. Unveiled Presence preserved.
- o Representatives of God's theocracy: *kingly* functions as vice-regents of the Great King overseeing paradise..
- o Recipients/administrators of God's general and specially revealed word: *prophetic* functions of prelapsarian revelations. Eschatological focus. Interpretive role: gaining greater knowledge and mastery of revealed wisdom. Naming (taxonomy).
- o Sons of God by creation. Bear the unmarred image of God and the glory of God immediately.

~ Cultural & Prophetic mandates: application of law, wisdom in creation mandate under covenant).

~ Priestly-kingly-prophetic mandate: godly dominion over creation.

**Redemption Covenant:**

Epilogue to Creation Covenant. A covenant of conferment, realized through Christ's preceptive/penal (active/passive) obedience.

**Redemption ordinances:**

- o Dominion over new creation through renewed image of God. Depravity: Satan & earth cursed.
- o Fruitful monogamous procreation and stewardship/work.
- o Works of last Adam, Jesus Christ (Jn 5:17).
- o Principle of law. Mosaic law typifies Messiah's work.

**Characteristics:**

- o Unconditional, spiritual eternal blessings.
- o Relies on promises/character of God.
- o Procreational dimension: family, ecclesiastical community.
- o Vocational dimension: cultivating, subduing, stewardship, cultural and pro-creational artistry. The master gardener reflects the Master Gardener as "world shaper" "architect of space."

**Distinctives:** Subsumes Creation Covenant

- o Explicit. Divine initiative. Bilateral. Provisional. Remedial. Intensification/progression.
- o Mandate to obey. Conditional aspects: temporal blessings/cursings (land/progeny/prosperity). Israel. Unconditional aspects (eternal promises). Messiah.
- o Internal/external law of God: "law of Christ" (Gal 6:2; 1 Cor 9:21). Regeneration/sanctification and re-indwelling work of Holy Spirit.
- o Eternal, soteriological grace known through faith (in Messiah) by elect, and common grace known by all.
- o Established in paradise in heaven (macrocosm). Presence typologized in sanctuary on earth.
- o Signs of "new" covenant: circumcision/rainbow/baptism
- o Result of obedience: soteriological grace for sinners Sabbath: denotes God is Lord of his exodus people. Signifies "redemption rest." Work is not slavery. Worship is preeminent.
- o Christ is federal head of all the elect. Messianic authority over believers and Paradise restored.
- o Administered through diverse covenants: Noah, Abraham, Moses, David.
- o through federal head of Messiah's active obedience.
- o Recreation of image of God in Christ: Redemption/renewal of creation: regeneration, justification, sanctification, resurrection of body, glorification.
- o "Dominion" reflects both sin and sanctification.
- o Eschatos for humanity is redemption: God's mediated presence restored.
- o Guardians of the sanctuary: *priestly* functions in typological, provisional sanctuary under post-lapsarian law revealed. Veiled Presence restored.
- o Representatives of God's theocracy: *kingly* functions as vice-regents of the Great King's post-lapsarian law revealed over limited theocracy of the redeemed.
- o Recipients/administrators of God's general and specially revealed word: *prophetic* functions of mediating and applying God's special post-lapsarian revelations. Eschatological focus. Interpretive role: gaining greater knowledge and mastery of revealed, (general) wisdom. Naming (taxonomy)
- o Sacrifice in sanctuary prefigures Messianic redemption.
- o Sons of God by redemption/adoption/re-creation. Bear the image of God and the glory of God through Christ.

~ Cultural & Prophetic mandates: application of law, wisdom in creation/redemption mandate under covenant.

**c) The two interacting levels of the covenant-promises:  
conditional/unconditional**

- See “Two covenants,” p. 28.
- See Spiritual Israel: “They are not all Israel who are of Israel . . .”, p. 37.

Many have found it problematic that the covenant promise, “I will be your God and you will be my people,” does not fit conveniently into the Mosaic/Sinaitic covenant. This was the catalyst in historical-critical views that placed the majority of the law after the prophets at the end of the OT canon. Many attempts have been made to devalue the law of God given at Sinai to Moses, some even claiming that the law did not belong to Israel (Noth).

A distinction between two kinds of covenants can help to clarify the issue:

**Unconditional**, unilateral, promissory covenant: Abrahamic-Davidic promises.  
**Conditional**, bilateral covenant: Mosaic-Sinaitic.

Some also call the Abrahamic/Davidic covenants conditional (O.T. Allis, R. Youngblood), yet Kaiser disagrees saying that there are no conditional stipulations attached to the Abrahamic or Davidic promises, even though obedience was required in both covenants.<sup>30</sup> Kaiser writes, “the ‘breaking’ or conditionality of the Abrahamic/Davidic covenant can only refer to personal and individual invalidation of the benefits of the covenant, but it cannot affect the transmission of the promise to the lineal descendents.”<sup>31</sup> This does not, however, take into account the possibility that the covenants all had both conditional and unconditional aspects and benefits: the Abrahamic/Davidic covenant-promises of temporal-spatial prosperity (land), progeny, and presence of God all had, on the temporal-spatial level, conditional aspects/benefits: they could all be revoked for any generation of the rebellious. While, at the same time, the unconditional, eternal aspects/benefits of the same promises were intact in the Messianic hope: promised kingdom (land), promised progeny (of Messiah and the “seed” as those who believe), promised presence (incarnation completed the promise of presence, second coming will consummate the promise of presence). There are some difficulties in determining what aspects fit into the conditional-temporal-spatial aspects of the covenants and which ones fit into the unconditional-eternal aspects of the covenants, but I believe making this distinction prevents us from either-or arguments which exclude one or the other aspect from some of the covenants. Indeed, the Abrahamic-Davidic promise corresponds to the post-fall covenant-promise of redemption to Adam, which, contrary to many interpreters, certainly would contain the eternal certainty of the promise in the Messiah, but also the certain conditionality of the covenant benefits dependent upon the requisite works the law would demand. This is expressed in the two covenants chart, p. 28. And I try to resolve the relationship of these two facets in the next section below.

Kaiser makes another helpful observation:

“There was an obligation to *transmit* the unconditional promise to each Davidic generation, even though that was not in itself a guarantee that each transmitter was also automatically a *participant* in the benefits of that promise, for they came only by faith and that faith was attested only by obedience.”<sup>32</sup>

**Qualification:** The physical/material side of redemption is also part of the *spiritual* promise of redemption. The *body* will be redeemed and resurrected. The new heavens and the new earth will be “material” (in some familiar, contiguous sense). Lest we be guilty of Neo-Platonism, we must affirm that the spiritual promises included the material, as well. To emphasize the *spiritual* nature of the promises is not meant to diminish the material and physical aspects of creation and redemption, though the “materiality” of the resurrected body will include glorification, and the new heavens and new earth will be *new*.

<sup>30</sup> Kaiser, *Toward Rediscovering*, p. 152.

<sup>31</sup> Kaiser, *Toward Rediscovering*, p. 154.

<sup>32</sup> Kaiser, *Toward Rediscovering*, p. 154.

The two levels of the covenant-promises:<sup>33</sup>

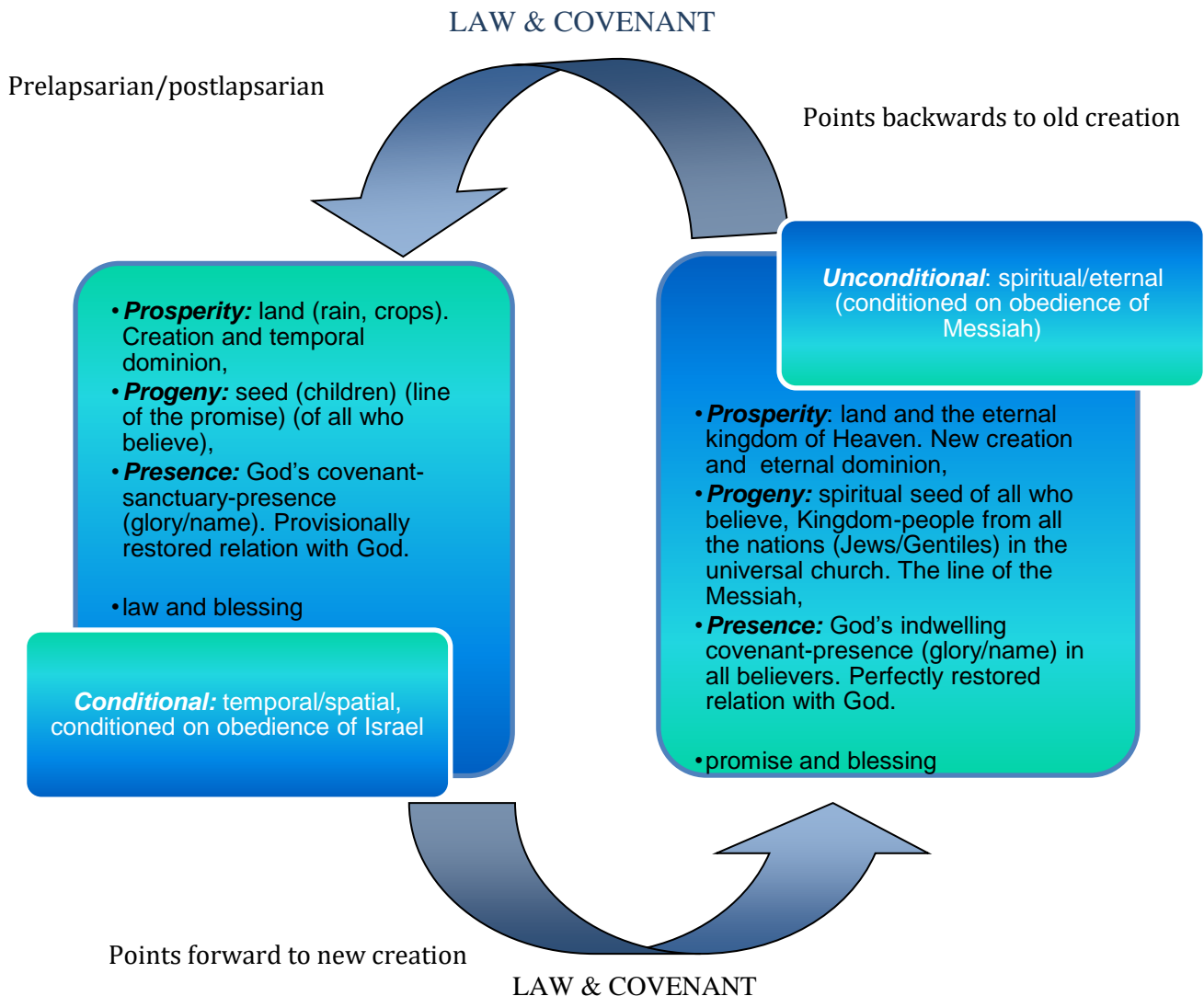
1. **Conditional:** temporal/spatial, conditioned on obedience of Israel

- a. **Prosperity:** land (rain, crops). Creation and dominion
- b. **Progeny:** seed (children) (line of the promise)
- c. **Presence:** God’s covenant-sanctuary-presence (glory/name). Provisionally restored relation with God

2. **Unconditional:** spiritual/eternal (conditioned on obedience of Messiah)

- a. **Prosperity:** land and the eternal kingdom of Heaven. New creation and dominion
- b. **Progeny:** spiritual seed of all who believe, Kingdom-people from all the nations in the universal church. The line of the Messiah
- c. **Presence:** God’s indwelling covenant-presence (glory/name) in all believers. Perfectly restored relation with God

The following illustration combines the ideas in section a. on the unity of the covenants, and the content of the boxes above.



The dual themes of judgment and blessing are found in all the prophets, signifying this dynamic relationship of the conditions of the covenant. The eternal kingdom is conditioned on the obedience of the Messiah, and grace results towards believers in the Messiah. In light of the law-covenant context of the promises, there is always the threat of judgment alongside the promise of blessing in redemption.

<sup>33</sup> Some scholars (like J. Bright) claim a dual theme of condition/unconditional covenants vacillates throughout the prophets, each prophet stressing one or the other. This is a misunderstanding of the dynamic relationship between these two concepts, as well as between the law, covenant, and grace. Redemption is always by grace via the works of the law. That is, the law is good, reflecting God’s character, and is the vehicle of grace through Christ Jesus who fulfilled the works of the law.

The physical land was regained *in part* after the exile and return, though entirely by God's gracious mercy. This seems to be the fulcrum between the conditional retention of the land and the unconditional blessing of grace pictured in that return, as they both point to the gospel of grace. Both the prelapsarian and postlapsarian scenarios point directly to the eventual reality of the new creation wherein the material and spiritual blessing are one!

“All of the blessings of the covenant would have come to Israel if only they had been willing to live according to the law of the Lord. Ultimately the people will discover their only hope lies in the law promulgated by the Lord's chosen servant (Isa 42:4c).”<sup>34</sup>

The ultimate objective of the old covenant and its promises is spiritual, not material. Although there were indeed temporal blessings in the covenant, the covenant itself was never properly understood as strictly temporal/spatial. The conditional aspects of the covenant were dependent upon the obedience of the nation, whereas the eternal and spiritual aspects of the covenant were unconditional (from Israel's vantage point), for the promise was redemption, which none could accomplish apart from God's divine work.

“The resolution to the problem [of conditional and unconditional] must begin by noting that *certainty of fulfillment is not the same things as absence of conditions.*”<sup>35</sup>

That is, redemption was conditioned upon the obedience of the Messiah. The spiritual/eternal components of the covenant-promises thus parallel the material/temporal/conditional components of the promises in terms of their significance, highlighting their complete dependence on God for the realization of the spiritual/eternal covenant blessings. The “though” above refers to the fact that though all this is true, since we now live in between two eras (the old covenant and the new Jerusalem), there will be a correspondence in the eternal kingdom to the material aspects of the covenant. Ultimately, in the New Jerusalem, the material aspects of the covenant promises will also be fully realized, since the goal of redemption is recreation and the restoration of all of creation. In this way, we can see the overlapping correlations between the material/temporal and the spiritual, eternal, and material promises. Perhaps, it can be said that the temporal aspects of the covenant are presently suspended (or are individually and corporately realized in the spiritual life of the church) during the age of the church, and will be fully realized only in the eternal kingdom. (See “Spiritual Israel: “They are not all Israel who are of Israel . . .”, p. 37).

#### ***d) Was the covenant-promise of the land fulfilled by God?***

##### **The covenant-promise of the land**

Though God did fulfill his promise to Israel of the land of Canaan, Israel did not drive out all of the remaining people in the land (Josh 23:40-5; Judg 1-2). Even though occupation was not complete, the promise was, contrary to some today who claim the promise was never fulfilled. The unconquered cities on the coast were Philistine cities. Under David and Solomon the territory was expanded to include much more land, the greatest extent of occupation that the Jews ever knew (See 2 Sam 24:2).

The eternal promise of the land, the idea that the land-promise was irrevocable is not found in the scripture, unless one understands that the unconditional aspects of the covenant-promises have spiritual meaning for all the people of God who are incorporated into the national promises by faith. Further, the land-promise points forward to the unconditional blessings of the land in the new creation when all of God's people will inherit the earth. Both of these unconditional aspects of the covenant-promise of land are in fact *conditional* from God's perspective, since the conditions of the covenant had to be met by the finished works of the only One who was able – Christ Jesus.

##### **Land of the promise in the Bible**

Genesis 15:18-21 On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, “To your descendants I give this land, from the river<sup>d</sup> of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates—<sup>19</sup> the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites,<sup>20</sup> Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites,<sup>21</sup> Amorites, Canaanites, Gergashites and Jebusites.”

<sup>34</sup> Roberston, *Christ of the Prophets*, p. 145.

<sup>35</sup> Roberston, *Christ of the Prophets*, p. 142.

<sup>d</sup> Or Wadi

Josh 21:43 So the Lord gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their forefathers, and they took possession of it and settled there. 44 The Lord gave them rest on every side, just as he had sworn to their forefathers. Not one of their enemies withstood them; the Lord handed all their enemies over to them. 45 Not one of all the Lord's good promises to the house of Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.

See also Josh 13:2-7

“This is the land that remains: all the regions of the Philistines and Geshurites: 3 from the Shihor River on the east of Egypt to the territory of Ekron on the north, all of it counted as Canaanite (the territory of the five Philistine rulers in Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath and Ekron—that of the Avvites); 4 from the south, all the land of the Canaanites, from Arah of the Sidonians as far as Aphek, the region of the Amorites, 5 the area of the Gebalites; and all Lebanon to the east, from Baal Gad below Mount Hermon to Lebob Hamath. “As for all the inhabitants of the mountain regions from Lebanon to Misrephoth Maim, that is, all the Sidonians, I myself will drive them out before the Israelites. Be sure to allocate this land to Israel for an inheritance, as I have instructed you, 7 and divide it as an inheritance among the nine tribes and half of the tribe of Manasseh.”

**“. . . the specificity of Ezekiel’s language regarding the uncovering of graves and the context of dry, dead bones coming to life further suggests the expectation of bodily resurrection. Upon the opening of graves and the coming alive of the dead, a return to the land shall be effected in its fullest sense.**

**From this perspective on Ezekiel’s prophecy, the minimalistic return from exile that occurred shortly after Ezekiel’s own day could not be regarded as the consummate fulfillment of expectations created by his prophecy. Israel’s return at that time, as significant for redemptive history as it might have been, served in its turn to point to a greater restoration in accord with the provisions of the new covenant.<sup>36</sup>**

**“For similar reasons, the return of the Jews to the land in the twentieth century, eventuating in the formation of the modern state of Israel in 1948, cannot fulfill this prophecy of Ezekiel. Their re-formation involved no opening of graves, no resurrection of the body, no inpouring of the Spirit of God, and no affirmation of Jesus as the Christ of the new covenant. However the restoration of the state of Israel may be viewed, it does not fulfill the expectation of Ezekiel as described in this vivid prophecy.”<sup>37</sup>**

## People of God

Judg 20:2 The leaders of all the people of the tribes of Israel took their places in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand soldiers armed with swords.

2 Sam 14:13 The woman said, “Why then have you devised a thing like this against the people of God? When the king says this, does he not convict himself, for the king has not brought back his banished son?”

Ps 47:9 The nobles of the nations assemble  
as the people of the God of Abraham,  
for the kings<sup>b</sup> of the earth belong to God;  
he is greatly exalted.

Heb 4:9 There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God;

Heb 11:25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.

1 Pet 2:10 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

## God’s people

Rom 12:13 Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

1 Cor 16:1 Now about the collection for God’s people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do.

<sup>a</sup> That is, the area of Byblos

<sup>b</sup> Or *to the entrance to*

<sup>36</sup> [fn 42 in Robertson] A similar analysis of the significance of Israel’s restored-temple vision may be found in Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 313. In light of references to the temple prophecy of Ezekiel in the New Testament, Walker concludes that New Testament writers “were presumably not expecting Ezekiel’s prophecy to be fulfilled literally at some future point in a physical Temple. Instead this prophecy became a brilliant way of speaking pictorially of what God had now achieved through Jesus. Paradoxically, therefore, although Ezekiel’s vision had focused so much upon the Temple, it found its ultimate fulfillment in that city where there was ‘no Temple,’ because ‘its Temple is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb’ (Rev 21:22).”

<sup>37</sup> Robertson, *Christ of the Prophets*, pp. 304-305.

<sup>b</sup> Or *shields*



2 Cor 9:12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.  
 Eph 2:19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household,  
 Eph 3:8 Although I am less than the least of all God’s people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,  
 Eph 4:12 to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up  
 Hebrews 13:24 Greet all your leaders and all God’s people. Those from Italy send you their greetings.  
 Rev 20:9 They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God’s people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them.  
 Rev 22:21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s people. Amen.

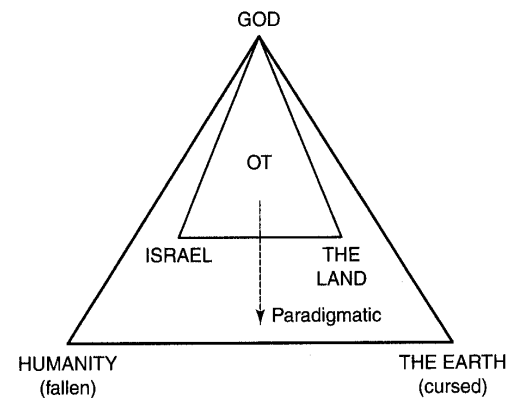
e) **Paradigms, types, and the eschatos by Christopher Wright**

**The eschatos of the promises is the restoration of creation through redemption.**  
**All of God’s promises are in essence eschatological.**

C.J.H. Wright on the complementary *paradigmatic, eschatological, and typological* interpretations (some selections from the chapter, see online for more:

**Paradigmatic:**

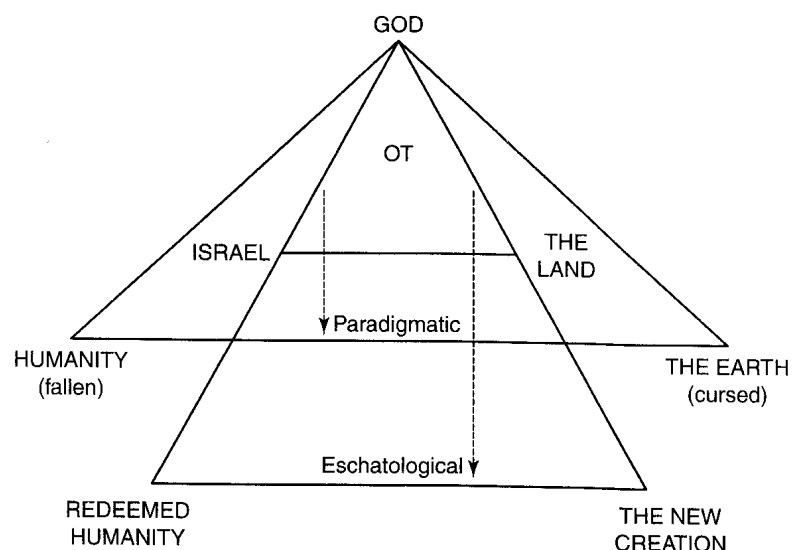
“This approach rests on the belief that God’s relation to Israel in their land was a deliberate reflection of God’s relation to humankind on the earth. Or, to be more precise, God’s involvement with Israel in their land was God’s redemptive address to the fracturing of his creative purpose for human beings and the earth. Humanity has rebelled and lives on an earth under God’s curse. Israel was redeemed and lived in a land God promised to bless. We can visualize this dual pattern through the following diagram:”<sup>38</sup>



“We are justified, therefore, in taking the social and economic laws and institutions of Israel (the base line of the inner triangle) and using them as models for our own ethical task in the wider world of modern-day secular society (the base line of the outer triangle). In the economic sphere the Old Testament paradigms provide us with objectives, without requiring a literal transposition of ancient Israelite practice into twentieth-century society. But at the same time the paradigmatic approach compels us to wrestle seriously with the texts themselves in order to understand fully the models we are seeking to apply.”<sup>39</sup>

**Eschatological:**

“The Old Testament looks forward not only to the world of nations turning to acknowledge the God of Israel and living at peace under his rule (see chapter 7), but also to the world of nature being transformed by God’s miraculous power (as we saw in chapter 4). There is a serious ‘earthiness’ about the Old Testament hope. God will not just abandon his creation, but will redeem it. And the land of Israel functioned as a prototype of that redeemed earth. Hints of this are to be found in those descriptions of the land that contrast starkly with the cursed earth. It is the land of promise, whereas the earth was the arena of threat and judgment. It abounds in milk and honey (Exod.



<sup>38</sup> Wright, *OT Ethics*, p 183.  
<sup>39</sup> Wright, *OT Ethics*, p. 184.

3:8, etc.), not thorns and thistles (Gen. 3:18).<sup>2</sup> The descriptions of the land in Deuteronomy recall some of the paradisiacal features of Eden: a 'good land' (8:7ff.), well watered, full of vegetation and rich in resources (cf. Gen. 2:8ff.). In short, 'It is a land the LORD your God cares for; the eyes of the LORD your God are continually on it from the beginning of the year to its end' (Deut. 11:12). Indeed, if only God's redeemed people would wholly obey him, it would be a land of such blessing as to be a veritable 'paradise restored' (Deut. 28:1-14). The same theme is echoed in Leviticus 26:12, where God promises to 'walk among' his people, using the same unusual form of the verb as is used to describe God walking with the couple in the Garden of Eden. Israel, however, though redeemed and brought into covenant relationship with God, was still part of fallen humanity and their land was still part of the cursed earth. The historical people and land were part of the process of God's redemptive purpose, not its final, perfected product. The theological function of both people and land together, therefore, is rather like a prototype, or a sign, pointing to something that lay beyond their present empirical reality. As Israel looked to the future completion of God's redemptive purpose, they did so in terms drawn from their experience of the past and the present. Thus just as they could not conceive of the new covenant without law, even though it would be law that transcended the reach of any legislator, for it would be written on the hearts of God's people (Jer 31:33)."<sup>40</sup>

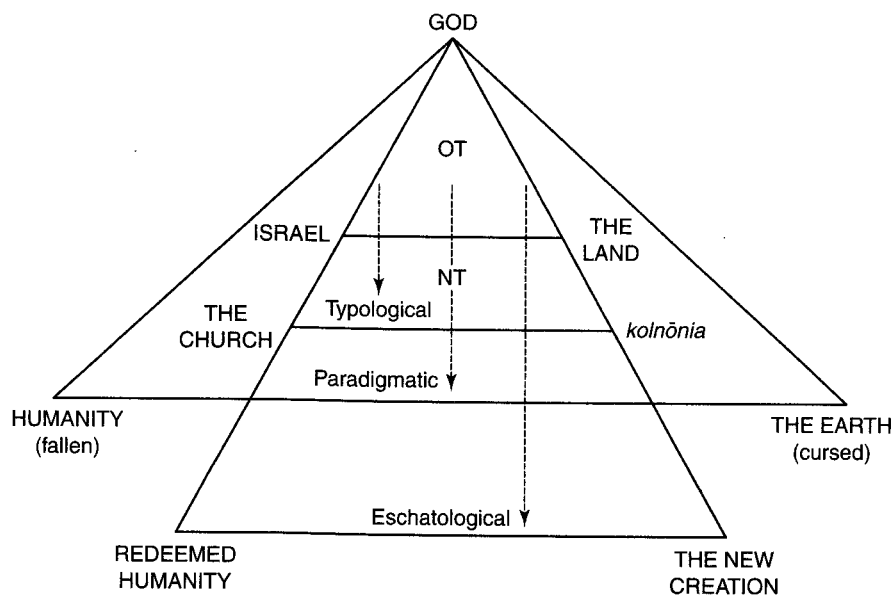
**Typological:**

No longer holy territory

"In one sense the land is almost completely absent from the New Testament. The physical territory of Palestine is nowhere referred to with any theological significance in the New Testament. The land as a holy place has ceased to have relevance. The vocabulary of blessing, holiness, promise, gift, inheritance and so on is never used of the territory inhabited by the Jewish people anywhere in the New Testament as it so frequently is in the Old. This is partly because the Christian churches rapidly spread beyond its borders to other lands throughout the Mediterranean and beyond.

But much more importantly it is because the holiness of the land, and indeed all its other attributes in Old Testament thinking,

was transferred to Christ himself. The spiritual presence of the living Christ sanctifies any place where believers are present. This transference of the holiness of the land to Christ is well presented by W. D. Davies, who points out how Christianity reacted to all the concrete details of Judaism, including the land, 'in terms of Christ, to whom all places and all space, like all things else, are subordinated. In sum, for the holiness of place, Christianity has fundamentally... substituted the holiness of the Person: it has Christified holy space.' The promise of Jesus to be present wherever his people meet, effectively universalizes the Old Testament promise of God's presence among his people in their land, for now the people of Jesus are everywhere."<sup>41</sup>



"It may help to clarify things further if we make a conceptual distinction between interpreting the land in terms of *principles* and in terms of *promise*. From that point of view, the paradigmatic method deals with principles; while the typological and eschatological methods are both handling the Old Testament land at the level of its inherent promise."<sup>42</sup>

"When we approach Old Testament theology of the land from the perspective of its inherent promise, however, we are led to see the fulfilment of that (as of all Old Testament promises) in the coming of Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah. The New Testament, it seems to me, leaves us no other option than to make that clear link. But this 'promise-fulfilment' motif in relation to the land divides in two, rather like the dual

<sup>40</sup> Wright, *OT Ethics*, p. 185.

<sup>41</sup> Wright, *OT Ethics*, p. 187 (quote from W.D. Davies, *Gospel and the Land*, p. 368).

<sup>42</sup> Wright, *OT Ethics*, p. 197.

presentation of the kingdom of God in the New Testament. There is an already and a not-yet. Already we have in Christ and in fellowship with the whole household of God in him the reality the land gave to Israel – the tangible blessing of our redeemed, covenantal relationship with God and one another (our typological interpretation). But there is yet to come the ultimate fulfilment of all the land promised the people of God; namely, the restoration of all things in a new creation, a new heaven and a new earth (the eschatological interpretation).<sup>43</sup>

**Calvin on the hope of the OT patriarchs and others:** the common assumption in Calvin’s day among certain scholars was that the hope of OT Israel was largely temporal and material. (Such a view is commonly espoused in modern scholarship, as well.) There are also many who claim that the OT view was largely an ancient “prosperity gospel,” that only the elect were blessed, and that blessing was strictly temporal-material. This is contradicted by the entire OT record, especially when we consider the lives and suffering of all the main figures in OT history, beginning with Adam. Both the details of their own lives as well as their testimony, attest to a hope in a future eschatos that is spiritual and not material. The hope of all OT believers is established upon the free mercy of God, which was confirmed by the intercession of Christ.

“If the Lord, in manifesting his Christ, discharged his ancient oath, one cannot but say that the Old Testament always had its end in Christ and in eternal life.”<sup>44</sup>

1 Cor 1:3-4. They ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink.

“We can conclude with full certainty that the Lord not only communicated to the Jews the same promises of eternal and heavenly life as he now deigns to give us, but also sealed them with truly spiritual sacraments.”<sup>45</sup>

Heb 11:9-10, 13-16 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. 10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. 13 All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. 14 People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. 15 If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

“If these holy patriarchs looked for a blessed life, as they undoubtedly did, from God’s hand, they both conceived and saw it as a blessedness other than that of earthly life.”<sup>46</sup>

### f) *The prophets and the (spiritual) promises*

“Whenever the prophets recount the believing people’s blessedness, hardly the least trace of which is discerned in the present life, let them take refuge in this distinction: the better to commend God’s goodness, the prophets represented it for the people under the lineaments, so to speak, of temporal benefits. But they painted a portrait such as to lift up the minds of the people above the earth, above the elements of this world (cf. Gal 4:3) and the perishing age, and that would of necessity arouse them to ponder the happiness of the spiritual life to come.”<sup>47</sup>

“Let us, therefore, boldly establish a principle unassailable by any stratagems of the devil: the Old Testament or Covenant that the Lord had made with the Israelites had not been limited to earthly things, but contained a promise of spiritual and eternal life.”<sup>48</sup>

“. . . in the earthly possession they enjoyed, they looked, as in a mirror, upon the future inheritance they believed to have been prepared for them in heaven.”<sup>49</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Wright, *OT Ethics*, p. 197.

<sup>44</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, p. 432.

<sup>45</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, p. 433.

<sup>46</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, p. 440.

<sup>47</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, p. 447.

<sup>48</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, p. 448.

<sup>49</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, p. 451.

Thus, all that was said in the Pentateuch lectures and the historical survey (Judges-Esther) about the covenant promises of land, progeny, and sanctuary must be understood in light of their spiritual import, especially in the latter prophets. The promise of land was to create a hope of heaven, the promise of progeny was to create a hope of a redeemed people of God, and the hope of a sanctuary was to create anticipation for the central aspect of redemption in re-admittance into the very presence of the living God. If the dual nature of the blessings (temporal and eternal) of the promises was not entirely understood and embraced in earliest biblical history, then it was largely whenever temporal blessings were confused with eternal, or where spiritual hopes were misplaced by material. Indeed, it can be affirmed that the full picture was not known until Christ came, that the progression of eschatological revelation was such that the gospel promises could understandably be overlooked for temporal promises by those walking more by sight than by faith. Further, it can be proposed that any emphasis on temporal blessing in the old covenant was related to the childlike, infancy status of ancient Israel, they were under tutorship in rudimentary instruction until the full picture was unveiled. This is not to suggest that Israel was largely ignorant of the spiritual aspects of the promises (as discussed with regard to the hope for salvation, resurrection, eternal life), but that due to the progressive nature of revelation, clarity on this distinction varied in the ebb and flow of redemptive history. We can affirm with subsequent revelation that the temporal blessings aspects of the old covenant were to teach and confirm the eternal and spiritual blessings. There was a consistent inability to understand the spiritual nature of the promises and purposes of God, but rather corporally or temporally, was at the heart of Jewish unbelief (as later in Jesus' day, and today).

Naturally, during and after the exile, we can suppose that for some time the spiritual nature of the promises must have been manifest to many in Israel, although we know that with the Maccabees, as well as the Zealots and others of NT times the hopes of Israel had become largely material, and for a Messiah that would bring political deliverance. This may have been fueled in part by the clear word from many of the prophets that the Lord would restore the nation to the land, and that he would once again bless them temporally. This word, however, when received without faith in the the God of the promises, soon deteriorates into nothing but temporal hope of material blessing. Needless to say, the temporal aspect of the promise of land is a central theme in dispensational premillennialism, which places great importance on the re-establishment of Israel in the land of Palestine. This naturally makes for a politically motivated eschatology for many Christians, and a sometimes short-sighted pro-Israel platform. Similarly, post-millennial theonomists not only emphasize the temporal blessings of the old covenant, they carry them over to our new covenant context. Regardless of one's interpretation of these hot-button issues, we must never lose sight of the spiritual blessings of the promise, nor confuse them with the temporal. We can, however, hold forth the promise that the new heavens and the new earth will contain "eternal pleasures at his right hand" (Ps 16:11). That is, though it will be a "new order" of existence, we can be confident that the "temporal" blessings of the promises will have an eternal counterpart that far surpasses the temporal in grandeur in the heavenly kingdom. The horizontal (human to human) and the vertical (human to God) aspects of the covenant promises will be realized in the heavenly kingdom. That is, we live on both planes now, and we can rest assured that heaven will be in a very real (perfected) way a continuation of both planes. As C.S. Lewis, wrote,

Meanwhile the cross comes before the crown and tomorrow is a Monday morning. A cleft has opened in the pitiless walls of the world, and we are invited to follow our great Captain inside. The following Him is, of course, the essential point. That being so, it may be asked what practical use there is in the speculations which I have been indulging. I can think of at least one such use. It may be possible for each to think too much of his own potential glory hereafter, it is hardly possible for him to think too often or too deeply about that of his neighbour. The load, or weight, or burden of my neighbour's glory should be laid on my back, a load so heavy that only humility can carry it, and the backs of the proud will be broken. It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you say it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one or other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people.

You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilisations—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendours. This does not mean that we are to be perpetually solemn. We must play. But our merriment must be of that kind (and it is, in fact, the merriest kind) which exists between people who have, from the outset, taken each other seriously—no flippancy, no superiority, no presumption.<sup>50</sup>

As personal sanctification will result in glorification, I am inclined to believe that human personality, works, culture, skills, and interests will also find glorification for the redeemed in Christ. That is, in the perfection of the eternal kingdom, the temporal blessings of the kingdom promises in the Old covenant are transformed into eternal and far superior blessings in the New covenant consummated in heaven.

Calvin, *Institutes*, II.X.17. *The hope of the godly rises above present calamities to the future life*

Let us, therefore, learn from this confession of David's that the holy patriarchs under the Old Testament were aware how rarely or never God fulfills in this world what he promises to his servants; and that they therefore lifted up their hearts to God's sanctuary, in which they found hidden what does not appear in the shadows of the present life. This place was the Last Judgment of God, which, although they could not discern it with their eyes, they were content to understand by faith. Relying upon this assurance, they did not doubt that, whatever might happen in the world, the time would nevertheless come when God's promises would be fulfilled. So these statements witness: "I shall behold thy face in righteousness.... I shall be satisfied with thy countenance" [Ps. 17:15]. Again, "I am like a green olive tree in the house of the Lord." [Ps. 52:8] Again: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree, and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Planted in the house of the Lord, they shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit; in old age they shall be fat and green" [Ps. 92:12-14]. A little before, he had said: "How deep are thy thoughts, O Jehovah, while evildoers flourish and sprout like grass, that they may perish forever" [Ps. 92:5]. Where does that beauty and grace of believers appear save when this world of appearances is overturned by the manifestation of God's Kingdom? When they cast their eyes upon that eternity, they despised the momentary harshness of present calamities and burst forth fearlessly in these words: "Thou wilt not allow the righteous to die. But thou ... wilt cast the wicked down into the pit of destruction" [Ps. 55:22-23, cf. Comm.] Where in this world is there a pit of eternal destruction that swallows up the wicked, in whose felicity another passage includes. also the following: "They end their days in a moment without much languishing" [Job 21:13, Cf. Comm.]. Where is that great stability of the saints who, as David himself everywhere laments, not only are violently shaken, but utterly oppressed and consumed? That is, he set before his eyes not what the changing course of the world brings — more unstable than the ocean tides — but what the Lord will do when he will one day sit in judgment to determine the permanent state of heaven and earth.

The psalmist aptly describes this in another passage: "Fools trust in their wealth, and boast of the abundance of their riches. And yet no one, however much he may excel in dignity, can redeem his brother from death; no one can pay to God the price of redemption.... Even when they see that the wise die, the wicked, and the foolish alike perish and leave their wealth to others, they still think that their houses will abide forever and their dwellings will last eternally, and they sing the praises of their own names on earth. But man will not remain in honor: he will be like the beasts that perish. It is the height of folly for them to think this way, yet their posterity avidly copy them. They will be gathered in hell like a flock death shall rule over them. When the light dawns, the righteous shall rule over them; their beauty shall. perish; hell shall be their home" [Ps. 49:6-14, cf. Comm.].

This mockery of fools for reposing in the slippery and fleeting "blessings" of the world shows in the first place that the wise should seek a far different kind of happiness. But then David more clearly discloses the mystery of the resurrection when he raises up the Kingdom of the godly after the wicked have been: lost and destroyed. What, I ask you, shall we call that "coming of the morning" [cf. Ps. 30:51] but the revelation of the new life that follows the end of the present age?<sup>51</sup>

### g) ***Spiritual Israel: "They are not all Israel who are of Israel . . ."***

- See "Israel and the church," p. 55.
- See Roberston, *The Israel of God*.
- See the "Mission of God," p. 143.
- See M. Horton on Platonism in "Back to the Future," *Modern Reformation* in reserve folder. See also Jerram Barrs, Randal Macaulay, *Being Human: the Nature of Spiritual Experience* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press), 1978  
[http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0830815023/ref=lib\\_dp\\_TFCV/002-6083010-0843225?v=glance&s=books&vi=reader - reader-link](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0830815023/ref=lib_dp_TFCV/002-6083010-0843225?v=glance&s=books&vi=reader - reader-link)
- See W. Kaiser: Israel can mean political system, the country, Jewish people, religious people, the spiritually minded among them, the heavenly body of believers. *Messiah*, p. 138.

<sup>50</sup> Lewis, "The Weight of Glory," pp. 45 -46.

<sup>51</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, II.X.17, pp. 443-444.

There is widespread use of the term *replacement theology* to describe the “relationship” of Israel to the NT church. That is, that the Christian church replaces Israel in the plan of God. This is often used in mis-presentations of the covenantal perspective on that relationship. In fact, the term “replacement theology” is not the most biblically accurate expression, since it is not indeed used in the scripture. It is more biblical to understand the relationship as of *ingrafting* of Gentiles both in the OT and the NT eras. That ingrafting is the equalizing factor between Jews and Gentiles, who are considered both in equal need of the gospel of redemption. That ingrafting is also the fulfillment of Israel’s purpose – God’s mission to save the nations! True believers of all the nations are grafted (by election and faith) into the vine of the Church of Jesus Christ.

Texts concerning the church and Israel: “A true Jew is a person from **any** nation, tribe, or tongue who has faith in Christ, whether of Jewish or Gentile origin” (A. Morrison, “Two Jerusalems,” *SCP Journal* 27:2-27:3, 2003, p. 27).

Rom 2:28 (NASB) For <sup>a</sup>he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh

Rom 2:28-29 (NIV) A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. <sup>29</sup> No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man’s praise is not from men, but from God

Rom 9:6-7 (NIV) It is not as though God’s word had failed. For **not all who are descended from Israel are Israel.** <sup>7</sup> Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham’s children. On the contrary, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.” <sup>b</sup>

Rom 11:26-27 (NIV) <sup>26</sup> And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:

“The deliverer will come from Zion;  
he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.

<sup>27</sup> And this is <sup>a</sup> my covenant with them  
when I take away their sins.” <sup>b</sup>

“The ‘*all Israel*’ who are ‘*saved*’ is *spiritual* rather than *fleshly*, and their salvation is effected through the first coming of Christ—the Deliverer who comes out of Zion—and is based on the substitutionary atonement in the blood of the New Covenant rather than any restoration to the land” (A. Morrison, “Two Jerusalems,” *SCP Journal* 27:2-27:3, 2003, p. 32).

Rom 4:11 (NIV) And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them.

Rom 4:16 Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham’s offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.

Rom 3:22-23 (NIV) This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,  
Romans 3:29-30 (NIV) Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, <sup>30</sup> since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith.

1 Pet 2:9-10 (NIV) (cf. Ex 19:5-6) But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. <sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Jn 10:14-16 (NIV) “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

<sup>a</sup> John 8:39; Rom. 2:17; 9:6; Gal. 6:15

<sup>b</sup> Gen. 21:12

<sup>a</sup> Or *will be*

<sup>b</sup> Isaiah 59:20,21; 27:9; Jer. 31:33,34

Jn 11:49-52 (NIV) Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! <sup>50</sup> You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.” <sup>51</sup> He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, <sup>52</sup> and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one.

Gal 3:9-29 (NIV) <sup>9</sup> So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. <sup>10</sup> All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.” <sup>c</sup> <sup>11</sup> Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, “The righteous will live by faith.” <sup>d</sup> <sup>12</sup> The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, “The man who does these things will live by them.” <sup>e</sup> <sup>13</sup> Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” <sup>f</sup> <sup>14</sup> He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit. <sup>15</sup> Brothers, let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case. <sup>16</sup> The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,” <sup>a</sup> meaning one person, who is Christ. <sup>17</sup> What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. <sup>18</sup> For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise. <sup>19</sup> What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator. <sup>20</sup> A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one. <sup>21</sup> Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. <sup>22</sup> But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe. <sup>23</sup> Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. <sup>24</sup> So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ <sup>b</sup> that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup> Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law. <sup>26</sup> You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, <sup>27</sup> for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. <sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Gal 4:24-26 (NIV) These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. <sup>25</sup> Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. <sup>26</sup> But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother.

Gal 5:6 (NIV) For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

Gal 6:14-15 (NIV) May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which <sup>a</sup> the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. <sup>15</sup> Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.

Eph 3:6 (NASB95) to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

Phil 3:3 (NIV) For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh—

Jn 1:11-13 (NIV) He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. <sup>12</sup> Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— <sup>13</sup> children born not of natural descent, <sup>c</sup> nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

2 Cor 6:18 (NIV) <sup>18</sup> “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” <sup>d</sup>

<sup>c</sup> Deut. 27:26

<sup>d</sup> Hab. 2:4

<sup>e</sup> Lev. 18:5

<sup>f</sup> Deut. 21:23

<sup>a</sup> Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 24:7

<sup>b</sup> Or *charge until Christ came*

<sup>a</sup> Or *whom*

<sup>c</sup> Greek *of bloods*

<sup>d</sup> 2 Samuel 7:14; 7:8

Eph 2:14-22 (NIV) For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, <sup>15</sup> by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, <sup>16</sup> and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. <sup>17</sup> He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. <sup>18</sup> For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. <sup>21</sup> In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Heb 11:8-10 (NIV) By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. <sup>10</sup> For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

Heb 11:13-16 (NIV) All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. <sup>14</sup> People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. <sup>15</sup> If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

Heb 12:22-24 (NIV) But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, <sup>23</sup> to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, <sup>24</sup> to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Rev 2:9 (NIV) <sup>9</sup> I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich! I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

“There are NOT two covenant peoples of God—Israel and the church, with one somehow held in abeyance for a time. The covenant people of God are one!” (A. Morrison, “Two Jerusalems,” *SCP Journal* 27:2-27:3, 2003, p. 43)

“There can no longer be a geographical land that God is promising to His people because His people are international, from every tribe and nation. To affirm a nationalistic plan of God is to reinstitute the Laws of separation between Jew and Gentile that Christ abolished” (Brian Godawa, “The Promise to Abraham,” *SCP Journal* 27:2-27:3, p. 60).

Some use the unfortunate term “replacement theology” when discussing the spiritual nature of the promises. The elabguage of the NT is consistently that of *grafting in* of the Gentiles, not replacing the Jews in the covenant.

Robertson writes, “The noun *apokatastaseōs*, which in Acts 3:21 refers to the restoration of all things as promised by the prophets, should be compared with the verb *apokathistaneis* in 1:6. Because of this connection between the two verses, the restoration of all things in 3:21 may be regarded as providing an explanation for the restoration of the kingdom to Israel in 1:6. The restoration of Israel in the prophets is equivalent in its new covenant context to the renewal of the whole earth, not merely the reestablishment of the state of Israel.”<sup>52</sup>

## **4. Israel and the mission of God to the nations**

**“The whole church taking the whole gospel of the whole Bible to the whole world.”**

- See C.J.H. Wright, *The Mission of God*, pp.
- See Robertson, *Christ of the Prophets*, pp. 433-444(unabridged).
- See file “Israel and the Mission of God to the nations” in recommended readings OneDrive folder for fuller list of biblical texts.
- See W. Kaiser, *Mission in the Old Testament*.
- See “Spiritual Israel,” p. 37.
- See “Foreign nations in OT prophecy by Payne,” p. 177.

<sup>52</sup> Robertson, *Christ of the the Prophets*, p. 64, fn. 19. See Robertson, *Israel of God*, pp. 141-42.



*This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.*

Ephesians 3:6

Even today readers of Paul's words [in Eph 3:6] have difficulty assimilating their full significance, despite two thousand years that have verified their truthfulness. The church has for so long assumed that some special dispensation belongs distinctively to the Israelite people that it continues to propagate this erroneous idea. Yet the declarations of the inspired apostle are plain: Gentiles are *fellow* inheritors, *fellow* participants, *fellow* possessors of the promises of God along with Jewish believers (Eph. 3:6). This is the mystery that needs to be fully comprehended by the church today if it is to properly communicate to the nations of the world the great gospel of the new covenant.<sup>53</sup>

The mission of God in choosing Israel was not primarily to bless Israel, but primarily to bless all the nations and peoples of the world in all of history. There is a widespread perception that Israel was chosen primarily for Israel and Israel to own the Promised Land, and that Israel was not expected to “evangelize” the nations.<sup>54</sup> That is, the goal of Israel was thought to be to create a *separated people* and the rest of “the world be damned.” Even though this is hyperbole, that attitude is sometimes conveyed today. Some of this may be an anachronistic reading of OT law, history, and precedent through the grid of NT Judaism which was separatist and proud of it. Any cursory reading of the NT reinforces the impression that Israel's revulsion towards non-Jews (esp. mixed Jews like Samaritans) was extensive and traditional. This did not, however, reflect the OT biblical theology of the purpose and mission of Israel to the nations (Indeed, Jesus' condemnation of such Judaism was uncompromising, since that Judaism was not in fact “biblical”). A Biblical Theology of the Bible gives us a very different picture; it is one of a small, insignificant people-group called by God to become a nation in order to bear witness/testimony to the Living God by *demonstrating* to the nations his holiness and glory. They were “called out” so that God's redemption of the world would go out to the nations. They were never called to be separate so as to exclude the world from the gospel-promises, but to illustrate and demonstrate to the world what true faith in God must look like, what a truly holy community of the people of God must be. In this, they were also to proclaim his glories to the nations (we see this throughout the OT, and especially in the Psalms and Prophets). This is the “mystery” that Paul declares in Eph 3:6 (“that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel”). Robertson states it like this:



“Several distinctive elements constitute the proclamations of Israel's prophets concerning neighboring nations: (1) the nations will be judged by God, particularly for their sins of brutality, idolatry, and pride; (2) the nations will be treated by God in accordance with their treatment of the nation of Israel; and (3) the nations will eventually share in the redemption provided for Israel.”<sup>55</sup>

Israel was called to live in the world, but not of the world, that the world might know . . . the riches of his glorious grace. This begins in the earliest times in biblical history, not in the church age of international evangelism. The best study of this that I am aware of is Christopher Wright's *The Mission of God*. (See the scanned chapters on Office Live.)

It may be interesting, in an antiquarian kind of way, to take note of the social differences of Israel from other nations, but surely that is irrelevant to discovering and applying the message of the Old Testament text itself to our context? Surely our authority is ‘what the Scriptures say’, not ‘what Israel was like’? Indeed so, but as we have just seen, the Scriptures of the Old Testament are massively, pervasively, interested precisely in ‘what Israel was like’ — and for the reasons outlined above. Clearly, it mattered very much indeed. The social shape of Israel was not an incidental freak of ancient history. Nor was it just a temporary, material by-product of their spiritual message. We cannot set aside the social dimension of the Old Testament as a kind of husk, out of which we claim to extract a

<sup>53</sup> Robertson, *The Christ of the Prophets*, p. 444. See also Robertson, *The Israel of God*.

<sup>54</sup> As Christ Wright observes, an important distinction in the OT is that between the *gift* of the land to Israel and the perpetual *ownership* of the land by YHWH. That is, Israel was never to be complacent and presumption in the occupation of God's Promised Land. This is precisely what happened in ancient Israel and continues to the present.

<sup>55</sup> Robertson, *Christ of the the Prophets*, pp. 433-434.

kernel of spiritual timeless truths. Rather, the social reality of Israel was an integral part of what God had called them into existence for. Theologically, the purpose of Israel's existence was to be a vehicle both for God's revelation and for the blessing of humanity. They were not only the bearers of redemption, but were to be a model of what a redeemed community should be like, living in obedience to God's will. Their social structure, aspirations, principles and policies, so organically related to their covenantal faith in the LORD, were also part of the content of that revelation, part of the pattern of redemption. God's message of redemption through Israel was not just verbal; it was visible and tangible. They, the medium, were themselves part of the message. Simply by existing and being obedient to the covenant law of the Lord, they would raise questions among the nations about the nature of their God and the social justice of their community.

Observe them [the LORD's decrees and laws carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him? And what other nations is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today? (Deut. 4:6–8)<sup>56</sup>

A cursory reading of the many Bible texts that mention the *nations* should encourage us to see how broad God's mission to the world *always* has been.

### ***The mission of God and the extent of the OT message to the nations:***

#### Several key texts:

Deut 4:1-40 (Wright, *Mission*, pp. 375-387)

Deut 4:5–8 (NAS) "See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it. 6 "So keep and do *them*, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' 7 "For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the Lord our God whenever we call on Him? 8 "Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today?"

Deut 4:32–36 (NAS) "Indeed, ask now concerning the former days which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and *inquire* from one end of the heavens to the other. Has *anything* been done like this great thing, or has *anything* been heard like it? 33 "Has *any* people heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, as you have heard *it*, and survived? 34 "Or has a god tried to go to take for himself a nation from within *another* nation by trials, by signs and wonders and by war and by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm and by great terrors, as the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? 35 "To you it was shown that you might know that the Lord, He is God; there is no other besides Him. 36 "Out of the heavens He let you hear His voice to discipline you; and on earth He let you see His great fire, and you heard His words from the midst of the fire."

Gen 18 (Wright, *Mission*, pp. 358-369)

Genesis 18:17–19 The Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, 18 since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? 19 "For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him."

Exod 19 (Wright, *Mission*, pp. 369-371)

Exod 19:4–6 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. 5 'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel."

Lev 19 (Wright, *Mission*, p. 374) (Ch 19 outlines the distinctive legal-ethical guidelines as part of their testimony/witness to the aliens)

Lev 19:33–34 'When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. 34 'The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God.

1 Ki 8

1 Kings 8:37–46 "If there is famine in the land, if there is pestilence, if there is blight *or* mildew, locust *or* grasshopper, if their enemy besieges them in the land of their cities, whatever plague, whatever sickness *there is*, 38 whatever prayer or supplication is made by any man *or* by all Your people Israel, each knowing the affliction

<sup>56</sup> Wright, *OT Ethics*, p. 62.

of his own heart, and spreading his hands toward this house; 39 then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive and act and render to each according to all his ways, whose heart You know, for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men, 40 that they may fear You all the days that they live in the land which You have given to our fathers. 41“Also concerning the foreigner who is not of Your people Israel, when he comes from a far country for Your name’s sake 42(for they will hear of Your great name and Your mighty hand, and of Your outstretched arm); when he comes and prays toward this house, 43 hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name, to fear You, as *do* Your people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by Your name.

Isa 12:4-5

Isaiah 12:4–5 And in that day you will say,  
 “Give thanks to the Lord, call on His name.  
 Make known His deeds among the peoples;  
 Make *them* remember that His name is exalted.”  
 5 Praise the Lord in song, for He has done excellent things;  
 Let this be known throughout the earth.

Mal 1:5 “You will see it with your own eyes and say, ‘Great is the Lord – even beyond the borders of Israel!’”

Mal 1:11 My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations,” says the Lord Almighty.

1 Chron 16:24 Tell of His glory among the nations,  
 His wonderful deeds among all the peoples.

1 Chron 16:26 For all the gods of the peoples are <sup>1a</sup>idols,  
<sup>b</sup>But the Lord made the heavens.

1 Chron 16:31 <sup>a</sup>Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;  
 And let them say among the nations, “<sup>b</sup>The Lord reigns.”

Ps 96

1 Sing to the Lord a new song;  
 Sing to the Lord, all the earth.  
 2 Sing to the Lord, bless His name;  
 Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day.  
 3 **Tell of His glory among the nations,**  
**His wonderful deeds among all the peoples.**  
 4 For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised;  
 He is to be feared above all gods.  
 5 For all the gods of the peoples are idols,  
 But the Lord made the heavens.  
 6 Splendor and majesty are before Him,  
 Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

Ps 97:6 The heavens declare His righteousness,  
**And all the peoples have seen His glory.**<sup>57</sup>

Isa 49:26 (NAS) And all flesh will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”

Ezek 21:5 “Thus all flesh will know that I, the Lord, have drawn My sword out of its sheath. It will not return *to its sheath* again.” ’

<sup>1</sup> Or *non-existent things*

<sup>a</sup> Lev 19:4

<sup>b</sup> Ps 102:25

<sup>a</sup> Is 44:23; 49:13

<sup>b</sup> Ps 93:1; 96:10

(left)Wright on OT monotheism for the nations<sup>58</sup>

the knowledge of the Lord gained through his acts of revelation, redemption and judgment, the affirmations in table 3.3, while not exhaustive, capture the broad outline of Old Testament monotheism.

**Table 3.3. Broad Outline of Old Testament Monotheism**

The Lord alone is	In relation to the heavens, the earth and all the nations:	
Creator	The Lord made them.	Ps 33:6-9; Jer 10:10-12
Owner	The Lord owns them.	Ps 24:1; 89:11; Deut 10:14
Ruler	The Lord governs them.	Ps 33:10-11; Is 40:22-24
Judge	The Lord calls all to account.	Ps 33:13-15
Revealer	The Lord speaks the truth.	Ps 33:4; 119:160; Is 45:19
Lover	The Lord loves all he has made.	Ps 145:9, 13, 17
Savior	The Lord saves all who turn to him.	Ps 36:6; Is 45:22
Leader	The Lord guides the nations.	Ps 67:4
Reconciler	The Lord will bring peace.	Ps 46:8-10

John H. Walton, *Covenant: God's Purpose, God's Plan*. Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1994, p. 104.

Judgment against the nations so the nations will know	Judgment against the nations so Israel will know	Judgment against Israel so Israel will know	Grace toward the nations so the nations will know	Grace toward Israel so the nations will know	Grace toward Israel so Israel will know
Ex 7:5	Ex 10:2	Isa 52:6	Ex 8:10	Jos 4:24	Ex 6:2-8
Ex 7:17	Eze 39:21-22	Jer 16:21	Ex 9:29	1Sa 17:47	Ex 16:6-12
Ex 9:14	Joel 3:14-17	Eze 6:7-14	Isa 45:3	Isa 49:26	Ex 29:46
Ex 14:4		Eze 7:4		Eze 36:22-23	Ex 31:13
Ex 14:18		Eze 7:27		Eze 37:24-28	Dt 4:32-40
1Sa 17:46		Eze 11:10-12		Eze 39:23-28	Dt 7:7-9
Eze 25:4-7		Eze 12:15-20			Dt 29:6
Eze 25:8-11		Eze 13:14			1Ki 20:13, 28
Eze 25:15-17		Eze 13:21-23			Ps 106:7-8
Eze 26:6		Eze 14:8			Isa 49:23
Eze 28:22		Eze 15:7			Isa 60:16
Eze 29:3-9		Eze 20:26			Eze 16:59-63
Eze 30:5-8		Eze 20:38			Eze 20:39-44
Eze 30:19		Eze 22:16			Eze 28:24-26
Eze 30:25-26		Eze 24:20-27			Eze 29:21
Eze 32:15		Eze 33:29			Eze 34:20-31
Eze 35:3-15					Eze 36:8-12
Eze 38:23					Eze 36:24-38
Eze 39:6-7					Eze 37:5-14
					Eze 39:25-29
					Joel 2:25-27

<sup>58</sup> Wright, *Mission of God*, p. 104.

## 5. *Eschatological metaphors for Messiah Jesus*

➤ See prediction and messianic prophecy, pp. 159, 162.

- ◆ The true high priest – the perfect mediator – Heb 9:24-28
- ◆ The true king – 2 Sam 7:14 (the name *messiah* is derived from the anointing of Hebrew priests, prophets, and kings, see anointing, p. )
- ◆ The true prophet – the word of God lived and proclaimed perfectly
- ◆ The truly wise man – the revealer of God’s wisdom.
- ◆ The true shepherd – the protector and guide for God’s people
- ◆ The divine warrior – conquers death, Satan
- ◆ The branch – Isa 4:2; 11:1; Jer 23:5; 33:15; Zec 3:8; 6:12
- ◆ The shoot – Is 11:1; 53:2
- ◆ The stone – Isa 8:14-15; Dan 2:34-35, 44-45 (Lk 20:18)
- ◆ The deliverer/redeemer – from sin Isa 59:20, 21; 27:9; Jer 31:33, 34; Rom 11:26
- ◆ *Son of David* – 2 Sam 7 for Davidic promise (NT clarifies)
- ◆ *Son of Man* – Daniel 7 (70x in the Synoptics)
- ◆ *Suffering Servant* – Mk 8:31 (a theme that Jesus’ contemporaries greatly misunderstood) Mtt 16:21-22) see Lu 23:40-43; 24:13-21
- ◆ *King of kings* – the one who brings God’s kingdom (“kingdom of God” not in OT) (1 Tim 6:15)
- ◆ *The Anointed One* – Ps 2:2; Da 9:25, 26; Acts 4:26

**Anointed/Anointed one** – Messiah is the translation of the Aramaic מָשִׁיחַ *māšīḥ*’ of the corresponding Hebrew of מָשִׁיחַ (*māšīyah*) (passive forms derive from מָשַׁח, *māšāḥ*, “to anoint”). Anointing corresponds to a *setting apart* for service, whether for a king (2 Sam 12:7; 1 Ki 19:15), priest (Ex 29:7; Num 35:25), prophet (1 Ki 19:16; Isa 61:1), or sacred objects for service in sanctuary (Ex 40:9-11; 29:36). Oil poured upon the head was the ordinary means of induction. Kings: anointed at succession, denotes divine appointment, divine relation and reverence, and the presence of the divine Spirit.

Verb is found only 2x in prophets in regards to sacred anointing (Isa 61:1; Dan 9:24). Adjective/noun is used some 40x in the OT to refer to an *anointed one*, whether king (also Cyrus, Isa 45:11; Acts 13:32ff; cf. Heb 1:5; 5:5), or Messiah (Ps 2:2) (though some argue a double reference is generally required, Ps 110:2-6[1-5]).

Lev 16:15 (Heb 6:22) He shall then slaughter the goat for the sin offering for the people and take its blood behind the curtain and do with it as he did with the bull’s blood: He shall sprinkle it on the atonement cover and in front of it.

Heb 6:20 where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

Lev 4:3, 5 High priest 3 If the anointed priest sins, bringing guilt on the people, he must bring to the LORD a young bull without defect as a sin offering for the sin he has committed. 5 Then the anointed priest shall take some of the bull’s blood and carry it into the Tent of Meeting.

Dan 9:25-26 Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. 26 After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. Ps 105:15 (1 Chron 16:22) metaphorically sacrosanct 15 “Do not touch my anointed ones; do my prophets no harm.”

Isa 45:1 – Cyrus: “anointed one”  
1 This is what the LORD says to his anointed,  
to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of  
to subdue nations before him  
and to strip kings of their armor,  
to open doors before him  
so that gates will not be shut:

1 Sam 2:10 – The central eschatological figure:  
10 those who oppose the LORD will be shattered.  
He will thunder against them from heaven;  
the LORD will judge the ends of the earth.  
“He will give strength to his king

and exalt the horn of his anointed.”

2 Sam 22:57 (Ps 18:51) He gives his king great victories; he shows unfailing kindness to his anointed, to David and his descendants forever.”

Hab 3:13 You came out to deliver your people,  
to save your anointed one.  
You crushed the leader of the land of wickedness,  
you stripped him from head to foot. *Selah*  
Ps 2:2 The kings of the earth take their stand  
and the rulers gather together  
against the LORD

and against his Anointed One.

Ps 20:6 Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed; he answers him from his holy heaven with the saving power of his right hand.

Ps 28:8 The LORD is the strength of his people, a fortress of salvation for his anointed one.

Ps 84:9 Look upon our shield, O God; look with favor on your anointed one.

Ps 89:39[38],52[51] 38 But you have rejected, you have spurned, you have been very angry with your anointed one. 51 the taunts with which your enemies have mocked, O LORD, with which they have mocked every step of your anointed one.

Ps 132:17 "Here I will make a horn grow for David and set up a lamp for my anointed one.

### *Anointed and spirit links*

God is the one who anoints by his Spirit. Today sometimes people talk loosely of being "anointed," but it may be better to speak in new covenant terms of being called, commissioned, or ordained.

Zech 4:6-14 So he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty. 7 "What are you, O mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground. Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of 'God bless it! God bless it!'"

8 Then the word of the LORD came to me: 9 "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands will also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you.

10 "Who despises the day of small things? Men will rejoice when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel." (These seven are the eyes of the LORD, which range throughout the earth.)"

<sup>11</sup> Then I asked the angel, "What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?"

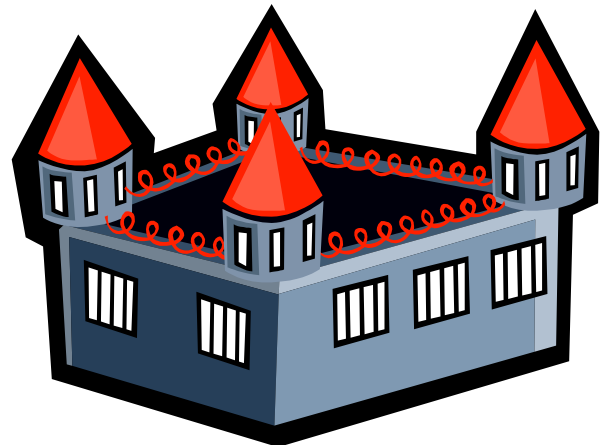
<sup>12</sup> Again I asked him, "What are these two olive branches beside the two gold pipes that pour out golden oil?"

<sup>13</sup> He replied, "Do you not know what these are?" "No, my lord," I said. <sup>14</sup> So he said, "These are the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth."

1 Sam 16:12-13 So he sent and had him brought in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; he is the one."

13 So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power. Samuel then went to Ramah.

Isa 61:1 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,



Jesus is both anointed one and the bearer of the Spirit.

Lu 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed,

Ac 4:26 The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.'

Ac 4:27 Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed.

Ac 10:38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

James 5:14. - a literal anointing

Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord.

## ***6. Creational eschatology of the pre-fall, pre-redemptive epoch: perfection and probation***

- See eschatology, pp.45, 81-114
- See old and new covenant, p. 50
- See two covenants (works/creation/redemption/grace), p. 28.

“There is an absolute end posited for the universe before and apart from sin.”<sup>59</sup>

*Creation order/ordinances:*<sup>60</sup> The goal of the Edenic test was a test of works. God set out the ideal of his free agents in his creation, under his divine law known largely through immediate knowledge, special revelation, as well as general revelation in creation. Adam and Eve were to live according to the ordinances of work, marriage, and obedience according to God’s command to avoid the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They were to have dominion over the creation, tending the garden, loving one another, and living in the abiding presence of God. All of this was beautiful, and was to be known in God’s original, Edenic *eschatos*-purposes for humanity. That is, God had *an end* in view for his creation. The “chief end” was “to glorify God and to enjoy him forever” (*Larger Catechism*, #1). *Telos* – ends, purposes, objective, goal.

The mandates given to man in his original state of integrity imply that confirmed integrity would have been followed by a long, drawn-out period of history. The probation prohibition was given in the context of a series of mandates and institutions and we must conclude that the purpose to be achieved by the probation commandment was not to fit man for translation to another realm in which these mandates and institutions would have had no relevance. Such a construction of the issue resultant upon successful probation would make mockery of the creation institutions and mandates. A successful probation would simply have confirmed man in the integrity by which he would be able to carry these mandates into effect and bring them to fruition. And so we must envisage the confirmation in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness as equipping Adam and his posterity for the continuous and successful discharge of all that was entailed in the creation ordinances and mandates. It is only in the unfolding temporal history with its cycles and sequences that we can understand the creation institution and appreciate the significance of Genesis 1:14-19 with the alternations and sequences of day and night, seasons and years. In other words, we must not forget the significance of time, with its successions and cycles, in the sinless state of unconfirmed integrity which actually existed, or its significance in that state of confirmed integrity which would have followed in the event of successful probation. What the ultimate eschatology would have been in this latter event we do not know. But it would not have been an eschatology without developments and achievements of temporal duration and succession. God himself followed a certain sequence in the creation and formation of heaven and earth—six days of creative activity and one day of rest. The significance of history for man is grounded in the significance of history for God himself in the realm of his creative and providential activity. The sequences which govern the creative order and the sequences which govern the life of man in that creative order are not originated or dictated by the new conditions which arose from sin, nor by the new conditions which the intervention of redemptive grace creates. And the limitations and restrictions which the sequences and cycles of temporal history impose are not the result of sin or the provisions of redemptive grace.<sup>61</sup>

*Vos summarizes the principles of pre-redemption eschatology:*

1. An absolute and perfect ethical relation to God existed as the only form; pure ethics
2. A supernaturalizing of both man and the world existed in perfection (supernatural transformation of the world).
3. The Sabbath is a pre-redemptive eschatological sign of the ultimate meaning of man’s relation to God.<sup>62</sup>

Vos proposes further that “the original goal remains regulative for the redemptive development of eschatology by aiming to rectify the results of sin (remedial) and uphold, in connection with this, the realization of the original goal as that which transcends the state of rectitude (i.e., rising beyond the possibility of death in eternal life).”<sup>63</sup>

**Redemption-eschatology is both restorative and consummative:  
resurrection and judgment take creation  
(physically and spiritually) far beyond the original state of humankind in Eden.**

*The Sabbath has particular significance in its pre-redemptive import: see Sabbath, p. 82.*

<sup>59</sup> Vos, *Eschatology*, p. 73.

<sup>60</sup> See J. Murray, “Creation Ordinances,” *Principles of Conduct*, pp. 27-44.

<sup>61</sup> Murray, *Principles of Conduct*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>62</sup> Vos, *Eschatology*, p. 73.

<sup>63</sup> Vos, *Eschatology*, p. 74.

It serves as an eschatological sign of the meaning and relation between God and humankind, as well as the meaning and role of work and rest. The cycles of work and rest underscored a life of perfect harmony and communion between God and humankind, all of which was incorporated as part and parcel to the worship of God. Work and rest and worship all correspond to the significance of family and the blessings of God in children and home.

*Vos proposes two key principles of primeval eschatology:* [covenant of creation: works]

1. There was a connection between eschatology and ethics (the condition of obedience). The tree of life was source of perfect knowledge and life. That is, there was *potential* for attainment of a higher state.
2. It was highly religious, involving an intimate relation to God in the Paradise created by God. The pre-redemptive eschatological state was *theocentric*.<sup>64</sup>

*Creation order:*

Further to what was said about the creation ordinances, we can also highlight the important *image of God* in his created humanity as fundamental to human existence. Adapting some from Kline,<sup>65</sup> we can delineate several lines of significance for the image of God theme in the history of redemption:

1. **priestly office** – includes the pre-fall, royal priesthood in which humanity received God’s glory in God’s self-revelation through unmediated correspondence, and through postlapsarian *mediation* of that presence and glory. *priestly functions* – intercession and ministry, mediating the presence of God, the goal of restoring the *imago Dei* and relations with God.
2. **prophetic office** – postlapsarian, redemptive historical period in which particular people are chosen as mediators of divine revelation, mediating the word, presence, and glory of God.
3. **Kingly/royal office** – judicial, theocratic functions in mediating the covenant-law of God, the goal of restoring the *imago Dei*, the law being written on the heart through the Spirit of God.

➤ See two covenants chart, p. 28.

Since the Spirit-rapture of the prophets was a pneumatic foretaste of entrance into the ultimate glorified form of the image of God, it was especially appropriate that the prophetic model of the royal priestly glory of the *imago Dei* should inform the symbolism of a vision like that of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21 and 22. But even the prophetic model does not suffice to portray the glory of the new mankind created in the image of God in Christ Jesus. The relationship of Jesus, the divine paradigm prophet, to his image-bearing prophet-church of the new covenant involves a union beyond anything that obtained in the relationship between the Old Testament Angel-prophet and the Old Testament prophets fashioned in his likeness.<sup>66</sup>

## ***7. Redemptive eschatology of the post-fall, redemptive epoch: redemption and kingdom***

➤ See redemption, creation, restoration, p. 56

*Redemption and kingdom:* many propose the kingdom as the central biblical theme (see covenant, p. 50). I would suggest that *redemption* is the central theme: the restoration of all proper relationships through the gospel. The medium through which this redemption is accomplished is the kingdom of God, the context of the Messiah’s work of redemption. That is, the restoration-redemption is the kingdom come and coming. The final goal of restoration is the kingdom of God restored, the covenant promise complete: “I will be your God and you will be my people” (see covenant promise, p. ). That is, these twin themes presuppose one another and depend on one another: the kingdom is the vehicle for redemption, while redemption derives from the kingdom as it also advances and establishes the kingdom. The one can hardly be considered without the other. God is establishing his kingdom through redeeming his creation. Re-creation of paradise progresses through all the ages of redemption, for the restored presence of God with his creation must be certain in order for the kingdom to be established in that creation. God’s heavenly kingdom is pre-figured in the Edenic garden, the old covenant’s earthly sanctuary, and the coming of the Messiah who would seal the internalization of God’s dwelling through the Spirit in those who comprise the people of God in the new covenant.

The post-fall redemptive purposes of God retain the pre-fall eschatology; Nevertheless, it is remedial, to rectify the consequences of sin. It is retrograde in perspective, progressive in goal. Soteric eschatology aims, however, not for the “original state,” but rather a renewed physical and spiritual state surpassing the original.

<sup>64</sup> Vos, *Eschatology*, p. 75-76.

<sup>65</sup> Kline, *Images of the Spirit*, pp. 57-96.

<sup>66</sup> Kline, *Images of the Spirit*, p. 95.



The expected advent of YHWH develops into an expectation of the coming Messiah.

## 8. *Captivity and Exodus: exile and remnant, return and restoration*

- See creation/redemption, p. 55.
- Dispersion of the tribes
- See “Song of Moses” and Isaiah on deliverance
- See especially Robertson, *Christ of the Prophets*, who uses this polarity motif throughout his Analysis of the Prophets.

The themes of Egyptian captivity and Exodus (the Exodus was *the* defining experience for Israel) deliverance play a primary role in the prophetic perspective. Further, the theme of Exodus/deliverance alongside the theme of creation form two primary sources of allusions and typology in the Bible. These themes also correlate significantly with the exile and remnant themes. Exile brings judgment from the God who is Creator of all, but it also brings hope of redemption and deliverance both temporally and spiritually. Creation, judgment, redemption, restoration (recreation) are all major threads in the history of redemption, overlapping and complementing each other.

- See the conditional and unconditional aspects of the covenant-promise, p. 29.

The conditional promise of land (Exodus/Conquest), progeny (Children/Nation), and presence (sanctuary-restoration) coincided with the promise of judgment-removal (Exile) regarding the *conditional* aspects of the covenant promises. If Israel obeyed, they would receive the blessings of the covenant; if they disobeyed, they would lose the blessings (the deuteronomic principle).

## 9. *The broad structure of redemption-restoration: dwelling-presence of God restored*

- See M. Kline, *Kingdom Prologue*, *passim*.
- See Kaiser, *Toward and OT Theology*, pp 182-261, traces major themes (esp. promise) through the prophets.
- See redemption, creation, restoration, p. 56

Heaven (macrocosm) – Edenic paradise (earthly kingdom) (microcosm) – promised land (earthly kingdom) (microcosm) – Zion (foreshadows heavenly kingdom) – sanctuary/temple (foreshadows heavenly kingdom) (microcosm) – new temple (prophets) (foreshadows heavenly kingdom) – Christ (new temple) (macrocosm/microcosm) – new Eden – new heaven/earth in promised paradise (heavenly kingdom) (macrocosm)

### Eschatos begins and ends in paradise.

God is perfect in all his attributes, thus we can expect a perfect justice in his eschatos:

- ◆ Perfect judgment ~ God is perfectly just because he is perfectly holy.
- ◆ Perfect redemption ~ God is perfect in his works because he is perfect in his essence.

- **Tree of Life = heaven**
- **Deluge = judgment**
- **Canaan = promises land**
- **Final victory over sin**
- **Removal of the curse**

*The foundation stones of redemption:*  
**Holiness:** the sinless perfections of all of God's attributes.  
**Glory:** the sinless perfections of God's essential being.

## 10. *Structuring, binary themes of the Bible* *Redemption-history and eschatos/consummation*

- See redemptive history in hermeneutics, pp. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

## a) *Type and antitype*

- See discussion, pp. 203ff.

## b) *Promise and fulfillment*

- See typology discussion, p.209.
- See Payne, “The Identification of Fulfillment,” *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp 57-143.
- See Baker, *Two Testaments*, pp. 203-233 and his bibliography.
- See France, “The Use of Old Testament Prediction,” *Jesus and the OT*, pp. 83-163.
- Read Pratt, “Historical Contingencies.”
- See “Multiple fulfillment,” p. 204, “fortelling,” (prediction), p. 159.

The structure of biblical revelation:  
*The central thread of redemption-history*

Promise and fulfillment of

Redemption–restoration  
(of humankind to God’s kingdom)

Promise and fulfillment: Goldsworthy proposes multiple fulfillment (fulfillment not necessarily in one event) and two levels of judgment and restoration – immediate and cosmic (eschatos).<sup>67</sup>

These can be called *fulfillment horizons*: the promises of God have two or more “fulfillments involving a *progression*.”<sup>68</sup>

The hermeneutics of progressive fulfillment looks at God’s promises  
as a vine that grows,  
extends its branches in various directions, bears fruits, and keeps  
developing.

For example, in fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise:

1. *Birth of Isaac - progeny*
2. *Moses – Israel becomes a nation*
3. *NT – believers in Messiah beyond number*
4. *New heaven and new earth – the ultimate consummation*

Gen 12:7 The LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

Gen 21:1-2 Now the LORD was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what he had promised. 2 Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him.

Ex 3:12 And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.”

Ex 33:1 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Leave this place, you and the people you brought up out of Egypt, and go up to the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’”

Jn 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.”

Gal 3:7-8 Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. 8 The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.”

Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

## c) *Old covenant and new covenant*

- See “New thing under the sun” themes, p. 53
- Read Hengstenberg, “New Covenant,” *Classical Evangelical Essays*.
- See Holmgren, *The Old Testament*, “Israel and the New Covenant,” pp. 75-104.
- See Jesus: old wine skins, new wine skins.

<sup>67</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, p. 78.

<sup>68</sup> See “literal and fuller sense,” p. 72. See VanGemeren, *Interpreting*, p. 83 on *progressive fulfillment* and below, p. 115.

- See Covenants in the history of redemption, p.
- See new creation, p. 56f.
- See two covenants chart, p. 28.
- See “new” themes,” pp. 50-53.

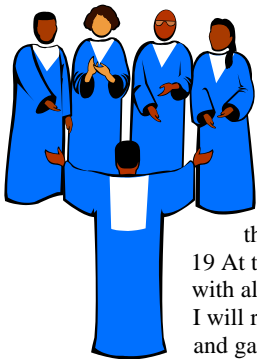
## (1) Covenants

There are many who claim that the covenant theme is the center of all biblical theology (see kingdom, p. 48). This may be defensible, but I have argued that redemption is the central theme, and that the covenant-promise is the binding thread throughout.<sup>69</sup> The promise of a new covenant is essentially the gospel promise that the law of the old covenant would not be displaced, but rather written on the heart (see new heart, law and spirit of the law, p. ). This new covenant would be continuous with the old, but would present new features unknown in the old covenant, namely the consummation of the promises of the old covenant. Where the old covenant presented the initial stages of redemption, the new would usher in the final stages. (See further discussion under Jeremiah of this theme.)

Jer 31:31 “The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

“Rather than warranting a radical break with the unfolding promise, Jeremiah’s teaching renewed the central core of God’s ancient word and added the emphasis that a divine capability could be expected in the eschatological day of God’s judgment and salvation (Jer 30:3; 31:27, 31, 38, ‘the days are coming’).”<sup>70</sup>

Some texts that hint at a “new” thing in preserving the believing remnant in a very intimate communion with God through faith:



Zeph 3:17 The LORD your God is with you,  
he is mighty to save.  
He will take great delight in you,  
he will quiet you with his love,  
he will rejoice over you with singing.”

Zeph 3:18-20 “The sorrows for the appointed feasts  
I will remove from you;  
they are a burden and a reproach to you.

19 At that time I will deal  
with all who oppressed you;  
I will rescue the lame  
and gather those who have been scattered.

I will give them praise and honor  
in every land where they were put to shame.

20 At that time I will gather you;  
at that time I will bring you home.

I will give you honor and praise  
among all the peoples of the earth  
when I restore your fortunes  
before your very eyes,”  
says the LORD.

Hab 2:4 See, he is puffed up;  
his desires are not upright—  
but the righteous will live by his faith—

(right)The cup of the Last Supper?<sup>71</sup>

Lk 22:20 cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured  
1 Cor 11:25 cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever  
2 Cor 3:6 competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the  
letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.  
Heb 8:8 the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel  
Heb 9:15 Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called  
Heb 12:24 to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood



<sup>69</sup> Consider Wellhausen who thought that the covenant concept was not known to the prophets.

<sup>70</sup> Kaiser, “Theology of the OT,” p.304.

<sup>71</sup> Some today that this is the onyx goblet Jesus Christ drank from at the Last Supper, and has been in the Basilica of San Isidoro in Leon, north Spain for many centuries.  
<http://breakingdeception.com/holy-grail-found-jewel-encrusted-goblet-found-gathering-dust-touched-lips-jesus-fact-holy-grail/>

The new covenant theme was in reality a *renewal* of the ancient covenant-promise, not something unknown in earlier stages of the history of redemption (see the spirit of the law, p. 72f.). This relates to the question of redemption, the law and the spirit of the law, as to whether there was one unfolding covenant of grace as the means of redemption. That is, the law was to be written on the heart, and there was nothing "new" in this as it unfolded in the history of redemption. It was only the human heart that from the giving of the law, and before, was ever turning the way of grace into works. Sin's very essence is to deceive, and thus we deceive ourselves into believing works will suffice. This is our "natural" inclination.

## Motivations

What is your motive?  
naturally  
must be answered  
with a prayer  
a votive candle  
and a wish that  
the heart deceives  
itself into telling  
the truth  
for once.

### *What's "new" in the consummation of the new covenant (begun in Gen 3:15):*

#### *Universal knowledge of God*

Jer 31:34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor,  
or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,'  
because they will all know me,  
from the least of them to the greatest,"  
declares the LORD.  
"For I will forgive their wickedness  
and will remember their sins no more."



#### *Universal peace*

Isa 2:4 He will judge between the nations  
and will settle disputes for many peoples.  
They will beat their swords into plowshares  
and their spears into pruning hooks.  
Nation will not take up sword against nation,  
nor will they train for war anymore.



Ezek 34:25; 37:26 I will make a covenant of peace with them and rid the land of wild beasts so that they may live in the desert and sleep in the forests in safety.

26 I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant (see p. 70). I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever.

Hos 2:18 In that day I will make a covenant for them  
with the beasts of the field and the birds of the air  
and the creatures that move along the ground.  
Bow and sword and battle  
I will abolish from the land,  
so that all may lie down in safety.

#### *Universal material prosperity*

Isa 61:8 "For I, the LORD, love justice;  
I hate robbery and iniquity.  
In my faithfulness I will reward them  
and make an everlasting covenant (see p. 70) with them.

Jer 32:41 I will rejoice in doing them good and will assuredly plant them in this land with all my heart and soul.

Ezek 34:26-27 I will bless them and the places surrounding my hill. I will send down showers in season; there will be showers of blessing. 27 The trees of the field will yield their fruit and the ground will yield its crops; the people will be secure in their land. They will know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke and rescue them from the hands of those who enslaved them.

Hos 2:21-23 “In that day I will respond,” declares the LORD—  
 “I will respond to the skies,  
 and they will respond to the earth;  
 22 and the earth will respond to the grain,  
 the new wine and oil,  
 and they will respond to Jezreel.  
 23 I will plant her for myself in the land;  
 I will show my love to the one I called ‘Not my loved one.’ I will say to those called ‘Not my people,’ ‘You are my people’;  
 and they will say, ‘You are my God.’”



### *The Age of the Spirit and the sanctuary of God as the focus of the nations*

Ezek 37:26, 28 I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant (see p. 70). I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever. 28 Then the nations will know that I the LORD make Israel holy, when my sanctuary is among them forever.

### *The relation of Israel and the church in the new covenant:* see pp. 55 and 37 (spiritual Israel).

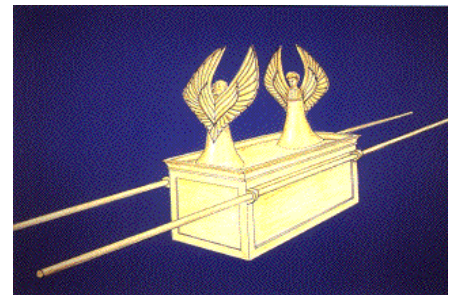
Paul’s view in Rom 9-11 “appears to be neither that the two remain as separate entities nor that the church ‘replaces’ Israel; rather, the church is in strong continuity with the ancient people, as a new realization of the covenant.”<sup>72</sup> The new community of God is a combined Jewish Gentile fellowship, they are the “new Israel.” There is no longer a geographical nation of God’s people, for the kingdom promises are for all the nations who have been grafted into the people of God. This was true in all the ages of the new covenant promise in the period of the OT covenant of redemption spanning all the ages from Gen 3:15 to the the present and to the end of the ages.

## (2) *More new themes under the prophetic sun*

➤ See old covenant, new covenant, p. 50.

The “new” theme corresponds to the promise to Adam and Eve to crush the serpent’s head, for it links all of the covenant promises as the promise that God will accomplish redemption in human history. What he is doing is not entirely *new*, for it is a restoration of paradise, but this new Paradise will far surpass the old.

- new exodus from captivity (spiritual)
- new return from captivity in Babylon (physical)
- new coming into the promised land (spiritual)
- new covenant written on the heart (new heart) (p. 50)
- new Jerusalem
- new name
- new temple
- new Davidic king
- new man/humanity
- new kingdom
- new heaven and earth (Paradise)
- new creation (pp. 48, 56)



Jeremiah envisions a new time when the *ark* itself will be forgotten:

Jer 3:16 In those days, when your numbers have increased greatly in the land,” declares the LORD, “men will no longer say, ‘The ark of the covenant of the LORD.’ It will never enter their minds or be remembered; it will not be missed, nor will another one be made.

This may be taken to refer to several levels of redemptive history: the returning exiles would have been living without the ark for some time and would not be able to reproduce the former sanctuary and its articles, and indeed would not *need* to. This points towards the approaching Messianic age in which the promise of God’s presence would take on dramatically new proportions. The prophet is making the profound point that the covenant and promises do not *depend* on the sanctuary (nor Israel itself), but on his promises; the sanctuary was only a picture or preparation for One who was to become their sanctuary. Indeed, he always was their sanctuary, though they consistently forgot it. There may be the further implication that in the unfolding progress of redemption that even sanctuary sacrifice would become superfluous. Reading the NT we

<sup>72</sup> Gordon J. McConville, “בְּרִית,” *NIDOTE*, p. 754.

know this has already been completely fulfilled. Considering how *central* the ark was, containing the law itself and the atonement cover, this is a truly remarkable prophecy of gospel grace.

The *significance* of the ark is not lost, however, for even John sees the ark in his vision of heaven:

Rev 11:19 Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

### **d) Law and gospel-grace: judgment and hope**

- See Luther (see Lint's discussion, pp. ff.)
- See Murray, *Principles of Conduct*, "Law and Grace," pp. 181-201.
- See the spirit of the law, p. 72.
- See critics and prophets on law, p. 226.
- See Marcion, pp. 54, 79.
- See covenants of work: creation/redemption
- See Robertson, *Christ of the Prophets*, ch. 5.

Central to the diverse views on theology, is the law of God and its relation to the believer in the old and new covenants. There are no grounds for assuming any radical discontinuity between the OT and the NT in regards to the law and the gospel. There are no grounds for assuming the NT is anti-law and pro-grace, nor that the OT is pro-law and anti-grace. Though this can not be developed extensively in this survey, it is a underlying theme throughout the prophets, especially in regards to the application of the law, the exposition of the law, and the message of grace in the prophets. It corresponds directly with what I will call the "spirit of the law" being written on the heart by the Spirit. That is, the gospel of grace proclaims that the law condemns but that the Spirit enlivens through the renewal of the heart, the spiritual transformation of the human heart to willingly obey the law of God *not* efficaciously (justification) but through the process of sanctification (Jer 31:33).

It should also be kept in mind that there is a very close relation between the law of God and wisdom. In this sense, it is appropriate to emphasize the overall *positive* view of the law in the OT – the teaching of wisdom was in large part an exposition of the law of God, the *instruction* for thought, work, relations, living life and loving God. The prophets were called to a variety of ministries, but a central task was in calling God's people back to God's high standards of his law and wisdom. In light of this, the prophets preach the gospel of grace in varying ways and to varying degrees (implicitly and explicitly). They resolutely condemn "legalism," pretentious religiosity, works-righteousness, and religious syncretism, while at the same time calling the people back to the law of God. This will hopefully become evident as we proceed.

Application: consider the prevalent Marcionite heresy today (see Marcion in hermeneutics of the history of redemption p. )

We are compelled therefore to recognize that the subject of the law and grace is not simply concerned with the antithesis that there is between law and grace, but also with law as that which makes grace necessary and with grace as establishing and confirming law. It is not only the doctrine of grace that must be jealously guarded against distortion by the works of the law, but it is also the doctrine of law that must be preserved against the distortions of a spurious concept of grace.<sup>73</sup>

It is symptomatic of a pattern of thought current in many evangelical circles that the idea of keeping the commandments of God is not consonant with the liberty and spontaneity of the Christian man, that *keeping* the law has its affinities with legalism and with the principle of works rather than with the principle of grace. It is strange indeed that this kind of antipathy to the notion of keeping commandments should be entertained by any believer who is a serious student of the New Testament. Did not our Lord say, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments (John 14:15).<sup>74</sup>

The facile slogan of many a professed evangelical, when confronted with the claims of the law of God, to the effect that he is not under the law but under grace, should at least be somewhat disturbed when it is remembered that the same apostle upon whose formula he relies said also that he was not without law to God but under law to Christ (1 Corinthians 9:21).<sup>75</sup>

**The Law has not destroyed nature, but has instructed it;  
grace has not destroyed the law, but has made it act.<sup>76</sup>  
The law imposed what it did not give. Grace gives what it imposes.<sup>77</sup>**

<sup>73</sup> Murray, *Principles*, p. 182.

<sup>74</sup> Murray, *Principles*, p. 182.

<sup>75</sup> Murray, *Principles*, p. 186.

<sup>76</sup> Pascal, *Pensées*, Trotter, #519.

<sup>77</sup> Pascal, *Pensées*, Trotter, #521.

As the scriptures themselves testify, law and covenant undergirded the whole perspective of the prophets in analyzing the past, present, and future of the people to whom they spoke. The law revealed by God at Sinai and the covenant with his people that dated back to the time of the patriarchs provided for the prophets the standard by which they presumed to condemn sin and to promise redemption for the nation of Israel. Without the foundational concepts of God's law and God's covenant, the prophets would have been totally awash in a sea of relativism. No other basis can adequately explain the manner in which the prophets so confidently and consistently joined messages of judgment and blessing to one another.<sup>78</sup>

### e) *Israel and the church: one people of God under grace*

- See texts p. 37.
- See Feinberg, *Continuity and Discontinuity* and hermeneutics discussion of continuity and discontinuity, pp. 221-259 and below, p. .
- See "Spiritual Israel," p. 37.
- See "Foreign nations in OT prophecy by Payne," p. 177.
- See *Israel and the Mission of God to the Nations*, p. 143.
- See S.Hague, "What is the Rapture Part I and II" in One Drive "Recommended reading" folder

"This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus." Eph 3:6

This is one of the most pressing issues and problems for all eschatological systems. Whether the NT church is OT Israel literally, figuratively, or both, and whether there is much or little continuity between OT Israel and the NT church. We can not easily resolve it without favoring one view over another, and the more continuity one sees the more Amillennial one is. Dispensationalists typically see great discontinuity between Israel and the church, and a very definite plan for national, geographic Israel until the end time with a reinstatement of slavivic sacrifice for them. This poses problems for our interpretation of NT texts that teach that there is no more sacrifice for sin for anyone, and that in the new covenant "there is neither Jew nor Greek . . ."

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Rom 10:12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him,

The people of God are one, and from all the nations, as children of Abraham who are part of the fulfillment of the covenant promises that he their would be children more numerous than the sand and stars. All who are Gentiles are considered *grafted* into the covenant-vine, and all Jews who are unbelievers are rejected from the covenant.

### f) *Universalism versus particularism (nationalism)*

- See Duane L. Christensen, "A New Israel: The Righteous from among All Nations."
- See notes on the "Israel and the Mission of God to the Nations," p. 143 and C. Wright, *The Mission of God; Ethics for the People of God*, pp. 56, 249-251, 240-243.
- See "Foreign nations in OT prophecy by Payne," p. 177.

The nature of Israel's relation to the nations is complex, involving on one hand the principle of *separation* from the nations by God's people, and on the other the gospel mandate to testify to the nations of their Lord and God. Thus there was a tension between them and the nations which stood under God's judgment. There is simulataneously the irony of the nations becoming God's instrument of judgment on God's people in Babylonian exile, as well as the instrument of God's deliverance through the Persians. Alongside these themes are the professions of understanding (belief) from pagans and pagan monarchs (e.g., Nebuchadnezzar), as well as awareness of, and response to, OT prophets (e.g., Nineveh). There is also the polar principle of the gospel of redemption going to all the nations of the earth, but never obliterating the fact of Israel's unique calling. Both the messages of judgment and the promises of redemption for pagan nations parallel the same to Israel, and *vice versa*. Progressively unveiled is the revelation that the promises will go to all the nations. Israel's exclusivity and separatism was not related to their virtue, indeed it was rather related to their propensity to fall into the sins of the nations. Because Israel was to avoid the sins of the nations did not mean that Israel had the right to deduce that God did not love those nations (Jonah) and plan to rescue/redeem his people from among them. Indeed, the principle of welcome to strangers and foreigners in their midst is frequent in the OT:

1 Ki 8:41-43 As for the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of your name— 42 for men will hear of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm—when he comes and prays toward this temple, 43 then hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel, and may know that this house I have built bears your Name.

Isa 56:3 Let no foreigner who has bound himself to the LORD say, "The LORD will surely exclude me from his people." And let not any eunuch complain, "I am only a dry tree."

<sup>78</sup> Robertson, *Christ of the Prophets*, pp. 121-122.

Central to the eschatological hopes of redemption in the prophets is the hope for the nations to know the Lord, the essence of the covenant promise to Israel. Thus, universalism (redemption available for all peoples) was to become a *passion* for *national* Israel, as it is for the church.

---

Amos 9:7 “Are not you Israelites  
the same to me as the Cushites?”  
declares the LORD.

“Did I not bring Israel up from Egypt,  
the Philistines from Caphtor  
and the Arameans from Kir?”

Isa 19:19-25 In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the heart of Egypt, and a monument to the LORD at its border. 20 It will be a sign and witness to the LORD Almighty in the land of Egypt. When they cry out to the LORD because of their oppressors, he will send them a savior and defender, and he will rescue them. 21 So the LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians, and in that day they will acknowledge the LORD. They will worship with sacrifices and grain offerings; they will make vows to the LORD and keep them. 22 The LORD will strike Egypt with a plague; he will strike them and heal them. They will turn to the LORD, and he will respond to their pleas and heal them. 23 In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together. 24 In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth. 25 The LORD Almighty will bless them, saying, “Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my inheritance.”

Isa 49:6 he says:

“It is too small a thing for you to be my servant  
to restore the tribes of Jacob  
and bring back those of Israel I have kept.  
I will also make you a light for the Gentiles,  
that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.”

---

### ***g) Creation, exodus-redemption, judgment, rest, and the renewal all things: ἀποκατάστασις and παλιγγενεσία***

- See discussion, p. 46f.
- See under heading on proper figures in typology, p. 209f.

#### ***(1) Creation and redemption***

Rest – restoration – Sabbath principle – rest from sin and the works of the law—shalom

As noted, all the promises of God have an eschatological dimension. The eschatological promise of redemption begins in the garden, after the fall. God who creates is the God who recreates (new creation) or redeems:

Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity  
between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring and hers;  
he will crush your head,  
and you will strike his heel.

Creation and redemption are the two sides of the whole story of history. Creation theology is, and must be, the starting point in re-telling that story. Creation theology is the starting point in the gospel, and even more so in our evolutionist times than ever before. Origins, beginnings, and the source of life must be considered first. Because this is crucial to the gospel of redemption, it has been under serious attack and revision for countless years. Since we are in a spiritual battle for the gospel of redemption, it is no surprise that the grounds of redemption, creation *ex nihilo*, would be so widely rejected by unbelievers. These are moral questions, and thus our understanding and belief regarding creation is intrinsically connected to *how*, and *whether*, we receive the whole gospel. Considering the whole Bible, it is easy to propose that creation theology is the starting point, but it is not always recognized as such that it is also the *central theme* in redemption theology.

To survey all textual examples of creation theology as it relates to redemption theology would far exceed my space here. Consider all the mention or, or reference to, creation and nature as direct and indirect allusions to God as Creator. Since all mentions of, or allusions to, creation (in any aspect) points to God the Redeemer.

The twin themes of creation and redemption/exodus/deliverance (as noted, p. 48f.) serve as twin themes in the history of redemption, both typologically and thematically. The allusions to both are so numerous it is impossible to list them. Indeed, they are the “warp and woof” of the history of redemption. The tabernacle/temple theme is central to the themes of creation/exodus, for they represent the redemption procured through atonement under the law after the exodus. The covenant promise was a promise of restoration to God’s presence, deliverance from sin and bondage, a new creation of



the new man. Correlating with these motifs of creation and redemption are also those of *creation* and *judgment*, involving doom/destruction of judgment (exile) and the hope/re-creation of redemption/deliverance (remnant). (Re-creation may not be the best expression for what we mean as *renewal* and *restoration*.) Without a Creator there can be no Redeemer. The term *recreation* is suitable in reference to the New Creation promised.

Both the former and latter prophets draw on these themes extensively: exodus/Moses are paradigmatic, correlations between Adam/Eve exiled and Egyptian bondage and Babylonian captivity, exodus and exile, exodus/return from exile, hard hearts, idolatry and exile, plagues in Egypt and later judgments, exodus remnant and exile remnant returned, old exodus and new exodus, YHWH's wonders in the desert and YHWH's wonders before the nations.

The NT also carries over these themes extensively: correlations between Jesus and Moses, high priests and Jesus, deliverance of the new Israel and ancient Israel, promised land and heaven, manna in the wilderness and Jesus the true bread, the tabernacle and the incarnation/resurrection.<sup>79</sup>

- See Rom 5 for creation themes in the Adam-Christ analogy.
- See Isa 51-52 for redemptive Exodus imagery; 43:14-19 (Exodus) and 42:5; 44:24; 45:11-12 (creation)
- See 1 Cor 10:1-6 for typology of the Exodus in salvation.
- See Ps 95:7-8; Heb 4:3-11 for Exodus imagery.
- See Jer 21:5-7 and Ex 3:20; Deut 4:34; 5:15; 7:19; 26:8) for Babylonian captivity and Exodus.

Ps 95:7-8 for he is our God  
and we are the people of his pasture,  
the flock under his care.  
Today, if you hear his voice,  
do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah,  
as you did that day at Massah in  
the desert,

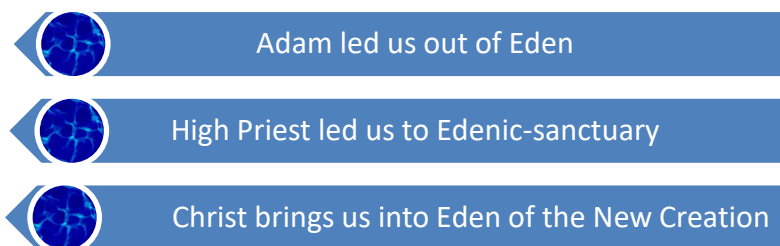
The prophets speak of God who is One, sovereign, holy, just, mercifully, loving Creator God. They proclaim destructive judgment by the Creator, as well as redemption in renewal-restoration-recreation. The fulfillment of redemption will come in the Messiah who is the one addressed in Hebrews as YHWH, the creator of the world:

Heb 1:10 He also says, "In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth,  
and the heavens are the work of your hands."

### Creation and redemption together form the matrix for understanding God's ways in Israel and in Jesus Christ.<sup>80</sup>

NT: Rom 1 ~ Consider the role of *general revelation* as "understood by all" – creation reveals the character of God (his judgment-wrath is manifested), while the *special revelation* of scripture reveals God's plan of redemption.

#### (2) *Rest and restoration*



**OT** – rest was designed as part of the pre-lapsarian state of creation. Adam and Eve rested, even slept, before sin entered their lives. This was the rhythm of life established by the Sabbath command (Gen 2:1-3). Rest in the Edenic context served multiple purposes. As stated in *The NIV Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, p. 709:

“An important part of the meaning of rest is suggested by the mystery of divine rest: it draws a boundary around work and exertion and takes legitimate delight in celebrating what has been accomplished, without an urge to keep working. The rest of God even includes an element that is crucial for humans who rest – refreshment” (cf. Ex 31:17).

<sup>79</sup> See extensive OT and NT scriptures listed in R.E. Watts, “Exodus,” *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, pp 482-487.

<sup>80</sup> VanGemeren, *Interpreting*, p. 86.

The importance of rest in the OT is such that it was a “**covenant sign**” between God and his people (Ex 31:16-17).<sup>81</sup> This rest involved cessation of labors for gain (“relinquishing of human self-assertion and a trust in God”<sup>82</sup>), acknowledging dependence on God the Provider, remembering his rest from creation, worship of God. It also looked back to the deliverance from Egyptian bondage (Deut 5:15). See homelessness, p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.** In the covenant of redemption, rest implies *restoration*.

“Taken a step further, rest in God’s providence becomes symbolic of salvation itself.”<sup>83</sup>

**NT**

Matt 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Rev 14:13 Then I heard a voice from heaven say, “Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them.”

*The goal of heavenly rest in the NT is the goal of human existence, since it is the objective of redemption.*

**Rest and Restoration:** the redemption of God’s people involves motifs of returning, reconciliation, rebirth, and reunion, regeneration. The return to, or restoration of, that which was lost.

➤ See John L. Nuelsen, “Regeneration,” *ISBE*, pp.

### (3) *New creation (re-creation & renewal): ἀποκατάστασις and παλιγγενεσία*

#### **Relevant words:**

שׁוּב (shûb) (re)turn, can be used to mean restore – this word is used many times in the OT in regards to the call from God to return to him: the call to repentance and restoration of relationship.

ἀποκατάστασις ἀποκαταστάσεως, ἡ (ἀποκαθίστημι, which see), *restoration*: τῶν πάντων, the restoration not only of the true theocracy but also of that more perfect state of (even physical) things which existed before the fall, [Acts 3:21](#); cf. Meyer at the passage (Often in Polybius, Diodorus, Plutarch, others.)

**NIV Mtt 17:11** Jesus replied, "To be sure, Elijah comes and will **restore** all things.

Louw and Nida: 3.65 ἀποκαθίστημι ; ἀποκατάστασις, εως f; ἐγείρω: to change to a previous good state - 'to restore, to cause again to be, restoration.' ἀποκαθίστημι: ἐξέτεινεν, καὶ ἀπεκατεστάθη ἡ χεὶρ αὐτοῦ 'he stretched out his hand and it was restored' or '... it was healed' [Mk 3.5](#). A rendering of ἀποκαθίστημι in [Mk 3.5](#) as 'was healed' is justified on the basis that at a previous time the hand was crippled, but ἀποκαθίστημι in and of itself does not mean 'to be healed.' Note, however, a contrasting situation in ἰάομαι (13.66). ἀποκατάστασις: ἄχρι χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων ὧν ἐλάλησεν ὁ θεός 'till the times of restoring all things of which God spoke' or 'until the time of making all things new of which God spoke' [Ac 3.21](#). ἐγείρω: καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις ἐγερῶ αὐτόν 'and in three days I will restore it' (a reference to the Temple) [Jn 2.19](#).

See also **2 Peter 3:13** But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness

Robertson writes, “The noun *apokatatastaseōs*, which in Acts 3:21 refers to the restoration of all things as promised by the prophets, should be compared with the verb *apokathistaneis* in 1:6. Because of this connection between the two verses, the restoration of all things in 3:21 may be regarded as providing an explanation for the restoration of the kingdom to Israel in 1:6. The restoration of Israel in the prophets is equivalent in its new covenant context to the renewal of the whole earth, not merely the reestablishment of the state of Israel.”<sup>84</sup>

<sup>81</sup> See baptism and covenant sign, p. .

<sup>82</sup> *NIV Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, p. 710.

<sup>83</sup> *NIV Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, p. 710.

<sup>84</sup> Robertson, *Christ of the the Prophets*, p. 64, fn. 19. See Robertson, *Israel of God*, pp. 141-42.

**Paligensis**

<sup>NAS</sup> **Matthew 19:28** And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

<sup>NIV</sup> **Matthew 19:28** Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

<sup>WHO</sup> **Matthew 19:28** ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ὑμεῖς οἱ ἀκολουθήσαντές μοι ἐν τῇ παλιγγενεσίᾳ ὅταν καθίσῃ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπὶ θρόνου δόξης αὐτοῦ καθήσεσθε καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐπὶ δώδεκα θρόνους κρίνοντες τὰς δώδεκα φυλὰς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ

<sup>NAS</sup> **Titus 3:5** He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

<sup>NIV</sup> **Titus 3:5** he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,

<sup>WHO</sup> **Titus 3:5** οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων τῶν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ἃ ἐποιήσαμεν ἡμεῖς ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος ἔσωσεν ἡμᾶς διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας καὶ ἀνακαινώσεως πνεύματος ἁγίου

Low and Nida

4771 παλιγγενεσία ας f

(a) rebirth 41.53

(b) new age 67.147

Also

41.53 γεννάω ἄνωθεν (an idiom, literally 'to be born again'); παλιγγενεσία, ας f: to experience a complete change in one's way of life to what it should be, with the implication of return to a former state or relation - 'to be born again, to experience new birth, rebirth.' γεννάω ἄνωθεν: ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν 'unless a person is born again' [Jn 3.3](#). It is also possible to understand ἄνωθεν in [Jn 3.3](#) as meaning 'from above' or 'from God' (see 84.13), a literary parallel to the phrase ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν in [Jn 1.13](#). In [Jn 3.3](#), however, Nicodemus understood ἄνωθεν as meaning 'again' (see 67.55) and γεννάω as 'physical birth' (see 23.52). παλιγγενεσία: διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας καὶ ἀνακαινώσεως 'new birth and new life by washing' [Tt 3.5](#). The metaphor of 'new birth' is so important in the NT that it should be retained if at all possible. In some languages 'new birth' can be expressed as 'to cause to be born all over again' or 'to have a new life as though one were born a second time.' See also 13.55.

*Continuity and discontinuity*: in the new creation, there will be total transformation of *the things we already know*: the environment (ecology), human relations (social), the body (resurrection), aesthetics (beauty, order), philosophy (true knowledge of God and creation), work (pain-free vocation), love, worship, etc., etc....

**Some object to the idea of a new creation with reference to 2 Peter 3:**<sup>85</sup>

2 Pet 3:10 Ἦξει δὲ ἡμέρα κυρίου ὡς κλέπτης ἐν ἣ ὁ οὐρανὸς ῥοιζηδὸν παρελεύσονται στοιχεῖα δὲ καυσούμενα λυθήσεται καὶ γῆ καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ ἔργα εὐρεθήσεται

<sup>NIV</sup> <sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

<sup>NASB</sup><sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

εὐρεθήσεται verb indicative future passive 3rd person singular from εὐρίσκω

<sup>85</sup> C.Wright says on this, "I prefer the textual reading that the earth 'will be found' to the emendation reflected in several English translations 'will be burned up.' I also find Bauckham's interpretation of this convincing; namely, that the earth will be 'found out': i.e. be exposed and laid bare (cf. NIV) before God's judgment so that the wicked and all their works will no longer be able to hide or find any protection (Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, pp. 316-322. The purpose of the conflagration described in these verses is not the destruction of the cosmos per se, but rather its purging and new creation" (*OT Ethics*, p 141, f.n. 55).

[GING] εὐρίσκω *find, discover, come upon* [Mt 7:7f](#); [Mk 14:55](#); [Lk 6:7](#); [11:24](#); [J 7:34](#), [36](#); [Ac 13:6](#), [28](#); [27:6](#); [Ro 7:21](#); [2 Cor 12:20](#); [Rv 20:15](#). *Find, obtain* [Lk 1:30](#); [2 Ti 1:18](#); [Hb 4:16](#); [9:12](#). *Pass. be found, find oneself, be* [Ac 8:40](#); [Phil 3:9](#); [1 Pt 2:22](#); *prove to be* [Ro 7:10](#); *be judged* [2 Pt 3:10](#). [*eureka*, Archimedes' exclamation; *heuristic*] [pg 81]

Primarily because of more ancient text traditions that suggest εὐρεθήσεται is more ancient, it is not universally agreed that the destruction of the earth is in view. Indeed, it the NIV is based on the more ancient text tradition of the word for “establish” or “find.” Metzger discusses the textual history below: From B. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, pp. 705-706. [3.10](#) εὐρεθήσεται {D} At the close of ver. [10](#) the extant witnesses present a wide variety of readings, none of which seems to be original. The oldest reading, and the one which best explains the origin of the others that have been preserved, is εὐρεθήσεται, which is attested by ⲛ B K P 424<sup>c</sup> 1175 1739<sup>txt</sup> 1852 syr<sup>ph, hmg</sup> arm Origen. In view of the difficulty of extracting any acceptable sense from the passage, it is not strange that copyists and translators introduced a variety of modifications. Thus, several witnesses retain εὐρεθήσεται but qualify it with other words: (a) the Sahidic version and one manuscript of the Harclean Syriac version insert the negative, and (b) the Bodmer Papyrus (P<sup>72</sup>) adds λύμενα (“the earth and the things in it will be found *dissolved*”) – an expedient, however, that overloads the context with three instances of the same verb. Other witnesses either (c) omit εὐρεθήσεται and the accompanying clause (so Ψ vg Pelagius *al*), or substitute another verb that gives more or less good sense. Thus (d) C reads ἀφανισθήσονται (“will disappear”), and (e) A 048 049 056 0142 33 614 Byz *Lect* syr<sup>h</sup> cop<sup>bo</sup> eth *al* read κατακαήσεται (“will be burned up”). Because εὐρεθήσεται, though the oldest of the extant readings, seems to be devoid of meaning in the context (even the expedient of punctuating as a question, “Will the earth and the things in it be found?” fails to commend itself), various conjectural emendations have been proposed: (a) after ἔργα the word ἄργα has fallen out (Bradshaw), “the earth and the things in it will be found *useless*”; (b) εὐρεθήσεται is a scribal corruption of ῥύσεται or ῥεύσεται (Hort),<sup>2</sup> “the earth and the things in it *will flow*”; (c) συρρῦσεται (Naber), “... will flow together”; (d) ἐκπυρωθήσεται (Olivier), “... will be burnt to ashes”; (e) ἀρθήσεται (J. B. Mayor), “... will be taken away”; (f) κριθήσεται (Eb. Nestle), “... will be judged”; (g) ἰαθήσεται (or ἐξιαθήσεται) (Chase), “... will be healed (thoroughly)”; (h) πυρωθήσεται (Vansittart), “... will be burned.”

## **h) “The law and the prophets” and the covenants**

- See “law and gospel grace,” p. 53f.
- See “Spirit of the law,” pp. 72
- See p. 226.
- See Robertson, *Christ of the Prophets*, pp.149-184, 179-187.
- See “Covenant law and prophecy,” p. 226.

### **(1) OT correspondence between the law and the prophets**

“Law and covenant must be seen as major defining factors in the ministry of the prophets of Israel. Virtually all the problems related to understanding the ministry of the prophets find their resolution in God’s administration of law and covenant. In these provisions may be found ultimately the expectation of the Christ of the covenants, the lawkeeper for God’s people, the lawgiver of God’s people, who lives and dies to fulfill the demands of covenantal law and who embodies the heart of the covenant, which is Immanuel: God with us.”<sup>86</sup>

2 Ki 17:13 The LORD warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: “Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your fathers to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets.”  
Neh 9:26 But they were disobedient and rebelled against you; they put your law behind their backs. They killed your prophets, who had admonished them in order to turn them back to you; they committed awful blasphemies.  
Jer 2:8 The priests did not ask, ‘Where is the LORD?’ Those who deal with the law did not know me; the leaders rebelled against me. The prophets prophesied by Baal, following worthless idols.  
Jer 18:18 They said, “Come, let’s make plans against Jeremiah; for the teaching of the law by the priest will not be lost, nor will counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophets. So come, let’s attack him with our tongues and pay no attention to anything he says.”  
Lam 2:9 Her gates have sunk into the ground;  
their bars he has broken and destroyed.  
Her king and her princes are exiled among the nations,  
the law is no more,  
and her prophets no longer find  
visions from the LORD.

<sup>86</sup> Robertson, *Christ of the Prophets*, p. 187. Robertson expands at length on the application of the law by the prophets, starting with the ten commandments.

Zeph 3:4 Her prophets are arrogant;  
they are treacherous men.  
Her priests profane the sanctuary  
and do violence to the law.

Zech 7:12 They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the LORD Almighty was very angry.

## (2) *NT correspondence between the law and the prophets*

Mtt 5:17 Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

Mtt 7:12 So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

Mtt 11:13 For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John.

Mtt 22:40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.

Mtt 23:29 Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous.

Lk 16:16 “The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.

Lk 24:44 He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

Jn 1:45 Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

Act 13:15 After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the synagogue rulers sent word to them, saying, “Brothers, if you have a message of encouragement for the people, please speak.”

Act 24:14 However, I admit that I worship the God of our fathers as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect. I believe everything that agrees with the Law and that is written in the Prophets,

Act 28:23 They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.

Rom 3:21 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.

## (3) *Wisdom, law, and covenant texts in the OT*

### *The wise & wisdom in the Law*

Gen 3:6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining **wisdom**, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Exod 28:3 3 Tell all the skilled men to whom I have given **wisdom** in such matters that they are to make garments for Aaron, for his consecration, so he may serve me as priest.

Deut 4:6 6 Observe them carefully, for this will show your **wisdom** and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, “Surely this great nation is a **wise** and understanding people.”

Deut 34:9 9 Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of **wisdom** because Moses had laid his hands on him. So the Israelites listened to him and did what the Lord had commanded Moses.

Gen 41:8 8 In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and **wise** men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him.

Gen 41:33 33 “And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and **wise** man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt.

Gen 41:39 39 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and **wise** as you.

Exod 7:11 11 Pharaoh then summoned **wise** men and sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians also did the same things by their secret arts:

Deut 1:13 13 Choose some **wise**, understanding and respected men from each of your tribes, and I will set them over you.”

Deut 1:15 15 So I took the leading men of your tribes, **wise** and respected men, and appointed them to have authority over you—as commanders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens and as tribal officials.

Deut 4:6 6 Observe them carefully, for this will show your **wisdom** and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, “Surely this great nation is a **wise** and understanding people.”

Deut 16:19 19 Do not pervert justice or show partiality. Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the **wise** and twists the words of the righteous.

Deut 32:29 29 If only they were **wise** and would understand this and discern what their end will be!

### *Law in Wisdom (NIV)*

Job 38:33 Do you know the **laws** of the heavens?

Can you set up God’s<sup>f</sup> dominion over the earth?

Ps 1:2 But his delight is in the **law** of the Lord, and on his **law** he meditates day and night.

Ps 10:5 His ways are always prosperous; he is haughty and your **laws** are far from him; he sneers at all his enemies.

Ps 18:22 All his **laws** are before me; I have not turned away from his decrees.

Ps 19:7 The **law** of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

Ps 37:31 The **law** of his God is in his heart; his feet do not slip.

Ps 40:8 I desire to do your will, O my God; your **law** is within my heart.”

Ps 50:16 But to the wicked, God says: “What right have you to recite my **laws** or take my covenant on your lips?”

Ps 78:5 He decreed statutes for Jacob

<sup>c</sup> Or *Spirit*

<sup>f</sup> Or *his*; or *their*

and established the **law** in Israel,  
 which he commanded our forefathers  
 to teach their children,  
 Ps 78:10 they did not keep God's covenant  
 and refused to live by his **law**.  
 Ps 89:30 "If his sons forsake my **law**  
 and do not follow my statutes,  
 Ps 94:12 Blessed is the man you discipline, O Lord,  
 the man you teach from your **law**;  
 Ps 105:45 that they might keep his precepts  
 and observe his **laws**.  
 Praise the Lord.<sup>a</sup>  
 Ps 119:1 **℣Aleph** Blessed are they whose ways are blameless,  
 who walk according to the **law** of the Lord.  
 Ps 119:7 I will praise you with an upright heart  
 as I learn your righteous **laws**.  
 Ps 119:13 With my lips I recount  
 all the **laws** that come from your mouth.  
 Ps 119:18 Open my eyes that I may see  
 wonderful things in your **law**.  
 Ps 119:20 My soul is consumed with longing  
 for your **laws** at all times.  
 Ps 119:29 Keep me from deceitful ways;  
 be gracious to me through your **law**.  
 Ps 119:30 I have chosen the way of truth;  
 I have set my heart on your **laws**.  
 Ps 119:34 Give me understanding, and I will keep your **law**  
 and obey it with all my heart.  
 Ps 119:39 Take away the disgrace I dread,  
 for your **laws** are good.  
 Ps 119:43 Do not snatch the word of truth from my mouth,  
 for I have put my hope in your **laws**.  
 Ps 119:44 I will always obey your **law**,  
 for ever and ever.  
 Ps 119:51 The arrogant mock me without restraint,  
 but I do not turn from your **law**.  
 Ps 119:52 I remember your ancient **laws**, O Lord,  
 and I find comfort in them.  
 Ps 119:53 Indignation grips me because of the wicked,  
 who have forsaken your **law**.  
 Ps 119:55 In the night I remember your name, O Lord,  
 and I will keep your **law**.  
 Ps 119:61 Though the wicked bind me with ropes,  
 I will not forget your **law**.  
 Ps 119:62 At midnight I rise to give you thanks  
 for your righteous **laws**.  
 Ps 119:70 Their hearts are callous and unfeeling,  
 but I delight in your **law**.  
 Ps 119:72 The **law** from your mouth is more precious to me  
 than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.  
 Ps 119:75 I know, O Lord, that your **laws** are righteous,  
 and in faithfulness you have afflicted me.  
 Ps 119:77 Let your compassion come to me that I may live,  
 for your **law** is my delight.  
 Ps 119:85 The arrogant dig pitfalls for me,  
 contrary to your **law**.  
 Ps 119:91 Your **laws** endure to this day,  
 for all things serve you.

Ps 119:92 If your **law** had not been my delight,  
 I would have perished in my affliction.  
 Ps 119:97 **℣Mem** Oh, how I love your **law**!  
 I meditate on it all day long.  
 Ps 119:102 I have not departed from your **laws**,  
 for you yourself have taught me.  
 Ps 119:106 I have taken an oath and confirmed it,  
 that I will follow your righteous **laws**.  
 Ps 119:108 Accept, O Lord, the willing praise of my mouth,  
 and teach me your **laws**.  
 Ps 119:109 Though I constantly take my life in my hands,  
 I will not forget your **law**.  
 Ps 119:113 **℣Samekh** I hate double-minded men,  
 but I love your **law**.  
 Ps 119:120 My flesh trembles in fear of you;  
 I stand in awe of your **laws**.  
 Ps 119:126 It is time for you to act, O Lord;  
 your **law** is being broken.  
 Ps 119:136 Streams of tears flow from my eyes,  
 for your **law** is not obeyed.  
 Ps 119:137 **℣Tsadhe** Righteous are you, O Lord,  
 and your **laws** are right.  
 Ps 119:142 Your righteousness is everlasting  
 and your **law** is true.  
 Ps 119:149 Hear my voice in accordance with your love;  
 preserve my life, O Lord, according to your **laws**.  
 Ps 119:150 Those who devise wicked schemes are near,  
 but they are far from your **law**.  
 Ps 119:153 **℣Resh** Look upon my suffering and deliver me,  
 for I have not forgotten your **law**.  
 Ps 119:156 Your compassion is great, O Lord;  
 preserve my life according to your **laws**.  
 Ps 119:160 All your words are true;  
 all your righteous **laws** are eternal.  
 Ps 119:163 I hate and abhor falsehood  
 but I love your **law**.  
 Ps 119:164 Seven times a day I praise you  
 for your righteous **laws**.  
 Ps 119:165 Great peace have they who love your **law**,  
 and nothing can make them stumble.  
 Ps 119:174 I long for your salvation, O Lord,  
 and your **law** is my delight.  
 Ps 119:175 Let me live that I may praise you,  
 and may your **laws** sustain me.  
 Ps 147:19 He has revealed his word to Jacob,  
 his **laws** and decrees to Israel.  
 Ps 147:20 He has done this for no other nation;  
 they do not know his **laws**.  
 Praise the Lord.  
 Prov 8:15 By me kings reign  
 and rulers make **laws** that are just;  
 Prov 28:4 Those who forsake the **law** praise the wicked,  
 but those who keep the **law** resist them.  
 Prov 28:7 He who keeps the **law** is a discerning son,  
 but a companion of gluttons disgraces his father.  
 Prov 28:9 If anyone turns a deaf ear to the **law**,  
 even his prayers are detestable.  
 Prov 29:18 Where there is no revelation, the people cast off  
 restraint;  
 but blessed is he who keeps the **law**.  
 Prov 31:5 lest they drink and forget what the **law** decrees,

<sup>a</sup> Hebrew *Hallelu Yah*

and deprive all the oppressed of their rights.

### **Law in Prophets**

Isa 1:10 (NIV) Hear the word of the Lord,  
 you rulers of Sodom;  
 listen to the **law** of our God,  
 you people of Gomorrah!

Isa 2:3 Many peoples will come and say,  
 “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
 to the house of the God of Jacob.  
 He will teach us his ways,  
 so that we may walk in his paths.”  
 The **law** will go out from Zion,  
 the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

Isa 5:24 Therefore, as tongues of fire lick up straw  
 and as dry grass sinks down in the flames,  
 so their roots will decay  
 and their flowers blow away like dust;  
 for they have rejected the **law** of the Lord Almighty  
 and spurned the word of the Holy One of Israel.

Isa 8:16 Bind up the testimony  
 and seal up the **law** among my disciples.

Isa 8:20 To the **law** and to the testimony!  
 If they do not speak according to this word,  
 they have no light of dawn.

Isa 10:1 Woe to those who make unjust **laws**,  
 to those who issue oppressive decrees,

Isa 24:5 The earth is defiled by its people;  
 they have disobeyed the **laws**,  
 violated the statutes  
 and broken the **everlasting covenant**. (see p. 70)

Isa 26:8 Yes, Lord, walking in the way of your **laws**,<sup>a</sup>  
 we wait for you;  
 your name and renown  
 are the desire of our hearts.

Isa 42:4 he will not falter or be discouraged  
 till he establishes justice on earth.  
 In his **law** the islands will put their hope.”

Isa 42:21 It pleased the Lord  
 for the sake of his righteousness  
 to make his **law** great and glorious.

Isa 42:24 Who handed Jacob over to become loot,  
 and Israel to the plunderers?  
 Was it not the Lord,  
 against whom we have sinned?  
 For they would not follow his ways;  
 they did not obey his **law**.

Isa 51:4 “Listen to me, my people;  
 hear me, my nation:  
 The **law** will go out from me;  
 my justice will become a light to the nations.

Isa 51:7 “Hear me, you who know what is right,  
 you people who have my **law** in your hearts:  
 Do not fear the reproach of men  
 or be terrified by their insults.

Jer 2:8 The priests did not ask,  
 ‘Where is the Lord?’  
 Those who deal with the **law** did not know me;

---

<sup>a</sup> Or *judgments*

the leaders rebelled against me.

The prophets prophesied by Baal,  
following worthless idols.

Jer 6:19 Hear, O earth:

I am bringing disaster on this people,  
the fruit of their schemes,  
because they have not listened to my words  
and have rejected my **law**.

Jer 8:8 ‘How can you say, “We are wise,  
for we have the **law** of the Lord,”  
when actually the lying pen of the scribes  
has handled it falsely?

Jer 9:13 The Lord said, “It is because they have forsaken my **law**, which I set before them; they have not obeyed me or followed my **law**.

Jer 16:11 then say to them, ‘It is because your fathers forsook me,’ declares the Lord, ‘and followed other gods and served and worshiped them. They forsook me and did not keep my **law**.

Jer 18:18 They said, “Come, let’s make plans against Jer; for the teaching of the **law** by the priest will not be lost, nor will counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophets. So come, let’s attack him with our tongues and pay no attention to anything he says.”

Jer 26:4 Say to them, ‘This is what the Lord says: If you do not listen to me and follow my **law**, which I have set before you,  
Jer 31:33 “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord.

“I will put my **law** in their minds  
and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God,  
and they will be my people.

Jer 32:23 They came in and took possession of it, but they did not obey you or follow your **law**; they did not do what you commanded them to do. So you brought all this disaster upon them.

Jer 33:25 This is what the Lord says: ‘If I have not established my covenant with day and night and the fixed **laws** of heaven and earth,

Jer 44:10 To this day they have not humbled themselves or shown reverence, nor have they followed my **law** and the decrees I set before you and your fathers.

Jer 44:23 Because you have burned incense and have sinned against the Lord and have not obeyed him or followed his **law** or his decrees or his stipulations, this disaster has come upon you, as you now see.”

Lamentations 2:9 Her gates have sunk into the ground;  
their bars he has broken and destroyed.

Her king and her princes are exiled among the nations,  
the **law** is no more,  
and her prophets no longer find  
visions from the Lord.

Ezek 5:6 Yet in her wickedness she has rebelled against my **laws** and decrees more than the nations and countries around her. She has rejected my **laws** and has not followed my decrees.

Ezek 5:7 “Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says: You have been more unruly than the nations around you and have not followed my decrees or kept my **laws**. You have not even<sup>e</sup> conformed to the standards of the nations around you.

Ezek 7:26 Calamity upon calamity will come, and rumor upon rumor. They will try to get a vision from the prophet; the teaching of the **law** by the priest will be lost, as will the counsel of the elders.

Ezek 11:12 And you will know that I am the Lord, for you have not followed my decrees or kept my **laws** but have conformed to the standards of the nations around you.”

Ezek 11:20 Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my **laws**. They will be my people, and I will be their God.

Ezek 18:9 He follows my decrees  
and faithfully keeps my **laws**.

That man is righteous;  
he will surely live,  
declares the Sovereign Lord.

Ezek 18:17 He withholds his hand from sin<sup>c</sup>  
and takes no usury or excessive interest.

He keeps my **laws** and follows my decrees.  
He will not die for his father’s sin; he will surely live.

Ezek 20:11 I gave them my decrees and made known to them my **laws**, for the man who obeys them will live by them.

<sup>e</sup> Most Hebrew manuscripts; some Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac *You have*

<sup>c</sup> Septuagint (see also verse 8); Hebrew *from the poor*



Ezek 20:13 “Yet the people of Israel rebelled against me in the desert. They did not follow my decrees but rejected my **laws**—although the man who obeys them will live by them—and they utterly desecrated my Sabbaths. So I said I would pour out my wrath on them and destroy them in the desert.

Ezek 20:16 because they rejected my **laws** and did not follow my decrees and desecrated my Sabbaths. For their hearts were devoted to their idols.

Ezek 20:18 I said to their children in the desert, “Do not follow the statutes of your fathers or keep their **laws** or defile yourselves with their idols.

Ezek 20:19 I am the Lord your God; follow my decrees and be careful to keep my **laws**.

Ezek 20:21 “But the children rebelled against me: They did not follow my decrees, they were not careful to keep my **laws**—although the man who obeys them will live by them—and they desecrated my Sabbaths. So I said I would pour out my wrath on them and spend my anger against them in the desert.

Ezek 20:24 because they had not obeyed my **laws** but had rejected my decrees and desecrated my Sabbaths, and their eyes lusted after their fathers’ idols.

Ezek 20:25 I also gave them over to statutes that were not good and **laws** they could not live by;

Ezek 22:11 In you one man commits a detestable offense with his neighbor’s wife, another shamefully defiles his daughter-in-**law**, and another violates his sister, his own father’s daughter.

Ezek 22:26 Her priests do violence to my **law** and profane my holy things; they do not distinguish between the holy and the common; they teach that there is no difference between the unclean and the clean; and they shut their eyes to the keeping of my **Sabbaths**, so that I am profaned among them.

Ezek 36:27 And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my **laws**.

Ezek 37:24 “My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my **laws** and be careful to keep my decrees.

Ezek 43:11 and if they are ashamed of all they have done, make known to them the design of the temple—its arrangement, its exits and entrances—its whole design and all its regulations and **laws**. Write these down before them so that they may be faithful to its design and follow all its regulations.

Ezek 43:12 “This is the **law** of the temple: All the surrounding area on top of the mountain will be most holy. Such is the **law** of the temple.

Ezek 44:24 “In any dispute, the priests are to serve as judges and decide it according to my ordinances. They are to keep my **laws** and my decrees for all my appointed feasts, and they are to keep my Sabbaths holy.

Dan 6:5 Finally these men said, “We will never find any basis for charges against this man Dan unless it has something to do with the **law** of his God.”

Dan 6:8 Now, O king, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the **laws** of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”

Dan 6:12 So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: “Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or man except to you, O king, would be thrown into the lions’ den?”

The king answered, “The decree stands—in accordance with the **laws** of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”

Dan 6:15 Then the men went as a group to the king and said to him, “Remember, O king, that according to the **law** of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed.”

Dan 7:25 He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the **laws**. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time.<sup>a</sup>

Dan 9:5 we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and **laws**.

Dan 9:10 we have not obeyed the Lord our God or kept the **laws** he gave us through his servants the prophets.

Dan 9:11 All Israel has transgressed your **law** and turned away, refusing to obey you.

“Therefore the curses and sworn judgments written in the **Law** of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against you.

Dan 9:13 Just as it is written in the **Law** of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us, yet we have not sought the favor of the Lord our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth.

Hos 4:6 my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.

“Because you have rejected knowledge,

I also reject you as my priests;

because you have ignored the **law** of your God,

I also will ignore your children.

Hos 4:13 They sacrifice on the mountaintops and burn offerings on the hills, under oak, poplar and terebinth, where the shade is pleasant.

Therefore your daughters turn to prostitution and your daughters-in-**law** to adultery.

Hos 4:14 “I will not punish your daughters

<sup>a</sup> Or for a year, two years and half a year

when they turn to prostitution,  
 nor your daughters-in-**law**  
 when they commit adultery,  
 because the men themselves consort with harlots  
 and sacrifice with shrine prostitutes—  
 a people without understanding will come to ruin!  
 Hos 8:1 “Put the trumpet to your lips!  
 An eagle is over the house of the Lord  
 because the people have broken my covenant  
 and rebelled against my **law**.  
 Hos 8:12 I wrote for them the many things of my **law**,  
 but they regarded them as something alien.  
 Amos 2:4 This is what the Lord says:  
 “For three sins of Judah,  
 even for four, I will not turn back my wrath.  
 Because they have rejected the **law** of the Lord  
 and have not kept his decrees,  
 because they have been led astray by false gods,  
 the gods their ancestors followed,  
 Mic 4:2 Many nations will come and say,  
 “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
 to the house of the God of Jacob.  
 He will teach us his ways,  
 so that we may walk in his paths.”  
 The **law** will go out from Zion,  
 the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.  
 Mic 7:6 For a son dishonors his father,  
 a daughter rises up against her mother,  
 a daughter-in-**law** against her mother-in-**law**—  
 a man’s enemies are the members of his own household.  
 Hab 1:4 Therefore the **law** is paralyzed,  
 and justice never prevails.  
 The wicked hem in the righteous,  
 so that justice is perverted.  
 Hab1:7 They are a feared and dreaded people;  
 they are a **law** to themselves  
 and promote their own honor.  
 Zeph 3:4 Her prophets are arrogant;  
 they are treacherous men.  
 Her priests profane the sanctuary  
 and do violence to the **law**.  
 Hagg 2:11 “This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘Ask the priests what the **law** says:  
 Zech 7:12 They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the **law** or to the words that the Lord Almighty had  
 sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the Lord Almighty was very angry.  
 Mal 2:9<sup>9</sup> “So I have caused you to be despised and humiliated before all the people, because you have not followed my ways  
 but have shown partiality in matters of the **law**.”  
 Mal 4:4<sup>4</sup> “Remember the **law** of my servant Moses, the decrees and **laws** I gave him at Horeb for all Israel.

### **Covenant in Prophets**

Isa 24:5 The earth is defiled by its people;  
 they have disobeyed the **laws**,  
 violated the statutes  
 and broken the **everlasting covenant**. (see p. 70)  
 Isa 28:15 You boast, “We have entered into a **covenant** with death, with the grave we have  
 made an agreement.  
 When an overwhelming scourge sweeps by,  
 it cannot touch us,  
 for we have made a lie our refuge  
 and falsehood our hiding place.”  
 Isa 28:18 Your **covenant** with death will be annulled;  
 your agreement with the grave will not stand.  
 When the overwhelming scourge sweeps by,  
 you will be beaten down by it.

Isa 42:6 “I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness;  
I will take hold of your hand.

I will keep you and will make you  
to be a **covenant** for the people  
and a light for the Gentiles,

Isa 49:8 *Restoration of Israel*

This is what the Lord says:

“In the time of my favor I will answer you,  
and in the day of salvation I will help you;

I will keep you and will make you  
to be a **covenant** for the people,  
to restore the land

and to reassign its desolate inheritances,

Isa 54:10 Though the mountains be shaken  
and the hills be removed,

yet my **unfailing** love for you will not be shaken  
nor my **covenant** of peace be removed,”

says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

Isa 55:3 Give ear and come to me;  
hear me, that your soul may live.

I will make an **everlasting covenant** (see p. 70) with you,  
my faithful love promised to David.

Isa 56:4 For this is what the Lord says:

“To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths,  
who choose what pleases me  
and hold fast to my **covenant**—

Isa 56:6 And foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord  
to serve him, to love the name of the Lord,

and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my **covenant**—

Isa 59:21 “As for me, this is my **covenant** with them,” says the Lord. “My Spirit, who is on you, and my words that I have put  
in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouths of your children, or from the mouths of their descendants  
from this time on and forever,” says the Lord.

Isa 61:8 “For I, the Lord, love justice;  
I hate robbery and iniquity.

In my faithfulness I will reward them  
and make an **everlasting covenant** (see p. 70) with them.

Jer 3:16 In those days, when your numbers have increased greatly in the land,” declares the Lord, “men will no longer say,  
‘The ark of the **covenant** of the Lord.’ It will never enter their minds or be remembered; it will not be missed, nor will another  
one be made.

Jer 11:2 “Listen to the terms of this **covenant** and tell them to the people of Judah and to those who live in Jerusalem.

Jer 11:3 Tell them that this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘Cursed is the man who does not obey the terms of this  
**covenant**—

Jer 11:6 The Lord said to me, “Proclaim all these words in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem: ‘Listen to the  
terms of this **covenant** and follow them.

Jer 11:8 But they did not listen or pay attention; instead, they followed the stubbornness of their evil hearts. So I brought on  
them all the curses of the **covenant** I had commanded them to follow but that they did not keep.’ ”

Jer 11:10 They have returned to the sins of their forefathers, who refused to listen to my words. They have followed other gods  
to serve them. Both the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken the **covenant** I made with their forefathers.

Jer 14:21 For the sake of your name do not despise us;  
do not dishonor your glorious throne.

Remember your **covenant** with us  
and do not break it.

Jer 22:9 And the answer will be: ‘Because they have forsaken the **covenant** of the Lord their God and have worshiped and  
served other gods.’ ”

Jer 31:31 “The time is coming,” declares the Lord,  
“when I will make a new **covenant**

with the house of Israel  
and with the house of Judah.

Jer 31:32 It will not be like the **covenant**

I made with their forefathers  
when I took them by the hand

to lead them out of Egypt,  
because they broke my **covenant**,

though I was a husband to them,”  
declares the Lord.

Jer 31:33 “This is the **covenant** I will make with the house of Israel  
after that time,” declares the Lord.

“I will put my **law** in their minds  
and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God,  
and they will be my people.

Jer 32:40 I will make an **everlasting covenant** (see p. 70) with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire  
them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me.

Jer 33:20 “This is what the Lord says: ‘If you can break my **covenant** with the day and my **covenant** with the night, so that day  
and night no longer come at their appointed time,

Jer 33:21 then my **covenant** with David my servant—and my **covenant** with the Levites who are priests ministering before  
me—can be broken and David will no longer have a descendant to reign on his throne.

Jer 33:25 This is what the Lord says: ‘If I have not established my **covenant** with day and night and the fixed **laws** of heaven  
and earth,

Jer 34:8 *Freedom for Slaves*

The word came to Jer from the Lord after King Zedekiah had made a **covenant** with all the people in Jerusalem to proclaim  
freedom for the slaves.

Jer 34:10 So all the officials and people who entered into this **covenant** agreed that they would free their male and female  
slaves and no longer hold them in bondage. They agreed, and set them free.

Jer 34:13 “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: I made a **covenant** with your forefathers when I brought them out of  
Egypt, out of the land of slavery. I said,

Jer 34:15 Recently you repented and did what is right in my sight: Each of you proclaimed freedom to his countrymen. You  
even made a **covenant** before me in the house that bears my Name.

Jer 34:18 The men who have violated my **covenant** and have not fulfilled the terms of the **covenant** they made before me, I  
will treat like the calf they cut in two and then walked between its pieces.

Jer 50:5 They will ask the way to Zion  
and turn their faces toward it.

They will come and bind themselves to the Lord  
in an **everlasting covenant** (see p. 70)  
that will not be forgotten.

Ezek 16:8 “ ‘Later I passed by, and when I looked at you and saw that you were old enough for love, I spread the corner of my  
garment over you and covered your nakedness. I gave you my solemn oath and entered into a **covenant** with you, declares the  
Sovereign Lord, and you became mine.

Ezek 16:59 “ ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I will deal with you as you deserve, because you have despised my oath  
by breaking the **covenant**.

Ezek 16:60 Yet I will remember the **covenant** I made with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an **everlasting  
covenant** with you.

Ezek 16:61 Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you receive your sisters, both those who are older than  
you and those who are younger. I will give them to you as daughters, but not on the basis of my **covenant** with you.

Ezek 16:62 So I will establish my **covenant** with you, and you will know that I am the Lord.

Ezek 17:18 He despised the oath by breaking the **covenant**. Because he had given his hand in pledge and yet did all these  
things, he shall not escape.

Ezek 17:19 “ ‘Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says: As surely as I live, I will bring down on his head my oath that he  
despised and my **covenant** that he broke.

Ezek 20:37 I will take note of you as you pass under my rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the **covenant**.

Ezek 30:5 Cush and Put, Lydia and all Arabia, Libya and the people of the **covenant** land will fall by the sword along with  
Egypt.

Ezek 34:25 “ ‘I will make a **covenant** of peace with them and rid the land of wild beasts so that they may live in the desert and  
sleep in the forests in safety.

Ezek 37:26 I will make a **covenant** of peace with them; it will be an **everlasting covenant** (see p. 70). I will establish them and  
increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever.

Ezek 44:7 In addition to all your other detestable practices, you brought foreigners uncircumcised in heart and flesh into my  
sanctuary, desecrating my temple while you offered me food, fat and blood, and you broke my **covenant**.

Dan 9:4 I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed:

“O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his **covenant** of love with all who love him and obey his commands,

Dan 9:27 He will confirm a **covenant** with many for one ‘seven.’ In the middle of the ‘seven’ he will put an end to sacrifice  
and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is  
poured out on him.”

Dan 11:22 Then an overwhelming army will be swept away before him; both it and a prince of the **covenant** will be destroyed.

Dan 11:28 The king of the North will return to his own country with great wealth, but his heart will be set against the holy  
**covenant**. He will take action against it and then return to his own country.

Dan 11:30 Ships of the western coastlands will oppose him, and he will lose heart. Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy **covenant**. He will return and show favor to those who forsake the holy **covenant**.

Dan 11:32 With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the **covenant**, but the people who know their God will firmly resist him.

Hos 2:18 In that day I will make a **covenant** for them with the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and the creatures that move along the ground.

Bow and sword and battle

I will abolish from the land,  
so that all may lie down in safety.

Hos 6:7 Like Adam, they have broken the **covenant**—  
they were unfaithful to me there.

Hos 8:1 “Put the trumpet to your lips!

An eagle is over the house of the Lord  
because the people have broken my **covenant**  
and rebelled against my **law**.

Hagg 2:5 ‘This is what I **covenant**ed with you when you came out of Egypt. And my Spirit remains among you. Do not fear.’

Zechariah 9:11 As for you, because of the blood of my **covenant** with you, I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit.

Zech 11:10 Then I took my staff called Favor and broke it, revoking the **covenant** I had made with all the nations.

Mal 2:4 And you will know that I have sent you this admonition so that my **covenant** with Levi may continue,” says the Lord Almighty.

Mal 2:5 “My **covenant** was with him, a **covenant** of life and peace, and I gave them to him; this called for reverence and he revered me and stood in awe of my name.

Malachi 2:8 But you have turned from the way and by your teaching have caused many to stumble; you have violated the **covenant** with Levi,” says the Lord Almighty.

Mal 2:10 Have we not all one Father<sup>a</sup>? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the **covenant** of our fathers by breaking faith with one another?

Mal 2:14 You ask, “Why?” It is because the Lord is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage **covenant**.

Mal 3:1 “See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the **covenant**, whom you desire, will come,” says the Lord Almighty.

### **Covenant in Wisdom**

Job 5:23 For you will have a **covenant** with the stones of the field, and the wild animals will be at peace with you.

Job 31:1 “I made a **covenant** with my eyes  
not to look lustfully at a girl.

Psa 25:10 All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful  
for those who keep the demands of his **covenant**.

Psa 25:14 The Lord confides in those who fear him;  
he makes his **covenant** known to them.

Psa 44:17 All this happened to us,  
though we had not forgotten you  
or been false to your **covenant**.

Psa 50:5 “Gather to me my consecrated ones,  
who made a **covenant** with me by sacrifice.”

Psa 50:16 But to the wicked, God says:  
“What right have you to recite my **laws**  
or take my **covenant** on your lips?

Psa 55:20 My companion attacks his friends;  
he violates his **covenant**.

Psa 60:1 For the director of music. To the tune of “The Lily of the **Covenant**.” A *miktam* of David. For teaching. When he fought Aram Naharaim and Aram Zobah, and when Joab returned and struck down twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

You have rejected us, O God, and burst forth upon us;  
you have been angry—now restore us!

Psa 74:20 Have regard for your **covenant**,  
because haunts of violence fill the dark places of the land.

Psa 78:10 they did not keep God’s **covenant**  
and refused to live by his **law**.

Psa 78:37 their hearts were not loyal to him,  
they were not faithful to his **covenant**.

<sup>a</sup> Or *father*

Psa 80:1 For the director of music. To the tune of “The Lilies of the **Covenant**.” Of Asaph. A Psa.  
 Hear us, O Shepherd of Israel,  
 you who lead Joseph like a flock;  
 you who sit enthroned between the cherubim, shine forth  
 Psa 89:3 You said, “I have made a **covenant** with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant,  
 Psa 89:28 I will maintain my love to him forever,  
 and my **covenant** with him will never fail.  
 Psa 89:34 I will not violate my **covenant**  
 or alter what my lips have uttered.  
 Psa 89:39 You have renounced the **covenant** with your servant  
 and have defiled his crown in the dust.  
 Psa 103:18 with those who keep his **covenant**  
 and remember to obey his precepts.  
 Psa 105:8 He remembers his **covenant** forever,  
 the word he commanded, for a thousand generations,  
 Psa 105:9 the **covenant** he made with Abraham,  
 the oath he swore to Isaac.  
 Psa 105:10 He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree,  
 to Israel as an **everlasting covenant**:  
 Psa 106:45 for their sake he remembered his **covenant**  
 and out of his great love he relented.  
 Psa 111:5 He provides food for those who fear him;  
 he remembers his **covenant** forever.  
 Psa 111:9 He provided redemption for his people;  
 he ordained his **covenant** forever—  
 holy and awesome is his name.  
 Psa 132:12 if your sons keep my **covenant**  
 and the statutes I teach them,  
 then their sons will sit  
 on your throne for ever and ever.”  
 Prov 2:17 who has left the partner of her youth  
 and ignored the **covenant** she made before God.

***The everlasting covenant*** (is the eternal new covenant)

Gen 9:16 Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the **everlasting covenant** between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.”  
 Gen 17:7 I will establish my **covenant** as an **everlasting covenant** between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.  
 Gen 17:13 Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My **covenant** in your flesh is to be an **everlasting covenant**.  
 Gen 17:19 Then God said, “Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my **covenant** with him as an **everlasting covenant** for his descendants after him.  
 Num 18:19 Whatever is set aside from the holy offerings the Israelites present to the LORD I give to you and your sons and daughters as your regular share. It is an **everlasting covenant** of salt before the LORD for both you and your offspring.”  
 2 Sam 23:5 “Is not my house right with God?  
 Has he not made with me an **everlasting covenant**,  
 arranged and secured in every part?  
 Will he not bring to fruition my salvation  
 and grant me my every desire?  
 1 Chron 16:17 He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree,  
 to Israel as an **everlasting covenant**:  
 Psa 105:10 He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree,  
 to Israel as an **everlasting covenant**:  
 Isa 24:5 The earth is defiled by its people;  
 they have disobeyed the laws,  
 violated the statutes  
 and broken the **everlasting covenant**.  
 Isa 55:3 Give ear and come to me;  
 hear me, that your soul may live.  
 I will make an **everlasting covenant** with you,  
 my faithful love promised to David.  
 Isa 61:8 “For I, the LORD, love justice;  
 I hate robbery and iniquity.

In my faithfulness I will reward them  
and make an **everlasting covenant** with them.

Jer 32:40 I will make an **everlasting covenant** with them; I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me.

Jer 50:5 They will ask the way to Zion  
and turn their faces toward it.

They will come and bind themselves to the LORD  
in an **everlasting covenant**  
that will not be forgotten.

Ezek 16:60 Yet I will remember the **covenant** I made with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an **everlasting covenant** with you.

Ezek 37:26 I will make a **covenant** of peace with them; it will be an **everlasting covenant**. I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever.

### ***How this correspondence of the law and the prophets is significant in redemptive history:***

The OT prophets were expositors of the law and covenant of God. The prophets constantly draw on the OT law and covenant for their theological prophesying, exhortations, warnings, and predictions. There was an integral relationship between the law, the prophets, kings, and the priests. The law of God was the rule for all. The prophets had the high calling of preaching and teaching the spirit of the law must be written on the heart. That religion must be true faith. External religion was dead works, “works of the flesh.” The law itself originated from the covenant.<sup>87</sup>

It can further be proposed that the structure of the history of revelation hinges on these two fundamental binary themes: the revelation of the law of God and the revelation of the prophetic word of God. They are essentially inseparable, for they both lay the groundwork for the gospel of God. The law reveals God’s holy character, the prophets reveal the judgment of God in light of human failure to keep the law, and thus implicitly and explicitly proclaim the gospel of the coming Messiah who would both perfectly fulfill the righteous demands of the law, as well as provide the means for the law to actually be written on the heart through his Spirit (see p. 75f.). So, in a very profound sense, the law and the prophets both *foretell* and *foreshadow* the coming Messiah, he is the center, the hope of all the law and the prophets, the eschatos of the redemptive plan of God. Without the Messiah, the law of God would be sure death, and the prophetic word would be the everlasting tomb.

2 Cor 3:6 He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

As the word of God came in the law, the word of God came through the prophets, the Word of God came incarnate in Jesus Christ.

Compare this summation of the whole of redemptive history with the variety of outlines in the discussion on the hermeneutics of redemptive history, pp. . It could be said that these twin themes are a summation of the two largest epochs of redemptive history:

- ❖ *Before the whole law* is revealed (general revelation and Patriarchal period) – preparation for law
- ❖ *The law* (Moses) – revelation of the whole law
- ❖ *After the law* is revealed (Prophets) – application of the whole law

As Jesus said, the law and the prophets spoke of him, so they are in essence eschatological and Messianic.

Note: the Sabbath-law principle from creation onwards points to the principle of rest-restoration-shalom of redemption, and was a *sign of the covenant*.

(right)Robertson’s interconnection of covenant and law<sup>88</sup>

### **III. Interconnection of covenant and law in the prophets**

These two large factors, law and covenant, provide the foundation for understanding the ministry of the prophets. But how do these two factors relate to one another?

- The law has its origin in the covenant. Israel’s special relation to the Lord as a consequence of the covenant leads to his revelation to them of the law. Because of the covenant, Israel is introduced into a fuller understanding of God’s will than had ever been enjoyed by any other nation.
- The covenant of redemption, arising out of a principle of grace, makes blessing possible despite death-deserving transgression of the law. Prophecies of exile and restoration may be understood only in the context of the gracious provisions in God’s covenants.
- The perfected merger of law and covenant is found in the provisions of the new covenant. No longer will the statutes, ordinances, and commandments of the Lord remain outside the life of the people. Instead, the administration of the new covenant will create a heart that delights in doing the law of the Lord. In this final covenantal context, all the blessings of the covenant will be experienced by God’s people.

<sup>87</sup> See Roberston, *Christ of the Prophets*, p. 184.

<sup>88</sup> Roberston, *Christ of the Prophets*, p. 184. Robertson notes that if Deuteronomy is historically late (Josianic) then its theology of history is all contradicted (*ibid*, p.129). See Kitchen on covenant forms for Deuteronomy and for early dating of Deuteronomy (*Reliability of the OT*, pp. ); Kline, *The Treaty of the Great King*.

### i) *Literal and fuller sense*

- See discussions of hermeneutics, pp. 204, 206.

### j) *The prophets and wisdom*

- See critical views on wisdom and prophets, pp. 223.
- See foretelling and forthtelling, p. 159.
- See law and prophets, p. 60.

This theme correlates with the previous one, and addresses the same issue of the interrelation of biblical revelation. How do the prophets relate to, borrow from, and contribute to the so-called Wisdom books?

In the very least, it can be affirmed that as the prophets expounded the law, they also expounded God's wisdom, and both through application and getting to the heart of the matter. The widespread characterizations of the prophets as strictly either foretellers (predictors) or forthtellers, or both, can miss the important role they played as people who having stood in God's presence are sent from God to teach and counsel and expound the deep truths of God (e.g. Edenic role of receiving, interpreting, and applying revelation). Their forth-telling role touches on this aspect of the prophets, but I think we do them more justice when we consider their profound role in opening the word of God with truly God-given insight and *wisdom*. Consider also the occasional overlap of priestly and prophetic roles (e.g. Samuel).

Only a few explicit references to prophets/prophecy in wisdom books:

Ps 51:1 For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your unfailing love;  
according to your great compassion  
blot out my transgressions.

Ps 74:9 We are given no miraculous signs;  
no prophets are left,  
and none of us knows how long this will be.

Ps 105:15 "Do not touch my anointed ones;  
do my prophets no harm."

Prov 29:18 (NIV) Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint;  
but blessed is he who keeps the law.

Prov 29:18 (NASB) Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained,  
But happy is he who keeps the law.

Prov 29:18 (RSV) Where there is no prophecy the people cast off restraint,  
but blessed is he who keeps the law.

חִזְיוֹן prophetic vision, vision, oracle, prophecy

Psa 74:9 We are given no miraculous signs (אֵיזֶרֶת לֵינֵנוּ);  
no prophets are left, and none of us knows how long this will be.

## 11. *The central themes of redemption-restoration*

### a) *The law and the spirit of the law, the law and the gospel of grace, and circumcised hearts*

- See Judges to Esther syllabus, pp. 188ff. (2001).
- See Poets/Wisdom syllabus in Proverbs section "The spirit of true religion"
- See Murray, *Principles of Conduct*, "Law and Grace," pp. 181-201.
- See "The covenant and its promises are spiritual [and material]," p. 25.
- See the law and the spirit of the law, p. 72, the "letter of the law," p. 73, pharisaism (index), hypocrisy, (index).



“Legalism demeans the law by reducing its standards to the level of our own competence.”<sup>89</sup>

“We want to ‘make the tree good.’ We do not aim *just* to control behavior, but to change the inner castle of the soul, that God may be worshipped ‘in spirit and truth’ and right behavior cease to be *performance*.”<sup>90</sup>

**“The Pharisee takes as his aim keeping the law rather than becoming the kind of person whose deeds naturally conform to the law.”**

Dallas Willard, *Divine Conspiracy*, p. 184.

### **b) *Internalization of the law***

Central to this structure, in the theme of redemption, is that of the *internalization of the law*: the goal of redemption is to re-create the image of God in humanity, to re-new the heart of the redeemed through the law being “written on the heart.” (This does not mean the the image had been obliterated in the fall. It does mean it will be renewed in Christ.) The internalization of the law is the process of sanctification through the Spirit of God writing the spirit of the law upon the very nature of redeemed believers. Sanctification is a work of God’s grace from beginning to end, from justification to glorification.

The OT prophets proclaim in bold relief this principle of the spirit of the law written on the heart over against the false religions of idolatry, syncretistic YHWHism, and legalistic YHWHism. The spirit of true religion in the Bible: the heart of the matter is the heart (from Poets and Judges-Esther syllabus notes). This corresponds with the body metaphors found throughout the wisdom books which illustrate the theme of the person being sanctified through the truth of God being written on the heart and expressed through hands, the tongue, the eyes, the feet, the path chosen (see p. 75). The two paths theme illustrates the spirit of the law, the two humanities, the two choices: will you serve YHWH or Baal. This is the fundamental question put forth by the prophets (Jer 2:8; 11:17; 12:16).

**Legalism:** the *letter* of the law only externalized only (through human effort) – to attain earned justification and sanctification. Legalism is the *trivialization of the law*.

versus

**Grace:** the *spirit* of the law internalized and externalized (acted upon) by the power of the Spirit of God<sup>91</sup> – attaining free justification and sanctification. The summation of the law/wisdom is LOVE lived out in action.

### **c) *The covenant-promise and the new heart***

**Law prepares for gospel.  
Gospel assumes and subsumes the law.**



Jeremiah contains one of the most remarkable correlations between the covenant promise and the law of God being written on the heart through the Spirit of God (central motif in Bible of “circumcised hearts”), as well as the forgiveness of God for human wickedness:

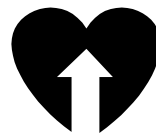
Jer 31:33-35 “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD.

“I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God, and they will be my people.

34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’

because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD.



<sup>89</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, p. 118.

<sup>90</sup> Willard, *Divine Conspiracy*, p. 364.

<sup>91</sup> OT Wisdom is in essence proof that the law (universal) is not “temporary” nor strictly external . Further, the law/wisdom are not abrogated in the NT. In fact, the NT often seems to *intensify* the demands of the law, rather than diminish them.

“For I will forgive their wickedness  
and will remember their sins no more.”

The covenant-promise to know the Lord rests entirely on the Lord’s forgiveness. The gospel is beautifully encapsulated here: the covenant-promise to know the Lord is followed by his giving of law that only highlights human wickedness and the need for forgiveness. Compare this to Ezekiel 36:27-28

And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. 28 You will live in the land I gave your forefathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God.

Once again the gospel is presented: the Spirit will write the laws of God on the hearts of those who are his people.

NT: Jesus repeatedly said he did not come to destroy the law and the prophets, but he in fact intensified their application. His applications of the law flow from his being the Author of all wisdom.

It should also be reiterated that the promise in Jer 31 is followed by the most important, and beautiful, encaptualisation of the covenant-promise repeated throughout the OT:

**I will be their God, and they will be my people.**

The intensely personal nature of this covenant-promise makes it impossible to reduce the redemption of God to mere formulas of “legal-codes” properly externalized; for the letter of law without the Spirit kills (2 Cor 3:6; Jn 6:63; Mtt 6:5[hypocrites]). This theme become paramount in the prophets, when God’s people had forgotten who they belonged to (see Hosea, p. 286f):

Hosea 1:9 Then the LORD said, “Call him Lo-Ammi, for you are not my people, and I am not your God.

Dare I say, it is much easier to fulfil the letter of the law than it is to fulfil the spirit of the law. Of course, at another level, it is impossible to fulfill the letter of the law, and only possible to fulfil the spirit of the law by the Spirit. After all, that is the message of Paul’s letter to the *Romans*. In the case of the latter, it is only by the Spirit’s enabling can *any* approximation or progress be achieved. The final integration of the heart/mind with God’s TRUTH and with God’s CHARACTER.

For those who argue that these ideas of the spirit of the law being internalized are late, read

Deut 6:4-6 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.

Deut 30:11-14 Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. 12 It is not up in heaven, so that you have to ask, “Who will ascend into heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?” 13 Nor is it beyond the sea, so that you have to ask, “Who will cross the sea to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?” 14 No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it.

Also, even earlier, we see that God was very concerned with the heart of humanity which had become extremely corrupted in its *sex* and *violence* (sounds familiar?), but this is a matter of the *heart*. Noah’s actions become a *prophetic indictment* on all of humanity coming under God’s judgment:

Gen 6:5 The LORD saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.

*The real heart of the matter is indeed the heart:*

Rom 2:28-29 A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. 29 No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man’s praise is not from men, but from God.

**The prophets do not introduce anything new into the history redemption in this regard; they only take this redemption theme to a deeper level of certainty. There was to be no question that redemption required a new heart, a heart which had God’s law and love written on it. That is, the motive, the driving engine of the soul, was to be the love of God and faith and hope in his promises. Trivialization of the law through “legalism” was to have no place, indeed could have no place, for such was a harbinger of death not life.<sup>92</sup>**

<sup>92</sup> Legalism can be said to be the strict externalization of the law without inward regeneration and the internalization of the law through the Spirit.

When truth is not internalized within the hearers, but is left as just so many notions floating around outside their experience, the exegete is in effect a mere dilettante—a trifler in the art of interpretation.<sup>93</sup>

**THE PURE DELIGHT IN OBEDIENCE  
ADDS TO THE ETHICAL VALUE OF CHOICE. Vos**

Three things I have observed (see Goals of Theological Education in The Wheel of Theological Education)

1. Theological education (and upbringing) does not necessarily lead to greater Christ-likeness, spiritual maturity, or knowledge.
2. Theological education does not necessarily lead to greater love for God. In both cases the whole gospel has not reached the whole person.
3. It is not enough to “be right.”

## ***12. Body-metaphors of redemption in the OT prophets***

These terms can serve to illustrate the significance of the spirit of the law being written on the heart, the law of God applied to the entire person and human life. They suggest the integrated relation of the whole person with the word and Spirit of God. This is an organic relationship for the believer, and brings sanctification along the *path* towards righteousness; sanctification of the heart and mind, hands and feet, eyes and ears. As in the Wisdom books, and elsewhere in the OT these motifs feature, the picture is not to be taken literally (though that may enter the picture), but rather as a spiritual model for the process of redemption in a person’s life.

*Selections from the prophets:*

<b>Heart and eyes</b> Isa 6:10; 10:12; Jer 22:17; Lam 2:11
<b>Ears and eyes</b> Isa 6:10; 11:3; 32:3; 33:15; 35:5; 43:8; Jer 5:21; Eze 12:2; 40:4
<b>Hearts</b> Ho 5:4; 7:6, 14; 10:2; Joel 2:12, 13; Am 7:10; Obad 3; Jon 2:3; Na 2:10; Hab 3:16; Zeph 3:14; Zech 7:10, 12; 10:7; 12:5; Mal 2:2; 4:6
<b>Tongue</b> Isa 32:4; 33:19; 35:6; 45:23; 50:4; 54:17; 57:4; 59:3; Jer 9:3, 8; Lam 4:4; Eze 3:26
<b>Hands</b> Ho 7:5; 14:3; Mic 5:13; 7:3, 16; Na 3:19; Zep 3:16; Hag 1:11; 2:17; Zec 4:9; 8:9, 8:13; 11:6; Mal 1:9, 10, 13; 2:13
<b>Hands (95x)</b> Isa 1:15; 2:6, 8; 3:11; 11:14; 13:7; 17:8; 25:11; 31:7; 35:3; 37:19; 45:9; 51:23; 59:3, 6; 65:2; Jer 1:16; 2:37; 4:31; 6:24; 11:21; 12:7; 15:21; 18:4; 19:7; 20:13; 21:4; 23:14; 25:6; 25:7, 14; 30:6; 32:30; 38:18, 23; 42:11; 44:8; 47:3; 50:43; La 1:7,10, 14, 17; 2:15, 19; 3:41, 64; 4:2, 10; 5:8, 12; Eze 6:11; 7:27; 10:2, 7, 8; 13:21, 23; 21:14, 17; 22:13, 14; 23:37, 45; 25:6; 28:9, 10; 29:7; 34:27; 48:14
<b>Path</b> Isa 3:12; 26:7; 30:11; 43:16; Jer 23:12; 31:9; La 3:11

<sup>93</sup> Kaiser, *Toward and Exegetical Theology*, p. 151.

Jer 22:17 “But your eyes and your heart are set only on dishonest gain, on shedding innocent blood and on oppression and extortion.”

La 2:11 My eyes fail from weeping, I am in torment within, my heart is poured out on the ground because my people are destroyed, because children and infants faint in the streets of the city.

Isa 6:10 Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.”

Isa 32:3 Then the eyes of those who see will no longer be closed, and the ears of those who hear will listen.

Isa 33:15 He who walks righteously and speaks what is right, who rejects gain from extortion and keeps his hand from accepting bribes, who stops his ears against plots of murder and shuts his eyes against contemplating evil—

Isa 43:8 Lead out those who have eyes but are blind, who have ears but are deaf.

Jer 5:21 Hear this, you foolish and senseless people, who have eyes but do not see,

who have ears but do not hear:

Joel 2:12 ‘Even now,’ declares the LORD, ‘return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.’  
13 Rend your heart and not your garments.  
Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

Zec 7:12 They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the LORD Almighty was very angry.

Isa 50:4 The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught.

Isa 59:3 For your hands are stained with blood, your fingers with guilt. Your lips have spoken lies, and your tongue mutters wicked things.

Jer 9:8 Their tongue is a deadly arrow; it speaks with deceit. With his mouth each speaks cordially to his neighbor, but in his heart he sets a trap for him.

Isa 26:7 The path of the righteous is level; O upright One, you make the way of the righteous smooth.


The ultimate goal is *being conformed to the image of God in Christ.*

The negative reality is that disintegration, *separation*, has occurred as a result of sin. The internal person is often divorced from the external person, as well as from the external world (man and man) and from God himself (image of God). Further, the body and spirit are rent asunder at death.

The eye, heart, mouth, hand, feet picture shows a figurative/literal correlation of our whole being before God, whether integrated through wisdom or disintegrated through folly. Disintegration comes through folly, wholeness through wisdom (this can be qualified in that wisdom *can* be undermined by folly, see Ecc 10:1-20)

Dissembling: to disguise the real nature of, to hide with a specious appearance, to conceal one’s real motives, nature or feelings under pretense (American Heritage).

---

Contrast the Chinese philosophy, of *ying/yang* , which is the foundation of all their medical and theological understanding of what humans “are.” The body is a dialectic of tensions that depend on each other (good and evil, light and darkness, life and death etc.), and thus have to be kept balanced through diet and medicine (the line between these is thin). This is held in stark contrast to the biblical picture in which there is *separation* now and at death but perfection and glorification in the resurrection. The syncretism of Asian/Eastern religions with Christianity today is rampant in the church (e.g., the alternative health movements, yoga, Tai-Chi, etc.).

---

***The essence of true religion*** is the integrated correlation of these factors in line with the spirit of the law of God. The *internalization* of the law is wisdom, living according to the spirit of the law, the eye, heart, hand, mouth, feet follow suit, *habituation* in the external world of the truth understood.<sup>94</sup>

Both the fool and the wise have an integrally correlated eye, heart, tongue, hands, and feet. The fool lives according to folly, unreality, *dissembling*, and appearances, but the wise live according to the law of God written on their heart (integrity or integration).

Further, “true religion,” says that the essential spirit of the law, is not found in the sacrifice of bulls but “a contrite heart” (Ps 51:17; Isa 57:15; 66:2 ). To be holy is to be made whole, integrated into the body of Christ and fellowship of all the saints.

Consider the philosophically “bi-polar” nature of the disintegrated world today in contrast to the biblical view that the Word of God unites our heart:

Ps 86:11 Teach me Your way, O LORD;  
I will walk in Your truth;  
Unite my heart to fear Your name.

### ***13. Disintegration: spiritual and mental fragmentation of divided heart (insanity)***

- From Logic and Rhetoric course notes
- See “Error! Reference source not found.,” p. Error! Bookmark not defined.; “Error! Reference source not found.” p. Error! Bookmark not defined.; “Error! Reference source not found.,” p. Error! Bookmark not defined.; “Error! Reference source not found.,” p. Error! Bookmark not defined.

The *disintegration* resulting from sin is the consequence of *alienation* from the only One who can unite our fractured selves, relations, and world. Sin and its alienation (loss of our infinite reference point of integration) mean the loss of *shalom* and order of life and heart and mind.

Something that we cannot address sufficiently here is the problem of mental illness, in terms of the impact of fallenness on our mental state and the spiritual/moral aspects of our mental health. That is, determining the correlations between sanity and insanity with the irrationality and confusion intrinsic to all sinners. Redeemed minds do not mean completely healed minds, and in this sense all of us are “not quite right,” yet. Having said this, insanity also has a genetic cause in many cases, as well as particular illness, so we must be careful not to presume that someone’s mental illness is directly caused by some specific moral or spiritual failing. Also, other variables must be considered: e.g., “Mad as a hatter” refers to the mad hat maker who is crazy from all the glue he has inhaled! One important theological point to affirm is that regardless of the degree of mental

impairment a person may be suffering, they are still *fully persons* made in the image of God.

*The fragmentation of disintegration (the tragic story of sin):*



<sup>94</sup> Develop the theme of *habit*: it is said that it takes at least thirty days of complete cessation to kick a habit. Humans are creatures of habit, that is the way we are made. We were created to *learn*, so once we learn and do the wrong things long enough, it is next to impossible to *unlearn* them. “Habits of the Heart” was a good title for a book I have not read. Training in righteousness results in most cases in righteousness, and *vice versa*.



Freedom becomes slavery.

Creativity becomes destructiveness.

Family life becomes disintegrated.

Work becomes drudgery and toil.

Dominion becomes domination.

Priestly worship of God becomes idolatrous worship.

Holiness becomes unholiness.

Righteousness becomes unrighteousness.

Knowledge/wisdom become ignorance and folly.

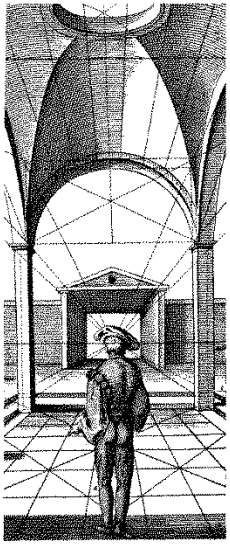
Good will/volition become bondage to sinful volition.

Love and faithfulness become hatred and faithlessness.

Sanity becomes insanity

#### 14. *Integration: mental and spiritual wholeness of undivided heart (sanity)*

➤ From Logic and Rhetoric course notes



Since the Fall, our *integration point* has been misdirected, misaligned, for it now is not in God himself but in idols, ourselves, and other such futile, finite points of reference. The *disintegration* that resulted from our alienation from God affected all aspects of our reason, but did not obliterate them. Human reason and logic are thoroughly corrupted and thus inclined to irrationality and unreason, but nevertheless can be substantially restored-redeemed-reintegrated (see “Reintegration-Restoration,” p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**; “**Error! Reference source not found.** p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**). Reintegration results from the redemption and sanctification of our reason through the work of the Holy Spirit and the revelation of the Word of God.

In God, as those who are redeemed, we have an infinite and personal reference point for our own identity and souls. But, without a proper relationship to him, we have no point of reference that is sufficient for anything. All of the characteristics listed above to define/describe the image of God could be listed here with the deleterious impact of the fall upon them, not obliteration of them but distortion and perversion. This has practical significance in giving *significance to all of life*; it also gives us a point of reference for every concern of our lives in this world. We now have an **infinite** reference point to *final integration* for our whole being, our whole world, our whole future, our whole eternity. The word *integration* (often used in Mathematics<sup>95</sup>) can be used to convey the antonym of *disintegration* (or alienation from self, body, society). For humans, that which makes us *whole*, complete, full, unified in mind, heart, and character, can only come from the One who made us complete in Eden. The restoration of redemption is to wholeness and *shalom*, since it is a restoration to the proper relationship to God himself. Yet, how do finite creatures relate to an infinite God? Only

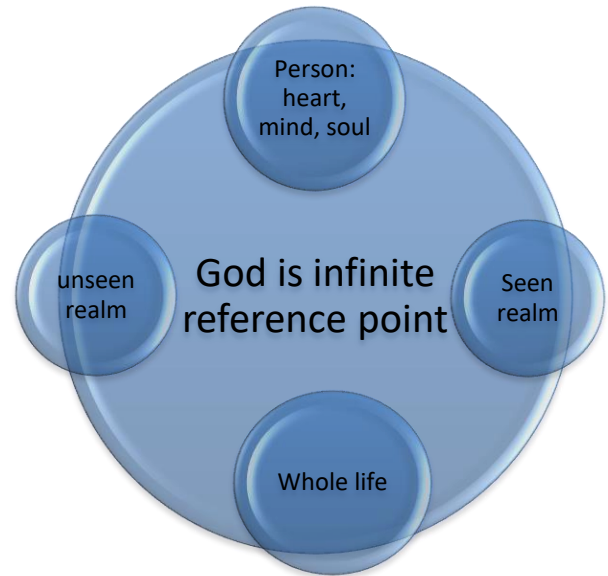
<sup>95</sup> The unity of an entity that makes a whole of constituent parts that is governed by an integer, or finding the integral of a function or equation.

through the Incarnate Son. Holiness and wholeness: the *telos* of God's purposes. To be holy is to be WHOLE, complete, perfect, unblemished, unmarred. We will be made whole in God's holy presence. Jesus' healings of the un-whole and unholy pre-shadowed this new creation reality: the blind see and the lame walk! The unblemished Lamb of God makes clean the blemished people of God.

Ps 86:11 (NIV) Teach me your way, O Lord,  
and I will walk in your truth;  
give me an undivided heart,  
that I may fear your name.

Ps 86:11 (KJV) Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth:  
unite my heart to fear thy name.

**The Circles of Integration**



The fruits of *disintegration* touch every aspect of human life, and most importantly the spiritual/theological/ philosophical makeup of how we perceive reality (God and creation). This is seen especially in the way knowledge and understanding (worldviews) are fragmented into many polarizations of perspective. These then become the *modus operandi* of world-view development and expression, as well as living in this world. For example, today there is the widespread belief that secular science provides "facts" while religion only affirms "values." This is what is called the sacred/secular divide. We suggest that this is a myth born of the devaluation of the concept of truth as true to all that is. Indeed, truth can not only be about "values." For it to be *truth*, it must concern total reality. Further, "secularism" is itself a religious world-view governed by *disbelief* in God. Secularist unbelievers often claim they have no religious assumptions or motivations, when in fact they are driven by deep religious *unbelief*. The same can be said of all such dichotomies that govern modern thought, as follows . . .

**Ancient and Contemporary Dualism and Falsely Dvided Fields of Knowledge**

**The basic dualism**

Upper Story  
Lower Story

**Gnosticism**

Spirit (Pleroma)  
Matter (material universe)

**Plato**

Forms (platonic ideals of eternal forms, rationality)  
Matter (formless flux)

**Marcion (the Gnostic heresy)**

Gospel (NT) (God of love) deliverance from the body  
Law (OT) (God of wrath) spiritual salvation

New Testament (superior)  
Old Testament (inferior)

**Aquinas**

Grace ("likeness," supernatural endowment)  
Nature ("image," natural endowment)

Theology (grace)

Philosophy (nature)

Redemption (grace, faith, theology)

Creation (nature, reason, philosophy)

**Kant** (moral imperative: reason is essence of religion)

Freedom  
Nature

Noumenal world (as it actually is)

Phenomenal world (as we experience it)

**Descartes** (reason, not Revelation, is our starting point)

Mind (spirit, thought, will)  
Matter (mechanical determinism)

**Schleiermacher**

Religious experience (essence of true religion)  
Bible (only a record of human religious experience)

**Historical Criticism & Neo-orthodoxy**

Theological truth (salvation history)

---

Historical truth (“unknowable” facts of “empirical” history)

**Hermeneutics and contemporary preaching**

Spiritual/moral examples (allegorical, exemplaristic, moralistic)

---

Historical (the original stories and characters are the unknowable “facts” of empirical history).

Redemptive historical, grammatical-historical

**Two Kingdoms?**

God (heavenly) (churchly, spiritual government and spiritual “sword”)

---

Human or Satan (worldly, secular government and temporal sword)

**The contemporary assumption**

Sacred (religion)

---

Secular (science)

**Other common dualisms**

Church

---

State

Religion

---

State

Faith

---

Reason

Faith (emotional) *versus* reason (rational)

---

Religion (public) *versus* spirituality (personal)

Spiritual

---

Religious

Morals

---

Ethics

Spirit (spiritual)

---

Matter (“flesh”) (material)

Values (socially constructed)

---

Facts (verifiable by science)

Subjective

---

Objective

Private (internal, personal)

---

Public (external, social)

Heart (emotion)

---

Head/Mind (reason)

Belief (nonrational)

---

Knowledge (rational)

Romanticism (religion)

---

Realism (scientism)

Romanticism (religion)

---

Enlightenment (science)

Transcendence

---

Immanence

**Pinker**

Ethics game (moral freedom/dignity)

---

Science game (humans are data-processing machines)

**Postmodernism**

PoMo mysticism (no basis in truth or meta-narrative)

---

Scientific naturalism (humans are machines)

New Age mysticism (occult, alternative “medicine” (autonomy of the individual)

---

Science-based, “mainstream” medicine (authorial)

**Christological heresies of Appolinarianism, Docetism, Nestorianism**

Divine (without humanity)

---

Human (without divinity or gaining divinity)

**Upper and lower story diagrams** from *Escape from Reason* by Francis A. Schaeffer

**Thomas Aquinas**

Grace (God, heavenly things, unseen)

---

Nature (created, earthly things, visible)

**Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael**

Grace (universals)

---

Nature (particulars)

**Kant and Rousseau (“secularized” polarity)**

Freedom (autonomy)

---

Nature (autonomy)



**Modern Science**

No God, grace, morals, significance, love, etc. (nature removes upper story)

Nature-physics, science, determinism

**Kierkegaard (Existentialism)**

Faith (no unified field of knowledge)

Rationality

Non-rational optimism (existential leap of faith)

Pessimistic rationality (mechanism, no meaning)

**New Theology**

Non-rational connotation [God-]words (leap of meaning) – unverifiable realm of faith

Rational-defined words – verifiable realm of rational-logical

**The non-rational is "the real"**

Freedom is madness

The rational man is dead

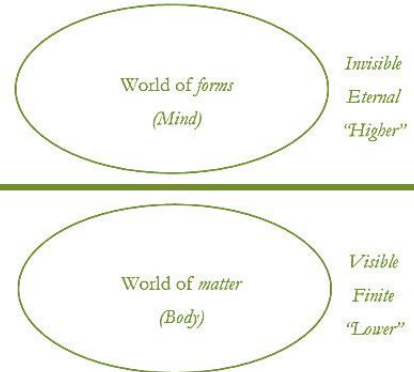
**(some)Evangelical Theology**

Nonrational encounter with Jesus

Rational – no need to prove or disprove propositions



"' Adam and Eve"?' – then You're going ahead with the dualism idea?"



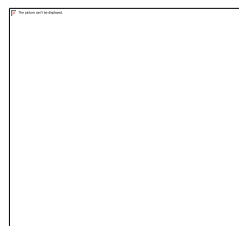
“If we think that we escaping some of the pressures of the modern debate by playing down propositional Scripture and simply putting the word *Jesus* or *experience* upstairs, we must face this question: What difference is there between doing this and doing what the secular world has done in its semantic mysticism, or what radical theology has done? At the very least, the door has been opened for man to think it is the same thing.” (*Escape from Reason* by Francis A. Schaeffer, pp. 258-259)

**15. The end of the world (as we know it)**

- See ἀποκατάστασις and παλιγγενεσία, pp. 56-58.
- See “new creation” in Biblical Theology syllabus.

*The end of the world in the OT:*

The end of the wicked is frequently predicted in the OT.



*The end of the world in the NT:*

1 Cor 10:11 These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.

Heb 1:2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

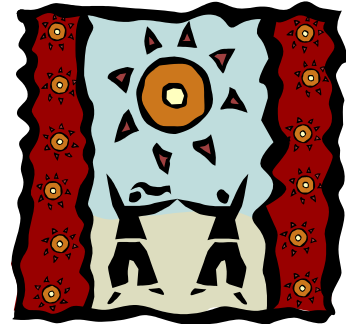
### a) “Day of the Lord” (יּוֹם-יְהוָה)

- See Obadiah, p. 231; Joel, p. 239.
- See Vos, *Eschatology*, pp. 37-42.

The day of the Lord is a very important motif in the prophetic witness.

**OT** – the day is a light for YHWH and his people, while it is darkness for sinners

**NT** – the day of the Lord is a Sabbath rest for the people of God, but it is now clearly the day of Jesus. 2 Cor 1:14 – see texts below.



#### *Background to the day of the Lord:*<sup>96</sup>

The divine Sabbath *is* the day of the Lord in the prelapsarian Eden and in the postlapsarian Israel.

“As the imitative sign of this original day of the Lord, the human Sabbath ordinance is then not only a symbolic celebration of the lordship of God, the Alpha-Creator, but a prophetic sign of the day of the Lord as a revelation of God, the Omega, in his eschatological coming for judgment.”<sup>97</sup>

*Sabbath:* The Lord’s day contains within itself a complex of motifs from the divine rest shared with his humanity, a day for God’s creation to rest, to the unrest awaiting the wicked standing under judgment. In terms of the *eschatos*, the day of the Lord will bring victory over all of God’s enemies, for the Sabbath of Eden, and the Sabbath of old covenant Israel, were preludes to the peace and rest promised in God’s coming kingdom. The new covenant church shares in that same blessed hope of final victory.

Condemnation looms large as an aspect of the great day in postlapsarian history — already and dramatically in Genesis 3:8 — but without canceling out the positive aspects of the day, as the Malachi passage attests. The day of judgment announced by the prophets is a day of both light and darkness, of creative restoration as well as desolating destruction, a day of realization of a Sabbath-consummation of the cosmos as well as of reversion to a chaotic deep-and-darkness. Rebellious peoples and hypocrites who assume it will be a day of light must be warned that they will experience it as a day of gloom and thick darkness. Suffering saints are promised that the day will come for them as brightness, dispelling their present darkness, as a day of judicial vindication and deliverance.<sup>98</sup>

Isa 13:6 Wail, for the day of the LORD is near;  
it will come like destruction from the Almighty.

Isa 13:9 See, the day of the LORD is coming  
—a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger—  
to make the land desolate  
and destroy the sinners within it.

Eze 13:5 You have not gone up to the breaks in the wall to repair it for the  
house of Israel  
so that it will stand firm in the battle on the day of the LORD.

Eze 30:3 For the day is near,



<sup>96</sup> Some scholars connect the Mesopotamian *enthronement rituals* to the OT “day of the Lord,” although this is questionable. See Judges-Esther syllabus notes for more on this issue.

<sup>97</sup> Kline, *Images of the Spirit*, pp. 113-114.

<sup>98</sup> Kline, *Images of the Spirit*, p. 118.

the day of the LORD is near—  
a day of clouds,  
a time of doom for the nations.

Joel 1:15 Alas for that day!  
For the day of the LORD is near;  
it will come like destruction from the Almighty.

Joel 2:1-2 Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
sound the alarm on my holy hill.  
Let all who live in the land tremble,  
for the day of the LORD is coming.  
It is close at hand—

Joel 2:11 The LORD thunders  
at the head of his army;  
his forces are beyond number,  
and mighty are those who obey his command.  
The day of the LORD is great;  
it is dreadful.  
Who can endure it?

Joel 2:31 The sun will be turned to darkness  
and the moon to blood  
before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

Joel 3:14 Multitudes, multitudes  
in the valley of decision!  
For the day of the LORD is near  
in the valley of decision.

Am 5:18 Woe to you who long  
for the day of the LORD!  
Why do you long for the day of the LORD?  
That day will be darkness, not light.

Am 5:20 Will not the day of the LORD be darkness, not light—  
pitch-dark, without a ray of brightness?

Obad 15 “The day of the LORD is near  
for all nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your own head.

Zeph 1:7 Be silent before the Sovereign LORD,  
for the day of the LORD is near.  
The LORD has prepared a sacrifice;  
he has consecrated those he has invited.

Zep 1:14 “The great day of the LORD is near—  
near and coming quickly.  
Listen! The cry on the day of the LORD will be  
bitter, the shouting of the warrior there.

Zec 14:1 A day of the LORD is coming when  
your plunder will be divided among you.

Mal 4:5 See, I will send you the prophet Elijah  
before that great and dreadful day of the LORD  
comes.

(right) Day of YHWH.<sup>99</sup>

NT – the coming of Messiah is a light, a  
“shining forth” for God’s people, while the  
unbeliever lives in darkness already. The  
Christian lives with the light now come and



**The day of Yahweh in pre-exilic prophets**

Text	Subject	Character	Effect	Figure of speech
Am. 5: 18–20	Israel	Judgment	Fear Surprise	Darkness/light
Is. 2: 12ff.	Proud and idolatrous people	Judgment	Terror	Massive levelling
Is. 13	Babylon	Judgment	Terror Desolation	War
Is. 34—35	Nations (Is. 34: 1–17)	Judgment	Desolation	Warfare
	Israel (Is. 35: 1–10)	Salvation	Renewal/ Wholeness	Paradise
Zp. 1:1 —3:7	Judah (1:4)	Judgment	Distress Desolation	Sacrifice (1:8)
Zp. 3:8ff.	Nations (3:8) Israel (3:14)	Salvation	Worship Joy	Convocation (1:8, 18, 20)
Joel 1:1 —3:7	Judah/Jerusalem Nations (3:2)	Judgment	Destruction (1:15; 3:13)	War (2:3–11; 3:9–11)
Joel 3: 18–20	Judah	Salvation	Agricultural prosperity	Paradise

<sup>99</sup> Marten, *Plot and Purposes*, p. 129.

still coming, thus they are the “children of the day.” Cf. the parable of the wise and foolish virgins and their lamps. The day of the Lord is the day of God and the day of Jesus.

---

Ac 2:20 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

1 Cor 5:5 hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

2 Cor 1:14 as you have understood us in part, you will come to understand fully that you can boast of us just as we will boast of you in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1 Thes 5:2 for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

2 Thes 2:2 not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come.

2 Pet 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

2 Pe 3:12 as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

Rev 16:14 They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.

## ***b) The παρουσία (parousia) of God: Christ's appearing and revelation***

The presence of God restored, or rather God's creation restored to the presence of God, is the goal of redemption. The Face of God (פָּנֵי, *pānîm*) is linked through the Bible with the glory and the name of God, all of which correspond with his presence.<sup>100</sup> The “coming” of God is the “arrival” of his presence, or the manifestation of his presence. Thus, the presence of the Lord has a logical link with the day of the Lord, for his *parousia* will bring his glory. For the righteous, it will be a day of blessedness.

On the negative side, the Lord's coming upon the wicked is his presence of judgment, purging the dross from his creation. This theme is prominent in the prophets who constantly warned that the Lord was coming . . .

The *parousia* (παρουσία) of the Messiah will be preceded by signs:

Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Isa 11:10 In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.

2 Thess 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.

1 Pet 4:13-16 But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

Rev 19:11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war.

Jesus' first *parousia* was the Messianic hope of the entire old covenant, and Jesus' final *Parousia* is the hope of the entire new covenant. With the arrival of Jesus, the glory of God is incarnated, and the *eschatos* of God's redemption for humanity is accomplished. The presence of God is restored through his glory-Spirit through his glorious Son. Thus, the day of the Lord has come, he has sent his Messiah and his Spirit in the last days to bring that redemption. Consummation of that redemption awaits the last “day of the Lord,” when he returns with his angelic hosts to glorify his redeemed, purging the tares from his harvest fields. See 2 Pet 3:10,12 below.

### ***Three synonymous terms:***<sup>101</sup>

- ◆ The coming *parousia* (παρουσία) – 1 Thess 4:15; 2 Thess 2:1
- ◆ The appearing *epiphany* (επιφάνεια) – 1 Tim 6:14; 2 Tim 4:1; 2 Thess 2:1, 8
- ◆ The revelation *apocalypse* (αποκάλυψις) – 1 Cor 1:7; 2 Thess 1:7

➤ See also Jn 14:3; 1 Cor 15:23; 1 Thess 3:13; 4:13-17; Jude 14; Acts 1:11; Mtt 16:27; 24:30; Mk 8:38; Lu 9:26.

### ***The return of Christ will involve:***

✎ Mtt 24:30 – *all will see him*

At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.

✎ Mtt 24:30-31 – *Christ will come in glory*

<sup>100</sup> The glory is reflected in Moses' face after he meets YHWH “face to face” (Ex 33:11).

<sup>101</sup> Dispensationalists separate the coming of Christ (the rapture of church) from the appearing-revelation of Christ.

At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. 31 And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

✎ Jn 5:28-29 – *Christ will raise all the dead*

Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice 29 and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

✎ Jn 5:27 – *Christ will bring the final judgment of all people*

And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

✎ Mtt 25:32-46 – *Christ will separate sheep and goats*

All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

✎ 2 Pet 3:10-13 – *Christ will bring a new heaven and earth*

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. 11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives 12 as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. 13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

### c) *The millennial morass and madness: in essentials, unity, in nonessentials liberty, and in all[most] things charity*

When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near. Luke 21:28

- These notes are repeated in NT Survey III and are revised in the *Revelation* syllabus.
- See discussion on *sensus plenior* and “literal” meanings, p. 207.
- See discussions on “prediction,” pp. 148, 159, 199, 222.
- See Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future*.
- See Horton, “Back to the Future” and Kim Riddlebarger, “Jesus Christ,” in *MR*, Sept/Pct, 2001.
- See typology, p. 209, my essay on the symbolic nature of language in Hermeneuticis Course Syllabus notes **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, and the discussion of poetics, p. 193f.

Mark 13:32-37 “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. 34 It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. 35 “Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. 36 If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. 37 What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”

The meaning of the “millennium” in Rev 20: 4,6 is a vexing issue which unfortunately dominates much of the discussion of “eschatology.” Admittedly, my own view has wavered over the years between aspects of all three of the major viewpoints. For those of you who actually know how to spell it Millennium (there are countless variations on the www), and know your position, then feel confident that the more you study the millennial issue the less confident you



Title page from one of many pamphlets that announced the end of the world via a flood that was supposed to have struck in 1524.

may become. Buswell makes the interesting point that neither Hodge, Warfield, Machen, nor O.T. Allis had felt they had studied it adequately to resolve it!<sup>102</sup> I think Boettner gets to the heart of the problem:

“No one has yet devised a sure method for distinguishing between figurative and literal.”<sup>103</sup>

(left) End of the World by flood.<sup>104</sup>

It is an inescapable fact that all interpreters must take many prophecies as figurative or symbolic, and to deny this is simply to deny the poetic, symbolic, and metaphoric nature of OT prophecy. That is, to hold tenaciously to a hermeneutical principle that all prophecies must be taken “literally,” is simply an inconsistent and impossible hermeneutics.

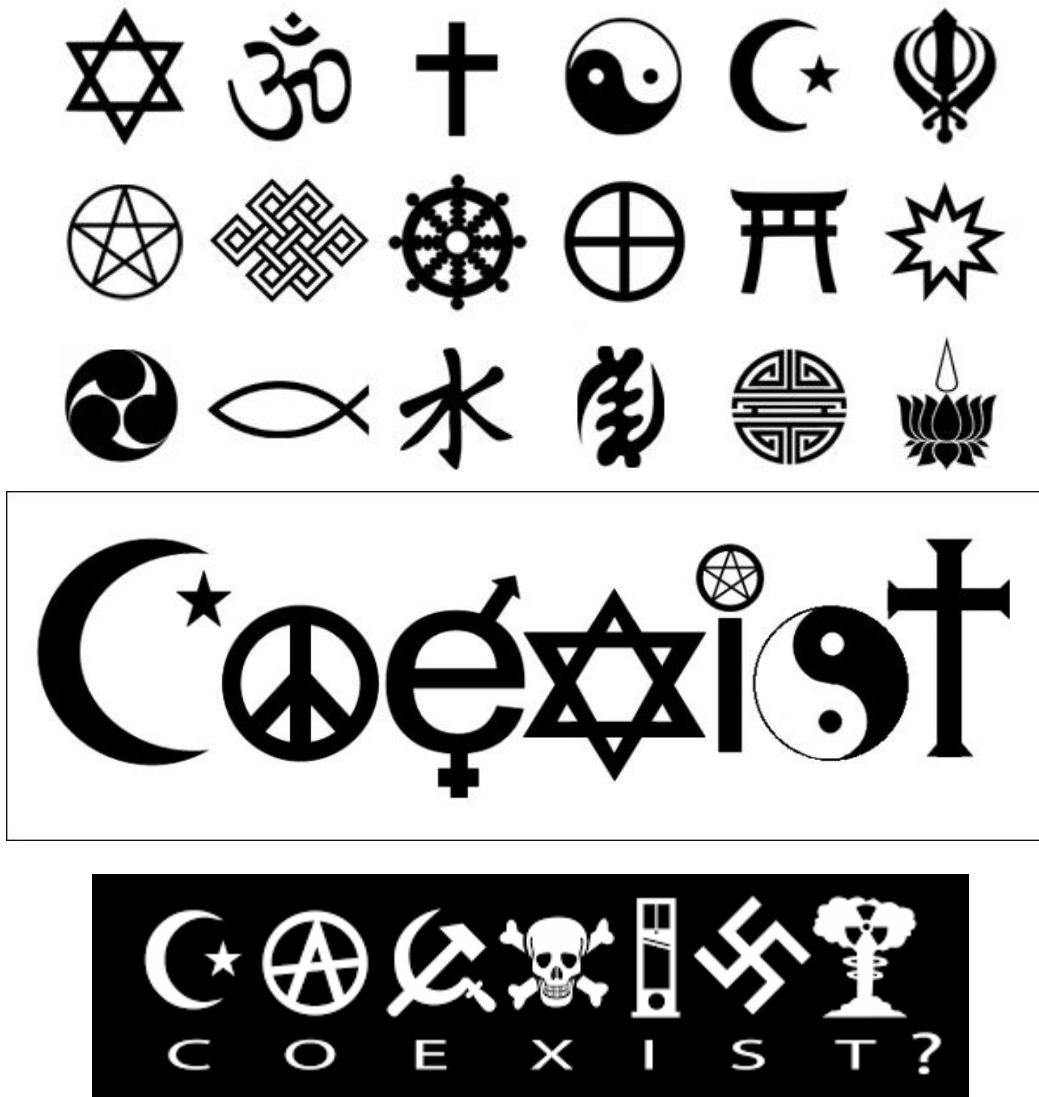
<sup>102</sup> Buswell, *Systematic Theology*, part 4, “Eschatology,” pp. 496-498.

<sup>103</sup> Boettner, *The Millennium*, p. 104.

<sup>104</sup> Illustration from Abanes, *End-Time Visions*, p. 185.

Another difficult term is *literal*, for it suggests *really happens* over against what does not *really happen*. Yet, all figures and types represent something literal, in the sense that these things point to something real in the history of redemption. That is, the literal sense does not preclude symbolism, metaphor and literary genre and device; in fact, it assumes it. The *literal* reading of a metaphor is as a metaphor. All metaphors draw on what is literal and identifiable in order to compare and contrast aspects. The symbolic language of biblical prophecy and *apocalyptic* demands a reading that takes symbolism into account. Any reading that denies this aspect of such language is akin to reading fantasy as fact, thus butchering the “plain sense” of the meaning as metaphoric and symbolic.<sup>105</sup> This is not so say that understanding the symbols and metaphors is easy, but that it is impossible if a unilateral “literalist-hermeneutic” is persistently employed.

The correlation between symbolism and what symbols represent is an enormous subject in modern philosophy (Semantics, Linguistics, Semiotics, etc.). Masses of material has been published on these subjects, but for our purposes it is important to keep in mind that much of that discussion is driven by uncertainty about *certitude* in our knowing. Whereas, for Christian discussions of the biblical nature of language and signs, they are underscored by the assumption that reliable cognition and knowledge are possible, even if never infallible. Further, another remarkable assumption often in the Postmodern view in our times is that all things being equal our symbols only represent our different, and equally valuable personal narratives, not any mettanarrative or overarching absolute truth. This is reflected even in many bumper stickers to that effect:



<sup>105</sup> So that no-one can accuse me of calling the Revelation of John a fantasy, I am only using this illustration as an example of how to misread the Revelation through employing a faulty hermeneutic.

Millennium in Early Church Fathers<sup>106</sup>

MILLENNIUM Tenants Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs

MILLENNIUM

But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My father's kingdom. Matt. 26:29.

And he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. . . . Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his images, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. Rev. 20:3-5.

The days will come in which vines having ten thousand branches will grow. In each branch, there will be ten thousand twigs, and in each shoot there will be ten thousand clusters. Each cluster will have ten thousand grapes, and every grape will give twenty-five metretres of wine, when pressed. . . . In like manner, a grain of wheat will produce ten thousand ears. Irenaeus, citing Papias (c. 120, E), 1.153, 154.

Among these things, Papias says that there will be a millennium after the resurrection from the dead, when the personal reign of Christ will be established on this earth. Eusebius, citing Papias (c. 120, E), 1.154.

I and others who are right-minded Christians on all points are assured that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and a thousand years in Jerusalem, which will then be built. . . . For Isaiah spoke in that manner concerning this period of a thousand years. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.239.

There was a certain man with us, whose name was John, one of the apostles of Christ, who prophesied by a revelation that was made to him, that those who believed in our Christ would dwell a thousand years in Jerusalem. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.240.

Therefore, when man will have again made his way back to his natural condition and no longer does evil, the [animals] will also be restored to their original gentleness. Theophilus (c. 180, E), 2.101.

It is fitting for the righteous to be the first to receive the promise of the inheritance that God promised to the fathers. It is fitting for them to reign in it, when they rise again to behold God

in this creation that will have been renovated. It is fitting that the judgment should take place afterwards. For it is just that in that very same creation in which they toiled or were afflicted (being tested in every way by suffering) they should receive the reward of their suffering. . . . It is fitting, therefore, that the creation itself, being restored to its pristine condition, should be under the dominion of the righteous without restraint. Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.561.

The promise of God that He gave to Abraham remains steadfast. . . . God promised him the inheritance of the land. Yet, Abraham did not receive it during all the time of his journey there. Accordingly, it must be that Abraham, together with his seed (that is, those who fear God and believe in Him), will receive it at the resurrection of the just. Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.561.

Now God made promise of the earth to Abraham and his seed. Yet neither Abraham nor his seed (that is, those who are justified by faith) presently receive any inheritance in it. Therefore, they will receive it at the resurrection of the just. For God is true and faithful. For this reason, He said, "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth." Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.562.

"I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of this vine, until that day when I will drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Therefore, Christ will Himself renew the inheritance of the earth. . . . For He cannot by any means be understood as drinking of the fruit of the vine when settled down with his [disciples] above in a heavenly place. Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.562.

What are the hundredfold [rewards] in this world? . . . These are in the times of the kingdom. That is, they are upon the seventh day, which has been sanctified, in which God rested from the works which He created, which is the true Sabbath of the righteous. Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.562.

The predicted blessing, therefore, belongs unquestionably to the times of the kingdom, when the righteous will bear rule, after their rising from the dead. It is also the time when the creation will bear fruit with an abundance of all kinds of food, having been renovated and set free. . . . And all of the animals will feed on the vegetation of the earth. They will become peaceful and harmonious among each other,

and they will be in perfect subjection to man. And these things are borne witness to in the fourth book of the writings of Papias, the hearer of John, and a companion of Polycarp. Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.562, 563.

Isaiah says, "The wolf also will feed with the lamb, and the leopard will take his rest with the kid." . . . I am quite aware that some persons attempt to apply these words to the situation of savage men, both of different nations and various habits, who come to believe. For, when they have believed, they act in harmony with the righteous. And this is presently [true] with regard to some men coming from various nations to the harmony of the faith. Nevertheless, in the resurrection of the just, [it applies] to those animals mentioned. And it is right that when the creation is restored, all the animals should obey and be subject to man, and revert to the food originally given by God. Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.563.

In the times of the kingdom, the earth will be called again by Christ. And Jerusalem will be rebuilt after the pattern of the Jerusalem above. Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.565

On the other hand, there is to be an end of evil when the chief of evil, the devil, will "go away into the fire that God has prepared for him and his angels," having first been cast into the bottomless pit. Likewise, at that time, the manifestation of the children of God will have delivered the animals from evil. For they have been "made subject to vanity." At that time, the cattle will be restored in the innocence and integrity of their nature and will be at peace with beasts of the field. At that time, also, little children will play with serpents. Tertullian (c. 200, W), 3.483.

The Sabbath is the type and symbol of the future kingdom of the saints, when they shall reign with Christ after He comes from heaven, as John says in his Revelation. For "a day with the Lord is as a thousand years." Hippolytus (c. 205, W), 5.179.

We do confess that a kingdom is promised to us upon the earth, although before heaven. Only, it will be in another state of existence. For it will be after the resurrection for a thousand years in the divinely-built city of Jerusalem "let down from heaven." Tertullian (c. 207, W), 3.342.

Cerintus [a heretic], through written revelations by a "great apostle" (as he would have us

believe), brings before us marvelous things which he pretends were shown to him by angels. He alleges that after the resurrection, the kingdom of Christ is to be on earth and that the flesh dwelling in Jerusalem will again be subject to desires and pleasures. Eusebius, quoting Celsus (c. 215, W), 5.601.

Certain persons, . . . adopting a superficial view of the letter of the law, . . . are of the opinion that the fulfillment of the promises of the future are to be looked for in bodily pleasure and luxury. Therefore, they especially desire after the resurrection to have again bodies that will always have the power of eating, drinking, and performing all the functions of flesh and blood. . . . Consequently, they say that after the resurrection, there will be marriages and the begetting of children. They imagine to themselves that the earthly city of Jerusalem is to be rebuilt, its foundations being laid in precious stones. . . . Moreover, they think that the natives of other countries are to be given them as the servants of their pleasures. . . . They think that they are to receive the wealth of the nations to live on. These views they think to establish on the authority of the prophets, by those promises that are written regarding Jerusalem. . . . And from the New Testament, too, they quote the saying of the Savior . . . "Henceforth, I will not drink of this cup, until I drink it with you new in My Father's kingdom." . . .

[The millennialists] desire the fulfillment of all things looked for in the promises, all according to the manner of things in this life and in all similar matters. . . . However, those who receive the interpretations of Scripture according to the understanding of the apostles, entertain the hope that the saints will indeed eat—but that it will be the bread of life that can nourish the soul with the food of truth and wisdom. Origen (c. 225, E), 4.297.

The Amen sends flames on the nations. And the Medes and Persians burn for a thousand years, as the apocalyptic words of John declare. After a thousand years, they will be delivered over to Gehenna. And he whose work they were is burned up with them. Commodianus (c. 240, W), 4.211.

The city will descend from heaven in the first resurrection. . . . We who have been devoted to Him will arise again to Him. And they will be incorruptible, even already living

## MILLENNIUM

without death. Neither will there be any grief nor any groaning in that city. They will also come who overcame cruel martyrdom under the Antichrist. And they themselves will live for the whole time and receive blessings because they have suffered evil things. And they themselves will marry, begetting for a thousand years. All the bounty of the earth will be prepared, because the earth will pour forth abundantly without end, being renewed. No rain and no cold will come into the golden camp. *Commodianus* (c. 240, *W*), 4.212.

They produce a certain composition written by Nepos. On this basis, as if it were incontrovertibly proven, they insist very strongly that there will be a reign of Christ upon the earth. . . . They attempt to lead [our simpler brethren] to hope for things that are trivial and corruptible—that is, only those things that we might presently find in the kingdom of God. *Dionysius of Alexandria* (c. 262, *E*), 6.81.

The true Sabbath will be in the seventh millennium of years, when Christ will reign with His elect. *Victorinus* (c. 280, *W*), 7.342.

Those years during which Satan is bound are during the first coming of Christ—even to the end of the age. They are called a thousand years, in accord with that manner of speaking whereby a part is signified by the whole. . . . And he cast him into the abyss." This is said because the devil began to take possession of the wicked, having been excluded from the hearts of believers. *Victorinus* (c. 280, *W*), 7.358.

I will put forth what my capacity enables me to judge [concerning the thousand year reign]. The tenfold number signifies the Decalogue. And the hundredfold means the crown of virginity. For the person who will have kept the undertaking of virginity completely and will have faithfully fulfilled the commandments of the Decalogue . . . he is the true priest of Christ, and he accomplishes the thousand year number completely. Therefore, he is said to reign with Christ. And truly, in his case, the devil is bound. . . . But in that it says that when the thousand years are finished, [Satan] is loosed, so the number of the perfect saints being completed . . . many will be overthrown, seduced by the love of earthly things. *Victorinus* (c. 280, *W*), 7.359.

They are not to be heard who assure themselves that there is to be an earthly reign of a

thousand years. They think like the heretic Cerinthus. For the kingdom of Christ is already eternal in the saints—even though the glory of the saints will be manifested after the resurrection. *Victorinus* (c. 280, *W*), 7.360.

Taking my journey and going forth from the Egypt of this life, I came first to the resurrection, which is the true Feast of the Tabernacles. There, I set up my tabernacle, adorned with the fruits of virtue, on the first day of the resurrection, which is the Day of Judgment. And I celebrate with Christ the millennium of rest, which is called the seventh day, even the true Sabbath. *Methodius* (c. 290, *E*), 6.347.

Back then a mortal and imperfect man was formed from the earth, so that he might live a thousand years in this world. So, now, from this earthly age is formed a perfect man. And, being quickened by God, he will bear rule in this same world through a thousand years. *Lactantius* (c. 304–313, *W*), 7.212.

The dead will rise again . . . to reign with God for a thousand years. *Lactantius* (c. 304–313, *W*), 7.218.

When He will have destroyed unrighteousness and executed His great judgment. . . . He will be occupied among men for a thousand years. And He will rule them with a most just command. . . . Then, those who are alive in their bodies will not die. Rather, during these thousand years, they will produce an infinite multitude. Their offspring will be holy and beloved by God. However, those who are raised from the dead will preside over the living as judges. The nations will not be entirely extinguished. For some will be left as a victory for God. . . . They will be subjected to perpetual slavery. During that time, the ruler of the devils, who is the contriver of all evils, will be bound with chains. He will be imprisoned during the thousand years of this heavenly rule, in which righteousness will reign in the world. . . . After [Christ's] coming, the righteous will be collected from all the earth. When the judgment has been completed, the sacred city will be planted in the middle of the earth, in which God Himself, the Builder, may dwell together with the righteous. . . . The sun will become seven times brighter than it is now. And the earth will open its fruitfulness and bring forth most abundant fruits of its own accord. . . . The world itself will rejoice, and all nature will exult. For they will be rescued and set free from

the dominion of evil, impiecy, guilt, and error. Throughout this time, beasts will not be nourished by blood, nor will birds prey. Rather, all things will be peaceful and tranquil. Lions and calves will stand together at the hay trough. *Lactantius* (c. 304–313, *W*), 7.219; see also 1.564–1.566.

SEE ALSO ESCHATOLOGY; JERUSALEM; RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

## MINISTRY

SEE CHURCH GOVERNMENT; EVANGELISM; ORDNATION.

## MINOR ORDERS

The term "minor orders" refers to ministerial positions below those of bishop, presbyter, and deacon. Among such positions in the early church were subdeacon, reader, and acolyte.

Know, then, that I have made Saturnus a reader, and Opatrus, the confessor, a subdeacon. For already, by the general advice, we had made him next to the clergy. For we had entrusted the reading to Saturnus on Easter, time and again. And when with the presbyter-teachers we were carefully testing readers, we appointed Opatrus from among the readers to be a teacher of the hearers. First of all, though, we examined whether all things were found fitting in these men, which should be found on those who are in preparation for the clerical office. *Cyprian* (c. 250, *W*), 5.301.

. . . also your readers, your singers, your porters, your deaconesses, your widows, your virgins, and your orphans. *Apostolic Constitutions* (compiled c. 390, *E*), 7.410.

We do not permit the rest of the clergy to baptize: neither readers, singers, porters, nor ministers—but the bishops and presbyters alone. *Apostolic Constitutions* (compiled c. 390, *E*), 7.429.

SEE ALSO CHURCH GOVERNMENT; READER; SUBDEACON.

## MINUCIUS FELIX

Mark Minucius Felix (c. 170–215) was a Roman lawyer who converted to Christianity. He composed one of the finest early Christian apologies, entitled *Octavius*, written in the form of a dialogue between a Christian and a pagan.

## MIRACLE

Of those who are known to me, Minucius Felix was of no low rank among apologists. His book, which bears the title of *Octavius*, declares how suitable a defender of the truth he might have been if he had given himself altogether to that pursuit [i.e., of being an apologist]. *Lactantius* (c. 304–313, *W*), 7.136.

## MIRACLES

Papias relates that he had received a wonderful narrative from the daughters of Philip. For I reports that a dead man was raised to life in a day. He also mentions another miracle related to Justus, surnamed Barsabas, how he swallowed a deadly poison, and received no harm because of the grace of the Lord. *Eusebius, citing Papias* (c. 120, *E*), 1.154.

Our Savior's works, moreover, were always present. For they were real. They consisted of those who had been healed of their diseases and those who had been raised from the dead. These persons were not only seen while they were being healed and raised up, but they were afterwards constantly present. Nor did they remain only during the sojourn of the Savior on earth but also a considerable time after His departure. Indeed, some of them have survived even down to our own times. *Quadratus* (c. 125), 8.749.

The heretics will, besides, add a great deal concerning the high authority of each teacher of heresy. They will relate how that these men strengthened belief in their own doctrine through mighty works, how that they raised the dead, restored the sick, foretold the future—so that they might deservedly be regarded as apostles. As if this warning were not also in the written record: that many would come who were to work even the greatest miracles, in defense of the deception of their corrupt preaching. *Tertullian* (c. 197, *W*), 3.264, 265.

I am acquainted with the case of a woman, the daughter of Christian parents, who in the very flower of her age and beauty slept peacefully [in death]. This was after a singularly happy though brief married life. Before they laid her in her grave, and when the presbyter began the prayers, at the very first breath of his prayer she withdrew her hands from her side, placed them in a posture of devotion, and after the holy service was concluded, she returned them to their lateral position. Then, again, there is that well-known story among our own people that a corpse voluntarily shifted in a certain cemetery



H.W. House & R. Price, Zondervan Charts of Bible Prophecy, p. 72.

## 39. Views concerning the Last Things

	AMILLENNIALISM	POSTMILLENNIALISM	HISTORIC PREMILLENNIALISM	DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLENNIALISM
<b>Second Coming of Christ</b>	Single event; no distinction between Rapture and Second Coming; introduces eternal state.	Single event; no distinction between Rapture and Second Coming; Christ returns after Millennium.	Rapture and Second Coming simultaneous; Christ returns to reign on earth.	Second Coming in two phases: Rapture of the church; Second Coming 7 years later.
<b>Resurrection</b>	General resurrection of believers and unbelievers at Second Coming of Christ.	General resurrection of believers and unbelievers at Second Coming of Christ.	Resurrection of believers at beginning of Millennium. Resurrection of unbelievers at end of Millennium.	Distinction of three resurrections: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The church at Rapture;</li> <li>2. Old Testament/Tribulation saints at Second Coming;</li> <li>3. Unbelievers at end of Millennium.</li> </ol>
<b>Judgments</b>	General judgment of all people.	General judgment of all people.	Judgment at Second Coming, at end of Tribulation.	Distinction of three judgments: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Believers' works at Rapture;</li> <li>2. Jews/Gentiles at end of Tribulation;</li> <li>3. Unbelievers at end of Millennium.</li> </ol>
<b>Tribulation</b>	Tribulation is experienced in this present age.	Tribulation is experienced in this present age.	Posttribulation view: the church goes through the future Tribulation.	Pretribulation view: the church is raptured prior to Tribulation.
<b>Millennium</b>	No literal Millennium on earth after Second Coming. Kingdom present in church age.	Present age blends into Millennium because of progress of Gospel.	Millennium is both present and future. Christ is reigning in heaven. Millennium not necessarily 1,000 years.	At Second Coming Christ inaugurates literal 1,000-year Millennium on earth.
<b>Israel and the Church</b>	The church is the new Israel. No distinction between Israel and the church.	The church is the new Israel. No distinction between Israel and the church.	Some distinction between Israel and the church. Future for Israel, but the church is spiritual Israel.	Complete distinction between Israel and the church. Distinct program for each.
<b>Adherents</b>	L. Berkhof, O. T. Allis, G. C. Berkhouwer	Charles Hodge, B. B. Warfield, W. G. T. Shedd, A. H. Strong	G. E. Ladd, A. Reese, M. J. Erickson	L. S. Chafer, J. D. Pentecost, C. C. Ryrie, J. F. Walvoord

Adapted from Paul Enns, *Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989), 383. Used by permission.

Credenda Agenda, Vol. 10, no. 3, 1999, pp. 38-39.

*This is an attempt to summarize the mainstream positions of the four millennial views, while recognizing that variations exist within each.*

	Postmillennialism	Amillennialism	Historic Premillennialism	Dispensational Premillennialism
<i>Hermeneutics</i>	Historical, grammatical. Context and genre are important interpretive considerations. Scripture interprets Scripture.	Historical, grammatical. Context and genre are important interpretive considerations. Scripture interprets Scripture.	Historical, grammatical. Context and genre are important interpretive considerations. Scripture interprets Scripture.	Historical, grammatical. Strong inclination toward literalism. Scripture is divided into dispensations. Prophecy is to be interpreted literally. <sup>1</sup>
<i>Second Coming</i>	Christ's Second Coming comes <i>after</i> the millennium (i.e., postmillennial) and initiates general resurrection, the judgment of all men, and the eternal state for believers and unbelievers.	Christ's Second Coming comes <i>after</i> the millennium (i.e., <i>postmillennial</i> <sup>W</sup> ) and initiates general resurrection, the judgment of all men, and the eternal state for believers and unbelievers.	Christ comes <i>before</i> the millennium (i.e., premillennial), but after the tribulation.	Christ comes <i>before</i> the millennium (i.e., premillennial). Christ comes and raptures the Church, followed by 7-year tribulation, then He comes again to establish an earthly kingdom.
<i>Kingdom, Timing of</i>	God's kingdom is a present earthly reality that began at the first advent.	God's kingdom is a present reality that began at the first advent.	God's kingdom is a present reality that began at the first advent. <sup>1</sup>	An earthly kingdom will be established during the future millennium. The kingdom is in no sense present today. <sup>2</sup>
<i>Kingdom, Nature of</i>	The kingdom is spiritual in nature, encompassing heaven and earth. It will grow gradually as more and more turn to Christ and are saved. God's kingdom will fill the whole earth.	The kingdom is spiritual in nature. The kingdom is growing in that the gospel will reach every tribe, tongue, and nation. <sup>1</sup> However, relatively few will be saved.	The kingdom has come, but not with transforming power. Neither good nor evil will prevail.	The Second Coming will establish the kingdom suddenly and cataclysmically. Christ does not reign as king now. The future earthly kingdom will be primarily Jewish.
<i>Kingdom, Christ's Reign in</i>	Christ reigns now from heaven. His kingdom is on earth. He will continue to rule until He has put all enemies under His feet <sup>W</sup> (1 Cor. 15:25).	Christ's reign is not an earthly reign, but a heavenly one. Christ reigns in heaven over the souls of believers who have died. <sup>2</sup>	Christ reigns now in heaven, but His present reign is invisible to the world. Only Christians see it by faith. The public manifestation of Christ's glory will not take place on earth until the millennium. <sup>2</sup>	Christ will reign in a future millennium in bodily form on the earth after the Second Coming. He will rule from a physical throne in Jerusalem. The kingdom has a political dimension to it.
<i>Millennium, Description</i>	We are in the millennium now. The millennium will slowly, progressively become a golden age. <sup>W</sup> Some older advocates believed that the millennium proper would begin at a future date, but most now hold that it began with Christ's death and resurrection.	We are in the millennium now, but the millennium will never become a golden age. <sup>W</sup> The millennium is the church age. After the millennium will be the Second Coming followed by the eternal state, the latter being a golden age. <sup>W3</sup>	The millennium is future. Christ will rule with absolute control. It will be a time of righteous rule. <sup>3</sup>	The millennium is future. Righteousness will prevail. The O.T. Jewish economy will be restored. Temple worship, priestly order, and animal sacrifices will be restored.
<i>Millennium, Duration</i>	A prolonged period of time, greater than a 1000 years. The Second Coming follows the millennium.	A prolonged period of time, greater than a 1000 years. <sup>4</sup> The Second Coming follows the millennium.	Generally (but not always) thought to be 1000 years. The Second Coming precedes the millennium.	Exactly 1000 years. The Second Coming precedes the millennium.
<i>Satan's binding and current status</i>	At Christ's death and resurrection, Satan was bound, meaning his ability to deceive the nations was restricted, thus opening the door for worldwide evangelism. The preaching of the gospel has a deleterious effect on satanic activity. God, not Satan, controls world events.	At Christ's death and resurrection, Satan was bound, meaning his ability to deceive the nations was restricted. Binding does not mean that Satan's ability to deceive is stopped altogether. It means he cannot prevent the nations from learning the truth about God.	The binding of Satan does not take place until the Second Coming. <sup>4</sup> [T]his age is a present evil age (Gal. 1: 4); Satan is its god (2 Cor. 4: 4). <sup>W5</sup>	The future Second Coming causes Satan to be bound 1000 years. Satan is not bound now. Satan rules the kingdom of this present world <sup>3</sup> and controls the world system. <sup>4</sup> Satan is alive and well on planet earth. <sup>W</sup>

**Eschaton:**  
  
**Comparison of the Four Millennial Views**  
 Jack Van Deventer

Credenda Agenda, Vol. 10, no. 3, 1999, pp. 38-39.

	Postmillennialism	Amillennialism	Historic Premillennialism	Dispensational Premillennialism
<i>Tribulation</i>	Culminated in A.D. 70. Roughly A.D. 6470, beginning with the persecution of Christians by Nero. Was predicted by Christ to be within a generation (Matt. 24:34) and was experienced by John (Rev. 1:9).	The church is in the tribulation now, but the tribulation will grow progressively worse. <sup>5</sup> Christians must expect to suffer tribulation and persecution during the entire church age. <sup>6</sup>	A future 7-year period immediately preceding the Second Coming. The Church will go through the tribulation. <sup>6</sup>	A future 7-year period immediately preceding the Second Coming. The Church escapes the tribulation via rapture. Jews who subsequently believe remain behind.
<i>Antichrist(s)</i>	The Antichrist <sup>7</sup> is viewed in the past, as various individuals, a movement or spirit <sup>8</sup> (1 Jn. 4:3) of deception. John wrote, even now many antichrists have come <sup>9</sup> (1 Jn.2:18). <sup>1</sup>	There will be a future establishment of the kingdom of Antichrist over the entire world. <sup>7</sup> The Antichrist is an individual.	A future Antichrist (an individual) will inflict persecution on Christians before the rapture. <sup>7</sup>	A future Antichrist (an individual) will become the world dictator and persecute both Jews and Christians. He will reach his dominant political position after the rapture. <sup>5</sup>
<i>Rapture</i>	The rapture occurs at the end of the millennium when believers who have just been raised from the dead, together with believers who have just been transformed are caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.	The rapture occurs at the end of the millennium when believers who have just been raised from the dead, together with believers who have just been transformed are caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. <sup>8</sup>	Posttribulation: rapture will take place at the end of a future tribulation but before the millennium.	Pretribulation: rapture will take place at the beginning of a future tribulation and before the millennium. The Church gets raptured out of the world. Believing Jews remain and suffer persecution.
<i>The Temple</i>	The temple and the O.T. sacrificial system are done away with forever.	The temple and the O.T. sacrificial system are done away with forever.	The temple and the O.T. sacrificial system are done away with forever. <sup>8</sup>	The Jewish temple will be physically rebuilt. The sacrificial system will be reinstated.
<i>Israel</i>	The prophecies and promises to Israel are fulfilled in the Church. Ethnic Jews will ultimately be converted over time through the preaching of the gospel.	The prophecies and promises to Israel are fulfilled in the Church. Jews will continue to be converted to Christ until the Second Coming. <sup>9</sup>	The prophecies and promises to Israel are fulfilled in the Church. There will be a future salvation of Israel. <sup>9</sup>	God's original plan to establish the kingdom at the first advent was thwarted when the Jews rejected Christ. The Jewish kingdom will be set up at Christ's Second Coming.
<i>Israel &amp; the Church</i>	The Church is spiritual Israel. It is, the Israel of God. <sup>10</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, all are one in Christ.	The Church is spiritual Israel. It is, the Israel of God. <sup>10</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, all are one in Christ.	The Church is spiritual Israel. It is, the Israel of God. <sup>10</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, all are one in Christ.	Israel and the Church are separate and distinct peoples of God. The Church is an interruption of God's program for Israel brought about by Israel's rejection of the kingdom offer. <sup>6</sup>
<i>The Church</i>	Over time the Church will grow and flourish. The Great Commission to disciple all nations will be fulfilled.	The Church can look forward to increasing apostasy, tribulation, and persecution toward the end times. <sup>10</sup>	The world's hatred of the gospel will lead to a last convulsive persecution that decimates the church. <sup>10</sup>	The Church will eventually lose influence, fail its mission, and become corrupt.
<i>Historic Expectation</i>	Optimistic. Prophecies of destruction are viewed preteristically (in the past). Over time the nations will be converted to Christ through the preaching of the gospel. The Great Commission will be fulfilled.	Pessimistic. Only a small proportion of the world will be saved. The kingdom of evil is growing. Apostasy and tribulation will culminate in the emergence of a personal Antichrist. The idea of widespread conversions and societal improvements is rejected.	Pessimistic. Unbelief and apostasy will increase. Prophecies of destruction are viewed futuristically. The gospel will be preached to all nations, but will not be effective.	Pessimistic. Unbelief and apostasy will increase. Prophecies of destruction are viewed futuristically. The gospel will be preached to all nations, but will not be effective.
<i>The Hope of the Church</i>	The conversion of the nations through the spread of the gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit.	The eternal state is held out as the future hope of the church. <sup>11</sup>	The post-tribulation rapture.	The pretribulation rapture.

<sup>1</sup> All millennial views see Christ's coming as the blessed hope. Moreover, they place great hope in the anticipation of eternity in heaven. The hope listed here is the present and immediate hope of believers as viewed from a millennial perspective.

**The major views on the millennium:** see views on Revelation, p.

**Amil:** should really be called Millennialism, for we are in the millennium now (probably the most common ancient viewpoint)

**The major views on the millennium:** see views on Revelation, p. See Rev 20, p. .

- ♦ **Amil:** should really be called Millennialism, for we are in the millennium now (probably the most common ancient viewpoint, but may have been considered as “postmil,” and the most “reformed” viewpoint). The present church age is understood metaphorically to be the 1,000 years mentioned in the Book of Revelation during which there will be a time of Satan’s loosing followed by the return of Christ, the resurrection of all people, and the final judgment, and then the creation of a new heavens and earth. Amil interpret the Revelation as referring to the historic churches in Rev 1-3, and is historicist on Rev 4-19, and sees the coming of Christ, the judgment, eternal state in heaven in Rev 20-22. Augustine, Calvin, Luther. Berkhof, G. vos, A. Kuypers.
- ♦ **Premil:** the millennium is literal, although it may not be exactly 1000 years, and follows Christ’s return. A minority ancient viewpoint, yet a majority viewpoint in recent history since Darby and Scofield. Premils interpret the Revelation as referring to the historic churches (as *representative* of historical stages) in Rev 1-3, and is futurist on Rev 4-19, and sees prediction of a literal millennium, great white throne judgment, and New Jerusalem in Rev 20-22. See Daniel’s seventy sevens, p. 490. Justin Martyr, Isaac Newton, Irenaeus.

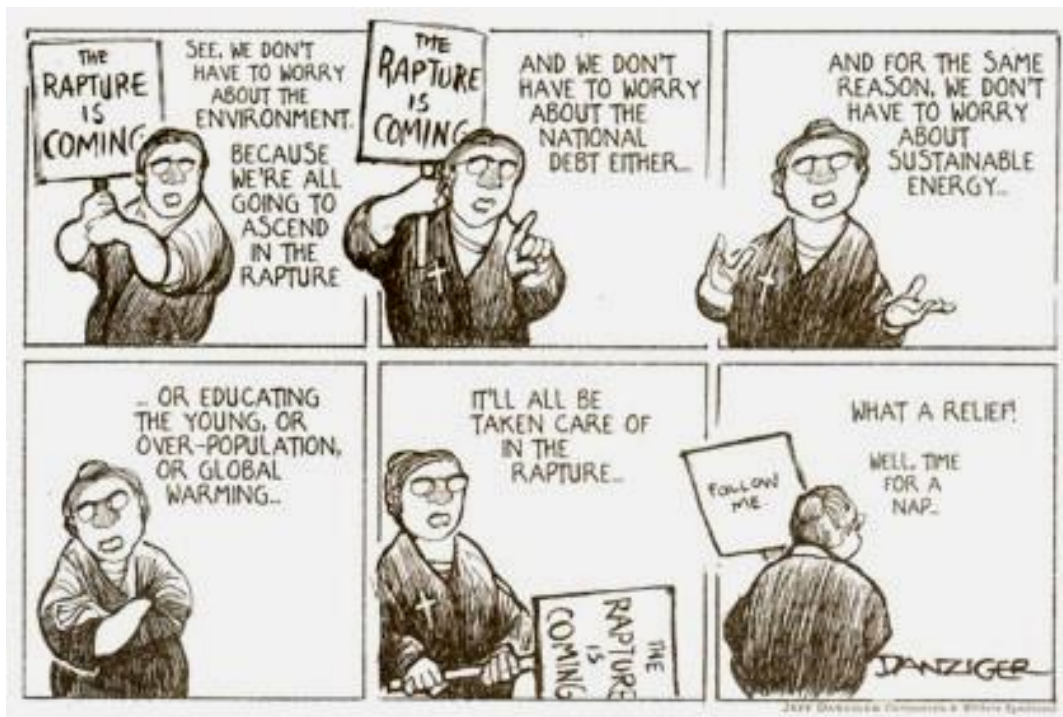
**Historic:** the present church age is followed by the return of Christ, the resurrection of believers, a 1,000 year reign of Christ on this earth after which Satan is loosed, and then the final resurrection of unbelievers is followed by the judgment which is followed by the creation of a new heavens and new earth. A. Reese, D. Alford, G.Ladd.

**Dispensational<sup>107</sup>:** the present church age is followed by a “secret” return of Christ which raptures believers, followed by a seven year tribulation, the battle of Armageddon, the visible return of Christ, and then there will be the judgment between the sheeps and goats followed by a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ on this earth, after which Satan is loosed, and then there will be the resurrection of unbelievers followed by the final judgment and the creation of a new heavens and earth.

- ◆ **Postmil:** the millennium is now, but the goal of a largely Christianized world must precede Christ’s return. That is, the present church age creates the millennium of peace and prosperity on this earth, after which Satan is loosed before the return of Christ, and the resurrection of all people is followed by the judgment which is followed by the new heavens and earth. Postmils interpret the Revelation as referring to the historic churches in Rev 1-3, is historicist on Rev 4-19, and sees a prediction of the coming victory of Christianity over the world before Christ returns in Rev 20-22. Augustine, Hodges, W.T. Shedd, Dabney, B.B. Warfield, George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, Charles Finney.
- ◆ **Apocalyptic:** interprets the Revelation as referring to historic churches in Rev 1-3, is preterist on Rev 4-19, and sees symbolism of future heaven and victory in Rev 20-22.

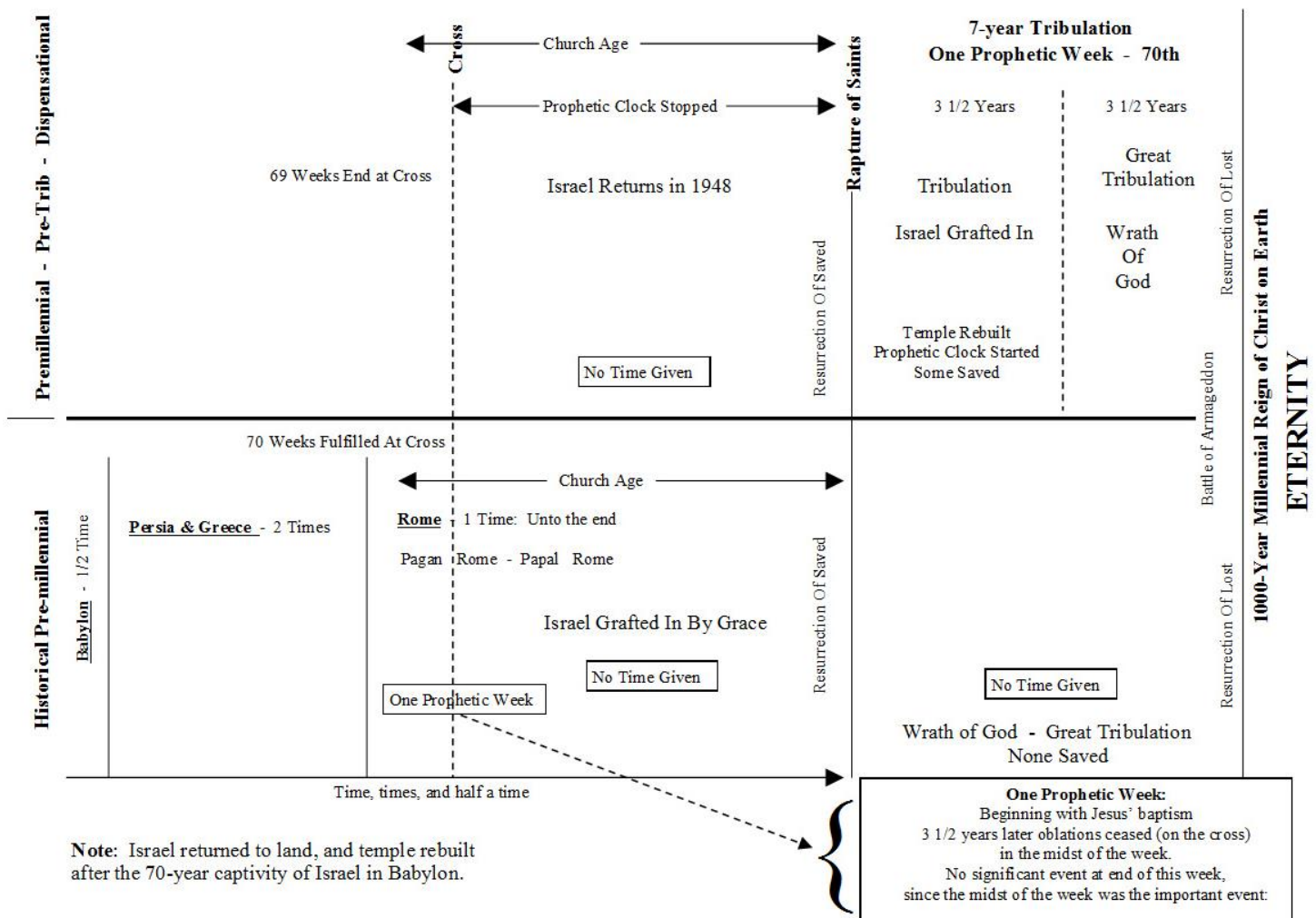
**Rapture and tribulation (ἁλιψις)<sup>108</sup>:** related to views on the millennium:

- **Historic premils** believe that before Christ returns the church will suffer the tribulation, and then the rapture will occur and then the return of Christ – Mtt 24 (though one could hold the other views, as well).
- **Dispensational premils** believe that a “secret” rapture occurs before the tribulation (so that Christians will not suffer this affliction on earth) which will be a seven year period (Daniels’ 70<sup>th</sup> week [see Prophets syllabus insert below]), and at which time the believers’ judgment occurs, followed by the return of Christ and all believers to the earth to begin the literal millennium. This describes the first resurrection and the first judgment.
- **Post-mils and Amils** believe that before Christ returns the church will suffer the tribulation. Post-mils believe that the rapture will occur before the millennium. Amils believe that the rapture will occur after the present millennium, when Christ returns.



<sup>107</sup> Some call Dispensationism “sensationalism” because it depends so heavily upon it.

<sup>108</sup> No NT word for “rapture.”



(above) Differences Between Dispensational Pre-millennialism and Historical Pre-millennialism by Dr. Ron Wolfe -- Sept. 28, 2009 (c) 2009 <sup>109</sup>

**Tribulation: Rev 7:9-17**

Within Amil and post mil views one can hold either NT events (fall of Jerusalem) and/or a progressive, ongoing tribulation (the church age), or both that and/or the view that there will be a widespread and greatly heightened tribulation before Christ returns. That is, many hold that there was, or will be, a Tribulation, while there are many “tribulations” in all ages. Jesus said that tribulation would happen in the lifetime of his disciples, and that it would also continue until he returned (Mtt 24:21-22). Tribulation texts in NASB (interestingly, the NIV only renders Rev 7:14 with “tribulation”):

Mtt 24:9 “ Then they will deliver you to tribulation , and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name

Mtt 24:21 for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.

Mtt 24:29 “But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened , and the moon will not give its light , and the stars will fall from the sky , and the powers of the heavens will be shaken ,

Mk 13:19 “For those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created , until now , and never shall.

Mk 13:24 “But in those days , after that tribulation , the sun will be darkened , and the moon will not give its light ,

Jn 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to that you also may be where I am.

Jn 16:33 “ These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace . In the world you have tribulation , but take courage; I have overcome the world.”

Rom 2:9 There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek,

Rom 5:3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;

<sup>109</sup> [http://www.firstharrison.org/eschatology\\_chart.htm](http://www.firstharrison.org/eschatology_chart.htm)

Rom 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Rom 12:12 rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer,

1 Cor 15:51-53 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— 52 in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

1 Thess 1:6 You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit.

1 Thes 4:13-17 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. 14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 15 According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

Rev 1:9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos, because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

Rev 2:9 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich ), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan .

Rev 2:10 'Do not fear what you are about to suffer . Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison , that you may be tested , and you will have tribulation ten days . Be faithful until death , and I will give you the crown of life .

Rev 2:22 'Behold, I will cast her upon a bed of sickness , and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation , unless they repent of her deeds .

**Rev 7:14 And I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

Within premil views one can hold to either a pre-trib, mid-trib, or post-trib rapture:

Matt 24:21 For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again.

- ♦ **Pre-trib** – rapture
- ♦ **Mid-trib** – rapture
- ♦ **Post-trib** – rapture

Within Amil and post mil views one can hold either NT events (fall of Jerusalem) and/or a progressive, ongoing tribulation (the church age), or both that and/or the view that there will be a widespread and greatly heightened tribulation before Christ returns. That is, many hold that there was, or will be, a Tribulation, while there are many "tribulations" in all ages.

Jn 16:33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

### ***Daniel's prayer and vision of Gabriel, and revelation of the seventy 'sevens': Dan 9***

Dan 9:24-2724 "Seventy 'sevens' <sup>a</sup> are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish <sup>b</sup> transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy. <sup>c</sup> 25 "Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree <sup>d</sup> to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, <sup>e</sup> the ruler, comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.' It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. 26 After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. <sup>f</sup> The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. 27 He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' <sup>g</sup> In the middle of the 'seven' <sup>h</sup> he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him. <sup>i</sup> <sup>j</sup>

a Or 'weeks'; also in verses 25 and 26

b Or *restrain*

c Or *Most Holy Place*; or *most holy One*

d Or *word*

e Or *an anointed one*; also in verse 26

f Or *off and will have no one*; or *off, but not for himself*

g Or 'week'

h Or 'week'

i Or *it*

God answered (in part) Daniel’s prayer with a vision of seventy ‘sevens’. See “seven,” pp.

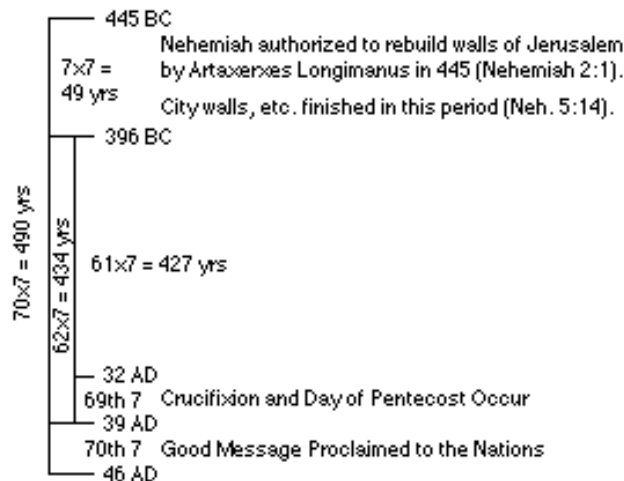
“On this all interpreters are agreed, that the seventy weeks which are determined upon the people and the city are in vers. 25-27 divided into three periods, and are closely defined according to their duration and their contents.”<sup>110</sup>

**Traditional Messianic viewpoint** – Sixty nine sevens are between the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the coming of the Messiah. The all-sufficient sacrificial death of the Messiah concludes the seventieth seven, after which Jerusalem is destroyed. The majority view of the church fathers considered Daniel’s prophecy to outline the first advent of the Messiah, the death of the Messiah, and the Roman desolation of Jerusalem.

**Typological Messianic viewpoint** – Dan 9:25 denotes two eras through seven sevens and sixty two sevens. The period of the seven sevens is between the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the first coming of the Messiah. The church age follows for a long time, after which Satan is loosed during a period of rebellion and persecution wherein Antichrist will suppress the worship of the church. But his end is sure.

**Historical-critical viewpoint** – the prophecy of Dan 9 was strictly about the time period of Antiochus Epiphanes.

(right) An example of the amil approach with slight variation in the last seven:



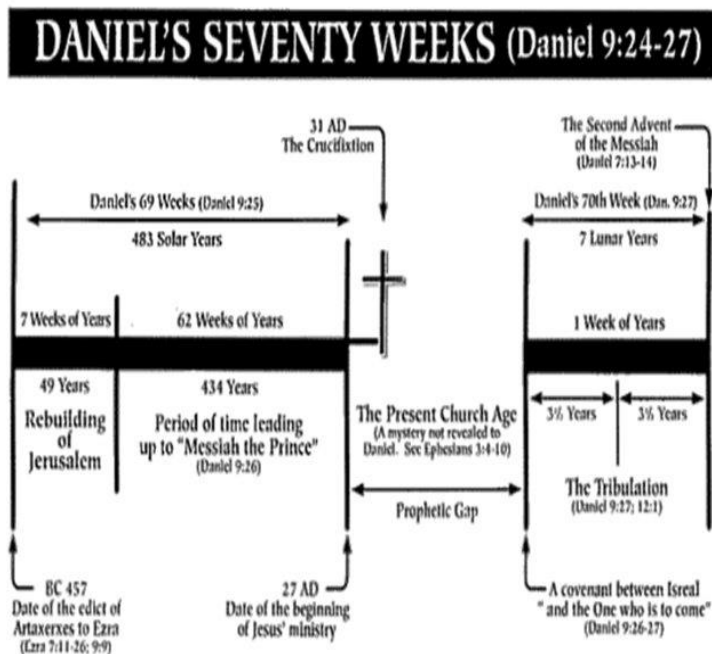
**Amillennialists: no gap view**

1. First seven “sevens” relates to the return of the remnant from Babylonian exile.
2. Sixty-two “sevens” relates to the period until the crucifixion of Messiah.
3. Last “seven” relates to the death of Messiah and the desecration of the temple (Romans)<sup>111</sup> (no gap between the 69<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> sevens).

(right) Premil outline of seventy weeks.<sup>112</sup>

**Premillennialists: gap view**

1. “Seven” equals one week, and if each day stands for one year, there are 490 years.
2. Sixty nine of the seven “days” are after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem in 445 BC until AD 29.<sup>113</sup> The Anointed One will be “cut off” at the end of these sixty nine sevens.
3. The seventieth “seven” will not occur until the very end, after the parenthetical church age, during the final tribulation and after the rapture of believers (preceding the millennium).<sup>114</sup>



j Or *And one who causes desolation will come upon the pinnacle of the abominable temple, until the end that is decreed is poured out on the desolated city*

<sup>110</sup> Keil & Delitzsch, *Daniel*, p. 337.

<sup>111</sup> VanGemeren, *Prophetic Word*, p. 349.

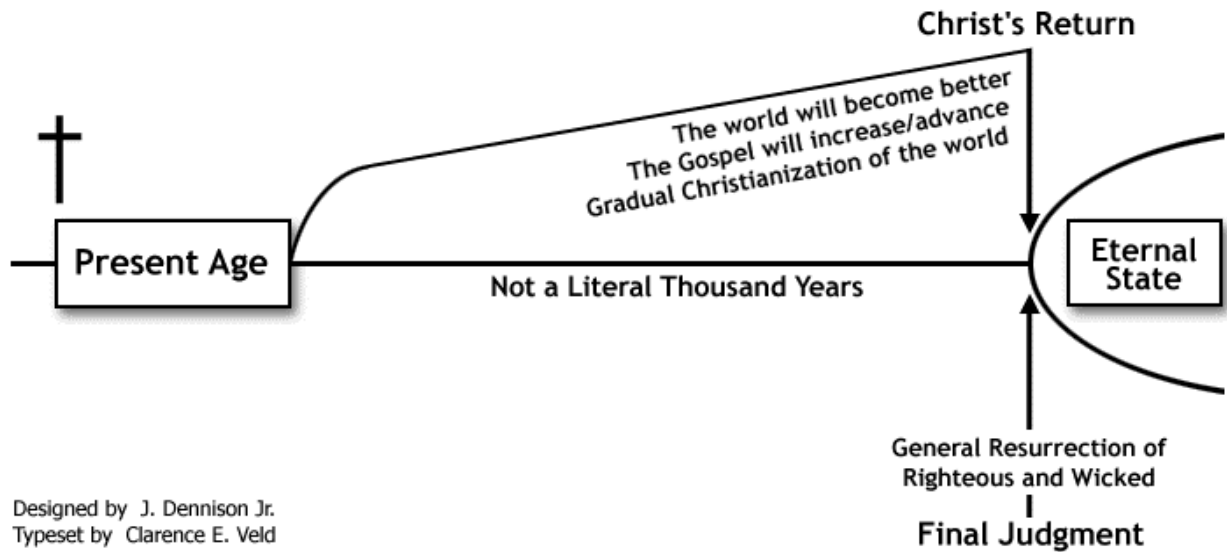
<sup>112</sup> David R. Reagan, “Daniel’s 70 Weeks Of Years When did it start? Has it ended, or is there a gap in it?” [www/therain.org](http://www.therain.org) 2002.

<sup>113</sup> Considerable disagreement about the beginning dating for the 490 years persists: Jeremiah’s prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem (Jer 31:38; 32:15, 37, 44), Cyrus’ decree (538), Darius I’s decree (520), Artaxerxes’ decrees (457 or 444). Unfortunately, one’s end-times eschatology often tends to affect the starting point more than anything else.

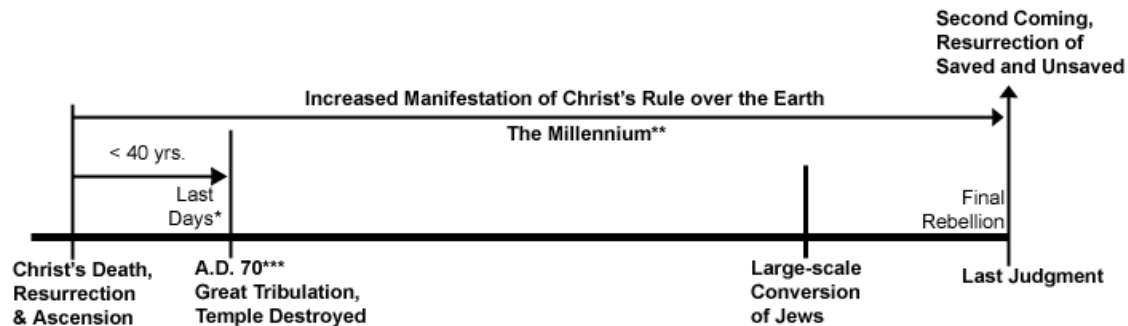
<sup>114</sup> Other important features common to premils are: 1) Abomination of desolation is the sign of the Great Tribulation. 2) Links Olivet Discourse with Daniel’s 3) The “anointed ruler” (Cyrus king of Persia) issued decree in 587 and the beginning of the 62 sevens is 408 B.C. 4) Daniel’s seventieth seven: “Coming Prince” will make covenant with Israel for seven years. Israel will sacrifice again. The “prince” will stop the Jewish sacrifices. The “prince will set up the abomination of desolation in temple. There will be war and desolations in 2nd half of seventieth seven. The prince and idol will be destroyed at end of seventieth seven. Paul’s “Man of Lawlessness” (II Thessalonians 2:1-11) may be the “prince” of Daniel.

**Postmillennialists:**

1. Preterist postmils place the seventieth week in the 40 year period between the resurrection (33 AD) and the destruction of Jerusalem (73 AD).
2. Traditionally postmils have viewed the present period as the millennium, similarly to the amils. Their emphasis is on the unilateral application of biblical law and the Christianization of the world which must precede Christ's return. I have not found any comments directed to what they make of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> "7".



Postmil diagram <sup>115</sup>



\* Some Postmillennialists teach that the Last Days are the entire period from the first to the second coming, since that is the last age of the earth prior to eternity.

\*\* Some Postmillennialists have taught that church history will end in a literal 1000 year period of great blessing before the Final Judgment.

\*\*\* The view that the Great Tribulation has already occurred is called the "preterist" view. Some Postmillennialists believe that the Tribulation covers the entire church history, called the "church historicist" view.

Postmil diagram <sup>116</sup>

<sup>115</sup> <http://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/post.html>

<sup>116</sup> [http://www.christianciv.com/eschatology\\_bs\\_Sect1.htm](http://www.christianciv.com/eschatology_bs_Sect1.htm)



*Geological Agenda, Vol 10, No 3, pp. 38-39, 1999*

*This is an attempt to summarize the mainstream positions of the four millennial views, while recognizing that variations exist within each.*

	Postmillennialism	Amillennialism	Historic Premillennialism	Dispensational Premillennialism
<b>Hermeneutics</b>	Historical, grammatical. Context and genre are important interpretive considerations. Scripture interprets Scripture.	Historical, grammatical. Context and genre are important interpretive considerations. Scripture interprets Scripture.	Historical, grammatical. Context and genre are important interpretive considerations. Scripture interprets Scripture.	Historical, grammatical. Strong inclination toward literalism. Scripture is divided into dispensations. Prophecy is to be interpreted literally. <sup>1</sup>
<b>Second Coming</b>	Christ's Second Coming comes <i>after</i> the millennium (i.e., postmillennial) and initiates general resurrection, the judgment of all men, and the eternal state for believers and unbelievers.	Christ's Second Coming comes <i>after</i> the millennium (i.e., "postmillennial") and initiates general resurrection, the judgment of all men, and the eternal state for believers and unbelievers.	Christ comes <i>before</i> the millennium (i.e., premillennial), but after the tribulation.	Christ comes <i>before</i> the millennium (i.e., premillennial). Christ comes and raptures the Church, followed by 7-year tribulation, then He comes again to establish an earthly kingdom.
<b>Kingdom, Timing of</b>	God's kingdom is a present earthly reality that began at the first advent.	God's kingdom is a present reality that began at the first advent.	God's kingdom is a present reality that began at the first advent. <sup>1</sup>	An earthly kingdom will be established during the future millennium. The kingdom is in no sense present today. <sup>2</sup>
<b>Kingdom, Nature of</b>	The kingdom is spiritual in nature, encompassing heaven and earth. It will grow gradually as more and more turn to Christ and are saved. God's kingdom will fill the whole earth.	The kingdom is spiritual in nature. The kingdom is growing in that the gospel will reach every tribe, tongue, and nation. <sup>1</sup> However, relatively few will be saved.	The kingdom has come, but not with transforming power. Neither good nor evil will prevail.	The Second Coming will establish the kingdom suddenly and cataclysmically. Christ does not reign as king now. The future earthly kingdom will be primarily Jewish.
<b>Kingdom, Christ's Reign in</b>	Christ reigns now from heaven. His kingdom is on earth. He will continue to rule until "He has put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. 15:25).	Christ's reign is not an earthly reign, but a heavenly one. Christ reigns in heaven over the souls of believers who have died. <sup>2</sup>	Christ reigns now in heaven, but His present reign is invisible to the world. Only Christians see it by faith. The public manifestation of Christ's glory will not take place on earth until the millennium. <sup>2</sup>	Christ will reign in a future millennium in bodily form on the earth after the Second Coming. He will rule from a physical throne in Jerusalem. The kingdom has a political dimension to it.
<b>Millennium, Description</b>	We are in the millennium now. The millennium will slowly, progressively become a "golden age." Some older advocates believed that the millennium proper would begin at a future date, but most now hold that it began with Christ's death and resurrection.	We are in the millennium now, but the millennium will never become a "golden age." The millennium is the church age. After the millennium will be the Second Coming followed by the eternal state, the latter being a "golden age." <sup>3</sup>	The millennium is future. Christ will rule with absolute control. It will be a time of righteous rule. <sup>3</sup>	The millennium is future. Righteousness will prevail. The O.T. Jewish economy will be restored. Temple worship, priestly order, and animal sacrifices will be restored.
<b>Millennium, Duration</b>	A prolonged period of time, greater than a 1000 years. The Second Coming follows the millennium.	A prolonged period of time, greater than a 1000 years. <sup>4</sup> The Second Coming follows the millennium.	Generally (but not always) thought to be 1000 years. The Second Coming precedes the millennium.	Exactly 1000 years. The Second Coming precedes the millennium.
<b>Satan's binding and current status</b>	At Christ's death and resurrection, Satan was bound, meaning his ability to deceive the nations was restricted, thus opening the door for worldwide evangelism. The preaching of the gospel has a deleterious effect on satanic activity. God, not Satan, controls world events.	At Christ's death and resurrection, Satan was bound, meaning his ability to deceive the nations was restricted. Binding does not mean that Satan's ability to deceive is stopped altogether. It means he cannot prevent the nations from learning the truth about God.	The binding of Satan does not take place until the Second Coming. <sup>4</sup> "[T]his age is a present evil age (Gal. 1:4); Satan is its god (2 Cor. 4: 4)." <sup>5</sup>	The future Second Coming causes Satan to be bound 1000 years. Satan is not bound now. Satan rules the kingdom of this present world <sup>6</sup> and controls the world system. <sup>4</sup> "Satan is alive and well on planet earth." <sup>7</sup>

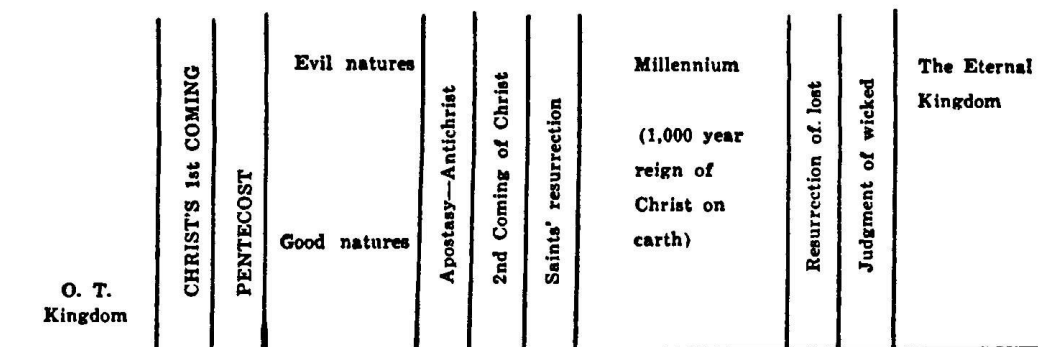
	Postmillennialism	Amillennialism	Historic Premillennialism	Dispensational Premillennialism
<b>Tribulation</b>	Culminated in A.D. 70. Roughly A.D. 64-70, beginning with the persecution of Christians by Nero. Was predicted by Christ to be within a generation (Matt. 24:34) and was experienced by John (Rev. 1:9).	The church is in the tribulation now, but the tribulation will grow progressively worse. <sup>5</sup> Christians must expect to suffer tribulation and persecution during the entire church age. <sup>6</sup>	A future 7-year period immediately preceding the Second Coming. The Church will go through the tribulation. <sup>6</sup>	A future 7-year period immediately preceding the Second Coming. The Church escapes the tribulation via rapture. Jews who subsequently believe remain behind.
<b>Antichrist(s)</b>	"The Antichrist" is viewed in the past, as various individuals, a movement or "spirit" (1 Jn. 4:3) of deception. John wrote "even now many antichrists have come" (1 Jn. 2:18). <sup>1</sup>	There will be a future "establishment of the kingdom of Antichrist over the entire world." <sup>7</sup> The Antichrist is an individual.	A future Antichrist (an individual) will inflict persecution on Christians before the rapture. <sup>7</sup>	A future Antichrist (an individual) will become the world dictator and persecute both Jews and Christians. He will reach his dominant political position after the rapture. <sup>5</sup>
<b>Rapture</b>	The rapture occurs at the end of the millennium when believers who have just been raised from the dead, together with believers who have just been transformed are caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.	The rapture occurs at the end of the millennium when believers who have just been raised from the dead, together with believers who have just been transformed are caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. <sup>8</sup>	Posttribulation: rapture will take place at the end of a future tribulation but before the millennium.	Pretribulation: rapture will take place at the beginning of a future tribulation and before the millennium. The Church gets raptured out of the world. Believing Jews remain and suffer persecution.
<b>The Temple</b>	The temple and the O. T. sacrificial system are done away with forever.	The temple and the O. T. sacrificial system are done away with forever.	The temple and the O. T. sacrificial system are done away with forever. <sup>9</sup>	The Jewish temple will be physically rebuilt. The sacrificial system will be reinstated.
<b>Israel</b>	The prophecies and promises to Israel are fulfilled in the Church. Ethnic Jews will ultimately be converted over time through the preaching of the gospel.	The prophecies and promises to Israel are fulfilled in the Church. Jews will continue to be converted to Christ until the Second Coming. <sup>9</sup>	The prophecies and promises to Israel are fulfilled in the Church. There will be a future salvation of Israel. <sup>9</sup>	God's original plan to establish the kingdom at the first advent was thwarted when the Jews rejected Christ. The Jewish kingdom will be set up at Christ's Second Coming.
<b>Israel &amp; the Church</b>	The Church is spiritual Israel. It is "the Israel of God." There is neither Jew nor Greek, all are one in Christ.	The Church is spiritual Israel. It is "the Israel of God." There is neither Jew nor Greek, all are one in Christ.	The Church is spiritual Israel. It is "the Israel of God." There is neither Jew nor Greek, all are one in Christ.	Israel and the Church are separate and distinct peoples of God. The Church is an interruption of God's program for Israel brought about by Israel's rejection of the kingdom offer. <sup>6</sup>
<b>The Church</b>	Over time the Church will grow and flourish. The Great Commission to disciple all nations will be fulfilled.	The Church can look forward to increasing apostasy, tribulation, and persecution toward the end times. <sup>10</sup>	The world's hatred of the gospel will lead to "a last convulsive persecution that decimates the church." <sup>10</sup>	The Church will eventually lose influence, fail its mission, and become corrupt.
<b>Historic Expectation</b>	Optimistic. Prophecies of destruction are viewed preteristically (in the past). Over time the nations will be converted to Christ through the preaching of the gospel. The Great Commission will be fulfilled.	Pessimistic. Only a small proportion of the world will be saved. The kingdom of evil is growing. Apostasy and tribulation will culminate in the emergence of a personal Antichrist. The idea of widespread conversions and societal improvements is rejected.	Pessimistic. Unbelief and apostasy will increase. Prophecies of destruction are viewed futuristically. The gospel will be preached to all nations, but will not be effective.	Pessimistic. Unbelief and apostasy will increase. Prophecies of destruction are viewed futuristically. The gospel will be preached to all nations, but will not be effective.
<b>The Hope of the Church!</b>	The conversion of the nations through the spread of the gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit.	*The eternal state is held out as the future hope of the church. <sup>11</sup>	The post-tribulation rapture.	The pretribulation rapture.

† All millennial views see Christ's coming as the blessed hope. Moreover, they place great hope in the anticipation of eternity in heaven. The hope listed here is the present and immediate hope of believers as viewed

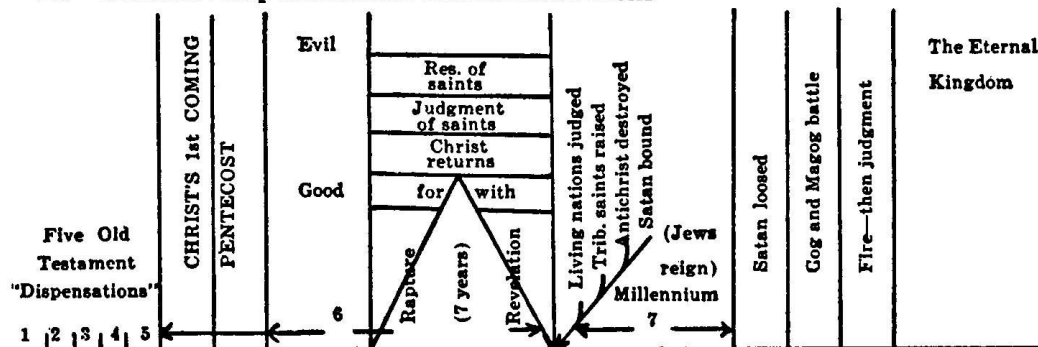
(1) Millennial chart by Williamson

Millennial chart by Williamson<sup>117</sup>

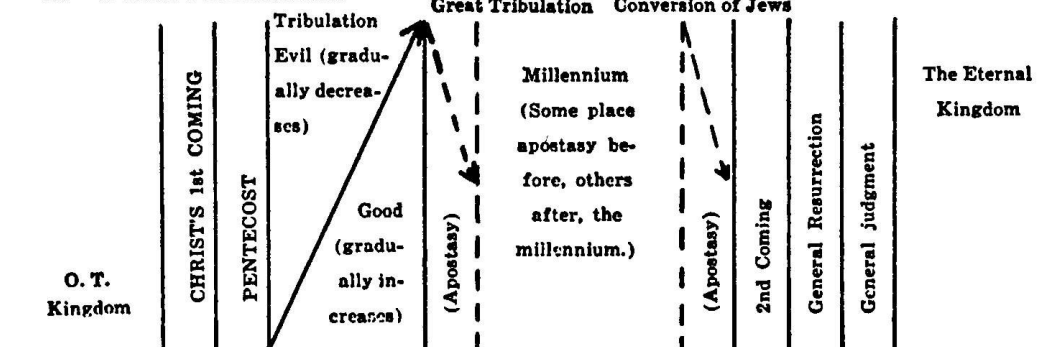
A. Classical Premillennialism



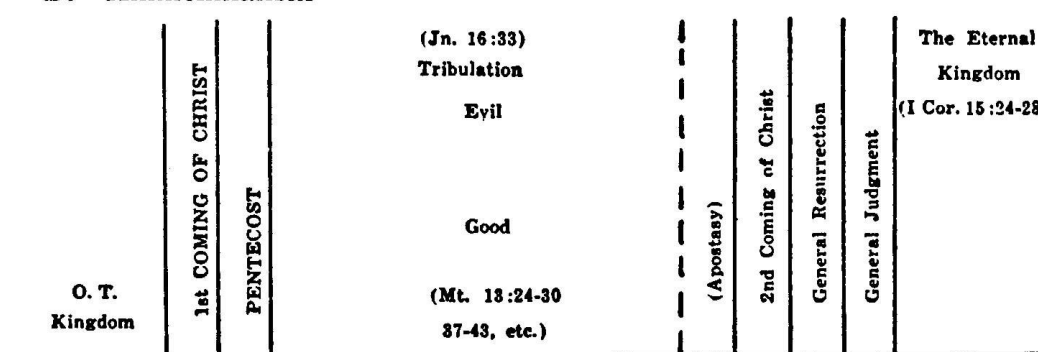
B. Modern Dispensational Premillennialism



C. Postmillennialism



D. Amillennialism



G.I. Williamson, The Westminster Confession of Faith for Study Classes, p. 264.

<sup>117</sup> Williamson, *The Westminster Confession of Faith for Study Classes*, p. 264.



## (2) *Eschatology Comparison*

From [http://www.fivesolas.com/esc\\_chrt.htm](http://www.fivesolas.com/esc_chrt.htm). This page is broken down into two sections. [Chart #1](#) lists the main distinctives of Dispensational Premillennialism and Historic Premillennialism. [Chart #2](#) lists the main distinctives of Postmillennialism and Amillennialism. This information was excerpted from *For He Must Reign: An Introduction to Reformed Eschatology* by Kim Riddlebarger. The complete audio series is available through ACE. They can also be reached at <http://www.alliancenet.org>. This series gives a good overview of the various positions with an excellent Biblical support for Amillennialism. It should be noted that is information may be a little dated as I understand that RC Spoul has gone into the postmil camp. This chart has him listed as amil.

Chart #1	Dispensational Premillennialism	Historic Premillennialism
<b>Overview</b>	<p><i>1. Distinctive Features and Emphases:</i></p> <p>a. Dispensationalists argue for the necessity of the literal interpretation of all of the prophetic portions of Scripture. Charles Ryrie makes this point very clearly:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">When the principles of literal interpretation both in regard to general and special hermeneutics are followed, the result the premillennial system of doctrine... If one interprets literally, he arrives at the premillennial system.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">This means that all promises made to David and Abraham under the Old Covenant are to be literally fulfilled in the future millennial age.</p> <p>b. Dispensationalists insist that God has two redemptive plans, one for national Israel, and one for Gentiles during the "church age." This presupposition forms the basis for the dispensational hermeneutic. As John Walvoord states regarding the dispensational hermeneutic, "Pretribulationism distinguishes clearly between Israel and the church and their respective programs."</p> <p>c. There is a "rapture" of believers when Jesus Christ secretly returns to earth before the seven year tribulation period begins (the seventieth week of Daniel, cf. Daniel 9:24-27). Believers do not experience the persecution of the Anti-Christ who rises to prominence during this "tribulation period." The Biblical data dealing with the time of tribulation is referring to unbelieving Israel, not the church. Therefore, church age, or the "age of grace," is to be seen as that period of time in which God is dealing with Gentiles prior to the coming of the kingdom of God during the millennium.</p> <p>d. The visible and physical second coming of Christ occurs after the great tribulation. Those who are converted to Christ during the tribulation, including Jews (the 144,000) who turn to Christ, go on into the millennium to re-populate the earth. Glorified believers rule with Christ during his future reign.</p>	<p><i>1. Distinctive Features and Emphases:</i></p> <p>a. While often popularly confused with "dispensational premillennialism" with but a mere disagreement as to the timing of the "rapture," historic premillennialism is, in actuality, a completely different eschatological system, largely rejecting the whole dispensational understanding of redemptive history.</p> <p>b. The basic features of historic premillennialism are as follows. When Jesus began his public ministry the kingdom of God was manifest through His ministry. Upon His ascension into heaven and the "Gift of the Spirit" at Pentecost, the kingdom is present through the Spirit, until the end of the age, which is marked by the return of Christ to the earth in judgement. During the period immediately preceding the return of Christ, there is great apostasy and tribulation.</p> <p>c. After the return of Christ, there will be a period of 1000 years (the millennium separating the "first" resurrection from the "second" resurrection. Satan will be bound, and the kingdom will consummated, that is, made visible during this period.</p> <p>d. At the end of the millennial period, Satan will be loosed and there will be a massive rebellion (of "Gog and Magog"), immediately preceding the "second" resurrection or final judgement. After this, there will be the creation of a new Heaven and Earth.</p>

	<p>e. Jesus came to earth bringing with him an "offer" of the kingdom to the Jews, who rejected him. God then turned to dealing with the Gentiles -- thus, the church age is a parenthesis of sorts. The rapture is the next event to occur in Biblical prophecy. The signs of the end of the age (i.e., the birth of the nation of Israel, the revival of the Roman empire predicted in Daniel as seen through the emergence of the EEC [common market], the impending Russian-Arab invasion of Israel, etc.) all point to the immediacy of the secret return of Christ for his church. Antichrist is awaiting his revelation once the believing church is removed.</p> <p>f. The millennium is marked by a return to Old Testament temple worship and sacrifice to commemorate the sacrifice of Christ. At the end of the millennium, the "great white throne" judgement occurs, and Satan and all unbelievers are cast into the lake of fire. There is the creation of a new heaven and earth.</p>	
<p>Leading Proponents</p>	<p>a. Dispensationalism was largely popularized through the Scofield Reference Bible, and is now represented, for example, by the notes in the Ryrie Study Bible. Hal Lindsey's book, <i>The Late Great Planet Earth</i> served to keep the movement in the mainstream of Evangelicalism in the late 60's and early 70's. The vast majority of the early Charismatic movement was dispensational in its orientation even though most dispensationalists emphasized that charismata ceased with the completion of the New Testament. As the Charismatic movement has matured and become more consistent in its own theology, dispensationalism has largely been jettisoned. Because of this, and because of the resurgence of questions of ethics (the dispensationalist cannot efficiently use his OT to answer ethical questions) dispensationalism is apparently on the decline.</p> <p>b. Leading dispensational theologians include John Walvoord, Charles Ryrie, J. Dwight Pentecost, Norman Geisler and Charles Feinberg. Popular dispensational pastors and writers include; Charles Swindoll, Dave Hunt, Jack Van Impe and Charles Stan Chuck Smith and the Calvary Chapel movement represent the Charismatic side of dispensationalism.</p> <p>c. Dallas Theological Seminary is the leading dispensational institution. Other dispensational institutions include: Talbot Theological Seminary, the Master's College and Grace Theological Seminary.</p>	<p>a. Without question, the best and most influential historic premillennialist was the late George Eldon Ladd of Fuller Theological Seminary. Through the work of Ladd, historic premillennialism gained scholarly respect and popularity among Evangelical and Reformed theologians. Other major historic premillennialists include the late Walter Martin, John Warwick Montgomery, J. Barton Payne, Henry Alford (the noted Greek scholar), and Theodore Zahn (the German NT specialist). The best examples of current historical premillennial work would be the many scholars of the Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (Evangelical Free).</p> <p>b. Historic premillennialism draws its name from the fact that many of the early Church Fathers (i.e. Irenaeus [140-203], who as a disciple of Polycarp, who had been an disciple of the apostle of John, Justin Martyr [100-165], and Papias [80-155]), apparently believed and taught that there would be a visible kingdom of God upon the earth, after the return of Christ.</p> <p>c. Several major Evangelical seminaries have some historic premillennial representation such as Fuller and Trinity. Surprisingly, a number of the faculty of Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis (a Reformed institution), held to a covenantal form of premillennialism -- J.O. Buswell, J. Barton Payne and R. Laird Harris. However, all of these men have recently departed for glory, and the Reformed varieties of premillennialism are probably gone with them.</p>
<p>Bibliography</p>	<p>The standard dispensational textbook is J. Dwight Pentecost's <u>Things to Come</u> (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978). Other important works include: Charles Ryrie, <u>The Basis of the Premillennial Faith</u> (New York: The Loizeaux</p>	<p>The best of all the historic premillennial writers was the late George E Ladd. See his works on the subject: <u>A Commentary on the Revelation</u> (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1987), <u>The Presence of the Future</u> (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans,</p>

Brothers, 1953); Charles Ryrie, Dispensationalism Today (Chicago: Moody Press, 1977); John Walvoord, The Millennial Kingdom (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1983), and John F. Walvoord, The Rapture Question (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1979). In addition, John Walvoord has authored an updated work incorporating all of his popular writings; Major Bible Prophecies (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1991).

1981), The Last Things (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1982), and The Gospel of the Kingdom (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1981). Also very helpful is Robert Duncan Culver's Daniel and the Latter Days (Chicago: The Moody Press, 1977). This is the single best defense of historic premillennialism against the amillennial critique. See also J. Barton Payne's Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980). Another important work defending the Biblical basis for premillennialism is, Donald K. Campbell and Jeffrey L. Townsend, eds., A Case For Premillennialism: A New Consensus (Chicago: Moody Press, 1992).

Chart #2

**Postmillennialism**

**Amillennialism**

Overview

*1. Distinctive Features and Emphases:*

a. Generally speaking, postmillennialists affirm that the millennium is a period of one thousand years of universal peace and righteousness in this world, which precedes the return of Jesus Christ to earth in judgement. Postmillennialists are divided as to whether or not the period of time is a literal one thousand years, and whether or not the millennial age begins abruptly or gradually. Some see the millennial age as entirely future, others argue that it may have already begun to gradually emerge. Postmillennialists also disagree as to the events that mark the beginning of the millennial age, such as the conversion of Israel (Romans 9-11), the binding of Satan (Revelation 20), and the defeat of Antichrist.

b. Postmillennialism is in one sense the historic position of the church since the days of St. Augustine. Since all amillennial Christians (to be discussed below) are also technically postmillennial in their understanding of the millennium, (though self-consciously "postmillennial" Christians cannot be "amillennial" in any sense) and since the term "amillennialism" was not coined until after the beginning of the twentieth century, it was common for Protestant dogmaticians to speak of the contrast between "pre" and "post" millennialism, without distinguishing between "a" and "post" millennialism. Therefore, the difference between amillennial and postmillennial Christians centers upon the character and length of the millennial age. Postmillennialists see the millennial age as commencing at some point during the present age, and as a period in which the kingdom of God triumphs over the kingdoms of this world. Amillennial Christians see the millennial age as occupying the entire period of time between the first and second coming Christ. Generally speaking, amillennial Christians see the millennial age as one of both the triumph of the spiritual kingdom of God and the corresponding rise of evil in opposition.

c. According to postmillennialists, there will be universal preaching and acceptance of the Gospel, and

*1. Distinctive Features and Emphases:*

a. The "a" millennial (literally meaning "no" millennium) position is the eschatological view of historic Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed Christianity. It would be my educated guess that about two-thirds of the Christian family espouse an amillennial eschatology. The amillennial position is as well the position of the vast majority of Reformed and Lutheran theologians. The position portrayed in these lectures is the Reformed understanding of amillennialism, which is better understood as "present" millennialism [or "realized" millennialism], since Reformed eschatology argues for a real, present, though "invisible" non-spatial millennium.

b. Amillennialists insist that the promises made to national Israel, David and Abraham, in the OT are fulfilled by Christ and the Church during this age, which is the millennium, that is the entire period of time between the two advents of our Lord. The "thousand years" are therefore symbolic of the entire inter-advental age. Satan is bound by Christ's victory over him and the establishment of the kingdom of God via the preaching of the gospel, and Satan is no longer free to deceive the nations, through the presence of Christ is reigning in heaven during this period with the martyrs who come out of the great tribulation. At the end of the millennial age, Christ returns in judgement of all men. The general resurrection occurs, final judgement takes place for all men and women, and a new Heaven and Earth are established.

c. In most forms of amillennialism, immediately before the return of Christ, Satan is unbound, there is a great apostasy, and a time of unprecedented satanically inspired evil. This last Satanic gasp and subsequent rebellious activity is destroyed by our Lord at his return.

	<p>a complete and total victory of the kingdom of God, over the forces of Satan and unbelief.          Postmillennialism is an optimistic eschatology of the victory grace of God in subduing evil in the world. During this period Satan will be effectually bound by the triumph of grace. Israel be converted somewhere near the beginning of the millennial Postmillennialists do disagree however, about the nature and details of these events.</p> <p>d. At the end of the millennial period, Satan will be released the period of great tribulation and the apostasy described in Revelation 20 occurs, culminating in Gog and Magog and the Battle of Armageddon. Christ then returns in judgement (the "great throne judgement"), the resurrection occurs, and there is the creation of a new heaven and earth.</p>	
<p>Leading Proponents</p>	<p>a. Postmillennialism was popular among American Evangelicals in the period of unprecedented technological growth between 1870 and 1915. World War I largely served to squash the tremendous optimism regarding the growth of technology and the related optimism about the future of man, which was carried over in church in the form of an optimistic eschatology. Many Reformed theologians of this period are generally considered postmillennial, including the "Old-Princetonians," Charles Hodge, A. A. Hodge, and B. B. Warfield.</p> <p>b. Recently, postmillennialism has seen a resurgence, with the rise of Christian reconstructionism and theonomy. In addition, there is mass confusion generated by critics of postmillennialism, such as Dave Hunt and Hal Lindsey, who portray the movement as taking two quite different and confusing forms -- that of "Theonomy," and that of "Dominion Theology." Thus many Evangelicals fail to see these two forms as distinct and divergent movements. Setting out the differences between the two forms then is helpful.</p> <p>1). The "theonomic" form of postmillennialism was initially presented by J. Marcellus Kik, and reworked into a full-blown ethical system known as "theonomy" or "reconstructionism" by R. J. Rushdoony. The business of the church was to work to see a theocracy restored upon the earth by emphasizing the continuity of OT law (civil, ceremonial and moral) with the NT. Once established, this victorious church would be the divine vehicle from which the ever advancing kingdom of God would bind Satan and subdue all evil in the world. The emphasis of theonomic postmillennialism is that it is God who exercises dominion through his church establishing His law as the law of the land. Other theologians in the postmillennial theonomic movement are, the late Greg Bahnsen, Ray Sutton and Gary</p>	<p>a. Amillennialism has always been the majority position of the Christian family. It was first articulated by St. Augustine, and has been given a distinctive Reformed emphasis through the work of Geerhardus Vos (the "Biblical-Theological" approach). As the "dispensational" movement captured the hearts and minds of conservative American Evangelicals, amillennialism was equated with "liberalism" or Roman Catholicism. The supposed interpreting prophecy "spiritually" or "not-literally" has led to the rejection of amillennialism by many. In addition, amillennialism suffered greatly from the failure of Reformed and Luthern writers to defend the position against the likes of Dave Hunt, Chuck Missler and Hal Lindsey, who has labeled the position as "demonic and heretical," and the root of modern anti-semitism.</p> <p>b. Leading contemporary "amill" theologians would include popular writers such as J. I. Packer, Mike Horton, [the late] Calvin seminary professor, Anthony Hoekema, and RC Sproul. In addition, all of the Reformers, as well as the Reformed and Lutheran confessional traditions, as a whole, have been amillennial.</p>



	<p>North. Popular writers include Gary DeMarr, Kenneth Gentry, and Peter J. Leithart.</p> <p>2). The "dominion" form of postmillennialism (though not all "dominion" advocates are postmillennial) is exclusively Pentecostal. This form believes the charismatic revival "Latter Rain") is God's means of binding Satan and allowing the Spirit-lead church to reclaim material possessions and wealth, which had been surrendered to unbelief and the kingdom of Satan. Once the Church understands its role and potential for dominion, through the work of the Spirit, be able to establish the kingdom of God on earth in it fullness, thereby bringing in a millennial age. The emphasis here is that it is the believer who must learn to exercise dominion if he is to take part in the advancing kingdom. Bishop Earl Paulk, Paul Yongli Cho and perhaps Kenneth Copeland, Kenneth Hagin and Pat Robertson.</p> <p>d. The older form of postmillennialism, as practiced by Reformed theologians such as Hodge and Warfield, has little in common in emphasis with the modern theonomic approach to eschatology, which emphasizes the rise of a theocracy as the vehicle of dominion. The modern form raises serious questions about the Reformed understanding of the distinction between law and gospel. The result in many circles a peculiar hybrid, (a tertium quid, if you will) with a propensity for making strange bed-fellows.</p>	
<p><a href="#">Bibliography</a></p>	<p>Standard classical Reformed postmillennial works are: Lorraine Boettner, <u>The Millennium</u> (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed publishing Company, 1957); Roderick Campbell, <u>Israel and the New Covenant</u> (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1954); Marcellus J. Kik, <u>An Eschatology of Victory</u> (Nutley: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1974). A classic expression of the older form of "postmillennialism" is found in the recently reprinted work; David Brown, <u>Christ's Second Coming: Will It Be Premillennial?</u> (Edmonton: Still Waters Revival Books, 1990).</p>	<p>The most important and useful amillennial work is the excellent book by Anthony A. Hoekema, <u>The Bible and the Future</u> (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1982). Also helpful are: Oswald T. Allis, <u>Prophecy and the Church</u> (Phillipsburg: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1947); Arthur Lewis, <u>The Dark Side of the Millennium</u> (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980); William E. Cox, <u>Amillennialism Today</u> (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1966); William E. Cox, <u>Biblical Studies in Final Things</u> (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1966).</p>

[\[Back to Top\]](#) [\[Back to Links\]](#) [\[Home\]](#)

**It is impossible to *bind* God to any eschatological (millennial) system.<sup>118</sup>**

Yet we try . . . (for anyone who doubts that this still makes the news)

**Conflict begins anew debate on end times**

By Larry Witham  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

<sup>118</sup> VanGemeren, "Systems of Continuity," *Continuity and Discontinuity*, p. 62.

April 6, 2002

The bloody conflict in the Middle East is again turning some evangelicals to the Bible for texts that speak of a final cosmic battle in those ancient lands.

Some scholars and religious leaders warn against being too literal.

As with the founding of Israel in 1948, the Six Day War in 1967, and the Persian Gulf war of 1991, the ongoing violence between Israel and Palestinians is making some Christians think of a biblical-scale showdown.

"I see Israel as the only nation on Earth with a title deed to any real estate," said Hal Lindsey, who popularized the study of Bible prophecy in his 1970 book, "The Late Great Planet Earth."

He said that at this time he is focusing on larger biblical themes rather than details, such as terrorist attacks on America or Israel's seizure of Yasser Arafat's political headquarters.

"In Jeremiah, God declared a promise to the people of Israel, and He keeps His promise," Mr. Lindsey said. "We're seeing a contest now between God's promise and the rest of the world, which says Israel can't exist."

Capital Bible Seminary President Homer Heater, an Old Testament scholar, said Bible prophecy demands a sympathy to Israel but that Christians must also defend the rights of Arab Christians and justice.

"I'm trying to persuade Christians to not just carte blanche support Israel," Mr. Heater said. "The Christian Embassy in Israel, for example, says Israel can do nothing wrong."

Mr. Heater had been a professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, widely known for its "premillennial" view of the Bible. In that belief, the 1,000 years cited in the book of Revelation is the millennium-long reign of Christ in Jerusalem before the final judgment.

"We do believe there is a future conflagration in the Middle East," Mr. Heater said. "But is this it? I don't know."

He recalls how Iraq's 1991 invasion of Kuwait made evangelical media eager for exciting commentary, which he tried to discourage. "Everyone was so hot on the thing," he said. "And I said, 'This is not it.'"

Images of an end time in the Middle East stretch from the Hebrew books of Jeremiah, Zechariah and Daniel to the New Testament's gospel of Matthew and the book of Revelation.

The more apocalyptic interpretations see the return of Jews to Israel, the rise of an anti-Christ, a new world government and a final battle of Armageddon as key features in God's plan.

During the Gulf war, some evangelicals said Saddam Hussein was the anti-Christ and likened the smoke of burning oil wells to Matthew's allusion to how "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light."

Also in Matthew, Jesus said that before His return, "Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars."

Though all Christian traditions adhere to the Bible, mainline Protestants and Roman Catholics take such prophecies and Israel symbolically.

Mainline Protestants also have historic missions in Arab Palestine and side with their cause, while Rome has Arab districts and sees Jerusalem as an international city.

In contrast, evangelicals such as Pat Robertson back Israel, and the Rev. John Hagee, a San Antonio pastor, built an international ministry on interpreting Middle East events.

His end-time evidence includes Jewish control of Jerusalem and world television so everyone may see the final events. Others point to the new European Union as the united empire the Bible predicts.

In recent weeks, some Christians have evoked Zechariah's prophecy that God will "make Jerusalem a burdensome stone" so "all the people in the earth gathered together against it."

Erin Zimmerman, a columnist for the Christian Broadcasting Network, recently visited Israel with evangelicals and was "surprised by the lack of detailed, 'date-setting' type of end-times speculation that was popular during the Gulf war."

She said those who make contact with suffering Israelis and Palestinians "are mostly concerned with their safety," not prophecy, and turn to Bible texts to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem" as the Psalms state.

"They're becoming more aware that there's a human side to Armageddon," Miss Zimmerman said. "For many Christians, I think the prophetic viewpoint is being tempered by a new level of compassion where the Middle East is concerned."

During the Gulf war, 40 percent of Americans told pollsters the world is likely to end in the battle of Armageddon, and as 2000 approached, 20 percent said the world will end in their lifetimes.

Mr. Lindsey's Web site, which receives 8 million hits a month, began a poll on interpreting the new Mideast violence, so far garnering an "unscientific sample" of 4,000 votes.

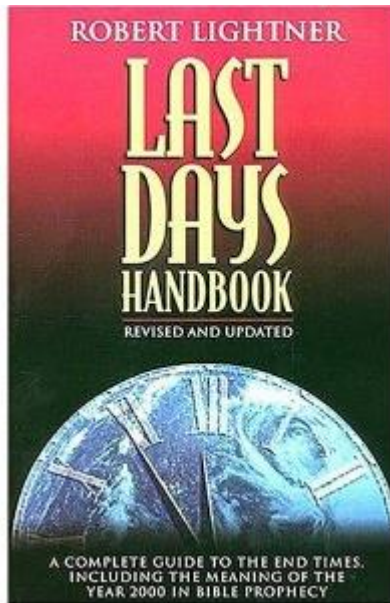
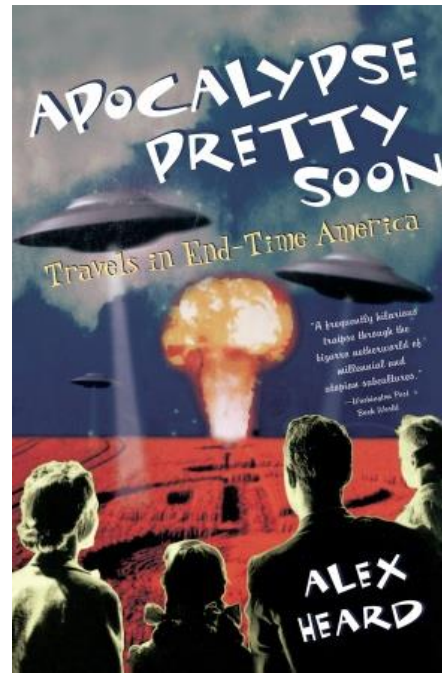
Most — 72.5 percent — agreed with the statement, "I believe we actually are seeing the start of the war that leads to antichrist and Armageddon." Most of the rest said: "I believe it is coming, but this isn't it."<sup>119</sup>

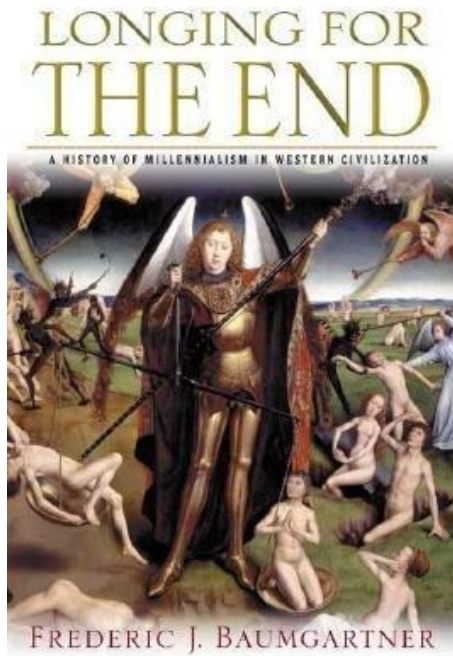
<sup>119</sup> From <http://www.washtimes.com/national/20020406-17874966.htm>.

### Proposed sequence of Hal Lindsey Apocalyptic Bestsellers! by Ed Weir,

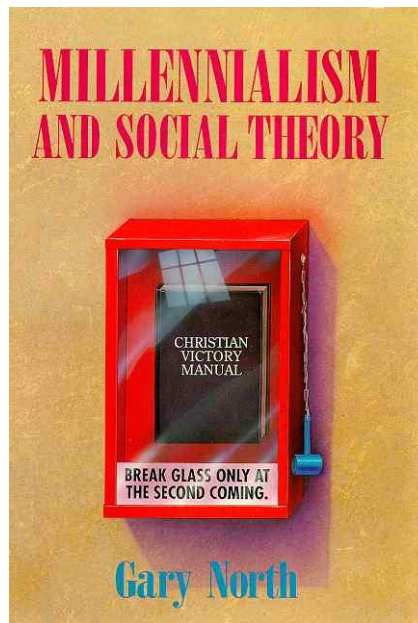
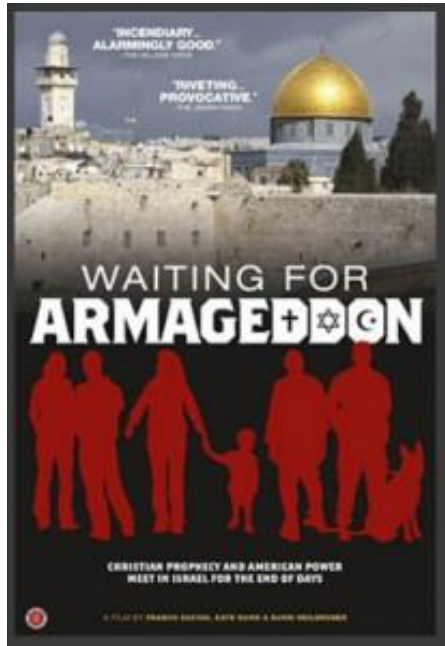
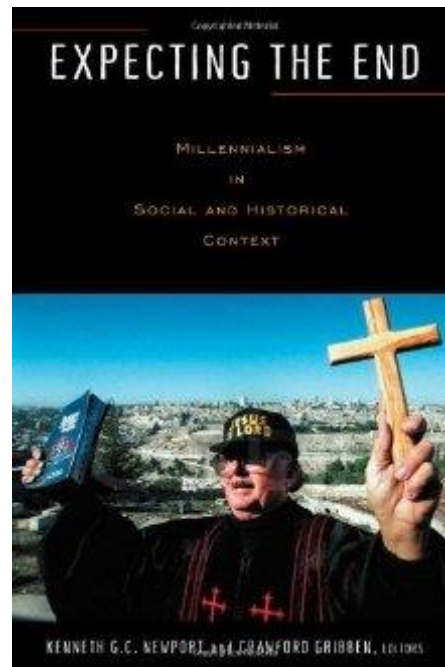
Wittenburg Door, Issue #171, July/Aug. 2000

- The Late, Great Planet Earth
- The Later, Greater Planet Earth
- The Latest, Greatest Planet of them All
- Planet Earth: Overdue and Overdrawn
- Planet Earth's Last Stand
- Planet Earth: Still Kicking
- The Planet that Would Not Quit
- Fat Lady Mother Earth is Singing
- Planet Earth on Life Support
- Pulling the Plug on Planet Earth
- Planet Earth: Remember When?
- The Never Ending Story of Planet Earth
- The Late Great Hal Lindsey





Yet,  
we  
try . .  
. .  
Read



**Preterism:** An eschatological viewpoint that places many or all eschatological events in the past, especially during the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.<sup>120</sup>

**Partial (moderate) Preterists:**

Those who believe that many predictive and eschatological events have been fulfilled in the past, yet there are some still presently future. Thus, it can also be called (partial) *futurism*.

**The Partial Preterist View<sup>121</sup>**

<b>A.D.70</b>	<b>Still Future</b>
<b>A coming (parousia) of Christ</b>	<b>The coming (parousia) of Christ</b>
<b>A day of the Lord</b>	<b>The day of the Lord</b>
	<b>The resurrection of the dead</b>
	<b>The rapture of the living</b>

<sup>120</sup> Sproul, *The Last Days According to Jesus*, p. 228.

<sup>121</sup> From <http://www.preteristarchive.com/PartialPreterism/index.html>.

**A judgment**  
The end of the **Jewish Age**

**The (final) judgment**  
The end of **history**

**Full Preterists:**

Believe that all of the book of Revelation has already been fulfilled. More precisely, they believe all *eschatological* events have been fulfilled. They have an increasing number of contemporary adherents, and numerous web pages to show it. Confusing as it sounds, I find full preterists claiming that many *prophecies* are still being (and will be) fulfilled. One must ask how this ancient heresy is becoming so widely accepted?

2 Tim 2:16-19 Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. <sup>17</sup> Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, <sup>18</sup> who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some. <sup>19</sup>

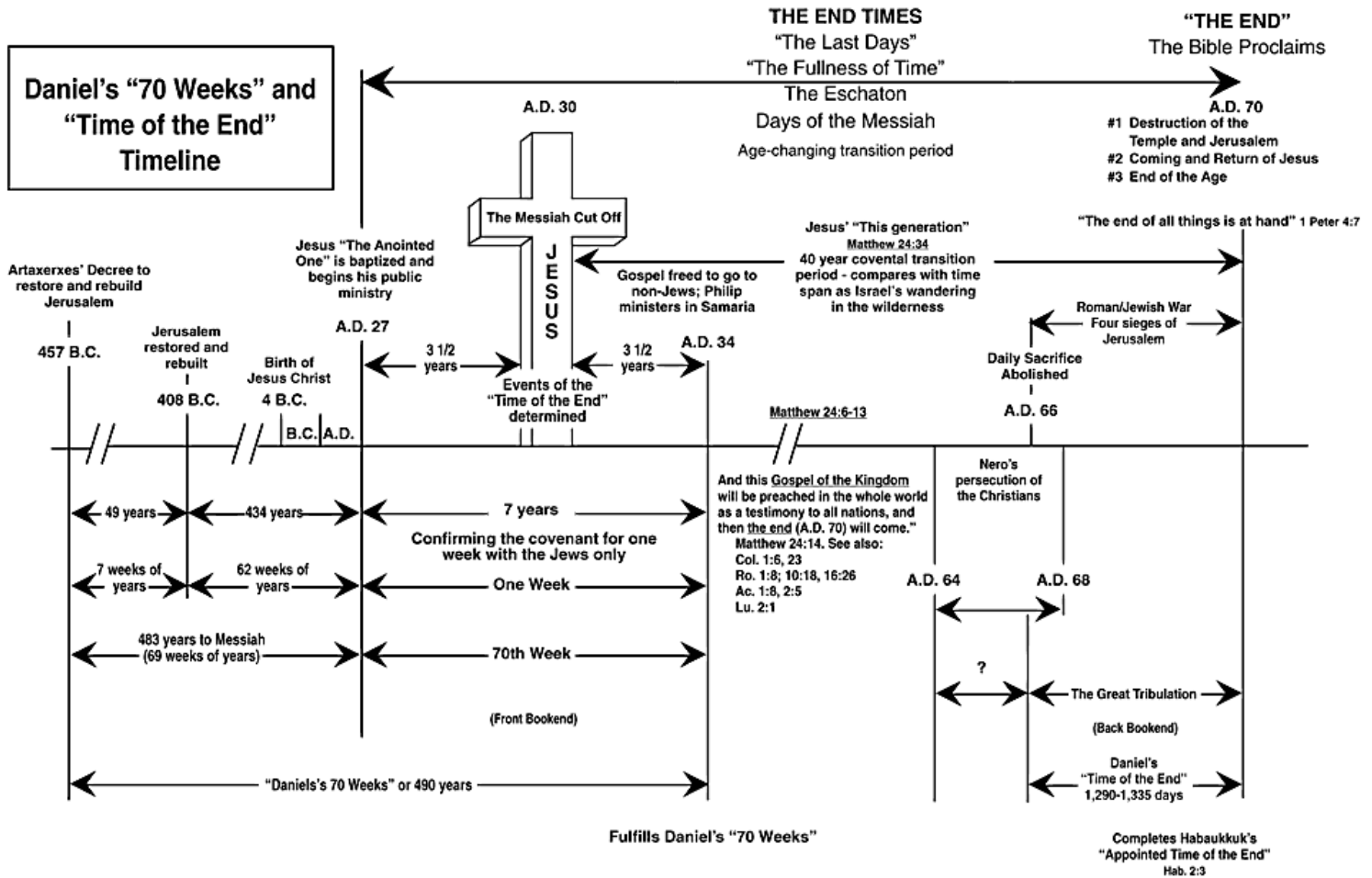
Differences between Preterists <sup>122</sup>				
R.C. Sproul	Full Preterists		Partial Preterists	
<i>The Last Days According to Jesus</i>	A.D. 70	At end of history	A.D. 70	At end of history
<b>Coming of Christ</b>	yes	no	yes	yes
<b>Resurrection, "Rapture"</b>	yes	no	<b>no</b>	yes
<b>Day of the Lord</b>	yes	no	yes	yes
<b>Judgment</b>	yes	no	yes	yes

**Realized Eschatology:** Similar to Full Preterism. This view espouses that the kingdom of God has already come in Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection (C.H. Dodd). The full focus of the early church was on the fact of this decisively fulfilled eschatology. The NT emphasis on end-times eschatology is perceived as a later revival of Jewish apocalypticism. Some hold that texts of a future *parousia* are only symbolical (sounds like full preterists) or mythological outworkings of God’s power or love, etc.

**Inaugurated Eshatology:** Similar to Partial Preterism. The view that eschatology was partially realized at Jesus’ death and resurrection, but that it was fully *inaugurated* in his death and resurrection (J.A.T. Robinson).

**“Synthesis”Preterist chart of end-times by John Noe:**

<sup>122</sup> From <http://www.preteristarchive.com/CriticalArticles/index.html>.



<http://www.prophecyrefi.org/purpose.htm>



L. Boettner's (a postmillennialist) summary of views below:

Loraine Boettner, *The Millennium*, pp. 4-5.

#### 4 THE MILLENNIUM

##### POSTMILLENNIALISM

Postmillennialism is that view of the last things which holds that the Kingdom of God is now being extended in the world through the preaching of the Gospel and the saving work of the Holy Spirit, that the world eventually will be Christianized, and that the return of Christ will occur at the close of a long period of righteousness and peace commonly called the *Millennium*.

This view is, of course, to be distinguished from that optimistic but false view of human betterment and progress held by Modernists and Liberals which teaches that the Kingdom of God on earth will be achieved through a *natural* process by which mankind will be improved and social institutions will be reformed and brought to a higher level of culture and efficiency. This latter view presents a spurious or pseudo Postmillennialism, and regards the Kingdom of God as the product of natural laws in an evolutionary process, whereas orthodox Postmillennialism regards the Kingdom of God as the product of the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit in connection with the preaching of the Gospel.

##### AMILLENNIALISM

"Amillennialism is that view of the last things which holds that the Bible does not predict a 'Millennium' or period of world-wide peace and righteousness on this earth before the end of the world. (Amillennialism teaches that there will be a parallel and contemporaneous development of good and evil—God's kingdom and Satan's kingdom—in this world, which will continue until the second coming of Christ. At the second coming of Christ the resurrection and judgment will take place, followed by the eternal order of things—the absolute, perfect Kingdom of God, in which there will be no sin, suffering nor death)."

##### PREMILLENNIALISM

"Premillennialism is that view of the last things which holds that the second coming of Christ will be followed by a period of world-wide peace and righteousness, before the end of the world, called 'the Millennium' or 'the Kingdom of God,' during which

#### 5 POSTMILLENNIALISM

Christ will reign as King in person on this earth. (Premillennialists are divided into various groups by their different views of the order of events associated with the second coming of Christ, but they all agree in holding that there will be a millennium on earth *after* the second coming of Christ but *before* the end of the world)."

##### DISPENSATIONALISM

"The false system of Bible interpretation represented by the writings of J. N. Darby and the Scofield Reference Bible, which divides the history of mankind into seven distinct periods or 'dispensations,' and affirms that in each period God deals with the human race on the basis of some one specific principle. (Dispensationalism denies the spiritual identity of Israel and the Church, and tends to set 'grace' and 'law' against each other as mutually exclusive principles)."

The word *millennium* is derived from two Latin words, *mille*, meaning thousand, and *annum*, meaning year. Hence the literal meaning is a thousand years. The term is found just six times in Scripture, all in the first seven verses of the twentieth chapter of Revelation, an admittedly difficult and highly symbolical portion of Scripture. The prefixes Post-, A-, and Pre-, as used with the word designate the particular view held regarding the thousand years. Premillennialists take the word literally, holding that Christ will set up a Kingdom on earth which will continue for precisely that length of time. Postmillennialists and Amillennialists take the word figuratively, as meaning an indefinitely long period, held by some to be a part, and by others to be the whole, of the Christian era.

Similarly, the word *Chiliasm*, more commonly used in early Church history than at the present time, comes from the Greek word *chilias*, also meaning thousand. The early Christians who believed that Christ at His coming would set up a one thousand year Kingdom were called *Chiliasm*. In their historical setting the words *Chiliasm* and *Premillennialism* have been used as synonyms, and it is commonly understood that today those who bear the name Premillennialists are logically the same as those who formerly were known as Chiliasm, although their systems differ in several important respects.

It should be said further in regard to Dispensationalism

<sup>123</sup> Boettner, *The Millennium*, pp. 4-8.

Lorraine Boettner, *The Millennium*, pp. 6-7.

7

## POSTMILLENNIALISM

tenets of Premillennialism in the United States. They have never found creedal statement in any of the larger Protestant denominations, but are held by individuals throughout the denominations, and they are the standard belief of various Pentecostal and Holiness groups, which as a rule are not noted for scholarship or scientific research. They have been further popularized by the Bible institutes, most of which are dispensational in their teaching. These views have been just as consistently rejected and opposed in most of the theological seminaries, where scholarship and research are given more prominence, and by a large majority of the outstanding theologians.

There can be no doubt but that Premillennialism lends itself more to an emotional type of preaching and teaching than does Postmillennialism or Amillennialism. It gives something definite to look for in the immediate future and charges the present with portentous possibilities. While many who hold it do not so exploit it, it often has been used in that manner by those who are less restrained.

Premillennialism tends to make the Bible a textbook of ready reference, rather than a source book from which statements are to be collected, compared, placed in their logical relations, and so worked up into a Systematic Theology. It professes to "take God at His word," and to "accept the plain statement of truth as God has revealed it." Such reasoning has its place when directed against the Modernists who reject the doctrine of the full inspiration of the Scriptures. But it is out of place when directed against those who while accepting the doctrine of the full inspiration of Scripture nevertheless acknowledge that much truth is conveyed through figurative expressions. The fact of the matter is that God's revelation as found in the Bible contains many deep mysteries and secrets which always have and probably always will challenge the intellects of even the wisest of men. Superficial statements about taking God at His word and about the plain harmony of God's word are illusory and ought to be their own refutation. Rejecting such easy solutions, we are deeply grateful for the rich heritage that the scholars and theologians of the Church have handed down to us. The deeper understanding of the Scriptures and the correlation of these doctrines is not some-

## THE MILLENNIUM

6

that while historic Premillennialism has held that the Church will go through the Tribulation, Dispensationalism holds that the Church will be raptured and so taken out of the world before that event, and that following the Rapture there will be a seven-year period, during the first half of which the Jews are in covenant relationship with the Antichrist and dwell in Palestine but during the last half they endure terrible persecution under the Antichrist. At the end of the seven year period Christ returns, annihilates the Antichrist, and establishes His Kingdom in Jerusalem. The Jews are to have a position of special favor in the Kingdom, and are to remain a body distinct from the Gentiles throughout eternity. Dispensationalists are thus double "pre-s"—pre-tribulation Pre-millennialists. This distinction is of great importance to the Dispensationalists, for it gives them a seven-year period, allegedly the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy (9:24-27), during which time all the events foretold in Revelation chapters 4 through 19 are to be fulfilled. That the Dispensationalists do attach great importance to this distinction is shown by the vigor with which they attack their fellow Premillennialists who are Post-tribulationists, that is, who hold that the Church does go through the Tribulation.

Another prominent feature of Dispensationalism is its doctrine that when the Jews rejected Christ's alleged offer of the Davidic Kingdom, the Kingdom was withdrawn, and the Church was then set up as a substitute,—this present church age being therefore an interlude or parenthesis period, during which time God deals with man through the Church until the return of Christ, when in turn the Church is to be taken away and the Kingdom established.

Dispensationalism is a comparatively recent development. These distinctive views were first effectively set forth by John N. Darby, a leader in the Plymouth Brethren group in England, about 1830, and later popularized by the *Scofield Reference Bible*. The real origin of the system, however, was considerably earlier, as we shall show when we discuss the history of the movement.

Primarily through the influence of the Scofield Reference Bible, with its explanatory Notes printed on the same page with the text, these views have now become the prevailing



Lorraine Boettner, *The Millennium*, p. 8.

## 8 THE MILLENNIUM

thing that can be completed in a day, or even in a lifetime, but is a task for the Church throughout the centuries. Dr. William H. Rutgers writing on this subject has well said: "If men are engaged in intellectual battle for centuries to settle the Christological problem, and so many other theological questions, it is not to be expected that eschatology, the most difficult problem of theological science, will be solved differently. The positiveness and assurance with which many of these Bible students speak concerning the future of God's program, is but pride and arrogance" (*Premillennialism in America*, p. 42).

Premillennialism thrives best and makes its greatest gains in time of war or of national crisis when people are anxious and worried about the future. Premillennial clergymen from all denominations gather in "prophetic conferences" to discuss impending events such as the establishment of the nation of Israel in Palestine, the future movements of Russia or Germany, signs that the apostasy has about run its course, etc., as these are assumed to be foretold in the "hidden" wisdom of Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah, or the Book of Revelation.

The earlier forms of Premillennialism as well as the present dispensational doctrines have been held usually, if not always, by a minority of Christian people. The distinctive dispensational doctrines occupy a much less prominent place in European than in American church life.

There are, then, three principal views concerning the return of Christ: the Postmillennial, which holds that He will return after the Millennium; the Premillennial, which holds that His return precedes the Millennium; and the Amillennial, which holds that there is to be no Millennium at all in the generally accepted sense of the term. Dispensationalism, sometimes looked upon as a fourth view, is in reality only a more extreme form of Premillennialism.

Little pretense can be made to originality in this book. Most of what is said here has been said before by scholars much superior to the present writer. The primary purpose of the present work is to make available in summarized and systematized form the information concerning these eschatological problems that has been wrought out through generations of careful study by the

### *Opinionated comments related to the post-mill position of Theonomy, or Christian reconstructionism:*

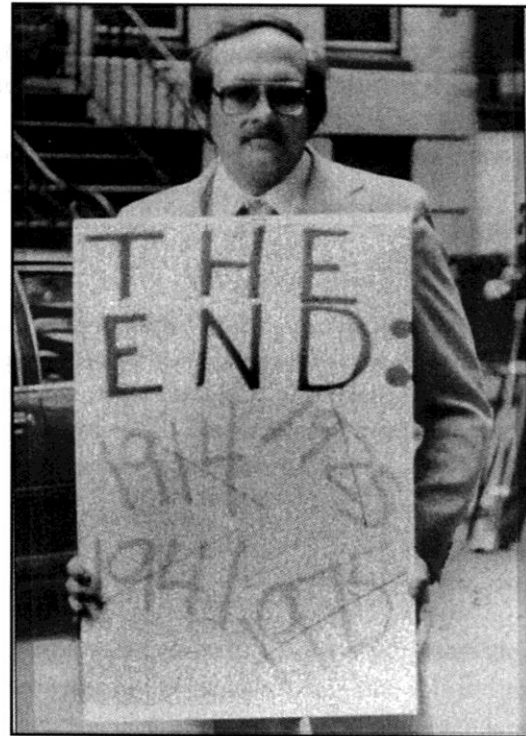
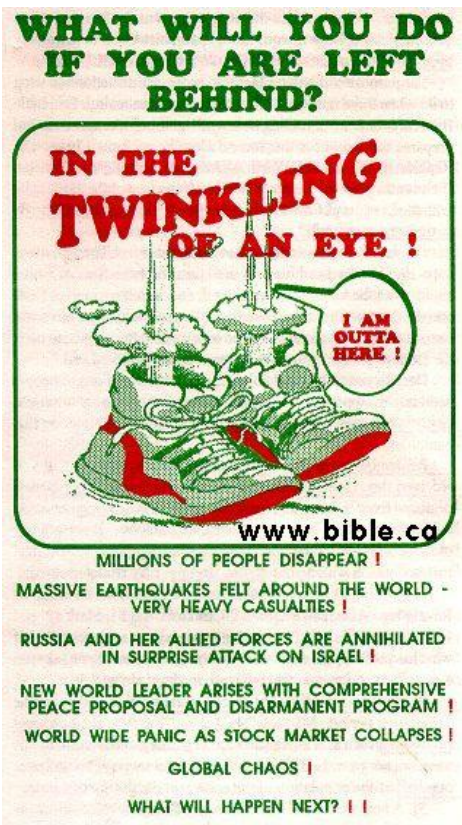
Though I share many moral/political sympathies with theonomists, I have reservations about post-mil eschatology that inclines naturally to *theocratic* notions (e.g., church-state high church Anglicanism), as well as the application of OT civil/moral law upon unbelievers. Despite the apparently agreeable tendencies towards Reformed theology in these circles, I have witnessed a goodly number of Reformed Episcopal acquaintances developing deep longings for a "Reformed" and "Catholic" theology and ecclesiology (which seems like a contradiction in terms to me). This would sit well with a theocratic Anglicanism underscored by a Reformed view that sees very little discontinuity with OT civil law, etc.

Further, the idea that we are in a political battle easily takes precedence over the *fact* that we are in a spiritual battle, though I sympathize with some of their political hopes. I think this is often characterized in the expression the "Fundamentalist right wing," which means "those who are politically opposed to our liberal agenda in securing power and access to capital to fund our cause." The sad truth is that this often does seem to be the impression we leave on the world, that we are more interested in winning a political battle with them than their souls. I clearly do believe we are in a battle, but the victory will only come in the *eschaton* of Christ, though we must work hard here to advance that kingdom through the preaching of the Gospel and "defending the innocent, looking after the widows, etc." And yes, through *all* means (barring sinful ones) of occupations we are to exemplify our Lord's character, by demonstrating his presence with us. I think what is in view here is the Reformed view that all of life *for the believer* is under the Lordship of Christ, but I do not believe we can compel faith or practice through the power of the state. That is, the sphere of the church's power is not political. Further, I am not persuaded by post-mils that the world is much better today than it was, nor that the world will be largely Christianized before Jesus returns. This is not to deny, however, that wherever true biblical faith and practice have touched the world that it has transformed the world. In that sense, since Christ came, the world has been better in countless ways, yet that is not solid enough ground upon which to base a post-mil eschatology, in my view.

### ***Millennial madness and mindsets: Wacko Waco and all of the excluded middles***

- See Richard Abanes' *End-Time Visions* for a historical survey of most of the bizarre and unbiblical predictions of the end, etc., See his list of the major (false) end-times predictions in "Timeline of Doom," pp. 335-340.
- See "Library of Date Setters for end of world!" in reserve folder ([www.bible.ca](http://www.bible.ca)).

Another subcategory could be included here for those with a fascination for the offbeat, counter cultural, and weird. The biggest money maker in Christian publishing is end-times sensationalism. Go to your local Christian bookstore and see the “prophecy” section and search in vain for anything on the OT prophets or the hermeneutics of *biblical prophecy*. One gets the impression that prophecy means only one thing: the contemporary fulfillment of particular predictions, and the more implausible the better. There are thousands of bizarre end-times web pages for the bored web surfer with nothing but *endless* time on his hands.



credit: David Riccoboni

This protester – marching outside the headquarters of the Jehovah’s Witnesses in Brooklyn, New York – is demonstrating against the apocalyptic cult because of its many predictions regarding the end of the world.

(left) The end

photo(from Abanes)

**d) Primary OT texts of the eschatos (and “millennium”)**

Isa 2:2-4 In the last days the mountain of the LORD’s temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.  
 3 Many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.”  
 The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.  
 4 He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.

Mic 4:1-5 In the last days the mountain of the LORD’s temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills,

and peoples will stream to it.  
 2 Many nations will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.”  
 The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.  
 3 He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.  
 4 Every man will sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken.  
 5 All the nations may walk in the name of their gods; we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.

Isa 11:1-10 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.  
 2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power,

the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD—  
 3 and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.  
 He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,  
 or decide by what he hears with his ears;  
 4 but with righteousness he will judge the needy,  
 with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.  
 He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the  
 breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.  
 5 Righteousness will be his belt  
 and faithfulness the sash around his waist.  
 6 The wolf will live with the lamb,  
 the leopard will lie down with the goat,  
 the calf and the lion and the yearling together;  
 and a little child will lead them.  
 7 The cow will feed with the bear,  
 their young will lie down together,  
 and the lion will eat straw like the ox.  
 8 The infant will play near the hole of the cobra,  
 and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.  
 9 They will neither harm nor destroy  
 on all my holy mountain,  
 for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as  
 the waters cover the sea.  
 10 In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for  
 the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of  
 rest will be glorious.

Isa 65:17-25 "Behold, I will create  
 new heavens and a new earth.

The former things will not be remembered,  
 nor will they come to mind.

18 But be glad and rejoice forever  
 in what I will create,  
 for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight  
 and its people a joy.

19 I will rejoice over Jerusalem  
 and take delight in my people;  
 the sound of weeping and of crying  
 will be heard in it no more.

20 "Never again will there be in it  
 an infant who lives but a few days,  
 or an old man who does not live out his years;  
 he who dies at a hundred  
 will be thought a mere youth;  
 he who fails to reach a  
 hundred will be considered accursed.

21 They will build houses and dwell in them;  
 they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

22 No longer will they build houses and others live in them,  
 or plant and others eat.  
 For as the days of a tree,  
 so will be the days of my people;  
 my chosen ones will long enjoy

the works of their hands.

23 They will not toil in vain  
 or bear children doomed to misfortune;  
 for they will be a people blessed by the LORD,  
 they and their descendants with them.

24 Before they call I will answer;  
 while they are still speaking I will hear.

25 The wolf and the lamb will feed together,  
 and the lion will eat straw like the ox,  
 but dust will be the serpent's food.  
 They will neither harm nor destroy  
 on all my holy mountain,"  
 says the LORD.

Jer 31:31-34 "The time is coming," declares the LORD,  
 "when I will make a new covenant  
 with the house of Israel  
 and with the house of Judah.

32 It will not be like the covenant  
 I made with their forefathers  
 when I took them by the hand  
 to lead them out of Egypt,  
 because they broke my covenant,  
 though I was a husband to them,"  
 declares the LORD.

33 "This is the covenant I will make with the house of  
 Israel after that time," declares the LORD.  
 "I will put my law in their minds  
 and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God,  
and they will be my people.

34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor,  
 or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,'  
 because they will all know me,  
 from the least of them to the greatest,"  
 declares the LORD.

"For I will forgive their wickedness  
 and will remember their sins no more."

Joel 2:28 And afterward,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
 Your sons and daughters will prophesy,  
 your old men will dream dreams,  
 your young men will see visions.

Mal 1:11 My name will be great among the nations, from  
 the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense  
 and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my  
 name will be great among the nations," says the LORD  
 Almighty.

Also see Ezek 40-48.

It is for us to decide what is the better interpretation of these OT texts. The fact that there is no sound principle for determining what is figurative or "literal" makes our task difficult. I propose that in many cases there is a progressive fulfillment at work, in that there is room for a both/and understanding. (see fulfillment, pp. 50, 204, 206). For example:

- The then-past of the exile/post-exilic age
- The now of the church age
- The then-future of the coming kingdom

In seeking to avoid a simplistic "multiple fulfillment" viewpoint,<sup>124</sup> the challenge is to determine which aspects are figurative, which aspects are telescoped, and which aspects refer to which epochs.<sup>125</sup> This is congruent with keeping

<sup>124</sup> The issues of multiple fulfillment/meaning and double sense are directly related to end-times eschatological issues (see pp. 204ff.). See also discussion in hermeneutics of the history of redemption on poetic sensibilities, p. . .

the progressive aspect of revelation ever in mind. Although we can not expect to derive concise charts and timelines for all the predictive prophecies in the OT (though many try), we need not despair of grasping significant redemptive historical meaning.

Prophecy is linked in a profound way with a poetic way of perceiving and describing, and any attempt to “systematize” the prophecies without consideration of this aspect is doomed to over “rationalization.” As in all communication, all is not always revealed, and the full picture often gradually comes through only in “starts and stops.” This process in the long view of biblical prophecy is difficult to always grasp from any given historical vantage point. Nevertheless, we can see how numerous predictions were at first hinted at, then elucidated, then misperceptions corrected, then finally clarified. Naturally, final clarification of many items occurred through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, yet there are many obscurities awaiting another Day of clarification. Jesus rebuked his disciples for failing to understand the prophets better on his account, after he had repeatedly told them that he was to die and be raised from the dead.

Lu 24:25 He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! They did not get the point until after the fact, even though they had every opportunity to try.

The artistry of the OT prophets suggests a close relationship between prophecy and poetry in the prophets’ inspired attempts to articulate the “incomprehensible” nature and plan of God. It is no surprise that much prophecy is poetic in form and thought, even the most dark and doom filled prophecies, for it is the perfect medium for the direct voice of God to us. In this sense, we can be thankful for the “obscurity” of prophetic/poetic language, and that he did not speak to us in the sterile language of a business management memo or a modern scientific journal! Such as we hear and use far too often in our time, as in . . .

**Language Management**  
**Prioritize and Target**  
**Quality Time with**  
**Excellence in**  
**Key Relationships of**  
**Personal Enrichment and**  
**Growth.**

(right) Song on End of the World by Czeslaw  
 Milosz<sup>126</sup>

**A Song On the End of the World** by [Czeslaw Milosz](#)  
 translated by Anthony Milosz

On the day the world ends  
 A bee circles a clover,  
 A fisherman mends a glimmering net.  
 Happy porpoises jump in the sea,  
 By the rainspout young sparrows are playing  
 And the snake is gold-skinned as it should always be.

On the day the world ends  
 Women walk through the fields under their umbrellas,  
 A drunkard grows sleepy at the edge of a lawn,  
 Vegetable peddlers shout in the street  
 And a yellow-sailed boat comes nearer the island,  
 The voice of a violin lasts in the air  
 And leads into a starry night.

And those who expected lightning and thunder  
 Are disappointed.  
 And those who expected signs and archangels' trumps  
 Do not believe it is happening now.  
 As long as the sun and the moon are above,  
 As long as the bumblebee visits a rose,  
 As long as rosy infants are born  
 No one believes it is happening now.

Only a white-haired old man, who would be a prophet  
 Yet is not a prophet, for he's much too busy,  
 Repeats while he binds his tomatoes:  
 No other end of the world will there be,  
 No other end of the world will there be.

Warsaw. 1944

<sup>125</sup> Consider the notion of *pre-figuration* of shalom, the church age, the new creation, the restoration and the return from exile. See Revelation course-syllabus notes and prefiguration below, p. 117.

<sup>126</sup> Czeslaw Milosz, *Collected Poems*

**e) Prefiguration: inter-textuality, inner-textuality, figural representation**

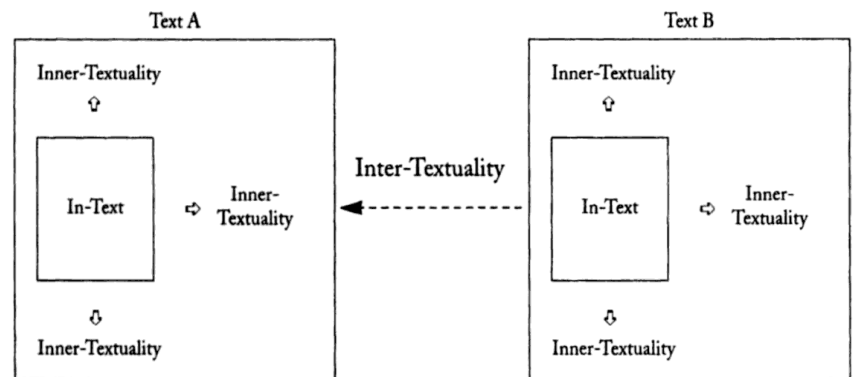
- See also Greidanus’ use of longitudinal themes, analogy, contrasts, analogy, typology, etc., in *Preaching Christ*.
- For a somewhat liberal viewpoint on BT and *intertextuality*, see. Waltke, *OT Theology*, pp. 128-142. He categorizes the various forms of intertextuality: citation, key words and motifs, allusion, salvation history, prophecy, typology, conceptualization.

[The following was revised from the course-syllabus on the Revelation of John.]

Considering the impact of the previous subject of interpretation of the OT Prophets (esp. in light of the *The Revelation*), when we seek to interpret difficult prophetic texts (such as *The Revelation*), the simple question of just *how are we to interpret* is paramount. Let us suppose (at least for the sake of argument) that prophetic texts (e.g., OT prophets and the NT *Revelation*) contain much symbolism and figurative language, expressing cosmic truths and realities in numerous metaphors, motifs, images, symbols, and allusions. If this can be agreed, then to propose that prophetic texts are brilliantly inspired compositions that employ complex literary techniques that include the following (and require some degree of skill in literary analysis) (note: we must be careful when using loaded linguistic terminology, for they may carry unintended connotations that can be misconstrued, and they are also used in divergent ways by scholars):

1. **Inner-textuality:** Sailhamer defines this as the inner-linkage that binds narratives into a larger whole.<sup>127</sup> Inner-textuality is typically sufficient to understand a biblical text, although author-intended inter-textuality (#2) is also helpful in interpreting texts that employ it. He also defines related *in-textuality* as the “cohesive nature of the strategy of the smallest literary unit,” that is as important as the structural unity of the whole book.<sup>128</sup>

2. **Inter-textuality:** Structuralists<sup>129</sup> look for common use of literary conventions in which later writers take up to “re-use” or “recontextualize” or “extend” or “re-interpret” or “transform.” In a biblical context, this might be understood as the explicit and implicit use of earlier texts by later authors. Sailhamer calls *inter-textuality* simply the “study of links between and among texts.”<sup>130</sup> This is seen in the NT which assumes our understanding of the OT (e.g. *Revelation*). *Allusions* (or *imitation, influence, parody, pastiche*) may fall into the category of inter-textuality.



**Figure 7.10**

(above) *Textual illustration in Figure 1.10*<sup>131</sup>

3. **Inter-textual figuration:** According to Jay Wells, inter-textual figurative representation is a compositional technique, not an interpretive one.<sup>132</sup> We seek to *interpret* prophetic literature, so we must first *read it as*

<sup>127</sup> Sailhamer, *Introduction to the OT*, pp. 209-212.

<sup>128</sup> Sailhamer, *Introduction to the OT*, pp. 207-208.

<sup>129</sup> **Structuralism** is an approach to texts that seeks meaning in structures, or conventions, not in the *intentions* of the author. That is, the *conventional codes* have public meaning, and reading is governed by the structures *beneath* the textual surface, since there are a finite number of roles and functions (spheres of action). Structuralism assumes that every text has a structure governed by observable rules. Structuralists call this the *grammar of literature*. An emphasis on *deep structure* in Structuralism tends towards the deep *subjectivity* of the reader of the text, and hypothetical constructions of meaning related to the deep structure. **Semiotics** (or semiology) relates to Structuralism in viewing system constituents of structures as the only source of meaning. Semiotics is basically the study of *signs* and their processes in terms of their indications, likenesses, symbols, designations, etc. Semiotics has come to be applied to countless disciplines besides linguistics and literary studies. **Deconstruction** is another related [linguistic] theory that involves extreme skepticism about language and communication that heightens the distance between the *signifier* and the *signified*, wherein there is great *slippage* between words and their referents, making it impossible to establish *meaning*. In Deconstruction, there is no *transcendental* signified. In Deconstruction, all interpretation is “text” related, not objectively related, and thus it is based on *contextual* relationships. See also **Lexical Semantics** and **Discourse Analysis**, p. f.n. .

<sup>130</sup> Sailhamer, *Introduction to the OT*, p. 212.

<sup>131</sup> Illustration from Sailhamer, *Introduction to the OT*, p. 212

<sup>132</sup> Wells, “Figural Representation,” p. 115.

literature. This is especially true today when our reading of prophetic texts is so influenced by *end-times* concerns that too often we cannot see beyond them.

4. **Figural representation:** Wells writes, “. . . the basic recognition that the biblical authors employ images or figures familiar to their readers (animals, objects, people, institutions, events from the past) to present their eschatological message.”<sup>133</sup> Prophetic texts (like *The Revelation*) are packed full of images, symbols, figures, metaphoric language, and other forms of representation that pose the interpretive challenge to readers. We cannot see the forest for the trees. In fact, part of the problem is that we do not first consider the correlations and significances of the figural representations (before trying to force them into some grand end-times scheme). Such representation functions on both the inter-textual and inner-textual levels, and this may help us understand the prophetic texts. Lansing comments on figuration: “In figural representation in the Bible, historical realities are understood to be intrinsically related to each other by special correspondences. Specifically, persons and events of the Old Testament are taken to signify persons and events in the New Testament. Both members of the figural relation are equally real and historical, but the New Testament personality or event is considered to be the “fulfillment” of the corresponding “figure” in the Old Testament.”<sup>134</sup>
  5. **Historical figuration** or **retrospective figuration.** Wells writes, when “an author often employs real historical events familiar to the reader as figures representing past, present, or future realities. This kind of historical figuration is a way of seeing one event by looking at another. That is, an author articulates a correlation or nexus between two real events for the purpose of illuminating one by means of the other.”<sup>135</sup> (For example, *The Revelation* is packed with historical, retrospective figurations that take the contemporary reader of John’s Revelation into their well-known, marvelous past of redemption-history. If we are not familiar with that history, much of this figuration (or allusion) is lost on us. It is comparable to our ill-informed, contemporary reading of Shakespeare that misses most of the historical allusions. **In sum, we can suggest that the Revelation of John looks back to the OT world (of which NT believers were still very much a part of) to examine the present in order to look to the future.** This is expressed in # 6.
6. **Prospective figuration:** Wells: when “an author contemplates a future time in terms of the past or present. The prospect of a future event, hope or expectation is cast in the imagery of something antecedent. The author’s purpose in drawing on past or present events is to look at the future, to instruct the reader in the way the future will be. The future is figurally represented in terms of past or present events. That is, the past heuristically configures the reader’s conceptualization of the future.”<sup>136</sup>
7. **Metonymy:** use of the name of one thing for another because of frequent association (Lu 16:29 “Moses and the Prophets”)<sup>137</sup>
  8. **Word-plays or phonetic figurations:** these would be very difficult to recognize, especially if found between NT Greek and OT Hebrew. Plays on words (meanings) and their phonetic sounds (assonance/alliteration) are common in biblical Hebrew. The Revelation of John may have word-plays that can be identified, esp. related to OT motifs and images.
  9. **Allusions:** traditionally, the term used to describe any explicit, or implicit, retrospective reference, usually to a literary character, place, or other identifiable (often well known) antecedent.
  10. **Metaphor/simile:** metaphoric language is symbolic language meant to communicate with an appeal to the imagination by aligning and comparing otherwise dissimilar things.

In general, the figures of the Old Testament all point to or signify the central figure of the New Testament—namely, Christ and things (like Rahab as a figure for the Church) related to him. This system of biblical figuralism is known alternatively as “typology,” and the Old Testament figure is termed the “type,” while its fulfillment in the New Testament goes by the name of “antitype.”<sup>138</sup>

<sup>133</sup> Wells, “Figural Representation,” p. 113. See also S.I. Wright, “Inhabiting the Story,” in Bartholomew, Evans, and Healy, “*Behind the Text*,” pp. 506-517. See also *pre-figuration* in D.L. Jeffrey, “(Pre) figuration: Masterplot and Meaning in Biblical History,” in Bartholomew, Evans, and Healy, “*Behind the Text*,” pp. 363-393.

<sup>134</sup> Lansing, Richard, Editor. *The Dante Encyclopedia*. UK: Routledge an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group. This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2010, p. 375.

<sup>135</sup> Wells, “Figural Representation,” pp. 113-114.

<sup>136</sup> Wells, “Figural Representation,” p. 114.

<sup>137</sup> Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, pp. 538-608.

<sup>138</sup> Lansing, *The Dante Encyclopedia*, pp. 375-376.

For the Resurrection of Christ is already the fulfillment of history, the *eschaton*; it is paradoxically the end of history within history, though its full implications are still to be worked out by the further development and consummation for all of what is definitively achieved already in Christ. To this extent, the relation of figure and fulfillment—and other persons between the New Testament and subsequent history can even be reversed. All fullness is in Christ and the Christ event, of which subsequent Christian history is a “postfiguration.”<sup>139</sup>

“The significances embodied in figural relations, consequently, are established exclusively by the Creator and Lord of history, who alone determines what history definitively is and means. Indeed, figuralism presupposes a conception of history as guided teleologically, as *intended* in accordance with a providential plan that gives specific significance to each individual and event by reference to the final end of all things. Such significance can be disclosed only by revelation, in which history’s final meaning is known—a conception that is alien to modern views of history, which are based rather on chronological and causal connections in a continuum of events without any known end.”<sup>140</sup>

**A qualification:** apparent links and allusions to motifs, language, themes, images, etc., are often *suggestive*, and admittedly *speculative*. In fact, it must be noted that some of the connections I outline below need closer semantic study to assure that the meanings we might deduce from OT contexts are at least comparable, if not synonymous (see Semantics and Silva, p. ).<sup>141</sup> For example, since John’s *Revelation* does not simply repeat OT motifs, he very often *transforms them* with rich new meaning in light of the Messianic age, we must be primarily focused on what God is revealing through this new and final Revelation to John. We can assert that the Revelation is *infused* in every verse with the OT in order to present a new, fully formed revelation of Jesus Christ exalted and victorious.

### f) *The Adversary Satan in the prophets*

This is also addressed in my Poets/Wisdom lecture (on Job), as well as in Judges-Esther (David and the census in 2 Sam 24). See there under “The Adversary, Accuser” for bibliography. See also handout “Lucifer and the Devil.”

Related to the question of the millennium is also the question of Satan and the extent of demonic influence and control in the world. If Satan is indeed bound in some way (amill), then how do we account for the undeniable fact that this world is in some sense still under his power? The other side of the question is the extent of Christ’s rein, influence, and control over the present world. Some would argue that Satan rules only over unbelievers, who in turn oppress and persecute believers, whereas Christ reigns now in the hearts and lives of all believers. It can also be said that Reformed folk often believe that Christ even reigns over all the evil choices of Satan and unbelievers. That is, under God’s absolute sovereignty everything is working out God’s purposes.

Dürer



<sup>139</sup> Lansing, *The Dante Encyclopedia*, pp. 377-378.

<sup>140</sup> Lansing, *The Dante Encyclopedia*, p. 378.

<sup>141</sup> We want also to avoid *exegetical fallacies* that so easily result from improper analysis of languages (see Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*).

Ezek 28:1-2, 12-19 The word of the LORD came to me: 2  
 “Son of man, say to the ruler of Tyre, ‘This is what the  
 Sovereign LORD says:  
 ’”In the pride of your heart  
 you say, “I am a god;  
 I sit on the throne of a god  
 in the heart of the seas.”  
 But you are a man and not a god,  
 though you think you are as wise as a god.

12 “Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of  
 Tyre and say to him: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD  
 says:  
 ’”You were the model of perfection,  
 full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.  
 13 You were in Eden,  
 the garden of God;  
 every precious stone adorned you:  
 ruby, topaz and emerald,  
 chrysolite, onyx and jasper,  
 sapphire, turquoise and beryl.  
 Your settings and mountings were made of gold;  
 on the day you were created they were prepared.  
 14 You were anointed as a guardian cherub,  
 for so I ordained you.  
 You were on the holy mount of God;

you walked among the fiery stones.  
 15 You were blameless in your ways  
 from the day you were created  
 till wickedness was found in you.  
 16 Through your widespread trade  
 you were filled with violence,  
 and you sinned.  
 So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God,  
 and I expelled you, O guardian cherub,  
 from among the fiery stones.  
 17 Your heart became proud  
 on account of your beauty,  
 and you corrupted your wisdom  
 because of your splendor.  
 So I threw you to the earth;  
 I made a spectacle of you before kings.  
 18 By your many sins and dishonest trade  
 you have desecrated your sanctuaries.  
 So I made a fire come out from you,  
 and it consumed you,  
 and I reduced you to ashes on the ground  
 in the sight of all who were watching.  
 19 All the nations who knew you  
 are appalled at you;  
 you have come to a horrible end  
 and will be no more.”

Though this text is addressed to the king of Tyre (Ittobaal), some suggest that it goes far beyond what could be attributed to him. In their view, the address extends to give us insight into the fall of Satan. That is, it is understood that there is a figurative reference to the king of Tyre alongside a literal reference to Satan. Even though it is understandable that these references and images seem to extend beyond the king of Tyre, such a view does not account for the literary and historical contexts of the text. It is assumed that such claims and boasts can not be attributed to human kings. Nevertheless, this was standard practice for A.N.E. kings (see ).

“Because of this mythological dimension, many scholars see behind the oracles a Mesopotamian or Canaanite myth in which a primeval figure, who lived in a fruitful garden on a cosmic mountain, was deposed and sent into the underworld as punishment for a sin that he had committed. Traces of such a myth are alleged to exist in Genesis 2-3 and Isa. 14:12-20, but to date no myth resembling the scholarly reconstruction has been found in extrabiblical sources.”<sup>142</sup>

So, here is a standard critical “reconstruction” that admittedly has no evidence to support it. A conservative estimate of this text could include a figurative description of Ittobaal, as compared to the fall of Adam, using Edenic imagery. It could also be a description of the fall of Adam interwoven with the rebellion of Ittobaal, or a description of the rebellion of Ittobaal as compared to that of Adam and/or Satan. Granted, it is not an easy text, and even though the imagery seems to favor some aspects of the rebellion of Satan, the historical and contextual approach is the least speculative.

Cf.

Zech 3:1 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him.

Zech 3:2 The LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?”

The “seed of Satan” (Gen 3:15) is also manifested in the “abomination that causes desolation” **מְשַׁחֵם שְׂקוּצִים** (שְׂקוּצָה, abominable/detestable, unclean idol or object) (Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Mt 24:15; Mk 13:14). This is an example of the fruition of the Adversary, which also is evident in many other areas even where implicitly.

The name appears to have in view the action of Antiochus Epiphanes, who placed on the altar in the Jerusalem Temple a small idolatrous altar, described in 1 Macc. 1:54ff. as the ‘desolating sacrilege’ (Gk. *bdelygma ereumouseous*). With it, according to Jewish tradition, went an image—almost certainly of

<sup>142</sup> Harper’s Bible Commentary, p. .



Zeus, the lord of heaven, bearing the emperor's likeness. This sacrilege created 'desolation', *i.e.* not destruction, but desolating horror (or possibly making the Temple to be 'desolate', emptied of God and his true worshippers). In Mk. 13:14; Mt. 24:15 a related sacrilege may well be in view; it is a sign of the impending destruction of the Temple (not the destruction itself). The sacrilege has been interpreted as the appearance of the Antichrist (*cf.* 2 Thes. 2:3f., and note that in Mark 'standing' is masculine in gender), or of the sacrilegious Roman army (*cf.* Lk. 21:20).<sup>143</sup>

## 16. *Prophetic indictments (of Israel's myths and idols)*

- *Ritual/religious* – cult and sanctuary practice under censure, often directed at the priests themselves. Called nation *back to God* (monotheism)
- *National/political* – nations were censured for all the above, as well as for their treatment of Israel. (see populist dissent, p.135)
- *Ethical/social* – moral, social and cultural behavior frequently fell far below biblical Torah

### a) *Prophetic dissent (from our myths and idols)*

- See Beale, *We Become What We Worship*.

This is related to the category, "Religion and revelation," p. 139f. The idols of humanity are what destroy humanity. Thus, they are what humans ironically fear the most. In totalitarian nations, the state is god, and thus to be greatly feared. In western democracies, free-individualism is god, thus everyone lives in fear of other individuals. There are many other such idols in our times. When such idols are considered gods they become diabolical and end by destroying those that worship them.

"... they mingled with the nations and adopted their customs. They worshipped their idols which became a snare to them." Ps 106.

### (1) *Christianity, culture, literacy, and biblical prophetic*

- See Hofstadter, *Anti-intellectualism in American Life*.

In recent decades, there has been a widely chronicled rise of Evangelical interest and participation in cultural pursuits. This has been seen as a return from the wilderness of isolationism (or cultural separatism), typically blamed on what many pejoratively have labeled "Fundamentalism." There are many academic, political, philosophical, social, and aesthetic examples of this resurgence, and welcome to those of us who are advocates of engagement. Therefore, these brief comments are not intended as an academic rehearsal of these examples, but rather some personal reflections on Christianity and culture in relation to that engagement and our own cultural literacy.

One example of this resurgence is the recent rise of interest in the *trivium*, or "Classical education" (CE) or the Classical School Movement (CSM). This revival raises some questions, since classical education was not necessarily a *biblical* education.<sup>144</sup> Nevertheless, the concerns of the CE movement are notable, and the objective of creating a higher academic standard is unobjectionable, so long as the biblical foundations for theology, philosophy, and criticism do not become subsumed by "classical" presuppositions.<sup>145</sup> Wherever such occurs, there is a loss of biblically "prophetic" authority and credibility. As it often is in England, a strictly "classical" education can become a course in pride for the elite. Nevertheless, for those of us who fight most of our adult lives trying to regain academic ground lost in public schools, the return to "classical" standards is encouraging. All the same, it needs to be remembered that we must not displace our spiritual goals in our pursuit of strictly intellectual or career goals.

My impression is that the CSM is less about being classical in the "Classical" sense (or even British), and more about producing students who can read and write and know their history and geography before graduation. Such an ambition may hopefully produce more culturally literate graduates, and who, with a solid biblical foundation, may remain humble before God as they challenge the *status quo* of our apostate culture. Such an education may, more positively, also *enrich* their living, loving, teaching, and evangelizing.

<sup>143</sup> G.R. Beasley-Murray, "Desolating Sacrilege," *New Bible Dictionary*, Logos Research Systems.

<sup>144</sup> Further, the European *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric, logic) and the *quadrivium* (math, geometry, music, astronomy) were twelfth-thirteenth century medieval developments from one of a variety of ancient Classical models. (see H.I. Marrow, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, NY: Merntor Books, 1964.)

<sup>145</sup> Indeed, the medieval *trivium* and *quadrivium* we seen as preparation for the study of theology and philosophy.

Yet before proceeding, I should define our terms regarding such an education. Attempting to define cultural literacy, E.D.Hirsch has written, “To be culturally literate is to possess the basic information needed to thrive in the modern world.”<sup>146</sup> As helpful as Hirsch has been in raising the bar, such a definition seems too narrowly concerned with *survival*, and pulls the train into the station of pure pragmatism.<sup>147</sup> Indeed, many Americans are quite happy to be in considerable cultural ignorance, while (perceiving themselves to be) thriving quite well. We may ask if their thriving is the reality, but surely any definition of cultural literacy that relies too heavily on the notion of “thriving” ironically leaves the door open to cultural relativism, since one man’s treasure is another’s trash. Although, defining and analyzing culture engages many worthy books, may it suffice to suggest that since culture is simply all the various aspects that make up human life in this world, then cultural literacy is extensive knowledge and understanding of, engagement with, living in, preservation of, and sometimes changing of our cultural heritage. To be acculturated, or “cultured,” means to develop increasing “refinement” of, and adaptation to a cultural heritage. Certainly, without such literacy we may not thrive (as Hirsch defines it). Nevertheless, many do “succeed” in life in many ways without ever obtaining any significant level of the cultural literacy that Hirsch and others describe.

The question that concerns me here is to what extent are we Christians to pursue cultural literacy and what are we “to do” with our cultural literacy in regards to our life of work, our ethics, our literature and art, our architecture, our politics, our aesthetics, our philosophy, and our traditions. Indeed, I have broadened the definition of culture so far as to make answering such a question nearly impossible. That is, unless we can employ some biblical categories that may apply to all, or most, human cultural contingencies. Whether such categories are to be found to cover all possibilities is not certain, but I suggest we can derive some overarching principles and concerns that the scriptures provide. These are at times implicit, but as often explicit.

Regrettably, the seminary objective of training people for ministry and Christian living has often failed to provide the necessary literacy requisite to understanding one’s world, history, and people (the question is, how can we speak the gospel to our generation if we do not know them?). I went to a traditional seminary and received such a valuable education that one can not “put a price tag on it.” But, I often felt something was greatly lacking in the area of cultural knowledge, understanding, and analysis.<sup>148</sup> That is, since the “old Princeton” model in our Reformed circles ironically lacks substantive cultural content in the curriculum, in contrast to old Princeton which assumed a “classical education” *before* seminary. Nevertheless, such traditions were also to some degree overly wedded to aristocratic ambitions, which of course quickly displace the Great Commission and the “Cultural Mandate” (p.), as well as create barriers of perception between the classes. In other words, must we be left with a legacy of extremes between “the snobbery of the banal” and the “snobbery of the cultured elite”? Certainly, one of the biggest obstacles against cultural literacy for Christians (as Americans) is their prevailing suspicion and distrust of, and enmity against, the life of the mind and study.<sup>149</sup> This has been fueled by the tension between the “heart and the

<sup>146</sup> E.D.Hirsch, Jr., *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987, p. xiii.

<sup>147</sup> I recognize that his objectives are pragmatically related to the problem of education in American schools, and rightly so. Nevertheless, human culture is far more complex and always has a spiritual component. In other words, the survival of civilization is more the issue in considering the impact of the loss of a “Christian consensus” or framework for human culture. See T.S. Eliot’s essay, “Christianity and Culture” which defines the *religious* nature of all culture and which argues that the loss of Christianity would be the end of civilization. This emphasis is important to retain, especially considering the etymology of the word *culture* (*colere*, to cultivate) which has its roots in the “cult” and people’s common worship. In the *American Heritage Dictionary* (1975), the first entry for “culture” is “The cultivation of the soil; tillage.” Thus, conceptions of *cultivation* cross-pollinate from agricultural images to those of cultivating social, personal, national, moral, and religious ideals, standards, and objectives. (See also Old English *kwel* from Latin *colere*, to cultivate, inhabit; colony. *Incult* means “not cultured or uncultivated, whereas today *acculturation* means the acquiring or changing of culture.)

<sup>148</sup> The other side of the coin would be liberal institutions that have little need for the Bible, the gospel, or doctrine, since political, cultural, and social agendas have pre-empted such concerns and rejected them as “otherworldly” and of little *earthly* good (for example the “social gospel” and its “liberationist” theologies abound). Despite those who have sought to redress this either/or situation, I suspect we have a long way to go before we can claim success in demonstrating that the biblical gospel (and its doctrines) is the only satisfactory cultural and social solution for human good and liberation at all levels of human life.

<sup>149</sup> See R.Hofstadter, *Anti-intellectualism in American Life*. This is also seen in regards to history as expressed by D.L. Jeffrey: “A sharply accentuated disdain for prior history, almost Virgilian in its firmness, and, in America especially, determination to make the frontier and future history supplant it, goes hand in hand with an inherent distrust of the authority of the more distant past – eventually perhaps a disregard for any authority that is not both contemporary and ‘popular’. It is small wonder that, to the chagrin of their grandparents, North American evangelical congregations of this generation possess little more of biblical knowledge – that is, biblical history in the plainest sense – than they do of the secular history which, more notoriously, they have also forgotten. But is the biblical scholarship of today, for all of our preoccupation with the questions of biblical history, doing very much to offset this nearly incalculable loss of biblical history in the shared memory of the church? Or is it the case that both in the guild and in the church biblical scholarship is serving merely to abet the fading from memory and imagination alike of the actual content of biblical narrative? For the erasure or fading away from present Christian consciousness of centering memory – in all its richness of texture and narrative detail – constitutes a loss of authority for the biblical past far more devastating in its implications than the obscure dubieties of academics about this or that textual correspondence or correlation” (David Lyle Jeffrey, “(Pre) Figuration,” *Behind the Text: History and Biblical Interpretation*, ed. C. Bartholomew, C.S. Evans, Mary Healy, Murray Ray, Scripture and Hermeneutics Series [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003], p. 373).

head” that has long persisted in troubling American Christians.<sup>150</sup> I propose that our perpetuation of it has been an immeasurable waste.<sup>151</sup> It has also led to a great loss of cultural and intellectual “ground.”

Machen, writing of the student revolt of 1910 at Princeton, said that “One of the greatest of the problems that have agitated the Church is the problem of the relation between knowledge and piety, between culture and Christianity.”<sup>152</sup>

For the contemporary “culturally literate” pastor, teacher, missionary, or leader who desires to communicate effectively, the choices today may appear to be between Dante and Doonesbury, or between Shakespeare and Bart Simpson. Also, for the contemporary audience, theological, historical, literary, and philosophical *anti-intellectualism* is advancing the plague of our cultural illiteracy.<sup>153</sup> That is, what is a pastor or teacher to do with his increasing cultural literacy in a world that is bent on forgetting (or ignoring) anything outside the omnipresent “telescreen” of the season’s fare? It is common for pastors to rely extensively on their “intelligent” film viewing for their repository of illustrations to show they are “in touch” with their culture. Yet, as helpful as this may be, it sometimes only confirms post-moderns in their sense that they are the new man of the new world, and nothing of great value preceded them. It also furthers the common assumption that seeking vicarious, “virtual” reality enables us to *experience* that which is portrayed (as we saw recently with the *Passion*), thus greatly diminishing human *imagination* based on written texts about those events. Thus, this “experience” becomes the new (subjective) canon for cultural literacy (a cosmic *Trivial Pursuit*), and against which we weigh the viscidities of life, work, relations, and faith. Frightfully, much evangelical theology is greatly impacted by the theological/philosophical content absorbed through both the message and the medium of this new canon.

In light of this contemporary situation, I often wrestle with the apparent “uselessness” of my Liberal Arts education in relation to the man on the street or in the pew. The question is, how do we bridge that gap, and how

<sup>150</sup> The long battle in theological schools between “practical” and “academic” is another fruit of this and needs to be re-addressed in our time. This was seen in the “battle of 1910” at Princeton Theological Seminary, as addressed by Greene: . . . There is a widely prevalent theory, that truth may be of the feelings as well as of the intellect; that it may not only come thus from two independent sources, but may be contradictory so that what is true to the feelings may be false to the intellect and *visa versa*; and that as moral character and so Christian life are rooted in the voluntary nature, of which the feelings are an expression, the Christian life may be developed and, some say, would better be developed, without reference to such intellectual conceptions as doctrinal statements. This theory is radically false. There is no knowledge of the heart. Feeling can give knowledge no more than can excitement. As Prof. Bowen has well said, “Feeling is a state of mind consequent on the reception of some idea.” That is, it does not give knowledge; it presupposes it. There must be knowledge by the head before there can be feeling with the heart. Once more you see the point. The religion of the heart and the theology of the head cannot be divorced. Unless the heart be disposed toward Christ, the head cannot, because it will not, discern the truth of Christ. As our Lord said, “It is only he who wills to obey God, whose heart is right toward Him, who shall know the doctrine whether it be of Him.” On the other hand, zeal in Christ’s cause will be strong and abiding in proportion as the faith from which it springs and by which it is nourished is intelligent. Zeal without knowledge is dangerous and short-lived (William Brenton Greene, Jr., “Broad Churchism and the Christian Life,” *Princeton Theological Review*, 4 (July 1906), pp. 311-13).

Dearborn also strikes at the heart of this: “In our theological studies, we are *not* enclosed within an ivory tower, a sacred cloister which is fundamentally different from ‘real life’ or the ‘real world’. Whether we like it or not, we’re standing today at the Front, on the front line of the Battle. Everywhere God’s people take a stand for the kingdom of God against the forces of the kingdom of darkness, one finds a front. A battle rages around us right now, in our classrooms, even in the soporific silence of our libraries. The question is, are we aware of it, participating in it, claiming the victory which our Lord has already won; or are we blithely stumbling along in pursuit of good grades and an academic degree. (Tim A. Dearborn, “Theology at the front line,” *Themelios* vol. 17, no. 1, October/November 1991).

And also Muller writes: “Although the problem is not evidenced uniformly throughout the country, it is certainly true that American seminaries and churches have tended to externalize the unity of theology by emphasizing the practice of ministry and, further, by defining practice in terms of the techniques of ministry. Again, it is not a universal problem uniformly evidenced, but the teachers of ministerial practice have been notoriously unable to deal with theological issues drawn from biblical, historical, or dogmatic theology and to apply these issues to contemporary situations. (There is also considerable irony in the frequently heard claim that the teachers of the so-called theoretical disciplines ought to make their courses more practical when the teachers of practice have difficulty working with theological categories.) (Richard A. Muller, “The Study of Theology: From Biblical Interpretation to Contemporary Formulation” in Philips V. Long, Tremper Longman III, Richard A. Muller, Vern S. Poythress, and Moisés Silva, editors, *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation: Six Volumes in One*, [Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996], p. 553).

<sup>151</sup> “The case against intellect is founded upon a set of fictional and wholly abstract antagonisms. Intellect is pitted against feeling, on the ground that it is somehow inconsistent with warm emotion. It is pitted against character, because it is widely believed that intellect stands for mere cleverness, which transmutes easily into the sly or the diabolical. It is pitted against practicality, since theory is held to be opposed to practice, and the ‘purely’ theoretical mind is so much disesteemed. It is pitted against democracy, since intellect is felt to be a form of distinction that defies egalitarianism. Once the validity of these antagonisms is accepted, then the case for the intellect, and by extension for the intellectual, is lost” (R. Hofstadter, *Anti-intellectualism in American Life*, pp. 45-45).

<sup>152</sup> J.G. Machen, “Christianity and Culture,” *Education, Christianity, and the State*, Jefferson, MD: The Trinity Foundation, pp. 45-59.

<sup>153</sup> A rather negative assessment from Sayers: “In the matter of Christian doctrine, a great part of the nation subsists in an ignorance more barbarous than that of the dark ages, owing to a slatternly habit of illiterate reading. Words are understood in a wholly mistaken sense, statements of fact and opinion are misread and distorted in repetition, arguments founded in misapprehension are accepted without examination, expressions of individual preference are construed as ecumenical doctrine, disciplinary regulations founded on consent are confused with claims to interpret universal law, and vice versa; with the result that the logical and historical structure of Christian philosophy is transformed in the popular mind to a confused jumble of mythological and pathological absurdity” (Dorothy L. Sayers, *The Mind of the Maker* pp. xi-xii).

can we draw on the vast wealth of our cultural heritage in our ministry teaching, and living? The other question is, in light of our definition of cultural literacy, what can be considered a proper objective for Christians in achieving it?<sup>154</sup> In so far as we retain a biblical foundation (“literacy”), it seems reasonable to suggest that there need be no limits to our seeking cultural literacy.<sup>155</sup> Although, this too could displace our primary Christian goal of pleasing our Lord, wherever we begin to conform to the ungodly culture of our growing literacy. This is not, however, to say that all conformity is misplaced, for we are both the makers of, and sharers in, our cultural heritage. Culture-making (p.) is part of our so-called “cultural mandate,” being made in God’s image and having dominion over God’s creation. The danger arises when our conformity to worldly culture (as it stands in rebellion against God) causes us to lose our saltiness, light, and evangelical zeal to reach the lost of our culture. Knowing the boundaries is the challenge. Cultural formation and cultural literacy should enhance spiritual maturity, though in a fallen and godless world, it can also pose a spiritual challenge. Spiritual maturity, in biblical terms, is the ability to discern good from evil, and it enhances our love for the lost compatriots of all cultures. It leads us to rightly *identify* with our neighbors near and far, regardless of our cultural distinctives. This means that a proper biblical perspective on our cultural heritage should induce humility towards other cultures and times (though *not* with the relativism of much modern pluralism). The axiom that “the more we learn the less we know” is universally held by all true students of life. We must remain such students of the world who acknowledge our ignorance of God and his Word, as well as human learning and culture, regardless of the depth or breadth of our own knowledge. For the Christian, before an infinite God and his extravagant creation, humility should grow simultaneously with knowledge. This is especially so when we consider God’s creation, which is but a “drop in his bucket,” that we have barely begun to plummet its mysteries. The same can be said of human culture and their varied histories, and this should not surprise us since we have been made in the Creator’s image. Consequently, we hold that our cultural creations, studies, and endeavors bring glory to God when done to his glory. This is the context, or framework, in which we must know and understand our cultural heritage. It is thus the raw materials of our cultural language through which we convey God’s truth, perspective, and gospel.

Considering the recent increased realization among Evangelical Christians (*e.g.*, the CSM) that human culture, politics, aesthetics, history, and life in this world is, after all, important to God, it is expedient that we consider the biblical ethos in regards to human culture. As God created Adam and Eve in a garden culture of effulgent beauty and lavish complexity, we must concede that our recent Evangelical “resurgence” in the areas mentioned above is a good development. God created us *in creation*, and that intrinsically means within a human context (*i.e.* culture). This would have been as true in the sinless, prelapsarian Garden of Eden as it is for our postlapsarian cities full of degradation and sin. Consequently, in this sense, there is no truly “uncultured” person alive, regardless of their ignorance of their own heritage.

The question is how are we as Christians to live in the culture of our own historical context, while remaining faithful to God. A history of the various Christian relations to their broader cultural contexts would be in order as backdrop to these brief comments, but that is treated well enough by others. In brief, Christians have tended to swing on the pendulum from *cultural separation* to *cultural accommodation* as blithely as the grass

---

<sup>154</sup> Consider C. Malik’s stirring argument that we must intellectualize the Evangelicals and evangelize the intellectuals (similar to Machen’s argument in “Christianity and Culture”):

“This is a solemn occasion. I must be frank with you: the greatest danger besetting American Evangelical Christianity is the danger of anti-intellectualism. The mind as to its greatest and deepest reaches is not cared for enough. This cannot take place apart from profound immersion for a period of years in the history of thought and the spirit. People are in a hurry to get out of the university and start earning money or serving the church or preaching the Gospel. They have no idea of the infinite value of spending years of leisure in conversing with the greatest minds and souls of the past, and thereby ripening and sharpening and enlarging their powers of thinking. The result is that the arena of creative thinking is abdicated and vacated to the enemy. Who among the Evangelicals can stand up to the great secular or naturalistic or atheistic scholars on their own terms of scholarship and research? Who among the Evangelical scholars is quoted as a normative source by the greatest secular authorities on history or philosophy or psychology or sociology or politics? Does your mode of thinking have the slightest chance of becoming the dominant mode of thinking in the great universities of Europe and America which stamp your entire civilization with their own spirit and ideas?”

It will take a different spirit altogether to overcome this great danger of anti-intellectualism. As an example only, I say this different spirit, so far as the domain of philosophy alone is concerned, which is the most important domain so far as thought and intellect are concerned, must see the tremendous value of spending a whole year doing nothing except poring intensely over the Republic or the Sophist of Plato, or two years over the Metaphysics or the Ethics of Aristotle, or three years over the City of God of Augustine. Even if you start now on a crash program in this and other domains, it will be a century at least before you catch up with the Harvards and Tübingens and the Sorbonnes, and think of where these universities will be then! For the sake of greater effectiveness in witnessing to Jesus Christ Himself, as well as for their own sakes, the Evangelicals cannot afford to keep on living on the periphery of responsible intellectual existence.

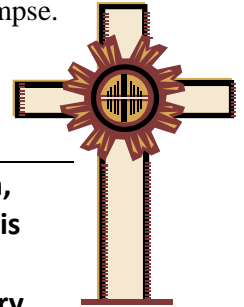
In the short time allotted to me I am only here to intimate and point out: I am not to expound. But the real meat and marrow come only in the expounding. Responsible Christians face two tasks—that of saving the soul and that of saving the mind.” (Charles Malik, *The Two Tasks*, Westchester, IL: Cornerstone Books, 1980, pp. 33-34).

<sup>155</sup> See C.S. Lewis’ essay which traverses the broad terrain of his own cultural pilgrimage and wrestling with the place of culture in the his life as a Christian (“Christianity and Culture,” *The Christian Imagination: Essays on Literature and the Arts*, ed. by Leland Ryken (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986, pp. 23-36).

waving in the path of torrential floods. Both extremes have landed us in a muddy muddle many times. I would say that both of those extremes are a wash-out, because they are traversed by unbiblical paths. In fact, each tends to force the other in a reaction-counter-reaction pattern. The reasons for this are complex, but for purposes of simplicity, let us suppose that this is due in part to our failure to appreciate culture rightly and with a godly, biblical perspective. We either live in fear, fright, and flee mode, or we live in longing, lusting, living the world's lies mode. We either make too much or too little of God's gift of culture. Yet, the Bible speaks prophetically to both concerns, to a proper creation and renewal of human culture, as well as to exhortation against accommodating idolatry with human culture. It also, in principle, does not advocate cultural separation: God's command to the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve to be fruitful and exercise dominion was in force both before and after the rebellion

The biblical material is so vast on this subject that its justice can not be given here, only a brief glimpse.

The "Cultural Mandate" is not so explicit as we often assume. And is complicated by the entrance of sin into Eden and the earth. Nevertheless, what is there to it? Why does it seem to sometimes supplant the Great Commission, and *vice versa*?



**The Reformed see the world also as the arena for the biblical drama of salvation, whereby God's good and perfect universe, which has been marred and besieged by sin, is being redeemed. To save the world, God became human in Jesus of Nazareth, to free humanity from bondage to sin and ultimately to restore creation to its unblemished glory. For the Reformed, then, God's plan of salvation goes far beyond the personal rescue of human souls; it involves society, nature, and indeed the entire cosmos. Jesus is both the Messiah of oppressed humanity and the cosmic Lord and Savior of the universe. This theology of salvation has important implications for education. Some faith traditions are inward-looking and mystical, but Calvinism is world-encompassing in its outlook. This world matters, and learning more about it honors its creator and, redeemer. People whom God has redeemed, moreover, are called to be divine agents in the great drama of redemption. They serve God's redeeming purpose when they live according to divine law and when their work anticipates the restoration of God's reign of holiness, justice, peace, and the full flourishing of nature and humanity — what the Hebrew prophets called God's *shalom*. Such work in the world, to which Reformed Christians feel called, requires much knowledge, both of the world itself and of God's purposes for it. It takes much learning.<sup>156</sup>**

## (2) *Christ and culture paradigms*

For class discussion, see:

- R. Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*
- R. Lints, *The Fabric*
- D.A. Carson, *The Gagging of God*
- R. Schlossberg, *Idols*
- D. Wells, *No Place for Truth*
- J. Stackhouse, "In the World, but . . ." *CT*, April 22, 2002 (included below)
- See S. Hague essay drawn from this section "Christianity, Culture, and Prophetic Perspectives."
- See "The Truth Project" video series of D. Tackett by Focus on the Family
- See S. Hague, "Dualism and Contemporary Divided Fields of Knowledge," on OneDrive recommended readings folder.

And the following,

Alcorn, Randy. *Christians in the Wake of the Sexual Revolution: Recovering our Sexual Sanity* (title is self-explanatory, highly recommended, popular level)

Billingsley K. Loyd *The Generation That Knew Not Josef: A Critique of Marxism and the Religious Left* (popular level)

----- *The Seductive Image: A Christian Critique of the World of Film* (popular level)

Carson, D.A. *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.

Collier, Peter and David Horowitz. *Destructive Generation: Second Thoughts About the Sixties* (a must for anyone wanting to understand the present 1990's in light of our recent past, popular level, explicit language, etc. throughout)

Fairlie, Henry. *The Seven Deadly Sins Today* (brilliant application of the word "sin" to analyze American society by a self-professed "reluctant unbeliever" who gets at the heart of the problem more honestly than many Christian writers)

Grounds, Vernon. *Evangelicalism and Social Responsibility*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1969. (an excellent must-read. Republished and available online)

<sup>156</sup> Joel A. Carpenter, "The Perils of Prosperity: Ne-Calvinism and the Future of Religious Colleges," in *The Future of Religious Colleges*, ed. By Paul J. Drove (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company), 2002, p. 187.

- Grunlan, Stephen A. "Biblical Authority and Cultural Relativity." *Christian Perspectives on Sociology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982, pp. 47-65.
- Guinness, Os. *The Dust of Death: A Critique of the Establishment and the Counter Culture—a Proposal for a Third Way*. Downer Grove: IVP, 1973.
- Hofstadter, Richard. *Anti-intellectualism in American Life*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963.
- Jones, Peter. *Spirit Wars: Pagan Revival in Christian America*. Escondido, CA: Wine Press Publishing, Main Editions, 1998.
- Kilpatrick, William Kirk. *The Psychological Seduction*. New York: Thomas Nelson, 1983.
- Lasch, Christopher. *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*. New York: Warner Books, 1979.
- Lewis, C.S. *The Abolition of Man: or Reflections on Education with Special Reference to the Teaching of English in the Upper Forms of Schools*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1975.
- , "On Obstnacy in Belief." New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1960.
- Mander, Jerry. *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*. William Morrow & Co., Reprint edition, 1978.
- Pawlowski, Cheryl. *Glued to the Tube: The Threat of Television Addiction to Today's Family*. Sourcebooks Trade, 2000.
- Postman, Neil. *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in an age of Show Business*. NY: Penguin Books, 1986.
- Reisser, Paul C. and Dale Mabe, *Examining Alternative Medicine: An Inside Look at its Benefits and Risks*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001.
- Robb, Edmund W. and Julia Robb. *The Betrayal of the Church: Apostasy and Renewal in the Mainline Denomination*. (well documented criticism of the religious left in America who have abandoned the Gospel for ideology, college level)
- Schaeffer, F.A. *Back to Freedom and Dignity*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1973.
- Schlossberg, Herbert. *Idols for Destruction: Christian Faith and Its Confrontation with American Society*. New York: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983.
- and Marvin Olasky. *Turning Point: A Christian Worldview Declaration* (a challenge to the "tidal wave of militant anti-Christian belief engulfing society, and the chaos left in its wake," popular level)
- Singer, Gregg C. *A Theological Interpretation of American History*. New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1964.
- Thomas, Cal. *Book Burning* (censorship of Christianity by the media, popular level)
- , *The Death of Ethics in America* (title is quite self-explanatory!, popular level)
- Wells, David. *God in the Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams*. Grand Rapids: IVP, 1994.
- , *No Place For Truth, or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?* Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans's Publishing Company, 1993.
- Winter, Richard. "Still Bored." *Perspectives*. St Louis: Francis Schaeffer Institute, Fall, 2002, pp. 1-6. Published excerpt from book of same title published by IVP, 1002.
- Winn, Marie. *The Plug in Drug: Television, Children, and the Family*. USA: Penguin, 2002.
- Whitehead, John. *The Stealing of America* (a lawyer's analysis of the many issues facing the Church, popular level)
- , *The Second American Revolution* (discusses "Christian and religious freedom versus a secular, humanistic elite, which increasingly controls our society," popular level)
- Wolters, Albert. M. *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

Compared to the OT prophets, there is no other body of literature in the world that provides such a universal and abiding foundation for prophetically evaluating, critiquing, decrying, censuring, calling humanity and its heart, thought-forms, lifestyles, and cultures back to God. While having said that, it must also be added that it never rests with things earthly, but its fundamental message is spiritual, for the kingdom of God is not of this world.

The question here is varied: is the prophetic witness of scripture one that intended/intends to simply critique culture, transform culture, reclaim culture, or what? Niebuhr has set the terms of discussion of much of the issue in our day, but does such a paradigm actually do justice to the full picture?

- Christ in culture (modern church, liberalism)
- Christ against culture (counterculture)
- Christ of culture (liberals, Gnostics, New Age)
- Christ in paradox with culture (Lutheran, two kingdoms in tension)
- Christ transforming culture (Reformed, grace restores)
- Christ above culture (Thomists)

These traverse the fields of *isolationism, dualism, dialecticism, accommodation, and transformation*. Can we propose that the fuller picture is one that places the focus on Christ *through* culture, if that is an appropriate metaphor. That is, not Christ *against, transforming, in paradox with, in, or of*, but rather that Christ and his people are *in*, and in this sense, part of forming culture. Though not "of" the world, Christians move through, and in, the world like leaven and yeast in dough and like salt in water and a light on a hill in a dark land, greatly impacting, challenging, transforming, and forming the world.

Further, the final *eschatos*, the *telos*, is not human culture *per se*, not its transformation, nor critique, nor destruction. Rather, although God/Christ's kingdom is truly *in* this world-culture, it is *truly not of it*. That is the essential thrust of the Bible. The transformation, *etc.*, of human culture is the inevitable *fruit* of God's/Christ's presence in human culture through those who believe and live out the truth of biblical revelation. A more biblical category might be that of *creating* and *shaping* of culture, while also transforming/renewing culture:

- Christ *creating/shaping* culture a culture of Christ-centered community that bears testimony to all of the glories of God in Christ (e.g., M.Luther, J.Calvin, esp. *The Institutes*; J.S.Bach, Handel, A.Kuyper. Creating A full list would be volumes.)<sup>157</sup>

Historically, believers have often been trend-setters, brilliant creators of culture, and preservers of worthy traditions (and also those who fight for righteousness and truth and justice to prevail). Creation or shaping of culture is not, however, the final goal of the gospel of redemption. The kingdom-restored is the goal, and that is accomplished through the redemption of humanity. This involves not only a redemption of the soul, but also renewal/restoration/reconciliation within the entire scope of God's creation (2 Cor 5:18, see also A.M.Wolters, *Creation Regained*). This is where the prophetic voice of the OT becomes so significant, for it involves the *eschatos*, the ends of God for his creation and redeemed humanity. In order to reach that *telos*, the Lord has always provided his Word which functions prophetically in all ages and places to bring about his redemption purposes. There is a complex dynamic of exhortation/encouragement throughout that prophetic voice. That prophetic voice is a crucial thread in all divine revelation, for it pre-empts idolatry through *exhortation*, while through *encouragement* it establishes kingdom-culture based on the ordinances and moral character of God himself. That is, the prophetic voice is the revelation of creation and redemption, which subsumes all cultures in its transcendent "desacralizing" of all things human. Similarly, regarding our modern "idols of history," Schlossberg has written:

Declining to sacralize any period or institution (including the church) means that Christians are free to do what is right, regardless of how radical it may seem. And refusing to sacralize history itself frees them to do what is right no matter how conservative it may seem. They do not need either to stand fast against change or to go with the tide. There is no movement or ideology, no matter what label it bears, that they are obliged, by custom or by the world's expectations, to support or to oppose. Their norms come from outside of history, and they do not submit to the judgment of those whose faith they consider to be wrongly placed. That conviction was well expressed by Ranke in his famous statement that eternity is equidistant from all points in time. None of those points is worthy of being invested with sacred aura. That freedom from contingent systems should be regarded as a foretaste of the freedom from bondage and decay, toward which Paul looked, when the whole creation would obtain "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21).<sup>158</sup>

Desacralizing history and its elements relativizes all human institutions. There is no ideology, party, movement, or organization that may declare itself to be the absolute judge and arbiter of history. The Christian is free to regard each of them in the light of the absolute that is outside of history, that relativizes and judges them, and provides a point beyond which relativity is not permitted. That absolute, and the judgment it implies, is unacceptable to a generation that seeks to relativize everything without limit, but it is the only bar to Wilson's and Lippmann's attempts to make facts and sentiments, respectively, govern the relations between human beings and thereby render everything permissible. There can be no mercy without judgment because only judgment can pronounce the final NO! to relativism's blessing on barbarity and provide people with the motivation and courage to oppose it.<sup>159</sup>

Jesus and some Pharisees



In light of a student's comment in class, "Evangelicals are often of the world, not in the world," I found Vernon Grounds comments helpful:

Various responses Evangelicals have had to the world:<sup>160</sup>

- ▶ **Quietism:** pious aloofness from social concerns of politics and economics, trusting that providence will in its time remedy oppression and injustice.

<sup>157</sup> See Machen's discussion of the *consecration* of culture ("Christianity and Culture," pp. 49ff.)

<sup>158</sup> Schlossberg, *Idols*, pp. 31-32.

<sup>159</sup> Schlossberg, *Idols*, p. 32.

<sup>160</sup> Vernon Grounds, *Evangelicalism and Social Responsibility*, Vernon Grounds (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press), 1969. See also C.Colson, *Kingdoms in Conflict*, ch. 9, "The Cross and the Crown."



- ▶ **Pietism:** pious subjectivism of the soul searching for inner purity and focused on the state of the soul with little concern for the concrete needs of neighbors.
- ▶ **Perfectionism:** pious conformism of everything to biblical norms, since anything less than absolute conformity is a compromise and betrayal of the faith.
- ▶ **Legalism:** pious avoidance of taboos, since spirituality is gaged by abstinence.
- ▶ **Nationalism:** pious patriotism (parochial, prejudicial tribalism) that reduces Christianity to a kind of folk religion (local god), denying the global genius of the gospel.
- ▶ **Pessimism:** pious pessimism, negativism, that the world and society must grow increasingly more corrupt until judgment, thus attempts to promote justice, and right wrongs, is futile.

#### Two polar orientations:<sup>161</sup>

1. *Indirect influence:* the gospel is the good news of a post-temporal salvation, addressed to the individual in sin to bring them to a right relationship with God. Any social implications of this are only incidental.
2. *Direct involvement:* the gospel is essentially social in its application and outworking in this world that includes both a restoration of the relationship between the individual and God and the restoration of all relationships in all other areas and dimensions of life. In the world, but not “of” the world.

“And indisputably the Old Testament teaches a social ethic which stands as an abiding challenge to any policy of quietistic withdrawal from the rough-and-tumble of politics. In God’s name the Old Testament demands that injustice be fought, righteousness be established in society, and the orphan, the widow, the stranger, the poor, and the oppressed be made the objects of protection and provision.” p. 11

“Unquestionably, therefore, the Old Testament insists on social justice. Passionately it affirms that the evidence of a right relationship with God is a right relationship with one’s neighbor – and this implies a willingness to struggle for his rights.” p. 16

“Religion divorced from social justice is a blasphemous mockery: true spirituality manifests itself in a concern for the needs and rights of people.” p. 12

#### Major strands of truth woven in to the fabric of the NT:<sup>162</sup>

- ❖ *Theological motif:* God is holy and loving. The glory of God is in his holy love.
- ❖ *Christological motif:* Christ reveals the sovereign creator as the Man-for-others to teach us to agape-love God and our neighbor and even our enemies: that is, to do good and to give of ourselves without limit and to revolt against all (political and religious status quo) that frustrates God’s will.
- ❖ *Anthropological motif:* humans have supernatural dignity despite their moral depravity (and need supernatural recreation in the image of God), and find fulfillment in community, fellowship, relationship.
- ❖ *Ecclesiological motif:* “the church is the community of faith and love which confesses, embodies, and implements the saviorhood and lordship of God-in-Christ” (p. 21). The church assumes unlimited liability for all its members, living under the law of love as salt and light to the world.
- ❖ *Sociological motif:* “For man, as the New Testament sees him, is being-in-the-world, the conscious nexus of a bewildering network of relationships, a being inextricably enmeshed in the processes of nature, the movements of history, and the structures of culture—all those aspects of existence which are the proper province of sociology. According to the New Testament, then, on becoming a believer a man is not abstracted from the world with its organizations and its obligations. Rather, he is realigned to the world”

<sup>161</sup> Grounds, *Evangelicalism and Social Responsibility*, p. 7.

<sup>162</sup> Grounds, *Evangelicalism and Social Responsibility*, pp. 16-25.



(p. 23).



**CHRIST THE CONTROVERSIALIST. Responsibility: Withdrawal or Involvement?** John Stott, IVP, pp. 182-188.

Christ's fraternization with outcasts was interpreted by the Pharisees as an inexcusable compromise with sin; they did not see it for what it really was, an expression of the divine compassion towards sinners.

### ***The attitude of Christian church***

Leaving the first century and entering the middle of the twentieth, it is necessary to ask what the attitude of the contemporary church is towards outsiders, outcasts. Is it Pharisaic, or is it Christian? I fear that it is often Pharisaic. That is, the church tends (has always tended) to withdraw from the world and leave it to its own devices. Evangelical churchmen have by no means been free of this tendency, although indeed it is a denial of their true character. Many examples could be given, illustrating different causes of the same general attitude. Let me try to enlarge on what I think are the four commonest.

1. ***The first is plain, unvarnished, Pharisaic self-righteousness.*** It is the attitude of the elder brother who, whether he articulates it in speech or not, thinks in his heart, 'Let the sinner stew in his own juice. He is getting what he deserves; it simply serves him right.' We do not use this outspoken language, but this is the image which we often present to the world. To the outsider the church is often not inviting but forbidding, smugly satisfied with itself and harshly condemning of others. Non-Christians sometimes say that they find more acceptance, more compassionate understanding of human foibles in the world than in the church. To them the church is lacking in warmth, even positively inhuman.

In saying this, I am not wanting the church either to condone sin or to dispense with repentance, but only to offer people what David Sheppard during his years at the Mayflower Family Centre called an 'unjudging friendship'. Otherwise we give the impression that the church is for saints, not sinners. True, it is composed of 'saints' in the New Testament sense that every Christian belongs to God and to the 'holy' ('separate') people of God. But if we are saints, we are also still sinners. Our nature is corrupt and our feet fall. We have not yet attained or become perfect. It is rather that God's sheer grace has put us on the road to becoming in character and conduct what in our standing before Him we already are, namely His. So the 'holiness' of the church is more in its position as belonging to God, in its continuous aspiration and in its final destiny, than in its present actuality. Pharisaism is a false claim to holiness, a false view of the church. It turns the church into a preserve for the impeccably respectable, a museum of rare spiritual exhibits, instead of a convalescent home for the sin-sick, a refuge for the helpless, and a common lodging-house for wayfarers.

Abbe Michonneau asks what would happen in the average local church if a militant anti-clerical Communist or a street-walker were converted. Would they be welcomed? he asks: 'Oh, we accept Mary Magdalene because she is in the Gospel, but I should like to see her walk into one of our meetings! We read about the reluctance with which the Christian Jews of Jerusalem received Saul the persecutor, when he appeared before them as a neophyte -- and we find their attitude astonishing; I should like to see him drop into one of our men's groups!'<sup>1</sup>

There is another aspect of this false view of the church. It is not only in moral terms that Pharisaism appears; it can take racial and social forms as well. And it often does. Whenever the church is more exclusive in its membership than Scripture enjoins, it has become Pharisaic. What unites the church is a common faith in Christ and a common share in the Spirit. Apart from this essential, Christians may have nothing at all in common. We differ from one another in temperament, personality, education, colour, culture, citizenship, language and in a host of other ways. Thank God we do. The church is a wonderfully inclusive fellowship, in which 'there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female'.<sup>2</sup>

In other words, in Christ we have equality. Distinction of race and rank, which are divisive influences in other communities, have no place in the Christian community. To import class distinctions or the colour bar into the Christian brotherhood is to destroy it. 'Birds of a feather flock together' may be true in nature; it is not a Christian proverb. The glory of the church is not our likeness to one another, but our unlikeness. Therefore to rebuff or cold-shoulder a brother because of the colour of his skin or the length of his hair or the accent of his speech is to betray Christ and join the Pharisees.

2. ***The second cause of the withdrawal of the church from the world is a genuine if mistaken fear of contamination.*** This is the spirit of monasticism. We should not condemn it outright, for it is the perversion of a noble ideal. It begins with a true biblical recognition that 'the world', human society which repudiates the rule of

God, or simply godless secularism, is evil. It goes on to hear, and to desire to obey, the biblical injunctions not to love the world, nor to be conformed to it, but rather to keep oneself unstained from the world.<sup>3</sup> But then it takes a wrong turning. It assumes that the only effective way to avoid conformity to worldly standards is to avoid the company of worldly people, that the way to renounce worldliness is to go out of the world. The desire is right; it is the deduction which is a grievous mistake.

In saying this we are not questioning the sincerity of all monks and hermits. Nor are we denying Christendom's debt to the monastic orders. Though some monasteries were hotbeds of sin and avarice, others in former centuries were islands of Christian culture in a turbulent sea of barbarism. As a matter of fact evangelicals, who have always been opposed to monasticism, have themselves been accused of it. And to some extent justly, I think. Thus Dr Eugene L. Smith, Executive Secretary of the New York office of the World Council of Churches, has written: 'I began to see them as the true monastics of this age, primarily concerned with the preservation of the faith in its purity in the midst of a collapsing and decadent world ? and willing to accept, sometimes without question, the discipline that this requires.'<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, we must insist that monasticism in whatever form is not a truly Christian ideal. Because it is a withdrawal from the world it is an expression of Pharisaism, whose danger Jesus seems to have envisaged when He uttered His petition: 'I do not pray that thou shouldst take them out of the world but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one' (Jn 17:15). It needs to be added that many contemporary churches Christians which have never seen the inside of a monastery are yet 'monastic' in outlook. That is, they live a life of religious seclusion, insulated from the world. They betray little if any concern for others outside their own fellowship, being preoccupied rather with the business of self-preservation. It this distortion which, more than anything else, has provoked the current fashion of 'religionless Christianity'. And indeed if by 'religion' is meant empty formalism and ecclesiastical self-absorption, it would be better for Christianity to be 'religionless'. Seen as a protest against these things, we have much sympathy with this movement. Although we would insist that 'religion' in the sense of public worship will always be a proper expression of Christianity, yet such worship is not acceptable worship if it exists on its own and the worshipers have no comparable concern to live in the world as both witnesses and servants. A church which lives for itself alone must die. It Pharisaic, not Christian. A truly Christian church exists God and for others.

3. ***A third modern form of Pharisaism, fairly so-called because its contact with the world is unbalanced has to with the relation between evangelism and social concern.*** What is God's purpose (and therefore the church's responsibility) for the world? The question was posed when the Commission World Mission and Evangelism met in Mexico City in December 1963: 'The discussion raised a theological issue which remained unresolved. Debate returned again and again to the relationship between God's action in and through the church and everything God is doing in the world apparently independently, of the Christian community. Can a distinction be drawn between God's providential action and God's redeeming action? If the restoration and reconciliation of human life is being achieve by the action of God through secular agencies, what is the place and significance of faith? If the church is to be wholly involve in the world and its history, what is the true nature of its separateness? We were able to state thesis and antithesis in this debate, but we could not see our way through to the truth we feel lies beyond this dialectic, . . . to a truer understanding of the relation between the world and the church in the purpose of God.'<sup>5</sup> Before attempting any kind of synthesis, we shall need to understand clearly both the evangelical thesis and the ecumenical antithesis.

The 'evangelical' thesis in its extremest form is that God's chief concern is the salvation of individual souls; that the church's sole responsibility is the proclamation of the gospel; and that therefore social action being the first cousin of the 'social gospel' must be firmly eschewed. When this view is caricatured, the missionary is pictured standing under a palm tree, wearing a *sola topi*, and declaiming the gospel to a group of ill-clad natives who sit respectfully round him on the floor. He sees his mission as essentially a preaching mission, he fulfils it in a rather paternalistic way, and he refuses to be distracted from it even by Christian medical and educational work. I think this exclusive emphasis on personal salvation is a good deal less common among evangelicals than our critics allow. Nevertheless, as an example of it, Philip Crowe quotes a certain R. N. Cust who argued in 1888 that missionary money 'was collected for the purpose of converting a soul, not sharpening an intellect'.<sup>6</sup> The 'ecumenical' antithesis in its extremest form is that God's chief concern is not with the church but with the world. And His action in the world, we are told, is the establishing of shalom, 'peace'. This shalom is not an individual's peace of mind or conscience, however. Professor J. G. Davies describes it as 'a social happening', which expresses the 'totality', the harmonious community, which God means society to enjoy.<sup>7</sup> According to this kind of ecumenical thinking, shalom is almost equivalent to the kingdom of God and the new humanity. Indeed, the revolutionary movements of today's world, in which the old order is giving way to the new, are regarded as God's own renewing action by which shalom, the divine rule and the new humanity are being extended. Once these ecumenical spokesmen have asserted that God is thus primarily related to the world, not the church, they go on to define the

church's mission in terms of discovering what God is doing in the world and catching up with it. 'If the goal of mission is the establishment of shalom, we are required to enter into partnership with God in history to renew society' (p. 15). Again, 'the church's task is simply to join Christ in his power struggle' (p. 53), that is, against the structures of social injustice. This is what is meant by the phrase 'let the world provide the agenda for the church'. Such a quest for better social structures replaces (in many ecumenical circles today) the quest for individual conversions, while proclamation is ousted by the kind of dialogue in which the Christian meets the non-Christian on equal terms so that they can pool their ideas. 'I would be glad', Dr Davies has written, 'if the term conversion could be dropped from the Christian vocabulary' (p. 54). And the dialogue he prefers to proclamation is both difficult and dangerous. 'If I engage in dialogue with a Buddhist,' he writes, 'and do so with openness, I must recognize that the outcome cannot be predetermined either for him or for me. The Buddhist may come to accept Jesus as Lord, but I may come to accept the authority of the Buddha, or even both of us may end up as agnostics' (p. 55). Similarly, Dr Erik Routley, reviewing in the British Weekly in November 1967 John Pellow's description of his ministry in the East End of London entitled *The Concrete Village*, could write: 'Earlier books are all in the key of old-fashioned mission ? of the church "giving" and "saving" and dispensing spiritual bounty. This one is in the key of modern mission ? of the church being a network of real relations between Christians and the equally real people who live in Stepney. Not "we've got it, you come and get it", but "here's my gift; there's yours: let's put them together and see what happens".' More drastically still, Dr E. Edmund Perry, Professor of History and Religion at Northwestern University, could tell the American Methodist Council of Evangelism in November 1965: 'I abhor the notion of individual salvation; Christianity is a societary term.'

These forms of thesis and antithesis, although at opposite extremes, yet resemble each other in that both contain an element of Pharisaism. For each side's involvement with the world is limited, unbalanced, and less than fully Christian.

The kind of evangelicalism which concentrates exclusively on saving individual souls is not true evangelicalism. It is not evangelical because it is not biblical. It forgets that God did not create souls but body-souls called human beings, who are also social beings, and that He cares about their bodies and their society as well as about their relationship with Himself and their eternal destiny. So true Christian love will care for people as people, and will seek to serve them, neglecting neither the soul for the body nor the body for the soul. As a matter of fact, it has not been characteristic of evangelicals in the past to be shy of social action, or even, when necessary, of political action. Perhaps the two most notable examples in England, both of which belong to the last century, are William Wilberforce, whose indefatigable campaign led to the abolition of the slave trade and later of slavery itself; and Anthony Ashley Cooper, the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, who introduced legislation to improve the working conditions in factories and mines, of colliers and chimney sweeps. We saw earlier how brightly Christ's compassion for outcasts shone against the dark background of the Pharisees' indifference. Still today there are neglected groups of our human society? for example drug addicts, alcoholics, the mentally sick, and the elderly ? who need what might be termed 'total care'. They challenge evangelicals to bold experiments which would combine gospel truth and practical service in a balanced expression of love. The kind of ecumenism which concentrates exclusively on questions of social justice, however, on eliminating racial discrimination, hunger, poverty and war, forgets the Christian saying which is 'sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners', and forgets also His plain commission to the church to proclaim repentance and forgiveness to all nations.<sup>10</sup> Much of its theological basis is also, to say the least, extremely questionable.

4. ***In our endeavour to find examples in the contemporary church of Pharisaic withdrawal from the world, we have so far alluded to self-righteousness, a monastic type of self-absorbed isolationism and an unbalanced emphasis on evangelism or social concern, each at the expense of the other.*** But the fourth and perhaps the commonest reason why we tend to stand aloof from the world is plain laziness and selfishness. We do not want to get involved in its hurt or dirt. Only the compassion of Christ will overcome our reluctance. Certainly the world itself has cultivated a high degree of irresponsible detachment. It continues to talk the language of Cain: 'Am I my brother's keeper?'<sup>11</sup> A frightening example happened in New York on 13 March 1964. A decent, pretty young woman of 28 called Kitty Genovese was returning home from her job as manager of a bar. It was 3.20 a.m. She had parked her car and was walking the remaining few yards to her apartment, when she was attacked by a man and stabbed. She screamed for help. Several lights went on in the apartment block, and somebody shouted from an upper window, 'Let that girl alone.' The assailant looked up, shrugged his shoulders and walked off. But as the lights went out again and nobody came to her rescue, he returned and stabbed her a second time. At her renewed screams more lights went on, windows were opened and heads looked out. So the man got into his car and drove away. But again, as nobody came to help her, he returned to stab her for the third time and kill her. Not until 3.50 a.m. did the police receive their first telephone call. By then she was dead. When the police questioned local residents, they found that at least thirty-eight respectable, middle-class, law-abiding citizens had heard this woman's screams and had

watched her being stabbed, but not one had done anything about it. She had even recognized one witness and called to him by name, but he did not reply. Why, the police asked, had these folk not come to her aid? Some confessed that they did not know. A housewife said she 'thought it was a lovers' quarrel'. A man explained without emotion, 'I was tired. I went back to bed.' But 'the word we kept hearing from the witnesses', said Police Lieutenant Bernard Jacobs, 'was "involved".' 'People told us they just didn't want to get involved.'<sup>12</sup>

Self-righteousness and snobbery, fear of contamination, a distorted perspective of soul and body, and apathy. Underlying these four causes of withdrawal there lurks a false view of God. The God revealed by Jesus Christ is a God who cares. He loves people who do not deserve to be loved. He makes His sun rise on the evil as well as the good, and sends rain on the unjust as well as the just. He made us body-souls and cares for us as body-souls. And He has taken action -- sacrificial action -- to supply a remedy for our sin. He has got Himself deeply involved in our predicament. So Jesus Christ Himself did not remain aloof, or refuse to get involved, or hide away in the safe immunity of heaven. He entered our world. He assumed our nature. He identified Himself our humanity. He exposed Himself to our temptations, sorrows and pains. He made friends with outcasts and was nicknamed 'a friend of tax collectors and sinners'<sup>13</sup> He humbled Himself to serve people in their need. He washed His disciples' feet. He never drew back from any demanding situation. He was willing finally to bear our sins and our curse in our place. And now He says to the church: 'As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.'<sup>14</sup> The church's mission reflects the Son's mission, and both express the character of the Father. What is this? He is not the Judge only, but the Saviour. He is not a rewarder of merit, but a bestower of mercy. He is the shepherd of lost sheep, the physician of sick souls, a father of infinite patience. Now He sends us out into the world like Christ -- not to run away and escape, but to enter the pain of distraught humanity, to think and feel our way into people's doubts, difficulties and distresses, to be channels of the love of God as both servants and witnesses, to bring what relief we can and the good news of salvation through Christ's death and resurrection. Such is our responsibility. Nothing but costly involvement is Christian; withdrawal, to whatever degree, is Pharisaic. 'As our Lord took on our flesh, so He calls His Church to take on the secular world.' Otherwise we do not 'take the Incarnation seriously'.<sup>1</sup>

The conclusion brings us to one of the great paradoxes of Christian living. The whole church is called (and every member of it) as much to involvement in the world as to separation from it, as much to 'worldliness' as to 'holiness'. Not to a worldliness which is unholy, nor to a holiness which is unworldly, but to 'holy worldliness', a true separation to God which is lived out in the world -- the world which He made and sent His Son to redeem. Only the power of God can deliver us from the grudging, judging attitude of the elder brother, from the false Pharisaic fear of contamination-by-contact and from the aloofness which refuses to get involved. In place of all this we need the compassion of Christ. Let the Pharisees of today's church murmur their disapproval if they will, if only they will also say of us (as their ancestors said of our Master): 'this man receives sinners and eats with them.'



Below is an example from J. Stackhouse of the "Christ in Paradox" model, "In the World, but . . ."

# In the World, but . . .

Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture* is 50 years old—and still has something wise to say to evangelicals. by JOHN G. STACKHOUSE JR.

**T**HE THEOLOGICAL WORLD OWES a great debt to Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Texas, which invited Yale professor H. Richard Niebuhr to deliver the lectures that resulted in *Christ and Culture* (1951), one of the most influential Christian books of the past century. Perhaps no other book has dominated an entire theological conversation for so long. Niebuhr's famous "five types" continue to serve as the launching point for most discussions of the interaction of Christianity and culture.

To mark this 50th anniversary, HarperSanFrancisco has reissued *Christ and Culture* with a winsome foreword by Martin Marty, a lengthy and strangely defensive preface by ethicist James Gustafson (Niebuhr's student and friend), and a bonus essay, "Types of Christian Ethics" (1942), in which Niebuhr began to work out his analytical framework.

Like Christians of other persuasions, evangelicals have often used Niebuhr's book as a point of departure to define how we should—and should not—interact with contemporary culture. Evangelicals have inhabited all of Niebuhr's types. And, given the varied circumstances in which evangelicals have sought to serve Christ, each type can be seen to offer its own integrity—despite Niebuhr's own sometimes jaundiced view of this or that option.

Niebuhr's first type, "Christ against culture," characterizes the sectarian impulse. In "Types of Christian Ethics," Niebuhr calls this the "new law" type. Christians in this mode see the world outside the church as hopelessly corrupted by sin. The kingdom of God comes to supersede it—currently in the purity of the church, and ultimately in the messianic kingdom. God calls Christians to "come out from among them and be ye separate" in communities of holiness. Mennonites, Baptists, Christian Brethren, Pentecostals, and most types of fundamentalists have included individuals and congregations that fit this model.

At the other end of the typology lies the model of "Christ of culture," in which the absolute conflict of one against the other gives way to a harmony between them. Christians in this mode seek to discern and then champion the highest moral and spiritual common ground between the teachings of Christianity and the noblest values of contemporary culture. Niebuhr identified this model with Germany's "Culture Protestantism" of the late 19th and early 20th century, with American Whigs such as Thomas Jefferson, and with Victorian liberals such as John Stuart Mill. Evangelicals

have manifested this type whenever we have closely associated God and country and assumed that our nations are Christian, or "almost," so that with enthusiasm and effort we can realize that ideal.

### THREE MEDIATING POSITIONS

Between these two extremes lie three mediating positions. The first is "Christ above culture," the outlook of Thomas Aquinas and of many Roman Catholics ever since. In this view, all that is good in human culture is a gift from God. But to be fully realized, this good requires Christian revelation and the mediation of the church. Thus Aristotle's insights can be received joyfully by the Christian, even as they are recognized as needing Christian theology to fulfill them. Such truths as the Trinity and the Atonement are accessible only via revelation, just as the sacramental life of the church provides blessings for us that no amount of non-

Christian culture can produce.

This view is uncommon among evangelicals but not altogether unknown. Consider, for example, evangelical missionaries who emphasize anticipations of Christian revelation in the beliefs of non-Christian peoples. Evangelical intellectuals who affirm the essential congeniality of the gospel with this or that non-Christian author—as the apologists of the early church allied themselves with Plato—might also fit in this category.

The most common mediating position in evangelical circles is Niebuhr's "Christ transforming culture." Puritans in 17th-century England; Puritans in 18th-century New England; 19th-century North American revivalists trying both to evangelize and to reform society; and the late 19th-century Dutch neo-Calvinists—all of these demonstrate its traits. Society is to be entirely converted to Christianity. Business, the arts, the professions, family life, education, government—nothing is outside the purview of Christ's dominion, and all must be reclaimed in his name.

The fifth option in Niebuhr's scheme is the one that he has the most trouble making clear. He calls it "Christ and culture in paradox," and associates it with Martin Luther, Ernst Troeltsch, and (in "Types of Christian Ethics") his brother Reinhold.

In this type, Christians live within a strong tension. They believe that God has ordained worldly institutions, and that they must work within those institutions as best they can. At the same time, however, they affirm that God's kingdom has

Ideas with Consequences

penetrated the world here and now. Thus, under God's providence, they tread a path that can seem crooked and unclear, trying to honor what is divinely ordained in culture (such as family bonds, the rule of law, and deference to legitimate authority) while also living out the distinct values of the kingdom of God as best they can without compromise.


Furthermore, sin mars all of our efforts, evil twists them, and God works in mysterious ways behind the scenes. Thus Christians in this mode are never free of suspicion yet never lacking hope: suspicion that apparently good things are compromised by sin in this not-yet-messianic dispensation, and hope that God nonetheless is working out his good pleasure through all of the means—worldly and churchly—that he has been pleased to ordain and sustain. In this in-between time, even openly evil governments may yet be instituted by God (Rom. 13:1–5); we are told to pay our taxes, though we know full well that the money will be used at least in part for ungodly purposes (Rom. 13:6–7).

It is this model of trying to cooperate with *all* that God is doing in the world, of bringing *shalom* everywhere we can while recognizing that we will rarely succeed in making *only* peace until Jesus returns, that North American evangelicals perhaps should consider more fully today.

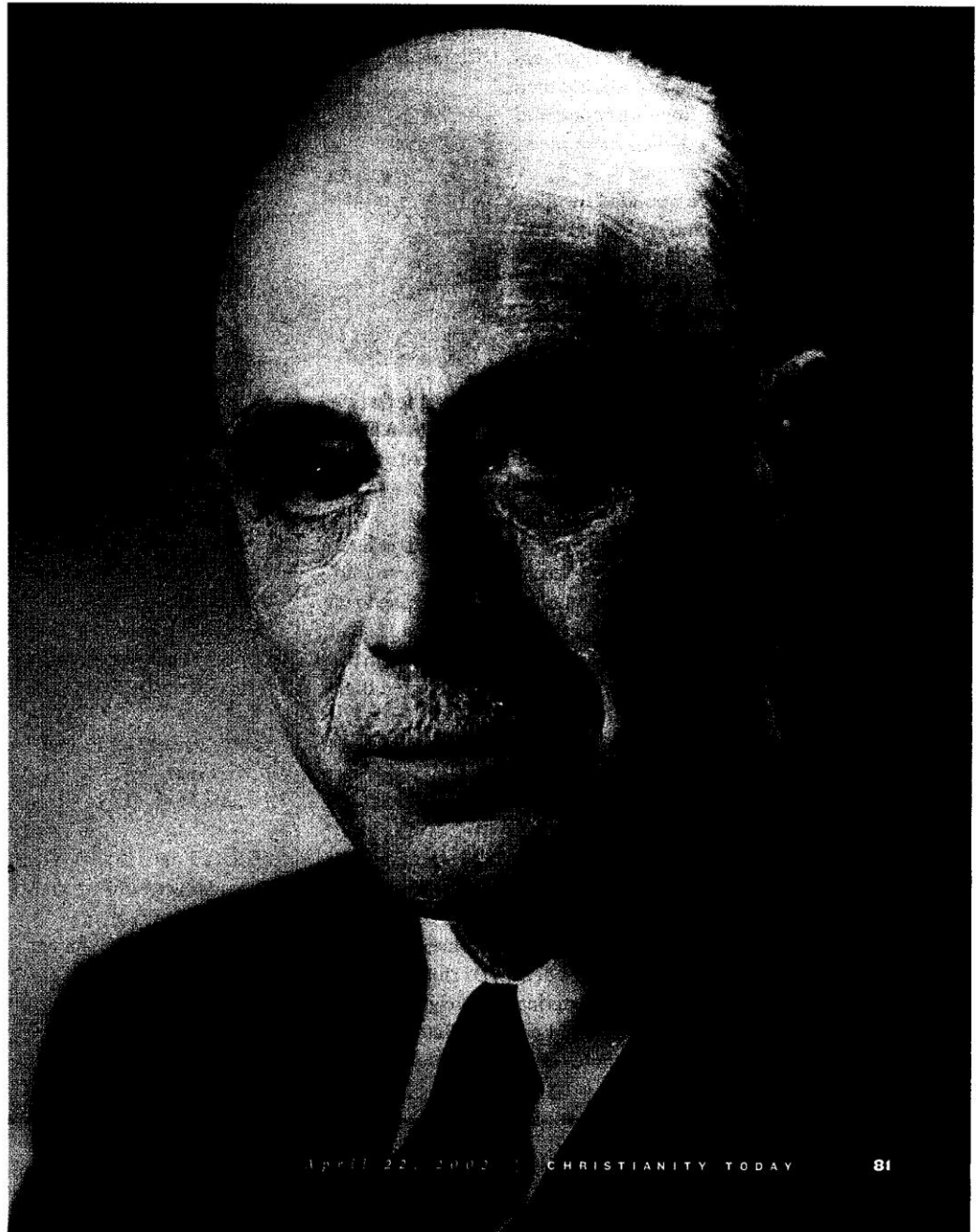
Evangelicalism generally eschews paradox. We prefer the clarity of binary opposition, and there are many such pairs in the Bible: light versus darkness, good versus evil, the kingdom of God versus the kingdom of Satan, the church versus the world, the flesh versus the Spirit. Yet we are Bible people, and we must listen also to Scriptures that speak of the kingdom itself as a “mixed field” (Matt. 13:24–30), full of wheat and tares, and of the Christian life as being in the world but not of it.

Yes, we must strive for holiness, as the first type asserts. Yes, we must affirm with the second type what is genuinely good in any culture. Yes, we must rejoice in opportunities to build on good things God has already bequeathed to this or that society. And yes, we must

seize every opportunity to improve, transform, and even convert this or that part of the world to the glory of God.

Yet we might also recognize that God has called us to lives of difficult paradox, of painful negotiation between conflicting and competitive values, of seeking to cooperate with God wherever he is at work. Such a position, full of ambiguity and irony, is also full of faith and hope: “in all these things we are more than conquerors” (Rom. 8:37). This is a faith that God can be trusted and honored even when the way is dark and confusing, and a hope that God works all things together for good. 

**John G. Stackhouse Jr.** is the Sangwoo Youtong Chee Professor of Theology and Culture at Regent College, Vancouver, Canada, and editor of *No Other Gods Before Me? Evangelicals Encounter the World's Religions* (Baker Academic).



### (3) *Populist dissent, prophetic dissent, reformation, and the reclaiming culture model*

On *cultural conservatism*, consider also the notion of *restorationism*. Conservatism for conservatism sake is nothing more than the preservation of past forms for the sake of preservation. This does not even begin to characterize the biblical and prophetic model.

*Cultural mandate* model (cultural conservatism, Theonomy?) Noah and Adam? This relates to the *creation-mandate* and the *creation ordinances*<sup>163</sup>:

1. Monogamous marriage.
2. Procreation of offspring as a fruit of their monogamous marriage.
3. Replenishing the earth.
4. Subduing the earth.
5. Dominion over all creation.
6. Work week.
7. Sabbath rest.
8. “Negative” prohibition concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The cultural mandate is generally more narrowly understood from the Genesis command from God to have dominion over the earth. Nevertheless, the *creation ordinances* are the comprehensive framework for the cultural mandate. Since they were in force prior to the rebellion, they give us a clear rationale for extending them to all places and times.

This brings us to questions of our relation to the cultures of our world, to what our call is in relation to them. The fruit of redemption, of God’s kingdom coming into this world, naturally is one of “redeeming the culture” in part. That is, few can deny that the blessings of the gospel have been immeasurable in every sense. Yet, the deep riches of that same gospel bless the world largely because the source and goal is the kingdom of God itself, not the cultures of humanity. The debate among Christians as to the relation between the “Kingdom of God” and the “kingdom of man” is not easily resolved in our non-theocratic New Covenant era. That is, does the prophetic voice destroy, conserve, transform, renew, or create? In the least, we can agree that the prophetic voice tears down the *stats quo* of rebellious opposition to God, while it also builds what honors him and advances his creation and redemption purposes.

“The modern church would be well served by a reminder that the secular character of modern life is a modern invention and a modern heresy.”<sup>164</sup>

The irony of the (infamous) *Time* magazine cover way back in 1966 that posted the [truly] dumbest question ever asked, “Is God Dead?,” is that the secular world that imagined such a question does not exist, for God is present in every sphere of reality, sovereign over, and sustaining, every atom. Rather, the “secular” world is dead, since it never truly existed.

Part of this process is understanding the role that God plays in the conversation – not only the manner in which we hear what he has to say but also the nature of who it is that is speaking to us. The theologian’s hope lies not in an ability to remove our cultural blinders so that we might see God but in the power of God to break through our cultural blinders and thereby enable us to see ourselves more clearly by the radiance of his glory. Strategically, this begins with conversion, but it continues most forcefully as we immerse ourselves in God’s story, as we begin to think in the categories of God’s revelation. This process reaches fruition when we adopt a prophetic stance within our culture. This entails understanding our culture and speaking to it in a language that is both intelligible to it and critical of it, a process that is bound to be painful, for it will inevitably remind us of our own depravity.<sup>165</sup>

“A theological framework ought effectively to situate us in redemptive history and by doing so provide the grounds for us to remain prophetic within our unique cultural setting.”<sup>166</sup>

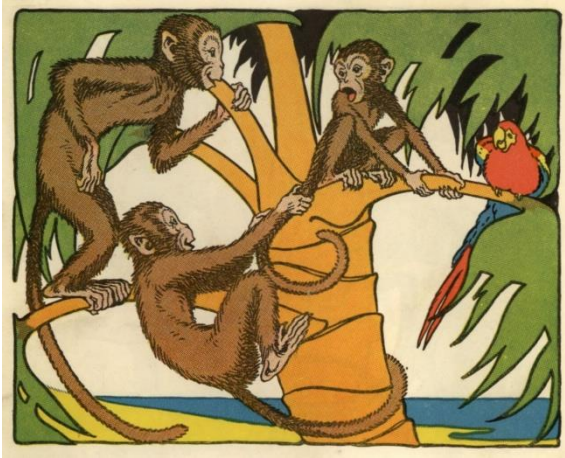
In a helpful study, Bruce Nicholls has suggested that a prophetic stance toward modern culture includes three essential elements: a call to deculturalize distorting accretions to biblical faith in the believing community, a call to judge and

<sup>163</sup> See John Murray, *Principles of Conduct: Aspects of Biblical Ethics*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957.

<sup>164</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 101.

<sup>165</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 106.

<sup>166</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 262.



condemn those elements of culture that are contrary to the Word of God in the larger culture, and a call to re-create and transform cultural elements that are consistent with God's revelation.

Modern prophets can accomplish this threefold task only if they understand the nature of the popular culture surrounding them and accord it a significant theological treatment. Evangelical theology must neither ignore popular culture nor succumb to its subversive pressures. Although a determination of what constitutes an appropriate prophetic stance toward that culture will be extremely complex, it is absolutely necessary that evangelicals expend the effort to make the determination and then to adopt the stance.

In order to discuss this complicated task, it may be beneficial to isolate dominant patterns in popular culture that have a direct theological bearing on it. A fuller treatment of this concern would require much more than I can present here, but I hope that the beginnings of a paradigm may

emerge from what follows. Three fundamental values of modern Popular culture will serve as the filters for the following discussion: cultural pluralism, confessional simplicity, and the cult of the self.<sup>167</sup>

Three fundamental values of modern culture:

- ◆ *cultural pluralism*
- ◆ *confessional simplicity*
- ◆ *cult of the self*

“One cannot assume a prophetic stance in modern culture simply by opposing its dominant themes. It is true that part of the power of the prophetic voice lies in its distance from the mainstream values of the culture, and yet the underlying value of popular dissent in America soon transforms distant voices into mainstream voices, and in becoming mainstream the voice inevitably loses its prophetic character.”<sup>168</sup>

What is the difference between *populist dissent* and *prophetic dissent*? Populist dissent typically results in established dissent (*status quo*), the authority of tradition, which results in further dissent from the *status quo*. Typically such dissent is based more on human foibles, desires, rebellion, discontent, distrust, and cynicism than it is based on the redemptive and liberating truth of biblical revelation which can provide a truly prophetic stance.<sup>169</sup>

“The prophets kept one eye firmly on the requirements of the law, and the other on the relationships and events of their own society. They dismissed the rationalizations and excuses offered by the political and religious establishment fronting for the idols and insisted that the nation return to the standards of God’s law. That is the model the Christian church ought be following now.”<sup>170</sup>

This is well said, yet I wonder if Schlossberg places the burden too much on the world at large, rather than directing his charge particularly to the church itself. True prophetic dissent is based on the final and absolute authority of God's revelation, and though it may reject certain traditions of authority (as does populist dissent), this is not essential to its message or success, for this is not the engine which drives it.

Lints traces populist dissent: PEP

populist dissent ⇔ establishment ⇔ populist dissent

"The PEP pattern occurs much more quickly today in evangelical circles because of the deep attachment to the central cultural force of television."<sup>171</sup>

That is, in other words to say that dissent quickly gets *co-opted* by the establishment and becomes the new *status quo*, especially if it can produce a profitable new line of footwear or jewelry, or spawn a profitable new fad frenzy.

Lints discusses the need for the "demythologization of modern culture."

<sup>167</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 322.

<sup>168</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 326.

<sup>169</sup> See C. Colson, "Channeling the Populist Rage," *CT*, 2010.

<sup>170</sup> Schlossberg, *Idols*, p. 306.

<sup>171</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 111.



“The myths of modern culture are exposed and unmasked for what they are only in the light of divine revelation.”<sup>172</sup>

Yet, what is even more needed is the *de-idolization*, de-Canaanization, of modern culture in the church. Perhaps modern myths are the same as modern idols. Indeed, they are part and parcel to the modern lies we so blithely believe, and in that sense they can be considered synonymous. The most serious and vexing problem is not national or international myths and idols, but their insidious presence in the heart of the Christian camp. Christian complicity in the sins of apostate cultures is more grievous than the sins of the world, as it was also so in OT times.

**Final questions:**

- See Augustine, *Kingdom of God*.
- See Vatican II Catechism on culture.
- See VanGemeren, *Interpreting*, pp. 84-85, 95.

“As long as the Spirit is operating in and through the Word, the community of God’s people lives in the tension between *stability* and *adaptability*. Each prophetic writing challenges the *stability* of the community.”<sup>173</sup>

- Does the prophetic word destroy the social order or revitalize it? The early revivals in America (J. Edwards) posed a threat to the social order. Indeed, the prophetic word does always threaten the pagan *status-quo*, yet it is not always in essence a threat to the social order.
- What was the pattern and model of the Reformation and reformers? Theocracy? Was the church-state idea part and parcel to their culture? The Puritans indeed were sometimes guilty of not seeing any distinction between the church and the state, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of man.
- How does the prophetic voice speak against corrupt structures, injustices, the pagan *status quo*, and theological error and apostasy when it is implicated in them?
- How does the prophetic voice call the people of God back to God when it is enmeshed in the same paganism as the pagans?

The principle of reformation as *always reforming*: (*the tripartite[triune] foundation: sola scriptura, sola fide, sola gratia*) ***Semper Reformanda - Always Reforming. Ecclesia reformata semper reformanda est ~ "the church that is reformed is always reforming."*** Reformed means to *be reforming* in personal sanctification, doctrine, life, obedience, and ecclesiology. That is, it is the ideal of the reformers that we would ever seek to return to and be faithful to the Word of God, acknowledging our persistent failure to do so perfectly or even sufficiently at any level. Contrary to some “Reformed folk,” the goal is not “conservatism for conservatism sake,” it is to be conformed to the Word of God for God’s glory. This is often more radical than conservative, for we seek to bring every thought, word, and deed captive to Christ. We seek to preserve biblical faith in our systems and confessions, yet the proper goal is *empowerment* of the church to believe, live, and proclaim that faith. We do not seek entrenchment, rather we seek the *advancement* of the kingdom.

Reformed often also means “that which is not Roman Catholic in doctrine,” and there is much truth in that regarding soteriology and ecclesiology. Yet, also significantly, the Reformation break with the Medieval notion of *sacred/secular* spheres was a great advance in history to *preserve* the biblical understanding of the Lordship of God over *all* of life’s particulars and for all people. This break never came altogether or completely, but its rejection can be credited with the amazing advances in the modern world wherever believers have embraced their own Christian call as their call to ministry in the priesthood of all believers: work, honoring to God, is sanctified, and importantly marriage is sanctified.

<sup>172</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 116.

<sup>173</sup> VanGemeren, *Prophetic Word*, p. 85.

## b) Technology and eschatology

Today, technology is “the principle source of eschatological hope.”<sup>174</sup>

Humanist eschatology involves the perfectibility of humanity through technology. Or, the perfectibility of technology in itself, and this becomes the means of having some form of hope for



humanity. We moderns find it very difficult to accept that previous generations could actually have gotten anything right, or that they could have done anything better than us, simply because we have known immense technological advances. May I remind us that in the most ancient of times, complex mathematics were known and applied. We still do not even know how things like the pyramids were built. The point here is simply that the hope for many moderns rests unacknowledged, insidiously, in human technology. This hope works like an unseen guest, undermining the possibility of a biblical eschatology to truly take hold, for it is much easier to walk by sight than faith, to live according to the seen realm than the unseen. An empirical age calls us to



build the kingdom on earth, to raise the towers of Babel to heaven – simply because it can be done. I do not intend to be anti-technological here, but rather remind us that the hope of vast numbers of people resides in an amorphously undefined hope in human invention and technology. This is often not articulated, thus I will call it a *practical eschatology* or *pragmatic eschatology*. The working assumptions of people that prevent them from conceptualizing eschatology for humanity in biblical terms, is in essence an idolatrous eschatology.

The fall brought the curse and the curse brought death and exclusion from the tree of life. In all subsequent history, humans have longed for that life forbidden them (cf. sixties song about Woodstock, “get back to the garden”). The only hope of such, however, must rest in the *eschatos* of God, his plans for redeeming his lost people. None of us wants to experience physical death, therefore many of us have an unacknowledged working assumption (hope) that medicine and technology will eventually add indefinite numbers to our years. Perhaps I am over stating my case, but I believe that we have numerous working assumptions that are a form of human eschatology which is not biblical.<sup>175</sup>



Another aspect of technology is the belief that one can actually improve one’s *self* through various “technologies,” whether spiritual, physical or psychological technologies. This has deep roots in American individualism and pragmatism, that both fuel the false notion that we can and must “improve on ourselves.” It also has Christian ideas that add to the fire, the ideas of self-examination and spiritual growth (sanctification). Yet, without the Spirit of God working those changes, it is simply another human work of the flesh to build another tower of Babel. Much New Age thought and practice relies on this deep modern quest to improve on the self, and has become mainstream in our era when *Self* magazine is a hot item on the newsstands. Also, the massive proliferation of ideas of self-help, pop-psychology, and integrationist psychology found throughout the Christian community are indicators of how we too have come to accept the basic tenets of the *technology of the self*. As Lints astutely points out, that in our age of subjectivism, the new theodicy of our times focuses on *unhappiness*. Our theodicy tries to resolve the dilemma of our unhappiness: “hedonism baptized with Christian rhetoric.”<sup>176</sup> Indeed, one could argue that Subjectivism itself is the new religion on the block, what Hofstadter calls “the confusion between religion and self-advancement.”

The literature of inspiration is of course by no means confined to America; it flourishes wherever the passion for personal advancement has become so intense that the difference between this motive and religious faith has been obscured. There has always been in Christian civilization a conviction that the world of business and that of religion must somehow be related, if only through their hostility or tension, since both have to do with morals, character, and discipline. At first, the negative relation was most clear: medieval prohibitions or limitations on usury expressed the conviction that it was a part of the task of the Church in the world to restrain economic exploitation. Later, the Puritan doctrine of the calling suggested another more

<sup>174</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 107.

<sup>175</sup> See Ethics syllabus on bio-ethics, neuro-theology, trans-humanism, nano-technology, and techno-sapianism.

<sup>176</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 326.

positive relationship: diligence in business was one of the ways of serving God. Success or failure in business might then be a clue as to an individual's spiritual condition. But over the years this relationship gradually became reversed. The distinction between service to God and service to self broke down. Whereas business had been an instrument in religious discipline, one of the various means of serving God, religious discipline now became an instrument in business, a way of using God to a worldly end. And whereas men had once been able to take heart from business success as a sign that they had been saved, they now took salvation as a thing to be achieved in this life by an effort of will, as something that would bring with it success in the pursuit of worldly goals. Religion is something to be *used*. Mr. Peale tells his readers that his work demonstrates "a simple, workable technique of thinking and acting." It "emphasizes scientific spiritual principles which have been demonstrated in the laboratory of personal experience." "The best place to get a new and workable idea for your business is in the type of church service described in this chapter." "If you will practice faith, you can be healed of ill-will, inferiority, fear, guilt, or any other block which impedes the flow of recreative energy. Power and efficiency are available to you if you will believe." <sup>6A</sup> *Guide to Confident Living* (New York, 1948), pp. 55.<sup>177</sup>

Another major category would be the general hope in *progress*. This touches on the technological, but is much broader for it often is underscored by an unacknowledged evolutionary assumption that all things are slowly improving through natural selection (or genetic/social engineering). We also tend to think that our brilliant generation has jumped a few millennia in the evolutionary progress.

At this juncture it is prudent to recall the biblical injunction: "When you enter the land of the promise do not say 'my hands have . . .'"

Deut 8:10 When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. <sup>11</sup> Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. <sup>12</sup> Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, <sup>13</sup> and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, <sup>14</sup> then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. <sup>15</sup> He led you through the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. <sup>16</sup> He gave you manna to eat in the desert, something your fathers had never known, to humble and to test you so that in the end it might go well with you. <sup>17</sup> You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." <sup>18</sup> But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today. <sup>19</sup> If you ever forget the LORD your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed. <sup>20</sup> Like the nations the LORD destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the LORD your God.

The prophets of God called Israel and Judah back to remembrance of just such injunctions. This text serves as an excellent background to the heart of the prophetic message through the quintessential prophet Moses. Further, the prophets of the OT were in part called to undo the unbiblical eschatologies Israel had accommodated, for they had lost sight of the purposes of God, the redemptive ways of God, as well as the purpose of their existence, and had sought their hope in the false gods of Baal-technology and Canaanite ingenuity, and human progress. They also had lost their way in listening to the *vox populi* (see VanGemerens's comments, p. 140)

### c) ***Religion and revelation: Realpolitik and Vox populi***<sup>178</sup>

➤ See on ANE religion, pp. 638-655.

The distinction between revelation and religion is fundamental in understanding the nature of the prophetic role and in interpreting the prophetic message.<sup>179</sup>

Any deviation from the way of revelation, slight as it might be, degrades revelation into religion.<sup>180</sup>

Religion is *open* to every available means (political, economic, social) to bring harmony among people, within society, and within nature, but it is *closed* to revelation.<sup>181</sup>

#### ***Religion attempts:***

1. to *maintain* harmony between humans and the gods
2. to *explain* what has happened
3. to *manipulate* nature, gods, humans through divination (see pp. 149-150f.)

<sup>177</sup> Hofstadter, *Anti-intellectualism*, p. 265. See his discussion of the "curious cult of religious practicality" in Christian "inspirational literature" in R. Hofstadter, *Anti-intellectualism in American Life*, "Self-Help and Spiritual Technologies," pp. 253-271.

<sup>178</sup> Derived largely from VanGemerens's *Prophetic Word*.

<sup>179</sup> VanGemerens, *Prophetic Word*, p. 19.

<sup>180</sup> VanGemerens, *Prophetic Word*, p. 20.

<sup>181</sup> VanGemerens, *Prophetic Word*, p. 24.

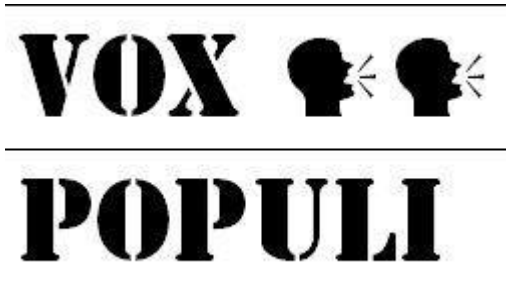
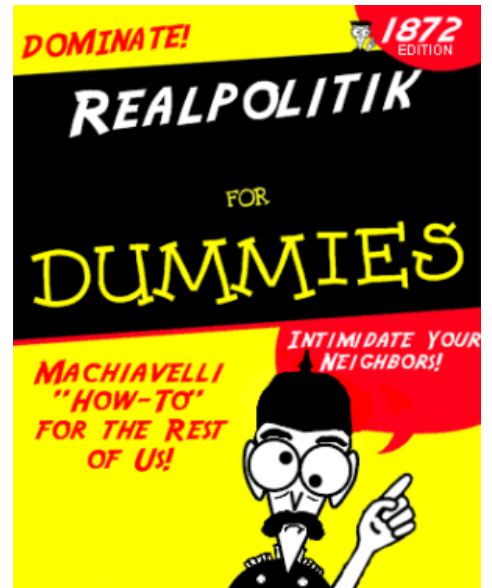
4. to *perpetuate* human structures on earth
5. to *preserve* human structures and the status quo (and sometimes to critique them)
6. to *establish* a system of meaning and purpose based on general revelation and human ideas (sometimes biblical revelation is syncretized)
7. to *suppress* biblical revelation and expression

**Religion uses:**<sup>182</sup>

1. **Realpolitik:** power-politics, “a pragmatic application of any technique by which an individual or group can maintain or enhance life. It is manipulative, works at the expense of others, and undermines the essential nature of revelation.”<sup>183</sup> Consider, for example, political activism without biblical motives and strategies. The bottom-line here is the prevalence of a *pragmatism* at the expense of others. *Realpolitik* often works in conjunction with religion (divination, magic, manipulation (see p. 638). It has often liaised with the church in an unholy alliance of Canaanized Christianity. See J. Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*; Langland’s *Piers Plowman*
2. **Vox populi:** the “voice of the people” – the establishment of a “sacred alliance of relative values” that forms the basis of society (laws, politics, traditions), while rejecting the absolutes of biblical revelation. Human traditions, as opposed to revelation, are the foundation of *Realpolitik*. *Vox populi* also often works in conjunction with religion. Popular expectations soften the demands of the radical standards of biblical revelation. This is akin to allowing the *status quo* to govern life, attitudes, values, policies, etc. Post-modernism is a form of this, in so far as it advocates a *community based* foundation for values, truth, and meaning (See the movie, *The Waking of Ned Divine*).

The fundamental basis of both *Realpolitik* and *vox populi* is *syncretism*. The context of *Realpolitik* is the *vox populi*, although power-politics may depart from the “voice of the people” in divergent ways when expedient.

We could discuss here the differences between theocracy, monarchy, and democracy in regards to both *Realpolitik* and *vox populi*, as to whether any system is more or less corruptible than another, and concerning the extent to which any system may be more inclined to one or the other. Top-down societies might be more inclined to a corrupt *Realpolitik*, whereas bottom-up societies may be more inclined to a corrupt *vox populi*. The voice of the masses, indeed, may be no more likely to be godly than a religious/political central government, established church, or proletarian dictatorship. Needless to say, there is no rule here, for corruption of either will influence the other.



<sup>182</sup> VanGemeran, *Prophetic Word*, pp. 25f.

<sup>183</sup> VanGemeran, *Prophetic Word*, p. 26.

ANDY CROUCH

# Glittering Images

*A profound Christian rethinking of power is overdue.*

**B**ARBARA NICOLOSI BELIEVES in the future of Christians in Hollywood. A Catholic veteran of the film industry who founded the screenwriting program Act One, she speaks enthusiastically of the time when believers will be well-enough represented in the ranks of studio executives to influence which films and TV series get the green light. "Right now, there simply aren't enough talented Christians who have paid their dues," she told a group of cultural-creative types in a coffeehouse near Washington, D.C., last fall. "But within five to ten years, we will see Christians in Hollywood with real power."

A young man wearing a beret waved his hand. "When you say 'Christians with power,'" he said, "I get really nervous."

"Well, you're here in Washington," Nicolosi responded. "Does it bother you that Christians have political power?"

"Yes it does, actually!" he responded—and a dozen others nodded intently in agreement.

Strange. No one would have been in that room, after all, if they didn't care quite a bit about power. Nicolosi filled a room and held our attention not just because of what she knew—though her knowledge of popular film and television is encyclopedic—but also whom she knew. In the currency of Hollywood, first-name anecdotes about Barbara Hall, producer of the spiritually attuned *Joan of Arcadia*, or Mel Gibson, director of *The Passion of the Christ*, are as good as gold.

Just as strange was the fact that many people in that room now have, or will soon acquire, significant power of their own. They aren't in Washington by accident—they have pursued a path of education, training, and apprenticeship designed to give them access to culturally influential vocations and locations.

Indeed, 50 years of evangelical efforts to reverse fundamentalism's cultural withdrawal have borne fruit. Christian colleges and universities, along with the ministries that are thriving in the penumbra of secular institutions, have nurtured a generation that takes cultural engagement for granted. Fundamentalists asked, Should we watch movies?—and usually, wary of worldliness, answered *no*. Evangelicals asked, What kind of movies should we watch?—and usually, wary of irrelevance, answered *anything without sex*. But now believers are asking, What kind of movies should we *make*? That's a question about power.

As Nicolosi's audience made clear, even many Christians who are acquiring power are ambivalent about it. The fourth century historian Eusebius could celebrate the life of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, with a heroic biography, conveniently glossing over small matters like the emperor's post-conversion murder of his wife and firstborn son. But we are millennia away from the euphoria that accompanied that first Christian ascent to cultural dominance. And in a post-Christian world, dominance is hardly in the cards. To acquire cultural influence one must cultivate numerous allies, most of them indifferent to faith, not to mention genuflect before consumer desires.

So a profound Christian rethinking of power—its possibilities and dangers—is overdue. Nearly 20 years ago, writer Richard Foster put the issue in

**Even many Christians who are acquiring power are ambivalent about it.**

context in *Money, Sex, and Power*. Each of these things, he observed, is fundamental to life, potentially full of blessing, and also potentially deceptive. Today there are sermon series and ministries to help Christians be stewards of their money. Store shelves groan under the weight of Christian books on sex. But Christian reflection on power generally stops with business-friendly topics like "leadership." Cultural power often accrues less from leadership than from connections, talent, and fame—not to mention money and sex. (There's a reason that the top-grossing star of *What Women Want* was able to make a movie about the Passion.)

Indeed, Christians who want to think more deeply about these things might well go to Mel Gibson's movie, whose controversy-ridden existence indicates the extent, and the limits, of Christian cultural power today. The *Passion of Christ*, after all, reminds us of the many ways that power can go wrong—a nervous procurator with his garrison of occupying troops, a conniving royal family with paper-thin claims to legitimacy, religious leaders bent on preserving pious decorum amid precarious alliances.

At the center of it all we find a thirty-something man with considerable political savvy, a gifted storyteller with a keen eye for shrewd symbolic acts. Moreover, he has the divine power to multiply loaves of bread, heal the sick, and raise the dead. Yet his most decisive, powerful act is not an action at all, but a passion—suffering the brunt of power itself, grieving, forgiving, waiting. If Christians are sometimes called to acquire power, we should probably begin by watching our Lord abandon it. ©

### d) OT prophets as reformers and reformers as prophets

**“ . . . IN THE PRESENT CLIMATE, THE LEVEL OF THEOLOGICAL INTEREST AN ACUITY AMONG LAY PEOPLE WOULD PROHIBIT A REFORMATION OF THE SAME KIND FROM TAKING PLACE.”<sup>184</sup>**

Consider the long list of movements in this century that sought to bring about a reformation or revival. In Judges to Esther, we considered the foundation of revival to be reformation, repentance and return to orthodoxy. This can truly only occur through the work of God's Spirit and the instrument of God's Word.

➤ See, for example, C. Macintyre's newspaper *The Beacon* and books from that era such as *The New Reformation*; See today *Modern Reformation* magazine (edited by M. Horton of CURE, Christians United for Reformation), The Center for Church Reformation.

The OT prophets often brought reforms to the nation of Israel, yet more often they only highlighted Israel's guilt through the nation's duplicitous reception of the word of the prophets. It might even be proposed that though the goal was essentially reformation, it was more decidedly *redemption*. God's word through the prophets was not “to return empty” to him. It was to reclaim and redeem that which was lost. It was to proclaim the real grace of God that brought real reconciliation and healing between the people of God and their God. That word was not intended simply to reform societal, religious, or personal forms or structures, or even simply to remove moral corruptions; it was to restore God's people to a relationship with God that was truly God glorifying and gospel testifying.

In biblical terms, *reformation* is not cultural conservatism, as is sometimes the impression communicated by evangelical Christians today: “if only we would return to a former ‘Christian century, era, time, form,’ then the impending judgment would be contravened.” Sadly, this often contains more cultural conservatism than is acknowledged, and can result in something even deadlier than the culture so feared to be encroaching upon us. In a sense, we are never going to escape our culture, and it seems the greater the effort, the greater the conformity [the enemy often comes from behind, catching us unawares]. Yet, by God's grace, and grace alone we can know sanctification in us. And, as we are salt and light, our culture may see living testimonies to that grace of God we proclaim along with the prophets of God.

**It is nothing profound to reiterate the adage that reformation must begin with me, and that must begin with redemption and continue through sanctification.**



The Reformed see the world also as the arena for the biblical drama of salvation, whereby God's good and perfect universe, which has been marred and besieged by sin, is being redeemed. To save the world, God became human in Jesus of Nazareth, to free humanity from bondage to sin and ultimately to restore creation to its unblemished glory. For the Reformed, then, God's plan of salvation goes far beyond the personal rescue of human souls; it involves society, nature, and indeed the entire cosmos. Jesus is both the Messiah of oppressed humanity and the cosmic Lord and Savior of the universe. This theology of salvation has important implications for education. Some faith traditions are inward-looking and mystical, but Calvinism is world-encompassing in its outlook. This world matters, and learning more about it honors its creator and, redeemer. People whom God has redeemed, moreover, are called to be divine agents in the great drama of redemption. They serve God's redeeming purpose when they live according to divine law and when their work anticipates the

<sup>184</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 146, fn. 11.

**restoration of God’s reign of holiness, justice, peace, and the full flourishing of nature and humanity — what the Hebrew prophets called God’s *shalom*. Such work in the world, to which Reformed Christians feel called, requires much knowledge, both of the world itself and of God’s purposes for it. It takes much learning.**<sup>185</sup>

- See Robertson, *Christ and the Prophets*, p. 121. To denounce sins, “critique the life of God’s people,” and to issue hope. “Law and covenant undergird the whole perspective of the prophets analyzing the past, present, and future of God’s people.” p. 122

## **17. Israel and the Mission of God to the Nations**

- Moved to p. 40.

## **18. YHWH’s prophets versus pagan prophets**

### **a) Hebrew expressions for OT prophets**

*Defined:* OT prophet acted as mouthpiece for God. The OT prophet had special insight inspired by God, that enabled supernatural spiritual insight. (Two of these words correspond to “seeing.”) This was often given in the form of *visions*, dreams, and theophanies.

#### **(1) נְבִיא – God’s spokesman**

The most common designation for a prophet sent from God. One who passes on a message from God, usually the activity of receiving and giving God’s word (OT: 330x). Although, scholars have debated the etymology of this word, this is most definitely not a fortune-teller. Some have suggested that the root means “to bubble forth,” while others correlate it with Akkadian, *nabu*, “to speak.” Etymology cannot resolve any “root meaning” here, and the best exegetical procedure is to allow its usage to be determinative.

Deut 18:18 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.

Ex 7:1 Then the LORD said to Moses, “See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron will be your prophet.

The נְבִיא prophet is considered primarily to be a *spokesperson* for someone else. The נְבִיא prophet carries and speaks the word for someone else.

#### **(2) רֹאֵה – God’s visionary**

From רֹאֵה, “to see.” To see, perceive, understand, a person who reveals secrets by inquiring of God; participle of seeing, as with *hōzeh* used to indicate the reception of the prophet’s message (12x) (1Sam 9:9; 11, 18, 19; Isa 28:7; 1 Chron 2:52; 9:22; 26:28; 29:29; 2 Chron 16:7, 10).

1 Sam 9:9-11 (Formerly in Israel, if a man went to inquire of God, he would say, “Come, let us go to the seer,” because the prophet of today used to be called a seer.) 10 “Good,” Saul said to his servant. “Come, let’s go.” So they set out for the town where the man of God was. 11 As they were going up the hill to the town, they met some girls coming out to draw water, and they asked them, “Is the seer here?”

Although some critics call v. 9 an explanatory gloss, the important fact is that the נְבִיא prophet was synonymous with a the רֹאֵה seer, although there was apparently some discrepancy in *popular usage*. Whereas a נְבִיא is one who speaks with God in order to become the spokesman for God, the emphasis of the רֹאֵה seer may be one who speaks with God in order to receive God’s message. Even if we can suppose some distinction in emphasis, these words are synonymous.

#### **(3) חֹזֵה – God’s seer**

- See “opening of eyes,” p. 156.

From חֹזֵה, “to see or gaze at.” Participle for intent gazing or looking; seer, spoke God’s word, sung, played instruments. 17x (2 Sa 24:11; 2 Ki 17:13; Isa 29:10; Am 7:12; 1 Ch 21:9; 25:5; 29:29; 2 Ch 9:29; 12:15; 19:2; 29:25, 30; 33:18; 35:15). Used frequently of *vision* as well.

The רֹאֵה seer and the חֹזֵה seer are undoubtedly closely related in meaning, typically involving some visionary aspects to their prophesying.

<sup>185</sup> Joel A. Carpenter, “The Perils of Prosperity: Ne-Calvinism and the Future of Religious Colleges,” in *The Future of Religious Colleges*, ed. By Paul J. Drove (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company), 2002, p. 187.

**Conclusions about Hebrew terms:**

*Distinctions* and relationships among titles – complexity and development argue against any clear-cut distinction between *nābīy'*, *rō'eh*, and *hōzeh*.

**(4) “My servants the prophets,” “messengers” of God**

2 Ki 9:7 You are to destroy the house of Ahab your master, and I will avenge the blood of my servants the prophets and the blood of all the LORD's servants shed by Jezebel.

2 Ki 17:13 The LORD warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: “Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your fathers to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets.”

Jer 7:25 From the time your forefathers left Egypt until now, day after day, again and again I sent you my servants the prophets.

Jer 26:5 and if you do not listen to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I have sent to you again and again (though you have not listened),

Jer 29:19 For they have not listened to my words,” declares the LORD, “words that I sent to them again and again by my servants the prophets. And you exiles have not listened either,” declares the LORD.

Jer 35:15 Again and again I sent all my servants the prophets to you. They said, “Each of you must turn from your wicked ways and reform your actions; do not follow other gods to serve them. Then you will live in the land I have given to you and your fathers.” But you have not paid attention or listened to me.

Jer 44:4 Again and again I sent my servants the prophets, who said, ‘Do not do this detestable thing that I hate!’

Ezek 38:17 ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Are you not the one I spoke of in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel? At that time they prophesied for years that I would bring you against them.

Zech 1:6 But did not my words and my decrees, which I commanded my servants the prophets, overtake your forefathers? “Then they repented and said, ‘The LORD Almighty has done to us what our ways and practices deserve, just as he determined to do.’”

The prophets had a special calling and thus a special place in redemptive history. In some sense the term *messenger* (מַלְאָכִים, *mal'āk*) frequently applied to them suggests a comparison to the angels.

2 Chron 36:15-16 The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent word to them through his messengers again and again, because he had pity on his people and on his dwelling place. 16 But they mocked God's messengers, despised his words and scoffed at his prophets until the wrath of the LORD was aroused against his people and there was no remedy.

Hag 1:13 Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, gave this message of the LORD to the people: “I am with you,” declares the LORD.

Mal 3:1 “See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty.

- ✳ Angel of the Lord is to be seen as distinct from the Glory of God.
- ✳ The angel of the Lord is often identified as Christ.
- ✳ The angel of the Lord seems to correspond with the ideal of the True Prophet, the angel of the covenant.

**(5) “Schools” of prophets?**

➤ See Young, *My Servants*, pp. 83-94.

Some scholars advocate that there were gatherings or “schools” (תַּקְוֵי-תַּנְּבִיאִים, elders, dignitaries, company [meaning is uncertain]) of prophets and students who educated others in the role of prophet. This is based on the following texts:

1 Sam 19:20 so he sent men to capture him. But when they saw a group of prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing there as their leader, the Spirit of God came upon Saul's men and they also prophesied.

2 Ki 4:3 Elisha returned to Gilgal and there was a famine in that region. While the company of the prophets was meeting with him, he said to his servant, “Put on the large pot and cook some stew for these men.”

Besides the fact that no prophetic “school” is ever mentioned in the OT, it can be proposed that OT prophets did not need any special training or instruction in order to be a prophet, for the word of the Lord was spoken through the Spirit of the Lord as the Lord willed. Some texts that suggest a community existed among the prophets, although it is highly debatable that this was any kind of “communal” situation (1 Sam 19:20 above)::

2 Ki 4:1 The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, “Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves.”



2 Ki 6:2 Let us go to the Jordan, where each of us can get a pole; and let us build a place there for us to live.” And he said, “Go.”

The canonical, writing prophets do not have any associations with the “schools” or communities of prophets. Indeed, none of the biblical prophets ever required “schooling,” nor were they ever paid for their services.

King Ahab had prophets in his employment:

1 Ki 22:6 So the king of Israel brought together the prophets—about four hundred men—and asked them, “Shall I go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall I refrain?” “Go,” they answered, “for the Lord will give it into the king’s hand.”

Yet, we see the prophetic indictment of such prophetic communities:

Micah 3:5,11 This is what the LORD says:

“As for the prophets who lead my people astray, if one feeds them,

they proclaim ‘peace’; if he does not, they prepare to wage war against him.

11 Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money.

Yet they lean upon the LORD

and say, “Is not the LORD among us?”

(6) “Sons”  
(בְּנֵי) of the  
prophets

No evidence of groups trained to be prophets. God

called individuals. “Sons of Prophets” in Kings were superstitious men with lack of spiritual understanding:

1 Ki 20:35 By the word of the LORD one of the sons of the prophets said to his companion, “Strike me with your weapon,” but the man refused.

2 Ki 6:1 (NASB) Now the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, “Behold now, the place before you where we are living is too limited for us. (NIV translates בְּנֵי-הַנְּבִיאִים as community of the prophets)”

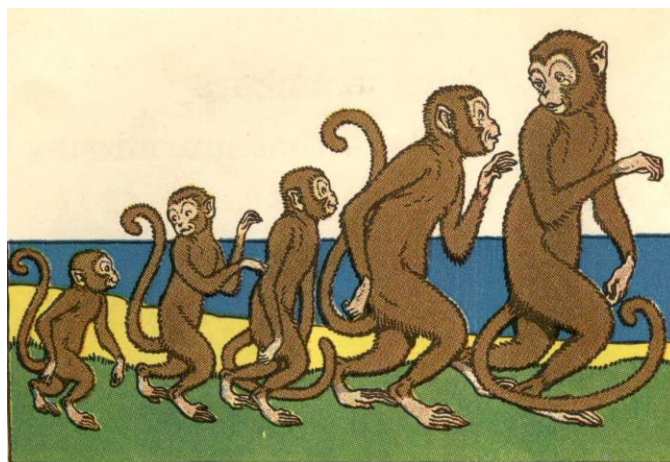
The “sons of the prophets” were not descendents of the prophets, rather members of the community of prophets. After Samuel, there is no mention of the community of prophets until the time of Elijah and Elisha where they appear only in the northern tribes. The expression the “sons of the prophets” seems to have superseded that of “community/groups” of the prophets. Young proposes that *discipleship* is the idea intended here, and that it suggests a closely intimate relationship between the prophets during this time of persecution.<sup>186</sup> It also seems that some of them were living together, or shared close quarters, though the details are unknown.

Meanings for the word בֶּן:

- male child
- descendent
- member of group
- apprentice or learner

b) *Moses is the paradigmatic prophet: holiness, righteousness, and glory*

➤ See discussion on the *parousia* of God and the glory, p. 84f.



<sup>186</sup> Young, *My Servants*, pp. 93-94.

Moses set the stage and the standard for all true prophecy subsequent to his calling. He reflected the very *glory* of God, the goal of all biblical prophecy:

- Moses had privileged access to God.
- Moses knew God “face to face” (Deut 34:10) (see p. 146)
- Moses was the mediator of the old covenant,
- thus he has the typological correspondence to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.
- Moses set the prophetic standard.
- Moses reflected the glory of God.

Ex 34:29 When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD.

**“ . . . Moses performed a prototypical messianic role as mediator of the Spirit and thereby of the prophetic *imago Dei*.”<sup>187</sup>**

- Prophets of YHWH declared the covenant sanctions that God had given to his people
- Prophets of YHWH were to shape the kingdom-house of God.
- Prophets were to mediate the redemption purposes of God, to call humanity into fellowship and the re-creation of the garden sanctuary relationship through the new sanctuary, priesthood, and prophecy. The prophetic word of God would begin the re-creation in preparation for its realization in the anticipated Messiah. The prophets thus represent the goal of the NT *New Man*, the goal of redemption in the image of God re-created in humankind. The prophets were in this fashion a *living testimony* to the gospel of God.

“The investment of the prophet with heavenly authority to shape the historical course of the kingdom of God in the midst of the kingdoms on earth in the name of the royal Lord of the council was a renewal; of the original assignment to man of a God-like dominion over the world, adapted now, of course, to the redemptive situation. It was an act of re-creation in the glory-image of God.”<sup>188</sup>

Such a high calling required *holiness and righteousness* in the prophets. That is, the prophets must be ethically suited and qualified for the task. These are the same qualities set before God’s created humanity in the garden; dominion must be one of holiness and righteousness, and thus a conformity to the image of God. The process of redemption has the high goal of re-creation of the image of God, and the prophets could represent nothing less.

Isaiah was very cognizant of this high standard and quickly perceived he was unworthy, and thus comes to represent the need for redemptive renewal in the prophetic call:

Isa 6:6-7 Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”

### ***Face to face with God in the Bible:***

As Moses was the paradigmatic prophet and mediator, he also climaxes this remarkable theme of God’s presence, that he is said to have met God “face to face.” We do not consider this a “literal” seeing, but a paradigmatic theophany that sets the stage for the hope of redemption – to once again be able to enter God’s unmediated presence. The final eschatos will bring the revelation of God in which we shall see him as he is:

1 Jn 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Gen 32:30 So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, “It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.”

Ex 33:11 The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend. Then Moses would return to the camp, but his young aide Joshua son of Nun did not leave the tent.

Nu 12:8 With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the LORD.

Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?”

Nu 14:14 And they will tell the inhabitants of this land about it. They have already heard that you, O LORD, are with these people and that you, O LORD, have been seen face to face, that your cloud stays over them, and that you go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

Deut 5:4 The LORD spoke to you face to face out of the fire on the mountain.

Deut 34:10 Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face,

Judg 6:22 When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he exclaimed, “Ah, Sovereign LORD! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!”



<sup>187</sup> Kline, *Images of the Spirit*, p. 70.

<sup>188</sup> Kline, *Images of the Spirit*, p. 60.

Ezek 20:35 I will bring you into the desert of the nations and there, face to face, I will execute judgment upon you.

1 Cor 13:12 Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

### **c) Tests of prophets: validation criteria from Deut 13, 18, 29**

- See Freeman, *Intro to the Prophets*, pp 25-26.
- See E.J. Young, *My Servants*, pp. 20-35.
- See Pratt, "Historical Contingencies" on the *implied conditions* of unqualified predictions, p. 188. See below, p. 159.

It is very likely that the NT writers had in mind the test for the prophet when writing their accounts and theology of Jesus the Messiah. Thus, it would make a very interesting study to examine the entire NT in light of the test of the OT prophet to see if this thesis stands. Deuteronomy 18 prepares typologically for the messianic antitype who brings the promises of the new covenant. As Peter affirms for us in Acts:

Acts 3:22 For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you.'

The *validation criteria* of the OT prophet is applied to Jesus, the true prophet. Applying these principles to ANE pagan prophets, or contemporary pagan prophets, we find that only the prophets of the Lord can be considered *true* prophets. OT prophets brought a message that was the very word of God, quite unlike the soothsaying and necromancy of pagan prophets.

#### **(1) Prophet may produce signs and wonders (Deut 13:1-2)**

Although a prophet may produce a sign or wonder, God warns us through Moses that it was not sure-proof evidence that the prophet was from God:

Deut 13:1-3 If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder, 2 and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place, and he says, "Let us follow other gods" (gods you have not known) "and let us worship them," 3 you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul.

*Signs and wonders:* Ex 7:3; Dt 4:34; 6:22; 7:19; 26:8; 29:3; 34:11; Ne 9:10; Ps 78:43; 105:27; Ps 135:9; Je 32:20, 21; Da 4:2, 3; 6:27; Jn 4:48; Ac 2:19, 22, 43; 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 7:36; 14:3; 15:12; 2 Co 12:12; 2 Th 2:9; Heb 2:4

Ex 4:1ff, 8 Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The LORD did not appear to you?'" 8 "And it shall come about that if they will not believe you or heed the witness of the first sign, they may believe the witness of the last sign. 9 "But it shall be that if they will not believe even these two signs or heed what you say, then you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground; and the water which you take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground."

Signs authenticated the witness and testimony of the prophet.

Matt 11:23 And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day.

Jesus warned against demanding signs and wonders:

Jn 4:48 "Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."

Mtt 12:39 He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.

Mtt 16:4 A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah." Jesus then left them and went away.

Lk 11:29 As the crowds increased, Jesus said, "This is a wicked generation. It asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.

2 Thess 2:9 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders,

Consider the "signs and wonders" movement ("Toronto blessing," Vineyard Ministries, etc.)

#### **(2) Prophet must agree with previous revelation (most important) (Deut 18:15)**

Deut 18:15 The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.

Jer 28:8-9 From early times the prophets who preceded you and me have prophesied war, disaster and plague against many countries and great kingdoms. 9 But the prophet who prophesies peace will be recognized as one truly sent by the LORD only if his prediction comes true.

Isa 8:19-20 When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living? 20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.

Neh 6: 11 But I said, "Should a man like me flee? And could one such as I go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in." 12 Then I perceived that surely God had not sent him, but he uttered *his* prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

How can revelation of *new* things be tested? Generally speaking, prophecy does not reveal anything entirely unrelated to previous revelation (organic unity). In cases where specific information about the distant future is new, it is validated in the broader context of its eventual fulfillment, while also in the context of possible other confirmations within the prophecy itself (such as a shorter term prediction being fulfilled, 1 Ki 13). That is, other validation criteria which are confirmed for a prophet give validation to his longer-term predictions. This works in a qualified sense with all of the criteria.

### (3) *Prophet must speak in the name of the Lord (Deut 18:20-21)*

Deut 18:20-22 But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded him to say, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, must be put to death." 21 You may say to yourselves, "How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the LORD?"

This one is a "no-brainer," yet we have people today in the mainstream church "prophesying" and pontificating in the name of the goddess Sophia and other sundry devils (see the yearly "Re-imaging" God Conference). Needless to say, Israel often turned to the Baal's and their prophets for help, while trying to maintain a hypocritical semblance of YHWH faith.

### (4) *Predictions may be visibly fulfilled (Deut 18:22)*

Deut 18:22 If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him.

The **gods/idols of the nations** were really "nothing" (hot air), for they could not even predict the future:

Isa 41:23 tell us what the future holds,  
so we may know that you are gods.  
Do something, whether good or bad,  
so that we will be dismayed and filled with fear.

The word of the prophet fulfilled is evidence that his word was from God

Isa 48:5 Therefore I told you these things long ago;  
before they happened I announced them to you  
so that you could not say,  
'My idols did them;  
my wooden image and metal god ordained them.'



*Qualification:* as we saw in Deut 13:1 above, the false prophets may produce signs and wonders, even predictions(?). This source of their abilities appears to be Satan and the spiritual realm, although coincidence, educated guesses, and sleight of hand may have sometimes been involved.

Acts 16:16 Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling.

*Certain fulfillment* thus becomes the final criteria here to attest or *indicate* (not prove) the prophet's validity, whereas *non-fulfillment* becomes the certain *proof* that the prophet is not from God.

### (5) *Subjective spiritual discernment (Deut 29)*

Objective validations are sufficient light and evidence to remove all excuses from those who behold them, but sinful nature being what it is will "miss the point," or worse, deny the point. The objective validation criteria are to be combined with faith and spiritual insight from God in order for them to be recognized as from God. As in Rom 1, people suppress general revelation, so also the words and deeds of the prophets go unheeded, misunderstood, misinterpreted, and misappropriated:

Deut 29:2-5 Moses summoned all the Israelites and said to them: Your eyes have seen all that the LORD did in Egypt to Pharaoh, to all his officials and to all his land. 3 With your own eyes you saw those great trials, those miraculous signs and great wonders. 4 But to this day the LORD has not given you a mind that understands or eyes that see or ears that hear. 5 During the forty years that I led you through the desert, your clothes did not wear out, nor did the sandals on your feet.

### (6) *Negative nature of the tests*

The prophetic test would not always provide absolute certainty, but the people were accountable to God to listen to the prophets of God and to reject the false prophets. All of the validation criteria had to work together, no aspects could be taken in isolation. That is, there were a number of checks given that with the help of the Spirit, were *adequate* safeguards against being duped by false prophets.

#### d) *Pagan, false prophets*

- See E.J. Young “Prophets False and True,” *My Servants*, pp. 125-152.
- See Van Gemeren, *Interpreting*, pp. 60-63.

All false prophets were in essence *pagan* prophets, for they were not from YHWH, regardless of what they might have claimed.

Deut 18:14 The nations you will dispossess listen to those who practice sorcery or divination. But as for you, the LORD your God has not permitted you to do so.

While the prophets, true and false, operated from the same theological framework, the false prophets operated from a different hermeneutical framework.<sup>189</sup>

#### *False prophets' concerns*<sup>190</sup>:

- Revelation *and* religion.
- Selective proclamation.
- Realpolitik and power.
- Social institutions.
- Status quo.
- Man centered ethics.
- Popularity and power.



Lu 6:26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets.

#### (1) *Hebrew titles for false prophets*

- (a) *soothsayers* (קָסָם, עֲוֹן, גִּזְרֵי)
- (b) *diviners* (קָסָם, גִּזְרֵי)
- (c) *sorcerer* (קָסָם m., עֲוֹן f.)

#### (2) *Prophesied in name of god or idol (Deut 18:20)*

#### (3) *Falsely claimed to receive messages from the Lord (Deut 18:21-22)*

#### (4) *Ceased to be true prophets*

#### (5) *A comparison of true and false prophets*<sup>191</sup>

False prophets and prophecy are very common in Scripture: many prophets prophesied falsehood and visions “from their own inspiration” (Ezek 13:1-23, Neh 6:12; Jer 14:14-15; 23:16-40); for personal gain (Mic 3:5, 11); telling the people what they want to hear (1 Ki 22:5-13 and Jer 5:31); calling people to worship idols (Jer 23:13); those introducing heresies into the church (2 Pet 2:1-3).

below

<sup>189</sup> VanGemeren quotes Sanders, *Interpreting*, p. 64.

<sup>190</sup> VanGemeren, *Interpreting*, pp. 60-63.

<sup>191</sup> Based in part on VanGemeren, *Prophetic Word*, p. 63f.

***True prophets/prophecy***

1. True revelation and faith.
2. Holistic: whole word/torah/wisdom with a covenant orientation towards internalization of word for all.
3. Dissent: independence from and critique of power structures.
4. Divine authority: members of divine, social institutions.
5. Prophetic message: vision of kingdom of God. Messiah, righteousness, justice, faith. Eschatological focus. Interpretive role.
6. Theocentric ethics: imitative of God, eschatological kingdom-ethics. Judgment/redemption.
7. Goal: suffering for God. "Suffering theology."
8. Means: intercessors for God's people.
9. Theocentric mission: proclamation of God's word to world.
10. Validation criteria satisfied (Deut 18:15-22)

***False prophets/prophecy***

1. Claimed revelation/religion.
2. Selective proclamation: cultic & kingly orientation towards externalization. Manipulation of gods for kings and subjects.
3. Syncretism and collusion: *Realpolitik* dependence on power structures.
4. Human authority: members of human social institutions (programs, techniques).
5. Popular message: *Vox Populi* guardians of the status quo.
6. Anthropocentric ethics: tradition (extrabiblical) *versus* revelation.
7. Goal: popularity, power, prosperity. "Prosperity theology."
8. Means: intercessors for idols/gods through manipulation, mythology, and divination.
9. Anthropocentric mission: proclamation of man's/devil's word.
10. Invalidation criteria satisfied (Deut 18:15-22).

## (6) Pagan eschatology and prophecy: false but sometimes “real” prophets

- Read Walton, “Prophetic Literature.”
- Read ANET, “Egyptian Prophecy,” pp. 252-257
- See Vos, *Eschatology*, pp. 53-62; “divination theory,” *Biblical Theology*, pp. 215-216.
- See E.J.Young “Extra-Biblical ‘Prophecy in the Ancient World,’” *My Servants*, pp. 193-205.
- See religion and revelation, p. 139.

Eschatology did exist among ancient peoples and their cultures in which the “past is injected into the future” in mythopoeic cultures that believed the great convulsions and catastrophes of the past would be repeated in the future. This is naturally so where a belief in a beginning presumed a belief in the end. That is, eschatology is not exclusive to biblical faith, which holds to special revelation in its regard. It can be supposed that ancient cultures, combining general revelation in themselves (‘longing for an end or purpose’) and nature, would seek to develop a meaningful eschatology to orientate their life and religions. This is particularly the case when a culture seeks to find meaning for its future from its past. This is essentially the same question we have considered in the section on the ANE and the correlations, continuities, discontinuities, accommodations, etc., between Israel and their ANE world-context (see pp. 655, 646). It can be proposed that despite *formal similarities* between pagan eschatology and prophecy and OT eschatology and prophecy, there are in essence very great differences between the two. This is particularly true in regards to the central theme in pagan “prophecy” of *divination*.

The eschatologies of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome were not generally true eschatologies for the *ends* they were concerned with were not *absolute*, but rather cyclical events stemming from the natural world. That is, they start with creation and not God. Thus, pagan eschatologies are intrinsically earth-bound.

Although Canaan is often presumed among critical scholars to have been the primary source of Israel’s prophetic traditions, only one extant analogy has been found to date.<sup>192</sup> See the “Stela of Zakkur” which records “prophets” speaking through Ball-Shemayn to king Zakkur that his enemies would be destroyed.<sup>193</sup>



*ANE texts further to Walton’s list:*<sup>194</sup>

### **Egypt:**

“The Prophecy of Nefer-Rohu” (*Papyrus Golenischeff*) contains a prophecy written by a priest during King Snefru’s reign (ca. 2613-2494 BC). It contrasts two periods, one a convulsive tribulation and the other a blessed salvation of protection and prosperity introduced by a man born of a woman (“son of man”), a king from the south. That is, it relates to the fall of the Old Kingdom and its restoration under Amen-em-het I (Middle Kingdom, 1910). It is basically a prophecy from, and on, the human plane, not rising to more than political eschatology. Some even claim that it speaks after the events (earliest extant text is 1450) as political propaganda to support Amen-em-het I.

“The Prophecy of the Lamb” was attested to have been written under King Bocchoris (718-12 BC), yet the papyrus dates from A. Caesar (AD 7-8). This prophecy contrasts a period of great calamity with a glorious future achieved through military expansion against Syria. This leaves the prophecy on the human and political plane.

“The Prophecy of the Potter” (the Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 2332) comes from the third century A.D. (ca. 284) and is attributed to Akhenaton (1379-1362). It describes a lawless, calamitous period that is followed by a period of blessedness that is ushered in by a human king. As the others, this represents a temporal reversal, not eternal.

In these prophecies there are no supernatural aspects involved, and in fact the gods/God are not involved. Such prophecies, strictly on the human plane, should rather be called, in my view, a kind of oracle or pagan invocation or “fortune telling.”

<sup>192</sup> For example, von Rad assumed that Canaanite religion must be the medium for Israel’s prophetic movement (*OT Theology*, p. ). This is based on the fact that there were prophets of Baal (1 Ki 18) led by Ahab and Jezebel. And, in the Egyptian story of Wen Amon, he encounters in Phoenicia a youth possessed by a frenzy or “ecstatic state,” such as it is often presumed Samuel introduced into Israel. Yet, Samuel was utterly opposed to Canaanite religion!

<sup>193</sup> Walton, *Ancient Israelite Literature*, pp. 206, 212-213.

<sup>194</sup> Drawn largely from Vos, *Eschatology*, pp. 55-62.

“Admonitions of Ipu-Wer” (*ANET*, pp. 441-444) may have originated sometime between the Old and Middle Kingdoms (2300-2050), incomplete, extant MS written sometime between 2000-1350. One wise man named Ipu-wer come to Pharaoh to tell him of disasters of robbery, revolution, and foreigners that had come upon Egypt. Woman do not give birth, the Nile river has overflowed its banks, people wear dirty clothes, and many social structures were inverted. Then there will arise one shepherd who has “no evil in his heart,” and will bring justice to Egypt.

Depending on how one translates this passage, future or past, the it can be understood to describe some ideal king or a future “messianic” figure. As in the other ancient texts noted, this text does not promise anything beyond temporal deliverance from chaotic social circumstances. If there are any eschatological themes, they might be found in the mention of “Justice,” in the longing for a just world. This is far removed, however, from the high hopes of OT eschatology for a Messiah who will actually establish truth and justice forever.

### **Mesopotamia:**

In the pantheon of Assyria, Marduk is the god of salvation who yearly introduces renewal of the world order. Kings are typically deified at birth, with the divine-birth idea at work. The accession of the king consequently was thought to usher in a period of blessedness. World-cycles feature prominently, in which repetition is the guiding principle (circular viewpoint). Considering the significance of these cycles, and the endless nature, there is essentially no real eschatology involved here.<sup>195</sup> Generally speaking, the changes of blessedness anticipated are political and economic. Although, some of the language may have had eschatological origins, for example the idea of divine/supernatural origin of kings. There have been many texts from Mari excavated that have been given claim of analogous prophetism.

“The Letter of Itu-Asdu” (*ANET*, p. 623) was written to king Zim-rilin. The letter relates a dream of a man who went into Dagon’s temple to whom he bowed down. Dagon asked him whether peace had been made between the kings of the Yaminites and the forces of Zimri-Lin. Dagon then reportedly is told that no peace had been made, to which Dagon replied that if Zimri-Lin had only attended to the god he would have been helped.

Despite the formal similarity with Hebrew prophecy of a command and requirement of obedience (adequate sacrifice), the report comes second hand from a man through a letter to the king, and is only the unrealized promise of temporal reversal of Zimri-Lin’s political misfortunes. Needless to say, Dagon was even ignorant of the present relations between these two factions. Also, “Let my lord do as he wants . . .” would never appear in the OT prophets! The Letter is concerned with cultic matters, not with ethical and spiritual matters that were the central focus of the OT prophets. That is, it does not really contain eschatology in any biblical sense, but rather contains aspects more akin to OT “false prophets.”

“The Letter of Kibri-Dagan” (*ANET*, p. 623f.) was written to Zimri-Lin in which similarly to the “Letter of Itu-Asdu” a word from the god Dagon comes second-hand through an ecstatic (*mahu*), exhorting Zimri-Lin to offer sacrifices, presumably for dead man, Yahdun-Lim, the founder of the dynasty of Zimri-Lin. In my reading of this, it sounds like a clever attempt to manipulate and control the king by Kibri-Dagan. It has no other formal similarities with OT prophecy other than that it purports to be a message from a god. In this case, the purpose of the prophecy is not even stated, only that it must be done soon, although at the beginning there seems to be a warning against rebuilding a house. Superstition prevails here, as well as strictly temporal concerns. There is no eschatological or teleological content.

### **Persia:**

Persian eschatology consists of the fundamental struggle between two powers in conflict, represented by the “good” Ahur-Mazda (see p. 625) and the god Ohmazd evil Angra Mainyu, Ahriman. This conflict was to result in the final victory of the good and contained a real eschatology in the following:

1. judgment
2. resurrection
3. final supremacy of the good
4. human saviors
5. the Savior
6. universal salvation (according to Vos, no real redemptive element here)
7. final bliss

<sup>195</sup> Vos argues that the priest Berosus (ca. 280 BC) is the source of some Babylonian eschatology that believed in a final conflagration and end to the world (*Eschatology*, pp. 57-58).



Dating such Persian eschatology is extremely difficult, so some posit that it borrows heavily from the Bible, placing the Persian ideas very late (e.g., messianic elements ca. A.D. 200).<sup>196</sup>

### **Greece/Rome:**

Largely syncretistic. The *Soter* title was transferred from gods, demigods, and heroes to the human rulers (both dead and living), such that human kings were called *saviors*. This means they were considered as semi-divine, and expected to be worshiped. There is also the hope of a future blessed state which would be headed by new rulers, as in Virgil's *Fourth Eclogue* (40 B.C.) in which a golden age would come through the birth of Pollio's child, ushering in the peaceful age of Saturn after a period of conflict. In his *Aenid* (23 B.C.), it is prophesied that Augustus would reign from sea to sea in the age of Saturn, thus attributing to him what was "predicted" of Pollio's child.

"There is a eudemonistic desire in the human heart to place a blessed state beyond the present. Perhaps this is due to a vague remembrance of the original state (of paradise)."<sup>197</sup>

In conclusion, Israelite prophecy had its origin in God, which sets it dramatically apart from other ANE analogies. This is the only adequate explanation for the phenomenon of Israelite prophecy. The *validation criteria* set out above from Deut 18 eliminate any possibility of derivation of OT prophecy from ANE pagan sources, despite formal similarities.

### **False prophets in the NT:**

**Mt 7:15** Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's  
**Mt 24:11** and many false prophets will appear and deceive many  
**Mt 24:24** For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great  
**Mk 13:22** For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs  
**Luk 6:26** how their fathers treated the false prophets.  
**2 Pet 2:1** but there were also false prophets among the people, just as the  
**1 Jn 4:1** are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.  
**Act 13:6** they met a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus, 7 who was  
**Rev 16:13** and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 They are spirits of  
**Rev 19:20** as captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the  
**Rev 20:10** where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown.

## **19. Receiving & relaying God's revelation**

- See discussion on redemptive history, pp. f.
- See prophets as seer, spokesman, visionary, pp. 143-143.

Prophets represent the fact that God is there, and he is not silent (FAS). This theme is quite evident in the historical books that correspond with the prophetic, wherein the prophets represent the polar themes of revelation-redemption and silence-judgment. As in the case of Elijah, the removal of the prophet from Israel signaled the silence of God. The silence of God signaled impending judgment. Real threat to God's promises were in view, that God would be their God, that he would speak with them, that he would make a people for himself. The very sanctuary of God's presence and communication was at risk, for when the word of God departs from the sanctuary and its community, the Spirit too will depart. In this sense, we see the biblical-theological theme of the unity of the Word and the Spirit of God. The Word and Spirit represent the very presence of God himself, and are the foundation of all the promises. Needless to say, they are the hope of the promise of redemption.

The remarkable thing is not the occasional removal of the word of God from Israel, but rather the long-suffering of God who repeatedly sent his prophets throughout the entire post-Mosaic era until the exile and then beyond. That is, judgment is not the remarkable feature in the prophets, but rather the continued revelation of God to a people whose loyalties were so compromised by Canaan and its idols. A nation that turned to the soothsayers, fortune-tellers, and necromancers had abandoned God and the primacy and exclusivity of his prophetic word to them. We must ask whether our evangelical fascination with the future-telling of the prophetic texts, at the expense of hearing their forth-telling message, is any less reprehensible?

<sup>196</sup> Vos, *Eschatology*, p. 59.

<sup>197</sup> Vos, *Eschatology*, p. 61.

OT prophets spoke a direct and living word from God, not just a matter of abstract theory or sociological insight. It was the flaming truth of God from God. Picture Jeremiah standing in the gates of the temple prophesying against it and the hypocrisy of Israel:

Jer 7:1-3 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: <sup>2</sup>“Stand at the gate of the LORD’s house and there proclaim this message: “‘Hear the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who come through these gates to worship the LORD. <sup>3</sup>This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Reform your ways and your actions, and I will let you live in this place.”



### **Revelation in the Bible:**

- casting lots
- dreams and visions, audible voice
- Urim and Thummin
- prophets
- revelation to Moses at the cherubim
- pagan unbelievers: Balaam

**“Call Stories” in Israel<sup>198</sup>:** Matthews suggests a literary pattern for the calls of some prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel), and this is helpful so long as it does not diminish the historical reality of the prophets’ calls. Prophetic calls highlight God’s majesty and the disclosure of God’s name.

1. Divine encounter: theophany
2. Introductory words: greeting, God’s name
3. Objection or demurral: prophet’s sense of unworthiness
4. Commission to a work: compulsion to speak (words often given)
5. Sign of empowering: speaks in God’s name

### **a) Prophetic call**

Prophetic call must be distinguished from being called a king or priest, many called, but not all prophets. Elisha was a prophet but no clear call, only Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel had a clear call. This does not mean they had no call, only that we do not know the details nor circumstances. Any prophet who spoke God’s revealed word was called to do so, regardless of what we might know of that call. The *validation criteria* discussed in Deut 18 were the important guidelines for the post-Mosaic prophetic era.

➤ See “test of prophets,” p. 147f.

### **b) Prophetic consciousness - real humans not automatons**

The spoken and inscripturated word of God always came through a human vehicle. Two authors of every biblical text. The prophets were human, not omniscient, and serve as a model for the scripture itself, divine and human: the paradigmatic correlation with the human/divine Word of God Himself.

### **c) Prophetic office<sup>199</sup>**

Must be chosen by God, the performance of a function not office, no distinction between office and gift. The office of OT prophet had an extremely high standard, for the prophet represented the very word of God and was to present the way of God to the people. This meant that the office involved interpreting and applying both the OT Torah and any new revelation given, as well as living in such an exemplary way that such teaching was never marred in any way.

The prophetic office was by nature *typically* messianic, for it presented the ideal of God’s spokesman in visible form. (Similarly to the kingly office of Israel’s kings and the priestly office of Israel’s priests.) Thus, it held great redemptive historical significance in and of itself, not just through the content of the vocal and inscripturated prophetic witness.

### **d) Prophetic activities and human response**

- ◆ Anointing of kings, founders of dynasties, and the priesthood.
- ◆ Proclaiming, preaching, teaching, demonstrating the revealed word of God.

<sup>198</sup> From Victor Matthews, *Social World*, pp 27-28.

<sup>199</sup> In the following sections of this introduction I have roughly borrowed headings from some of MacRae’s outline of the prophetic material in “Prophets and Prophecy,” *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Encyclopedia*.

- ◆ Teaching and applying the Torah.
- ◆ Exhortation and edification of the nation and its kings, as well as prophesying to foreign nations.
- ◆ Living testimonies to the gospel.
- ◆ Bringing redemption through word and deed.
- ◆ Foreshadowing the Messiah who would be the true Prophet.
- ◆ Praying intercessors (1 Sam 12:23; 1 Ki 13:6; 2 Ki 20:11; 2 Chron 32:20; Jer 27:18; 37:3; 42:4; Hab 3:1. See also Gen 20:17; Ex 32:11-14).

### **Prophets *supernaturally*:**

- Worked miracles and lived faithfully
- Disclosed hidden secrets, installments in the history of redemption
- Predicted future events and interpreted present events
- Interpreted and applied the Torah broadly and widely
- Taught messianic doctrine and prediction

### **Prophets *naturally* were:**

- Prominent men of their times (often)
- Evangelists, preachers, literary writers
- Good organizers, “managers”
- Reformers by nature
- Subservient to God
- Praying intercessors

### ***OT prophets:***

- ◆ received a distinct call (see prophetic call, p. 154)
- ◆ had no hereditary claims or rights as priests and kings (presumably reducing their collusion with corruption in the community and nation. That is, they had no personal “vested interests,” and could retain an objective distance from the recipients of God’s revelation. False prophets are not YHWH’s prophets gone bad, but rather false from the start.<sup>200</sup> In other words, the very identity of “false prophet” precludes one from being considered the Lord’s prophet.
- ◆ theocratic officers who guided the covenant community
- ◆ prosecutors of the covenant and the law in wisdom
- ◆ guardians of the theocratic kingdom
- ◆ shepherds of the covenant community

### *The human response for all their blood, sweat, and tears in serving the nation:*

- ◆ ignored
- ◆ ridiculed
- ◆ persecuted
- ◆ imprisoned
- ◆ murdered

Mt 23:31 So you testify against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets.

### **e) *Prophetic emotion or “ecstasy”?***

➤ See ecstasy, p. 226.

Much debate has transpired over whether the OT prophets were ecstatics, yet it can be affirmed that though there was often dramatic emotion and behavior among the OT prophets, that they do not lose consciousness, that peculiar behavior was the exception rather than the norm, and that visionary experience does not involve irrationality and ecstasy. The OT prophets were not some kind of “mad men” roaming about giving prophesies in wild ravings.

<sup>200</sup> Micah 3:5 This is what the LORD says:

“As for the prophets who lead my people astray,  
if one feeds them, they proclaim ‘peace’;  
if he does not, they prepare to wage war against him.”

Further, behavior that is “abnormal” does not prove derivation from pagan practices of prophetic dervishes and ecstasy.

➤ See Mowinckel who believed that spirit and ecstasy belonged together (*JBL* 53, [1934]: 199-227).

Not “ecstasy” but sorrow, gratitude, determination, compassion. Visions and dreams are not related to the idea of “ecstasy.”

### **f) External voice - audible, understandable voice from God**

OT prophets were the vehicles of God’s revelation. They repeatedly claim that God himself spoke to them.

Jer 1:7 But the LORD said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am only a child.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you.

### **g) Internal voice - not audible, internal revelation from God**

Dreams and visions can fit into this category, as well as internal divine revelation to the prophets when they wrote or were guided supernaturally in their ministry.

### **h) Opening of eyes - to see spiritual realities**

➤ See “visionary” and “seer,” p. 143f.

1 Samuel 3:7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD: The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. <sup>8</sup> The LORD called Samuel a third time, and Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.” Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy.

### **i) Visions, pictures - pictorial revelation**

➤ See “visionary” and “seer,” p. 143f.

Theophany and vision, as well as dreams include pictorial revelation.

Ezek 40:4 The man said to me, “Son of man, look with your eyes and hear with your ears and pay attention to everything I am going to show you, for that is why you have been brought here. Tell the house of Israel everything you see.”

Acts 10:10 He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance.

### **j) Angels – as conveyors of divine revelation**

Dan 9:21 while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice.

Zech 1:14 Then the angel who was speaking to me said, “Proclaim this word: This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘I am very jealous for Jerusalem and Zion

### **k) Women prophets in the Bible**

**Miriam:** a prophetess during the wilderness wanderings whose ministry included music making and dancing.

Ex 15:20 Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron’s sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing.

**Deborah:** a prophetess (נְבִיאָה) of the Judges period who was “leading/judging Israel” (שֹׁפֵטָה) and is said to have “held court under the Palm of Deborah” (NIV) (Heb sit or dwell, יוֹשֵׁבֵת) where Israel had their disputes (לְמִשְׁפַּט) decided.<sup>201</sup>

Judg 4:4 Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time.

**Huldah:** prophesied during Josiah’s reign in Judah (640-609) that the Lord had heard his repentant prayer when the book of the law was found (2 Ki 22:14-20; 2 Chron 34:22-28). She was married to Shallum, the keeper of the royal wardrobe.

**Isaiah’s wife:** the only known OT marriage of a prophetess to a prophet.

Isa 8:3 Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and gave birth to a son. And the LORD said to me, “Name him Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.

<sup>201</sup> NIV seems to overextend the meaning of “judge” to “sit,” making an overly literal rendering of יוֹשֵׁב.

**Noadiah:** false prophetess, apparently hired by Tobiah and Sanballat to discourage Nehemiah and the people from completing the walls of Jerusalem after the return from exile in Babylon.

Neh 6:14 Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, O my God, because of what they have done; remember also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who have been trying to intimidate me.

**Anna:** Luke 2:36 There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage.)

**Philip's four daughters:** Acts 21:9 He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.

“The activity of women as prophets was distinct from the activity of OT priests, who were male, and who had the responsibility of teaching God’s laws to the people (Mal 2:7; cf. Deut 24:8;p 2 Kgs. 12:2; 17:27-28; 2 Chr 15:3; Neh. 8:9; Hos 4:6; Mic 3:11), and was thus distinct also from the activity of kings, who ruled the people. Thus the OT forshados both the NT’s encouragement of women to prophesy in churches (Acts 21:9; 1 Cor 11:5) and its prohibition of their teaching or governing the whole church (1 Tim 2:11-15; 3:2; 1 Cor 14:33-35).”<sup>202</sup>

## l) Music of the OT prophets

- See Miriam the prophetess, p. 156.
- See music in sanctuary in Poets/Wisdom and Judges-Esther syllabi.
- See Moses and music, Deut 31:19-22.
- 

(right) J.S. Bach's score as art

It should not surprise us that music was very much a part of the ministry of prophets. The revelation of God was very suited to the music of the OT poets, and since much of the writing Prophets is in poetry it is directly related to music and song. As argued in Psalms/Wisdom, poetic and musical forms are particularly suitable mediums to reveal the infinite Creator-God whose mind is essentially “poetic.”

1 Chron 25:1-3 David, together with the commanders of the army, set apart some of the sons of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun for the ministry of prophesying, accompanied by harps, lyres and cymbals. Here is the list of the men who performed this service: 2 From the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah and Asarelah. The sons of Asaph were under the supervision of Asaph, who prophesied under the king’s supervision. 3 As for Jeduthun, from his sons: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiiah, Shimei, Hashabiah and Mattithiah, six in all, under the supervision of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied, using the harp in thanking and praising the LORD.

1 Sam 10:5 After that you will go to Gibeah of God, where there is a Philistine outpost. As you approach the town, you will meet a procession of prophets coming down from the high place with lyres, tambourines, flutes and harps being played before them, and they will be prophesying.

*Music censored by prophets as part of the problem:*

Lam 3:63 Look at them! Sitting or standing, they mock me in their songs.

Ezek 26:13 I will put an end to your noisy songs, and the music of your harps will be heard no more.

Ezek 33:32 Indeed, to them you are nothing more than one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays an instrument well, for they hear your words but do not put them into practice.

Amos 5:23 Away with the noise of your songs!

I will not listen to the music of your harps.



<sup>202</sup> W.A. Grudem, “Prophecy/Prophets,” *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, p. 703.

Amos 8:3 “In that day,” declares the Sovereign LORD,  
“the songs in the temple will turn to wailing. Many, many  
bodies—flung everywhere! Silence!”



*Music as part of the prophecy, prediction, or fulfillment:*

Isa 52:9 Burst into songs of joy together,  
you ruins of Jerusalem,  
for the LORD has comforted his people,  
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

Jer 30:19 From them will come songs of thanksgiving  
and the sound of rejoicing.  
I will add to their numbers,  
and they will not be decreased;  
I will bring them honor,  
and they will not be disdained.

Hos 2:15 There I will give her back her vineyards,  
and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope.  
There she will sing as in the days of her  
youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt.

Zeph 3:14 Sing, O Daughter of Zion;  
shout aloud, O Israel!  
Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,  
O Daughter of Jerusalem!



Isa 5:1 I will sing for the one I love a song

Isa 12:5 that his name is exalted. 5 Sing to the LORD, for he has done

Isa 12:6 Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,

Isa 23:16 play the harp well, sing many a song, so that you will

Isa 27:2 In that day— “Sing about a fruitful vineyard:

Isa 30:29 And you will sing as on the night you celebrated

Isa 38:18 death cannot sing your praise; those who go down

Isa 38:20 LORD will save me, and we will sing with stringed instruments

Isa 42:10 Sing to the LORD a new song

Isa 42:11 Let the people of Sela sing for joy; let them shout

Isa 44:23 Sing for joy, O heavens, for the LORD

Isa 54:1 “Sing, O barren woman, you who never

Isa 65:14 My servants will sing out of the joy of their hearts

Jer 20:13 Sing to the LORD! Give praise to

Jer 31:7 This is what the LORD says: “Sing with joy for Jacob; shout for



**m) Primary issues and purposes of prophecy<sup>203</sup>**

**(1) Primary prophetic issues**

- *Spiritual and religious matters*: theology of God, monotheistic, God is One and sovereign, just, holy, merciful, etc.(primary eschatology, see pp. 46, 48).
- *Social and moral/ethical matters*: true religion is that which is concerned for justice, the oppressed, the poor, etc. The prophets condemned exploitation and injustice as much as they condemned apostasy.
- *Political and foreign relations*: prophets were given many words of exhortation and wisdom for the leaders of their times, both internally at home and externally abroad. Alliances were a particular source of contention, on account of idolatry. Prophets were the Guardians of the theocracy. “The prophets were guardians of the unfolding theocracy, and the guardianship was exercised at its center, the kingdom.”<sup>204</sup>
- *Messianic proclamations* and preparations (messianic eschatology): the future orientation is very important, contrary to many today who view “forth-telling” as superceding “fore-telling” (see p. 159f.).

**(2) Primary prophetic purposes**

- Rebuke for sin and call to repentance
- Encouragement to God’s people
- Revelation of facts about God and creation
- Revelation for specific guidance

<sup>203</sup> Adapted from MacRae, “Prophets and Prophecy,” *ZPBE*, pp. 875-903.

<sup>204</sup> Vos, *Biblical Theology*, p. 186. See also

- Authenticating a divinely appointed leader or prophet
- Laying foundation concerning life and work of Messiah

### n) *Conveying message to divinely appointed recipients*

OT prophets were sent to give specific messages about specific things to specific people or peoples. They were not on a personal “journey” or rampage as many in our times are when they call themselves prophets and bring their own word for personal reasons. (The NT “gift of prophecy” should be considered in light of this common claim among Christians to have such a gift.)

1 Cor 13:2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

1 Cor 14:1 Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.

- (1) *Brief oral statements and rejoinders - various forms*
- (2) *Patriarchal blessing - declarations regarding future*
- (3) *Descriptions of visions - figurative pictures described*
- (4) *Symbolic actions - object lessons for hostile audiences*

### o) *Foretelling (prediction) and “forth-telling”*

- This is clearly related to the categories discussed on p. 81f., as well as millennialism, pp. .
- This relates to the hermeneutical question of fulfillments. The original context is primary in exegesis. On predictions in biblical prophecy, see Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*: “Biblical Predictions in the Order of Their Fulfillments,” pp. 631-659; “Prophecies Concerning the Foreign Nations,” pp. 660-664; “Prophecies with Personal Reference to Christ,” pp. 665-670. See statistics below, p. 174.
- On predictions, see Pascal, pp. 174, 200, 223.
- See “millennial madness,” pp. 85ff.
- See predictions in NT, p. 199.
- Read Pratt, “Historical Contingencies.” Prophets often spoke of what *might be* (p. 184). Some predictions were certain, but the details of *how, when, and to what extent* are not certain (p. 187).

**Besides the sign of omnipotence there is the sign of conjunction, consisting in the prediction that two (possibly both natural) events will come together in time, and which in the last analysis is reducible to the omniscience of God, showing His supernatural presence in the course of things as clearly as the sign of omnipotence. All predictions are wonders, that is, when taken together with the fulfillment. This does not, however, necessarily imply that the fulfillment must be brought about through supernatural interposition. The supernatural here lies in the foreknowledge; it is a species of omniscience-miracle. In such cases the name “sign” is transferable to the fulfilling event itself (Isa 41:22ff.; 42:9).<sup>205</sup>**

It has often been said that the OT prophets were more about *forth-telling* than *foretelling*. What was discussed in the previous section indicates the depth of the forthright prophetic forth-telling. The purposes of redemption are the backdrop to all prophetic forth telling.

People in America almost universally think “prediction” when they hear the word prophecy. In fact, when one surveys the listings in Christian bookstores, one finds that the vast majority of books deal with end times predictions and practically nothing dealing with the OT prophets, their message, or the known fulfillments in the Bible of biblical prophecy. It encourages the notion that people are generally more interested in fortune telling (astrology?) than in prophetic “forth-telling.” Indeed, I am only stating the obvious. This has many factors to it, the least of which is not the cultural conformism among Christians to an anti-intellectual, anti-theological, anti-historical, anti-exegetical, anti-prophetic, anti-critical consensus in America. It can also distract us from *holy living*. Entertainment from the *Left Behind* type movies sustains the hunger for scintillating images of futuristic speculation, while circumventing all depth of critical thought or reflection. This is not meant to diminish the important aspect of our message that judgment is coming, but rather that the Bible’s prophetic message is far too

<sup>205</sup> Vos, *Biblical Theology*, pp. 231-232.

profound and encompassing to be reduced to charts and dates for a future that is yet to be. The study of prophecy is not a “parlor game.”<sup>206</sup>



There are also the frequent claims that particular contemporary events are either the fulfillment of prophecy or a judgment of God – 9/11 was a case in point – that reflect our propensity to seek explanations for events, as well as our hermeneutical shallowness. This is not meant to deny that God is ever-active in the affairs of human life and history. Yet, to acknowledge that God is ever-active in the affairs of history is not to affirm that all events can be properly interpreted. This is only one of many issues that dodge all attempts at balance, for human curiosity is often most curious about the inexplicable and mysterious and quickly tires of what is perspicuously clear. This does not mean that what is clear is always easy to understand, but in fact with the goal being accuracy of interpretation it actually may involve more rigorous labor than speculations about what can probably never be resolved this side of heaven.

Mickelsen notes two erroneous ways people read predictive prophecy:

1. as a captivating way of writing history *after the fact* (apocalypticism)
2. as history written beforehand

But Prophecy is not history written after the event. Ordinary historical writing in the Bible lacks the enigmatic character of prophecy. It is characterized by a treatment of details and their subordination to basic events in some type of chronological pattern. This is in contrast to the prophetic narratives which deal with future realities. These realities are set forth as important particulars, but subordinate details are not presented in developed time sequences or consistent trains of thought. Any man who could write history in the form of Hebrew prophecy would have to forget half of what he knew in order to give the appearance of being a prophet. But the artificiality of such a tactic would surely show through.

The other erroneous approach to prophecy consists in the belief that prophecy is history written beforehand. But this is impossible, because prophecy never gives as complete a picture of an event as does an historian's account. The historian must provide some account of the antecedents to an event, of the event itself, and of its consequences. He must, in other words, supply many particulars.<sup>207</sup>

### ***OT prophets represent the forthtelling and foretelling***

**The prophetic office relates to the Edenic role of Adam/Eve in interpreting the revelations of God in creation and directly from God. The prophetic role of receiving, interpreting, applying, living God's truth is a consistent BT theme from Eden until the New Creation. Christ as the Word of God in the flesh embodies the office of the True Prophet who fulfills the Edenic prophetic ideals for Adam/Eve.**

- ❖ living word of the *living* God
- ❖ creating word of the *creating* God
- ❖ written word of the *revealing* God
- ❖ preached word of the *speaking* God
- ❖ messianic word of the *redeeming* God
- ❖ foretelling word of the *predicting* God

<sup>206</sup> J.R. Ross, *Dreams, Visions, and Oracles*, 1977. Our emphasis should be: 1 Jn 3:3 ~ Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure. 2 Pet 3:10 ~ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. 11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness . . .

<sup>207</sup> Mickelsen, *Interpreting*, p. 289.



- ❖ holy word of the *judging* God
- ❖ word that searches and cuts to the marrow (*Heb 4:12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*)
- ❖ word that leaves no stone unturned
- ❖ word that relativizes all human institutions with the absolutes of God
- ❖ word that interprets the history of redemption, and the plan of redemption
- ❖ God's prophetic word predicts the future: this aspect of prophecy confirms God's supernatural word and work (apologetic significance):

“THE PROPHECIES” by *Blaise Pascal's Pensées (1660)* translated by W. F. Trotter (WWW public domain book):

See Pascal on Jesus prophecies under heading “Jesus is the both the hope and bringer of redemption,” p. 17.

693. When I see the blindness and the wretchedness of man, when I regard the whole silent universe and man without light, left to himself and, as it were, lost in this corner of the universe, without knowing who has put him there, what he has come to do, what will become of him at death, and incapable of all knowledge, I become terrified, like a man who should be carried in his sleep to a dreadful desert island and should awake without knowing where he is and without means of escape. And thereupon I wonder how people in a condition so wretched do not fall into despair. I see other persons around me of a like nature. I ask them if they are better informed than I am. They tell me that they are not. And thereupon these wretched and lost beings, having looked around them and seen some pleasing objects, have given and attached themselves to them. For my own part, I have not been able to attach myself to them, and, considering how strongly it appears that there is something else than what I see, I have examined whether this God has not left some sign of Himself.

I see many contradictory religions, and consequently all false save one. Each wants to be believed on its own authority, and threatens unbelievers. I do not therefore believe them. Every one can say this; every one can call himself a prophet. But I see that Christian religion wherein prophecies are fulfilled; and that is what every one cannot do.

694. And what crowns all this is prediction, so that it should not be said that it is chance which has done it?

Whosoever, having only a week to live, will not find out that it is expedient to believe that all this is not a stroke of chance . . . Now, if the passions had no hold on us, a week and a hundred years would amount to the same thing.

695. Prophecies.- Great Pan is dead.

696. *Susceperunt verbum cum omni aviditate, scrutantes Scripturas, si ita se haberent.\**

\* Acts 17. 11. “They received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”

697. *Prodita lege. Impleta cerne. Implenda collige.\**

\* “Read what has been announced. See what has been accomplished. Meditate on what is to be done.”

710. Prophecies.- If one man alone had made a book of predictions about Jesus Christ, as to the time and the manner, and Jesus Christ had come in conformity to these prophecies, this fact would have infinite weight.

But there is much more here. Here is a succession of men during four thousand years, who, consequently and without variation, come, one after another, to foretell this same event. Here is a whole people who announce it and who have existed for four thousand years, in order to give corporate testimony of the assurances which they have and from which they cannot be diverted by whatever threats and persecutions people may make against them. This is far more important.

J.B. Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 680.

**Statistics by Periods of Fulfillment<sup>1</sup>**

(left) Statistics of fulfillments.<sup>208</sup>

Period	Number of prophecies fulfilled	Number of verses involved
1. Primeval-patriarchal	25	65
2. Egyptian	25	91
3. Wilderness	16	61
4. Conquest	27	224
5. Judges	25	69
6. United Kingdom	32	117
7. Divided Kingdom	139	1421
8. Exilic	29	471
9. Persian	31	379
10. Greek	25	104
11. Maccabean	14	49
12. Roman	7	44
13. Life of Christ	127	3348 (82 nontypical, 574 vv.; 45 typical, 2774 vv.)
14. Church	88	481 (83 nontypical, 464 vv.; 5 typical, 17 vv.)
15. Christ's Second Coming	52	535 (50 nontypical, 512 vv.; 2 typical, 23 vv.)
16. Millennium	46	614 (43 nontypical, 435 vv.; 3 typical, 176 vv.)
17. Final Judgment	14	279
18. New Jerusalem	15 <sup>2</sup>	128 <sup>2</sup> (13 nontypical, 116 vv.; 2 typical, 12 vv.)

1. See above, pp. xxi, 93–110.

2. Not to be totaled, since a few of the predictions (listed on pp. 134–136) are marked by a developmental fulfillment and are therefore listed under more than one period.

**20. The development of messianic prophecy in the Pentateuch**

- See Messiah, pp. 17, 37.
- See Kaiser's chart, pp.
- See J. Sailhammer, "Messiah in the Hebrew Bible," *JETS* 44/1, March (2001). Available online at ETS web site.

"It is possible to show that the Pentateuch is already thoroughly messianic and that the rest of the OT understands this and expands on it by way of textual commentary and exposition."<sup>209</sup>

Genesis 3:15	Woman's offspring: <i>Edenic/Adamic</i> "Protoevangelium": first gospel
Genesis 9:25-27	Shem's descendents: <i>Noahic</i>
Genesis 12:1-3	Abraham's descendents, land/seed/blessings (kings): <i>Abrahamic</i>
Genesis 49:8-12	Tribe of Judah (a King): <i>Judaic</i>
Numbers 24:15-19	A Mighty Conqueror (a King): <i>Balaamic</i>
Deuteronomy 18:15-18 (cf. Numbers 12:6-8)	The Prophet: <i>Mosaic</i> The Prophet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A brother</li> <li>• Like Moses</li> <li>• Authority to declare God's word</li> <li>• Performs miracles</li> <li>• Law giver</li> </ul>

<sup>208</sup> J.B. Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 680. See further stats below, pp. erns among the biblical authors.

<sup>209</sup> Sailhammer, "Messiah and the Hebrew Bible," p. 14.

**Numbers 24:15-19**, Kaiser, *Messiah*, pp. 53-57. Revelation of a “new perception of God”: true revelation from God. True knowledge of God’s revelation.

**Balaam:** pagan prophet predicts:

Context: Balak hired Balaam to curse Israel.

Balaam refused (God forbade) first request, accepted second at God’s command

Three times Balak situated Balaam

Three times Balaam blessed Israel

Fourth oracle: prophecy and prediction

- Coming, powerful ruler from Israel
- Victorious over enemies
- New perspective:
  - A future man
  - Israelite
  - King who would be triumphant. Symbols of star and scepter. The star was long thought to be a sign of the Messiah (among Jews and some say the Magi from the East came based on Num 24:17 that a star would mark the Messiah’s birth).
- Israel and its ruler would subdue the nations and its enemies.
  - Moab would be conquered
  - Edom would be conquered
  - Sons of Seth would be conquered
  - Amalek (first enemy of Israel) would be conquered
  - Mesopotamia invaded by West (Kittim)

Note: Balaam was later involved in corrupting Israel (Num 25:31; 31:8-15).

**Job** (assuming Job may have been pre-patriarchal)

- 9:33 – Arbitrator
- 16:19-21 – Witness, Advocate
- 19:23-27 – Redeemer
- 33:23-28 – Mediator



“The prophets and the writings are not intent on giving us a *new* vision for the future. Their aim is to help us understand the messianic vision that has already been laid down in the Pentateuch and repeated in their own writings. J. Sailhamer, “Messiah,” p. 15.

c. *The Pentateuch and the prophets*. The ~first thing to strike one when looking at these features of the composition of the Pentateuch is how similar its themes are to the central themes of Israel’s later prophetic literature. By that I mean its messianic focus on a future new covenant in which God will give a new heart to those who trust in his word. At the center of that focus is the coming king who will defeat Israel’s enemies and establish a perfect kingdom. To be sure, the Pentateuch is about the Mosaic covenant and the Law given at Sinai. But what it tells us about that Law is much the same as what Paul says in Galatians 3. The Law did not produce a living faith in Israel’s heart. There was nothing inherently wrong with the Law, nevertheless, Israel failed to keep it. God thus gave Israel a hope for the future and laws to hold them until that future should come. The Pentateuch is therefore a commentary on the laws of Sinai Covenant. It, like the prophetic books, looks for something better. That “something better” is a “new covenant” that includes both Jews and Gentiles and has as its center piece a royal, that is, a messianic Redeemer. J. Sailhamer, “Messiah,” p.

J.B. Payne, Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy, p. 665.  
*Prophecies with Personal Reference to Christ*<sup>1</sup>

**Old Testament<sup>2</sup>**

<i>Verse listing</i>		<i>Numbered listing in each book</i>
Gen 3:15a	Jesus will reconcile men to God, at painful cost	Gen 6
3:15b	He will be a man, springing from the seed of woman	7
3:15c	He will crush Satan, cast him down, and eventually destroy him	8
9:26a	He will come from the Semitic branch of humanity	17
22:18a	Within this branch, His descent will be through the family of Abraham	46
49:10a	He will spring from the royal tribe of Judah	67
*49:10b	He will receive the obedience of the peoples	68
Num *24:17c	As a star out of Jacob, He will strike down all defiance (Armageddon)	Num 36
Dt 18:15	He will be a prophet, like Moses, speaking the words of God	Dt 35
32:43a	The angels of God will worship at His birth	47
I Sam *2:10b	God will strengthen His anointed (the first use of the term <i>Messiah</i> for Jesus) for His rule	I Sam 4
II Sam 7:13b	He will descend from the line of David as an eternal king	II Sam 11
7:14a	God will be His Father, and He will be His Son	12
*23:3	His rule will be righteous and good, in reverence toward God	18
Job 17:3	As the divine Angel of Yahweh, He will ransom men and restore their righteousness	Job 4
*19:25b	He will come again and stand over the dust of the righteous, to resurrect them	6
P s 2:1	Gentile rulers will unite with Jewish people against Him at His trial	Ps 2
2:2b	He will be anointed, in gladness above all others	3
*2:4	He will break the nations with a rod of iron at Armageddon	4
*2:6	God will install Him on Mount Zion as king over the nations	5
8:3	He will ascend to the Father's right hand, gloriously crowned	8
16:10	God will not allow His holy One to see corruption	11

- 
1. All references are to His first coming, unless marked by asterisk.
  2. Not including types (see Summary D, below) or prophecies in later books that incorporate earlier ones (see pp. 676-679).

666 / Summary C

<i>Verse listing</i>	<i>Numbered listing in each book</i>
22:1 He will be forsaken of the Father while bearing men's sins	14
22:6 Men will wag their heads in mockery at His crucifixion	15
22:10 He will trust in God the Father, from His birth onward	16
22:11 He will suffer from thirst and pierced limbs, as men gamble for His clothes beneath the cross	17
22:19 But God will answer Him after His sufferings and receive Him	18
22:22 Shortly thereafter He will honor God in the midst of the church	19
*22:27 Men will pray for Him continually and give worship to God	21
40:6c He will delight to do the Father's will	27
*72:7 He will come down like showers upon the earth and cause abundance	34
*72:8 He will rule from the Euphrates to the ends of the earth	35
*72:12 He will have a particular concern for the poor	36
*72:17a His years will have no end	37
89:4 He will be the everlasting seed of David	40
89:26 He will be God's Son, His firstborn	41
110:1a He will be deity, "Lord" even to King David	53
*110:3 In the day of His battle (Armageddon), young people will offer themselves to Him	54
110:4a He will be a priest, after the manner of Melchizedek	55
*110:6 He will strike down the Antichrist over a wide land	56
Isa *2:4a Kings will arise before His exalted presence, and princes worship	Isa 11
7:13 He will be conceived by a virgin	24
7:14b He will be Immanuel, <i>God with us</i> , the "Mighty God"	25
7:15 He will experience moral growth, though in an oppressed land	26
8:9 Opposed by the counsels of raging nations, He will not open His mouth	30
*8:17 He will wait for Yahweh to convert Israel again to Himself	31
9:1 He will bring the light of His ministry to those in Galilee	32
*9:4 He will proclaim the day of vengeance of our God	34
*9:7 He will sit on the throne of David and be swift to execute righteousness	35
11:1 He will be a <i>néser</i> : a "branch" from David, living in <i>Nazareth</i>	39
11:2 He will be anointed with God's Spirit, for preaching the gospel	40
11:4a He will decide with equity for the poor and the meek of the earth	41
*11:4b He will slay the wicked, the Antichrist	42
*12:1 He will furnish His people with joy and praise	46
24:16a He will be a light to the Gentiles, with worldwide salvation	69
*26:21 The victorious Redeemer will come to Zion	77
40:3 John will be His forerunner: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord"	90
42:1a He will come as the prophetic Servant of Yahweh	91
42:2 His ministry will be unpretentious	92
42:6a He will embody God's redemptive testament	93

J.B. Payne, Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy, pp. 666-667.

Prophecies with Personal Reference to Christ / 667

<i>Verse listing</i>	<i>Numbered listing in each book</i>
49:7a He will suffer, be rejected and slain, and be assigned burial with the wicked	99
52:15a His death will serve as an atoning sacrifice to justify many	100
53:4a He will carry our diseases, in a healing ministry	101
53:9b He will receive honorable burial in the tomb of a rich man, Joseph of Arimathea	102
53:10b He will prolong His days, experiencing resurrection from the dead	103
Jer 23:5a God will raise up out of Israel an eternal Branch of David	Jer 45 46
*23:5b He will execute justice and righteousness in the land	47
*23:6 He will be called "Yahweh (is) our righteousness," as men live in safety	66
30:21c He will pledge His life in priestly mediation for God's people	Ezek 23
Ezek 17:23b He will be an offshoot of David, through Jehoiachin and Zerubbabel	27
*21:27 Yahweh will grant the Davidic throne to the One whose right it is	Dan 19
Dan *7:13 The son of man will come with the clouds of heaven	34
9:24a His baptism will occur in A.D. 26, 483 years after Ezra will have received the decree by which he would begin to rebuild Jerusalem	35
9:24b 3½ years later He will be cut off, to make atonement for sin	36
9:24c As God's "Most Holy" One, He will be anointed by the Spirit	39
9:27a He will confirm the testament with Israel and terminate OT sacrifice	Hos 5
Hos *1:11a The Jews will seek the Davidic King, whom they accept as their head	18
6:1 After two days, i.e. on the third day, He will be raised from the dead	Joel 19
Joel *3:16 Through Him, Yahweh will "roar" from Zion and judge the attacking nations	20
*3:17 Representing Yahweh, He will dwell on Zion the holy mountain	Amos 23
Amos 9:11 In Christ, God will raise up the booth (humbled house) of David	Mi 6 14
Mi *2:13a As the "Breaker" of restraints, He will move before His people	27
*4:3a He will be great unto the ends of the earth	28
5:2a The future ruler will be born in the little town of Bethlehem	30
5:2b Yet He will have been with the Father from all eternity	32
5:3b He will be brought forth by a woman, through childbirth	Zeph 20
*5:5a He will deliver His people from the Antichrist's attack from Assyria	Hag 6
Zeph *3:15 The King of Israel, of the essence of Yahweh, will be in Jerusalem	
Hag 2:9 In the temple rebuilt by Zerubbabel, God will give peace, in Christ	

<i>Verse listing</i>	<i>Numbered listing in each book</i>
Zech 2:5b God will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem as its glory	Zech 5
3:8b The Lord will bring forth His "Servant"	9
3:8c He will be the One called the "Branch," out of David	10
3:9b He will remove the iniquity of the land in one day by His counsel of peace	11
6:12b The Branch will grow up, where He is, through a childhood	14
*6:13b But He will bear glory and sit and rule upon His throne	15
*8:3a The Jews will look upon Him at His return to Zion	18
*8:3b He will reside in Jerusalem, as deity present	19
9:9b His kingship will be one of justice	33
9:9c He will be granted saving help from God	34
9:9d He will enter Jerusalem humbly, riding on a donkey	35
*9:10c His dominion shall be from sea to sea	38
11:12 The Jews will weigh out 30 pieces of silver for His hire	53
*12:1 He will go forth and fight against the nations gathered at Jerusalem	58
*12:10 At His return, the Jews will mourn for Him and accept Him	62
12:10d God will identify the Savior with Himself as deity, "My fellow"	64
12:10e The Good Shepherd will be smitten and "pierced"	65
13:7d He will bring back His hand over "the little ones" of His flock (the disciples) and regather them to Galilee	67
*14:4a His feet will stand in that future day upon the Mount of Olives	69
*14:5b He will be accompanied by a host of holy ones, angels (or saints)	71
Mal 3:1a His way will be prepared by a messenger, John the Baptist	Mal 9
3:1b As deity and as redeemer, "the Angel of the Testament," He will come to His temple	10
*3:2 At His second coming none will be able to stand before His refining power	11
*3:3a He will purify His people who serve as Levites	12
<b>New Testament<sup>3</sup></b>	
Mt 1:21b His name will be Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins	Mt 2
2:13 Herod will search for the child to destroy Him	6
*7:19 At the final judgment He will order the ungodly to depart from Him	19
*7:21 But He will invite the righteous into their eternal inheritance	20
12:40 He will experience a 3-day burial	35
16:21 On the third day He will rise from the dead	43
*16:27a He will come a second time, on the clouds, with glory	44
Mk *13:32 Except to the Father, the date of His return is unknown, even to Himself	Mk 38
14:3 His body will be anointed for burial	41

3. Not including prophecies quoted from the OT, or repeating prophecies that appear in several of the Gospels (see pp. 676-679).

J.B. Payne, Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy, pp68-669.

<i>Verse listing</i>	<i>Numbered listing in each book</i>
14:28b After His resurrection, He will go before His disciples to meet them in Galilee	47
Lk 1:17a John the Baptist will go as a forerunner to Him, as Elijah	Lk 8
1:31a The virgin Mary will conceive Him by the power of God's Spirit	10
1:32a He will be great and will be called the Son of God	12
*1:32b The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David	13
*1:33 His kingdom over Israel will have no end	14
1:42 He will be men's "Lord," and the blessed one	15
1:54 In the house of David God will thus raise up a horn of salvation for Israel	17
2:30 He will be a light of revelation to the Gentiles	22
2:34a This child is appointed for the fall of many in Israel	23
2:34c He will be opposed and suffer, be rejected and killed (cf. John, No. 11)	24
2:35b He will reveal the thoughts, good and bad, of many hearts	25
12:8 He will ascend into heaven (cf. John, No. 16)	46
*12:35 His return is imminent, at any time, and will be unexpected	47
*12:37 At that point He will feast with His people	48
John 1:15 The One who comes after John will have a rank higher than he	John 1
1:29 Behold the Lamb of God who will take away the sin of the world	5
1:33c John the Baptist will see the Holy Spirit descending upon Him	6
2:19 Christ will raise up the temple of His own body	8
*5:28 At His voice, all who are in the tombs will come forth	12
*5:29b Those who believe on the Son, He will raise up in the resurrection of life	13
6:70 He will be betrayed by one of the 12, Judas	17
11:14 He will raise Lazarus from the dead	23
14:18 His disciples will behold Him again after His passion	34
Acts *1:11 Jesus will return in the same way as He was seen to ascend	Acts 8
9:16a He will show Paul how much he must suffer for His name	44
*10:42 God has appointed Him to judge the living and the dead	47
26:16 He will appear to Paul with revelations about which he is to witness	59
Rom *2:6 <sup>4</sup> God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus	Rom 2
11:12b The Messianic Redeemer will convert the Jews from ungodliness to faith in Himself	20
I Cor 1:7 He will come again; cf. the early church expression, <i>Maranatha</i>	I Cor 1
13:12 He will judge the saints, bringing hidden things to light	3
15:24b He will finally offer up His mediatorial kingship to God the Father	20
15:24c He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet	21
II Cor 1:14 All the saints must appear before Him at His judgment seat	II Cor 1

4. Beyond the Book of Acts, all references should be considered as marked \*, i.e., forecasting His second advent and subsequent activities.

<i>Verse listing</i>	<i>Numbered listing in each book</i>
Eph 1:21 In the age to come, Christ will have supreme rule and authority	Eph 4
5:14 He "will shine on you" at His second advent	6
5:27 He will present the church to Himself, spotless, at the marriage feast	7
Phil 1:6 He will come from heaven as Savior and Lord	Phil 1
2:9 At His name every knee will bow	2
4:5 His coming is "near," or "at hand"	5
Col 3:4a Christ, who is "our life," will be revealed	Col 4
I Thess 1:10 The Lord will descend from heaven with a shout	I Thess 1
4:17a He will be met in the air by the raptured saints	6
5:17b They will continue to be "with Him," on earth, and hence-forward	7
II Thess 1:5 He will deal out retribution to those disobedient to the gospel	II Thess 1
1:7b He will be revealed from heaven, with His angels, in flaming fire	3
1:10 The purpose is that He may be glorified in His saints	6
2:8 He will slay the Antichrist through the breath (word) of His mouth	10
I Tim 6:14 God will bring about His appearing "at the proper time"	I Tim 2
II Tim 4:1a Jesus Christ will judge the living and the dead	II Tim 5
4:1b He will appear again on earth	6
4:1c and assume its kingship	7
Titus 2:13 The appearing of Christ in glory is the "blessed hope" of the church	Titus 1
Heb 1:13b To Him, God will subject the world to come	Heb 7
9:28 He will appear a second time and will not delay	31
James 5:7 The Christian is to be patient "until the coming of the Lord"	James 3
5:8 His coming is at hand; the Judge is standing at the door	4
I Pet 1:7 The Chief Shepherd will appear, in a revelation of glory	I Pet 2
II Pet 1:19a The Lord is not slow about His promise of coming; the day will dawn	II Pet 2
I John 2:28 He will appear, and we shall see Him just as He is	I John 2
Rev 1:1 The time is near; He will come quickly, as unexpectedly as a thief	Rev 1
1:4 He is coming with the clouds, on a white horse, as heaven opens	2
10:5 He will rule the world, with a rod of iron	30
11:18b He will render to every man according to what he has done	35
14:1a He will stand on Mount Zion with his 144,000 chosen young people	38
14:15 At His return He will gather in the "harvest" of His elect church	41
17:14a At Armageddon He will destroy the enemy by a mere word	47
20:2b He will reign for 1,000 years while Satan is bound	52

J.B. Payne, Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy, p. 670.

# ◆ Appendix I ◆

## Chart Of New Testament Fulfillments Of Old Testament Predictions

### *Messiah's Birth From a Virgin*

Isaiah 7:14

Matthew 1:33

### *Messiah's Birthplace*

Micah 5:2

Matthew 2:1, 6

### *The Forerunner of Messiah*

Isaiah 40:3-5

Matthew 3:3

Mark 1:3

Luke 3:4-6

John 1:23

Malachi 3:1

Matthew 11:10

Mark 1:2

Luke 1:76; 7:27

Malachi 4:5

Matthew 11:14; 17:10-12

Mark 9:11-13

Luke 1:16-17

### *Messiah's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem*

Zechariah 9:9-10

Matthew 21:9

Psalm 118:25-26

Mark 11:9

Luke 19:38

John 12:13

Kaiser, Walter. The Messiah in the OT, p. 237.





Kaiser, Walter. The Messiah in the OT, pp. 240-241.

◆ Appendix II ◆

Chart of the Progress of Sixty-Five Direct Predictions of the Messiah in the Promise Doctrine

**Six Direct Messianic Predictions in the Pentateuch**

*Two in Genesis 1-11: Two in the Patriarchal Era: Two in the Mosaic:*

Genesis 3:15 "Seed"	Genesis 12:1-3 "all . . . be blessed"	Numbers 24:15-19 "star"
Genesis 9:27 "live in . . . Shem"	Genesis 49:8-12 "Shiloh"	Deut 15:15-18 "prophet"

**Four Messianic Texts in Job**

Job 9:33; "Arbitrator"	Job 16:19-21; "Witness"	Job 19:23-27; "Redeemer"	Job 33:23-28 "Mediator"
---------------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------------	----------------------------

**Five Messianic Texts Prior to and During the Davidic Era**

1 Sam 2:1-10; 1 Sam 2:35-36; 2 Sam 7; Psalm 89; Psalm 132  
"Anointed" "faithful Priest" David's "house, throne, kingdom"

**Eleven Psalms Celebrating the Person and Work of the Messiah**

*As Conqueror and Enthroned Ruler:*

Psalm 110  
Psalm 2

*As a Rejected Stone:*

Psalm 118

*As Betrayed:*

Psalm 69  
Psalm 109

*As Dying and Resurrected:*

Psalm 22  
Psalm 16

*As Planner and Groom:*

Psalm 40  
Psalm 45

*As Triumphant King:*

Psalm 68  
Psalm 72

**Thirty-Nine Predictions of the Messiah in the Prophets of the Old Testament**

*Ninth Century: One Prediction*

Joel 2:23      Messiah as "Teacher"

*Eighth Century: Four Non-Isaianic Predictions*

Hosea 3:4-5      Messiah as the Second David  
Amos 9:11-15      Messiah as the Raised House of David  
Micah 2:12-13      Messiah as the "Breaker"  
Micah 5:1-4      Messiah as the Coming Ruler

*Eighth Century: Isaiah: Fourteen Isaianic Predictions*

Isaiah 4:2      Messiah the "Branch of the LORD"  
Isaiah 7:14      Messiah Born of a Virgin  
Isaiah 9:1-7      Messiah Whose Name is "Wonderful Counselor"  
Isaiah 11:1-16      Messiah's Reign  
Isaiah 24:21-25      Messiah's Universal Triumph  
Isaiah 28:16      Messiah the "Foundation Stone"  
Isaiah 30:19-26      Messiah as "Teacher"

Kaiser, Walter. The Messiah in the OT, pp. 240-241.

◆ Appendix II ◆

**Chart of the Progress of Sixty-Five  
Direct Predictions of the Messiah  
in the Promise Doctrine**

**Six Direct Messianic Predictions in the Pentateuch**

*Two in Genesis 1-11: Two in the Patriarchal Era: Two in the Mosaic:*

Genesis 3:15 "Seed"	Genesis 12:1-3 "all . . . be blessed"	Numbers 24:15-19 "star"
Genesis 9:27 "live in . . . Shem"	Genesis 49:8-12 "Shiloh"	Deut 15:15-18 "prophet"

**Four Messianic Texts in Job**

Job 9:33; "Arbitrator"	Job 16:19-21; "Witness"	Job 19:23-27; "Redeemer"	Job 33:23-28 "Mediator"
---------------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------------	----------------------------

**Five Messianic Texts Prior to and During the Davidic Era**

1 Sam 2:1-10; 1 Sam 2:35-36; 2 Sam 7; Psalm 89; Psalm 132  
"Anointed" "faithful Priest" David's "house, throne, kingdom"

**Eleven Psalms Celebrating the Person and  
Work of the Messiah**

*As Conqueror and Enthroned Ruler:*

Psalm 110  
Psalm 2

◆ 240 ◆

*As a Rejected Stone:*

Psalm 118

*As Betrayed:*

Psalm 69  
Psalm 109

*As Dying and Resurrected:*

Psalm 22  
Psalm 16

*As Planner and Groom:*

Psalm 40  
Psalm 45

*As Triumphant King:*

Psalm 68  
Psalm 72

**Thirty-Nine Predictions of the Messiah  
in the Prophets of the Old Testament**

*Ninth Century: One Prediction*

Joel 2:23      Messiah as "Teacher"

*Eighth Century: Four Non-Isaianic Predictions*

Hosea 3:4-5	Messiah as the Second David
Amos 9:11-15	Messiah as the Raised House of David
Micah 2:12-13	Messiah as the "Breaker"
Micah 5:1-4	Messiah as the Coming Ruler

*Eighth Century: Isaiah: Fourteen Isaianic Predictions*

Isaiah 4:2	Messiah the "Branch of the LORD"
Isaiah 7:14	Messiah Born of a Virgin
Isaiah 9:1-7	Messiah Whose Name is "Wonderful Counselor"
Isaiah 11:1-16	Messiah's Reign
Isaiah 24:21-25	Messiah's Universal Triumph
Isaiah 28:16	Messiah the "Foundation Stone"
Isaiah 30:19-26	Messiah as "Teacher"

◆ 241 ◆

## THE MESSIAH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Isaiah 42:1–7	Messiah the “Servant of the LORD”
Isaiah 49:1–6	Messiah’s Mission to the World
Isaiah 50:4–9	Messiah’s Gethsemane
Isaiah 52:13–53:12	The Atonement By Messiah
Isaiah 55:3–5	Messiah and the Unfailing Grace Promised to David
Isaiah 61:1–3	Messiah as Proclaimer of the Good News
Isaiah 63:1–6	Messiah as the Conqueror

### *Seventh Century: Three Predictions*

Jeremiah 23:5–6	Messiah as “the LORD our Righteousness”
Jeremiah 30:9, 21	Messiah as the Priestly King
Jeremiah 33:14–26	Messiah’s Inviolable Promise

### *Sixth Century: Six Predictions*

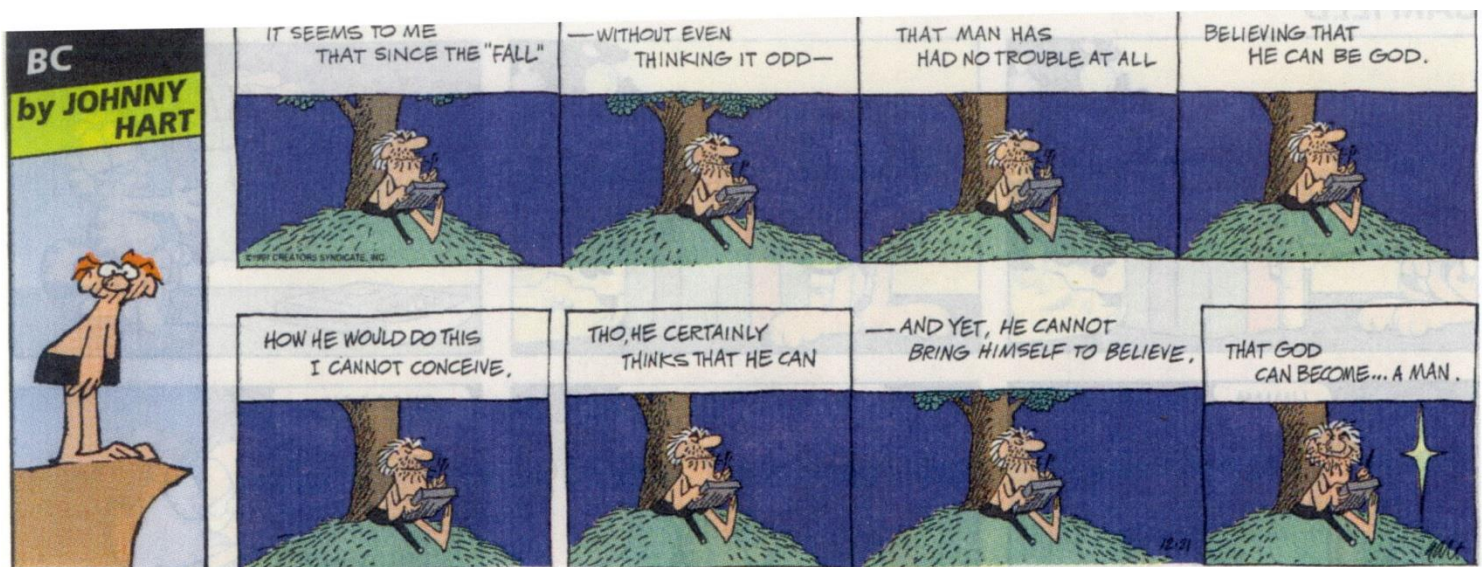
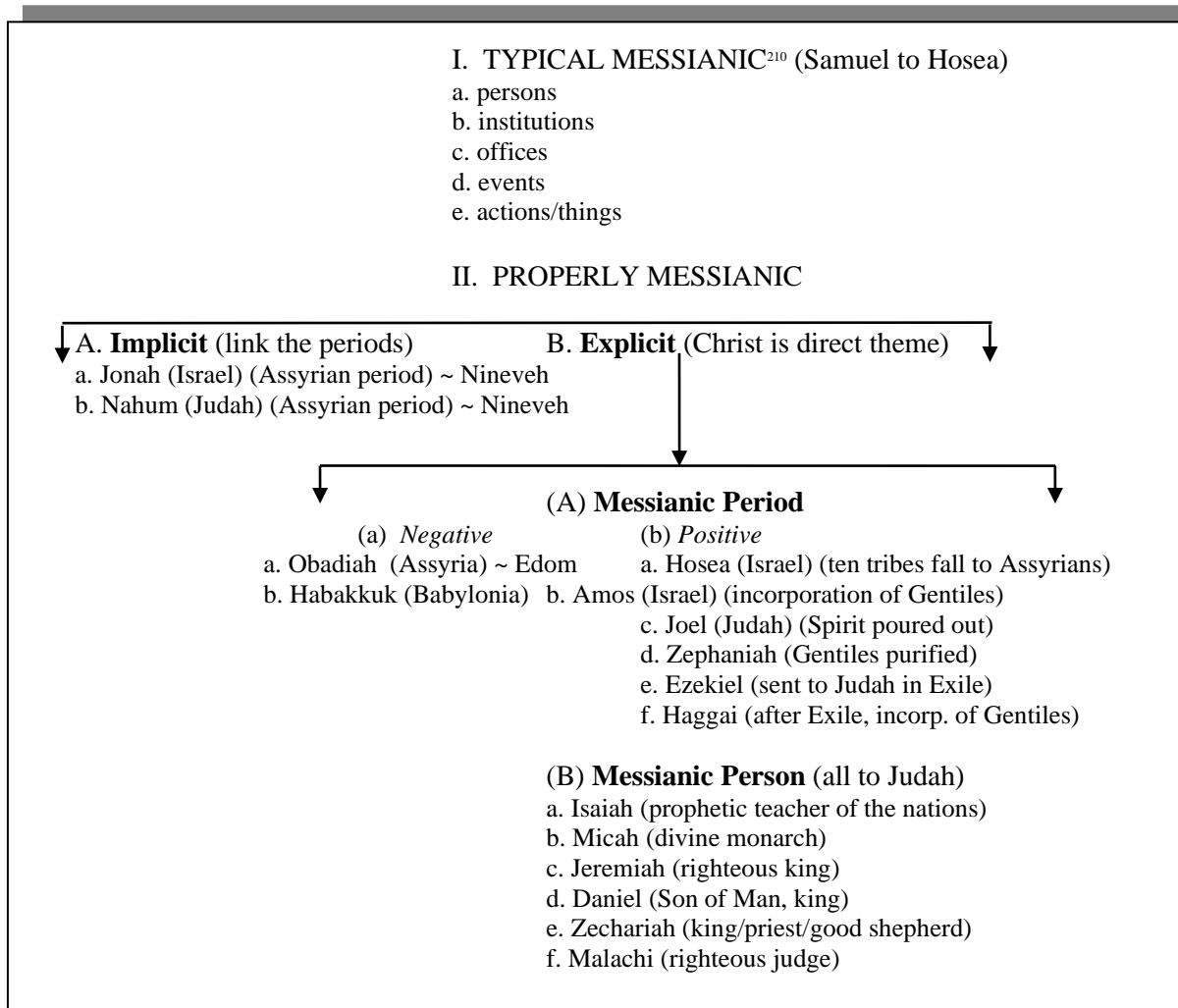
Ezekiel 17:22–24	Messiah as the Tender Sprig
Ezekiel 21:25–27	Messiah as the Rightful King
Ezekiel 34:23–31	Messiah as the Good Shepherd
Ezekiel 37:15–28	Messiah as the Unifier of the Nation
Daniel 7:13–14	Messiah as the Son of Man
Daniel 9:24–27	Messiah as the Coming Anointed Ruler

### *Fifth Century: Eleven Predictions*

Haggai 2:6–9	Messiah as the “Desire of the Nations”
Haggai 2:21–23	Messiah as God’s “Signet Ring”
Zechariah 3:8–10	Messiah’s Work as High Priest
Zechariah 6:9–15	Messiah as King-Priest Over the Nations
Zechariah 9:9–10	Messiah as the Entering King
Zechariah 10:4	Messiah’s Four Titles
Zechariah 11:4–14	Messiah as the Rejected Good Shepherd
Zechariah 12:10	Messiah as the Pierced One
Zechariah 13:7	Messiah as the Smitten Companion
Malachi 3:1	Messiah as the “Messenger of the Covenant”
Malachi 4:2	Messiah as the “Sun of Righteousness”

## 21. Primary messianic forms of OT prophecy

➤ See Messiah, pp. 17, 37



<sup>210</sup> Derived from William Henry Green's class syllabus, *Prophets and Prophecy*, pp. 29-37; Robert J. Vannoy class syllabus, *Biblical Theological Seminary*, 1991. Green calls the typical messianic "non-messianic," most prophets between Samuel to Hosea, because "They reclaimed the people from apostasy, made disclosures, and urged the people to adhere to God, but, as a rule, say nothing of the coming Messiah" (*ibid.*, p. 30).





**Statistics by Biblical Books** Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp. 674-675.

	Predictions		Total verses in book: <sup>1</sup>	% pre- dictive	By literary form (numbers in parentheses = verse Types)			
	Number	Verses			Oracles	Figurative	Symbolical	
Genesis	77	212	1533	14	32	26 (34 vv.)	6 (31)	13 (67)
Exodus	69	487	1213	40	39	1 (3)	-	29 (387)
Leviticus	37	506	859	59	10	-	-	27 (462)
Numbers	50	458	1288	36	22	4 (6)	-	24 (396)
Deuteronomy	58	344	959	36	37	8 (18)	-	13 (68)
Joshua	27	89	658	12	14	1 (1)	1 (2)	11 (51)
Judges	20	41	618	7	10	1 (2)	1 (2)	8 (17)
I Samuel	31	124	810	15	19	1 (1)	2 (3)	9 (81)
II Samuel	22	68	695	10	12	2 (4)	-	8 (34)
I Kings	44	189	816	23	33	-	1 (2)	10 (132)
II Kings	50	144	719	20	34	-	2 (5)	14 (75)
I Chron	24	132	942	14	12	1 (1)	-	12 (101)
II Chron	37	268	822	31	20	-	-	17 (232)
Ezra	10	63	280	23	-	-	-	10 (63)
Nehemiah	14	45	406	11	2	-	-	12 (43)
Esther	1	1	167	.6	1	-	-	-
Job	10	22	1070	2	8	1 (1)	-	1 (2)
Psalms	59	242	2526 <sup>2</sup>	10	38	7 (27)	-	13 (101)
Proverbs	4	7	915	.8	1	-	-	3 (6)
Ecclesiastes	3	7	222	3	1	-	-	2 (3)
Isaiah	111	754	1292	59	71	27 (285)	3 (18)	10 (25)
Jeremiah	90	812	1364	60	73	7 (25)	2 (244)	8 (60)
Lamentations	4	8	154	5	-	1 (2)	-	3 (6)
Ezekiel	66	821	1273	65	39	5 (71)	8 (230)	14 (198)
Daniel	58	161	357	45	35	-	20 (109)	3 (6)
Hosea	28	111	197	56	15	3 (18)	2 (62)	8 (6)
Joel	25	50	73	68	19	2 (12)	-	4 (6)
Amos	26	85	146	58	19	2 (48)	-	5 (5)
Obadiah	10	17	21	81	10	-	-	-
Jonah	4	5	48	10	2	-	-	2 (3)
Micah	40	73	105	70	26	11 (17)	1 (1)	2 (2)
Nahum	2	35	47	74	2	-	-	-
Habakkuk	4	23	56	47	4	-	-	-
Zephaniah	20	47	53	89	18	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Haggai	7	15	38	39	4	1 (1)	-	2 (9)
Zechariah	78	144	211	69	59	6 (15)	7 (22)	6 (9)
Malachi	19	31	55	56	11	2 (2)	-	6 (14)
<b>Total OT</b>	<b>1239</b>	<b>6641</b>	<b>23,210<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>28½%</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>121 (595)</b>	<b>56 (731)</b>	<b>310 (2671)</b>
Matthew	81	278	1067 <sup>4</sup>	26	62	10 (88 vv.)	3 (12)	6 (24)
Mark	50	125	661	19	37	6 (35)	1 (6)	6 (12)
Luke	75	250	1146	22	61	6 (21)	-	8 (27)
John	45	180	866	20	34	3 (5)	1 (6)	7 (31)
Acts	63	125	1003	13	56	1 (2)	-	6 (14)
Romans	29	91	433	21	24	2 (2)	-	3 (11)
I Corinth	25	85	437	19	16	2 (8)	-	7 (23)
II Corinth	7	12	257	5	6	-	-	1 (1)
Galatians	7	16	149	11	4	1 (2)	-	2 (7)
Ephesians	7	8	155	5	5	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Philippians	5	10	104	10	4	-	-	1 (1)
Colossians	4	9	95	9	2	-	-	2 (6)
I Thess	9	16	89	18	9	-	-	-
II Thess	12	19	47	40	12	-	-	-
I Timothy	2	5	113	4	2	-	-	-
II Timothy	8	17	83	20	8	-	-	-
Titus	1	1	46	2	1	-	-	-
Hebrews	52	137	303	45	28	5 (5)	1 (1)	18 (63)
James	4	7	108	6	4	-	-	-
I Peter	11	21	105	20	9	1 (1)	-	1 (2)
II Peter	11	25	61	41	7	4 (6)	-	-
I John	4	6	105	6	4	-	-	-
II John	2	2	13	15	2	-	-	-
Jude	8	10	25	40	6	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Revelation	56	256	404	63	28	4 (49)	24 (100)	-
<b>Total NT</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>1711</b>	<b>7914<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>21½%</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>47 (226)</b>	<b>30 (125)</b>	<b>70 (224)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1817</b>	<b>8352</b>	<b>31,124</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>1183</b>	<b>168 (821)</b>	<b>86 (856)</b>	<b>380 (2895)</b>

1. On the procedure followed for the calculation of the full number of predictive verse, see above, p. 149.

2. Includes 65 vv. that constitute numbered\*verses in the Hebrew text, though printed as titles rather than as numbered verses in most E see above, introduction to Psalms, note 3.

3. Including 85 vv. for Ruth and 117 for Song of Solomon.



## 23. Foreign nations in OT prophecy by Payne

- See Israel and the Mission of God to the Nations, p. 143.

J.B. Payne, Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy, pp. 660-661. SUMMARY

# B

Prophecies Concerning the Foreign Nations / 661

### Prophecies Concerning the Foreign Nations More Prominent in Scripture

(\* = the reference of primary discussion for repeated prophecies)

#### Ammon

Period Event and numbered listing in each book

- To fall to Babylon, 582 B.C. and be led into captivity there, Jer 23, Ezek 28, \*Amos 9
- To experience restoration after Babylon's fall in 539, Jer 88
- To be destroyed by Nabatean Arabs from the east, Ezek 29
- Parts of Transjordan also to be occupied by John Hyrcanus, Jer 87, \*Obad 9, Zeph 8
- Its better portions to be spared from attack by the Antichrist prior to Armageddon, Dan 52
- But to be overpowered by Israel, Isa 34

#### Assyria

- Tiglath-pileser III to take 3½ Hebrew tribes captive, 733 B.C., Hos 23
- To carry the Kenites away captive, Num 40
- To bring about the fall of Damascus, 732, Isa 21, \*Amos 2
- To bring the kingdom of N. Israel to its end, 722 B.C., \*I K 25, II K 39, Isa 27, Hos 2, Amos 1, Mi 1
- To advance against Judah in 701, under Sennacherib, \*Isa 18, Mi 3
- One army to march down Palestine's central ridge, Isa 38
- To accomplish widespread desolation in Judah, Isa 29
- Sennacherib's host to be destroyed, as God protects Jerusalem, \*Isa 37 (II K 41, II Chron 36), Hos 3, Mi 35, I Cor 2
- Sennacherib to return to Assyria, Isa 86 (II K 42)
- Sennacherib to fall by the sword in his own land, Isa 87 (II K 43)
- Ashurbanipal to take Egypt captive, 663, Isa 59
- Nineveh to be destroyed, 612, \*Nah 1, Zeph 12
- To become a Christian land, along with Egypt, Isa 58
- As an element in the campaign of Armageddon, the land of Assyria to be wasted by the sword, Mi 32

#### Babylon

Period Event and numbered listing in each book

- To expand under Nebuchadrezzar, after the battl: of Carchemish, 605 B.C., Hab 1
- To overthrow Ashkelon and other Philistine cities, 64, Jer 53
- To plunder and destroy among the Arab tribes, 58, Jer 25
- To overpower Jehoiachin and permanently banish him from Judah 597, Jer 33
- To choose to attack Judah rather than Ammon, in 588, Ezek 26
- To commence Jerusalem's siege on a given date, Jan. 15, 588, Ezek 30
- After diversion due to Egypt, to return to the siege, Jer 77
- To capture, blind, and exile Zedekiah, \*Jer 40, Ezek 16
- To bring the kingdom of Judah to an end, 586, Lev 33, and 16 others (No. 280 in Summary A)
- To carry Judah into exile, Lev 34 and 8 others (No. 291)
- To besiege Tyre and gain its capitulation, so that it is eclipsed for 70 years after 585, \*Isa 66, Jer 54, Ezek 36
- To invade and pillage Egypt, 568-567, \*Jer 21, Ezek 41
- Nebuchadrezzar to suffer madness until he acknowledges God, Dan 12
- Babylon to be served by the W. Fertile Crescent for 70 years, through 3 generations, from before 604 to 539, \*Jer 29, Ezek 48
- To maintain the Jewish exile for a similar total period, Jer 50
- To fall to Cyrus of Persia, 539, with his Medes and Elamites, Dt 46 and 6 others (No. 318)
- The city of Babylon to become deserted, before NT times, \*Isa 49, Jer 52

#### Edom

- To be settled by Isaac's son Esau, Gen 53
- To develop into a nation, Gen 49
- To serve their brother-nation Israel, especially under David, \*Gen 50, Num 37, Rom 14
- To shake off the yoke of Judah under Jehoram, after 348, \*Gen 54, Heb 46
- To be reconquered by Amaziah, 796, Gen 50 (2nd stage)
- To suffer under Assyrian attack, 711 and 701, Isa 60 \*Amos 8, Obad 1
- To be diminished by Babylonian aggression, 552, Jer 22
- Like others, to be returned to their land after Babylon's fall in 539, Jer 30
- The area to be taken by the Nabatean Arabs, ca. 500, and the Edomites to be permanently driven out, Isa 83, Jer 32, Ezek 47, \*Obad 2
- Idumaea to be conquered by John Hyrcanus and incorporated into Judah, \*Gen 50 (3rd stage), Num 38, Jer 31, Ezek 34, Otd 6, Mal 1
- To be spared from the Antichrist's pre-Armageddon attack, Dan 52
- But to be despoiled by Israel, Isa 34
- The land to be desolate during the Messianic kingdom, Joel 24

#### Egypt

- To experience 7 years of plenty, then 7 of famine, 1852-1838 B.C., Gen 59
- To host Israel for 400 years, 1843-1446, but also to afflict them, Gen 31, Acts 30
- To be judged by 10 divine plagues, Gen 32, Ex 10 (see also 9, 11-12, 14, 18-28), Acts 31
- To pursue Israel in their exodus, but to fall at the Red Sea, Ex 34
- To march into Palestine, as do the Assyrians, 720 and 701, Isa 30

660

214



Copyright © 1996 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.  
Redistribution in whole or in part prohibited.

*Period Event and numbered listing in each book*

7. The XXVth Dynasty pharaoh Shabaka to be routed by Assyria at Eltekeh, 701, Isa 82
7. To send Judah congratulatory presents upon Sennacherib's defeat, Isa 37
7. The XXVth (Ethiopian) Dynasty to end with captivity to Assyria, 663, Isa 59
7. To break Judah and its king Josiah at Megiddo, 609, Jer 3
7. To stumble and fall before Babylon at Carchemish, 605, Jer 83
7. To retreat from Judah in 588, leaving it to fall to Babylon, \*Jer 63, Ezek 21
8. Pharaoh Hophra to be given into the hands of those who seek his life, 569, Jer 81
8. To be invaded and pillaged by Nebuchadrezzar, 568-567, \*Jer 21, Ezek 41
8. Afterwards, to recover, as before, Jer 84
9. To be plagued by civil disorder and to fall to a cruel lord, Cambyses II of Persia, 525, \*Isa 56, Ezek 40
9. Cush (Nubia) to be raided by Cambyses, after 525, Zeph 11
10. Ptolemy I to be strong, but less so than his former general Seleucus, in Syria, Dan 42
10. Ptolemy II's marriage alliance with Syria to fail, 247, Dan 43
10. Ptolemy III to counter by invading the north, Dan 44
10. To repulse the invasion of Seleucus II, Dan 45
10. An Egyptian fortress, probably Gaza, to be attacked by Antiochus III, Dan 46
10. Ptolemy IV to defeat Antiochus at Raphia, 217, but fail to follow it up, Dan 47
10. Ptolemy V to be attacked by Antiochus in 202, to regain Palestine in 200, but to lose it in 198, Dan 48
10. Ptolemy VII to be threatened by Antiochus IV until Rome intervenes, 168, Dan 24
11. Judaism to prosper in Egypt, with a temple at Heliopolis, 160, Isa 57
14. To be a leading Christian nation, 3-7th centuries, one with Israel and Assyria, Isa 58
15. To suffer under the Antichrist prior to Armageddon, Dan 52
16. Threatened with punishment for failure to worship at the Feast of Tabernacles, Zech 77
16. To be desolate during the Messianic kingdom, Joel 23

**Greece (and the Greek Seleucids)**

9. Xerxes of Persia to stir up his whole empire against Greece, 480-479, Dan 41
10. Alexander to conquer Persia, 331, and establish a world empire, \*Dan 4, Zech 3
10. His empire to be divided into 4 parts and seized by his leading generals, Dan 23
10. Ptolemy's general Seleucus I to become greater than he and to rule Syria and eastward, Dan 42
10. The marriage alliance of Antiochus II with Egypt to fail, 247, Dan 43
10. The Seleucid realm to suffer invasion from Ptolemy III, Dan 44
10. Seleucus II to be driven back from counterattacking Egypt, ca. 240, Dan 45
10. Seleucus III and his brother Antiochus III to attack toward Egypt, Dan 46
10. Antiochus to be defeated by Ptolemy IV at Raphia, 217, but to be allowed to recover, Dan 47
10. To reattack in 202, lose Palestine in 200, but win the victory in 198, though the land be wasted by these conflicts, \*Dan 48, Zech 47
10. Antiochus III to be checked by Rome at Magnesia, 190, and later die, Dan 49
10. Seleucus IV to attempt to rob the Jerusalem temple, Dan 50
10. Antiochus IV to usurp the throne and attack surrounding lands, Dan 24

*Period Event and numbered listing in each book*

10. To attempt to stamp out Judaism, defiling the temple and setting up his "abomination," Dan 26
10. To persecute and martyr many Jews, Dan 25, \*Mi 23
11. God to arouse Maccabean resistance against the Greeks, Dan 51, \*Mi 24, Zech 40
11. Antiochus IV to be "broken without hand" (die by disease), 164, Dan 31

**Moab**

5. To be defeated by Ehud, 1316 B.C., Jd 5
6. To be struck down by David, Num 35
7. To be delivered up to a coalition of Jehoram (N.) and Jehoshaphat (S.), II K 5
7. To be devastated by Sargon's sweep through the land in 715, Isa 53, \*Amos 10
7. To suffer even more during his campaign against Ashdod in 711, Isa 54
8. To be overpowered and largely deported by Nebuchadrezzar, 582-581, Jer 24
9. To experience a restoration after Babylon's fall in 539, Jer 86
9. To be destroyed, as Sodom, Ezek 33, \*Zeph 7
15. The land to be spared from the Antichrist's pre-Armageddon attack, Dan 52
15. But to be despoiled by Israel, Isa 34

**Persia**

9. Within the joint Medo-Persian empire, Persia to arise later but to be the stronger, Dan 3
9. A ruler to be named Cyrus and to authorize the Jewish restoration, 538, Isa 98
9. After him to come three: Cambyses, Smerdis, and Darius I, 529-485, Dan 40
9. Xerxes to stir up the Persian empire against Greece, 480-479, Dan 41
10. To fall to Alexander, 331, \*Dan 4, Zech 3

**Philistia**

5. Samson to begin to save Israel from the Philistines, 1090-1070, Jd 14
5. Samuel to deliver Israel from the Philistines, 1063, I Sam 13
6. Jonathan to overcome a Philistine garrison before Michmash, I Sam 22
6. Saul, to deliver Israel, at the battle of Michmash, 1041, I Sam 15
6. The Philistines to be defeated at the fall of the champion Goliath to David, I Sam 25
6. Philistines to be delivered up to David at Keilah, I Sam 27
6. David finally to overcome the Philistine oppression of Israel, 1003, II Sam 2 (I Chron 6)
7. Gaza to be burned by Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria, 734, Amos 3
7. The ruler of Ashkelon to be cut off: Mitinti in 733, or Sidqia, 701, Amos 5
7. Ashdod to be struck down by Sargon, 711, Isa 52, \*Amos 4
7. and to fall after a 29-year siege by Psamatik I of Egypt (663-609), Zeph 4
7. Gaza to be struck down by Necho II of Egypt, 605, Jer 85, \*Zeph 2
7. Ashkelon and others of the remnant to be overthrown by Nebuchadrezzar, Jer 53
10. Philistia to submit to Alexander and to Greek culture, Zech 28
10. Gaza to be stormed by Alexander, Nov., 332, Zech 29
10. Ashkelon to become depopulated, Zech 30
10. Philistines to be sold into slavery, by Jews, after Gaza's fall to Alexander, Joel 16
11. To be overcome by Simon the Hasmonean, 148, \*Amos 6, Obad 7, Zeph 3
11. To be occupied by the Jews, Zeph 5

215



Copyright © 1996 United Feature Syndicate, Inc. Redistribution in whole or in part prohibited.

664 / **Summary B** J.B. Payne, Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy, p. 664.

*Period Event and numbered listing in each book*

11. To become incorporated into Judah, Zech 31
15. To be the object of Israelite attack at Armageddon, Isa 34

### Phoenicia

7. Sidon to be oppressed by Sennacherib, after the flight of its leaders to Cyprus, 701 B.C., Isa 65
7. Tyre to be wasted and lose its mainland fortresses to Ashurbanipal, 663, Isa 64, \*Amos 7
8. To suffer Chaldean siege and pass into eclipse, 585–515, \*Isa 66, Jer 54, Ezek 36
9. To furnish materials for Judah's postexilic reconstruction, Isa 67
9. Sidonians to be sold into slavery to Arabs, by Jews, after Artaxerxes III's capture of the city in 345, \*Joel 15, Zech 27
10. Tyre to be destroyed by Alexander, July, 332, \*Ezek 37, Zech 26
10. Tyrians to be sold into slavery to Arabs by Jews, Joel 14

### Rome

10. To defeat Antiochus III of Syria at Magnesia, Asia Minor, 190, Dan 49
10. To compel Antiochus IV to withdraw from attack upon Egypt, 168, Dan 24
12. To come from the west and afflict the Semitic Near East, \*Num 41, Dan 5
14. To attack the holy city of Jerusalem over a period of 42 months, 66–70, Rev 31
14. Nero's successor Galba to remain "a little while," 68–69, Rev 37
14. To destroy Judah and Jerusalem, 70, Mi 39, and 7 others (No. 580 in Summary A)
14. In the 4th century to suffer decay and be divided into the E. and W. empires, Dan 6
14. To fall, officially in A.D., 476, \*Num 42, Zech 56, Rev 40
14. Its empire to be broken up into a balance of power, \*Dan 10, Rev 36

### Syria (Damascus)

7. Ben-hadad II to be defeated by Ahab of Israel, 857, I K 35
7. but to attack again in the following year, I K 36
7. only to suffer a more decisive defeat, 856, I K 37
7. Ben-hadad's forces to slay Ahab and repel Israel at Ramoth-gilead, 853, I K 39 (II Chron 25)
7. To come down against Jehoram of Israel at places specified by Elisha, II K 14
7. To abandon a siege of Samaria when Israel was most desperate, II K 16
7. Ben-hadad not to recover from illness but to die, II K 20
7. Hazael to become king in Damascus, ca. 843, II K 22
7. Hazael seriously to oppress Israel, I K 32, II K 21
7. Syria to suffer an overwhelming defeat by Jehoash of Israel, after 798, at Aphek, II K 33
7. To be smitten by him on 3 occasions, II K 34
7. The Syro-Ephraimitic alliance to be broken by Assyria, and Damascus to fall, 732, Isa 21, \*Amos 2
8. Damascus to become feeble, with its soldiers silenced, Jer 89
10. To fall to Alexander, after the battle of Issus, 333, Zech 25

216



Copyright © United Feature Syndicate, Inc.  
Redistribution in whole or in part prohibited.

## 24. *Prophets in their order in the MT and LXX*

There is no definite explanation for the differences of order between BHS, LXX, and English.

MT(English)	LXX
Hosea	Hosea
Joel	Amos
Amos	Micah
Obadiah	Joel
Jonah	Obadiah
Micah	Jonah
Nahum	Nahum
Habakkuk	Habakkuk
Zephaniah	Zephaniah
Haggai	Haggai
Zechariah	Zechariah
Malachi	Malachi

## 25. *Prophets in their context in the Hebrew Bible*

➤ Based on Freeman, *Intro to OT Prophets*, p 136.

- ◆ The Law: The Pentateuch (Moses)
- ◆ The Prophets: Former (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings); Latter (writing) (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, “minor prophets”)
- ◆ The Writings: Poets (Psalm, Job, Proverbs); Megilloth (Ruth, Canticum, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations)
- ◆ History (Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles)

### *Chronological periods:*

- ◆ Patriarchal: Moses, Miriam, Deborah
- ◆ Early non-writing prophets: Samuel, Hulda, Elijah, Elisha, Micaiah, Isaiah’s wife
- ◆ Pre-exilic: Obadiah, Joel, Jonah, Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk
- ◆ Exilic: Daniel, Ezekiel
- ◆ Post-exilic: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

### *In relation to Gentile nations:*

- ◆ Assyrian: Obadiah, Joel, Jonah, Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum
- ◆ Babylonian: Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Daniel, Ezekiel
- ◆ Persian: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
- ◆ Egypt: Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Jeremiah, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Micah, Nahum, Haggai, Zechariah
- ◆ Edom: Obadiah, Joel

### *Types:*

- ◆ Anonymous: majority
- ◆ Canonical: writing prophets
- ◆ Former and Latter: order in Hebrew canon
  - Former: six historical, following Pentateuch, anon except Joshua
  - Latter: prophetic

Preclassical: primarily addressed the king, beginning with Samuel, including Nathan, Elijah, Micaiah, etc.

Classical: primarily addressed the nations, writing prophets

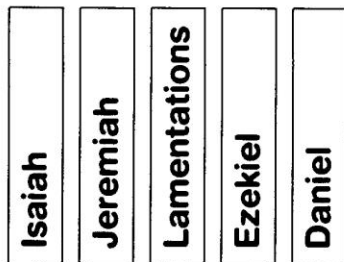
### *Recipients:*

- ◆ Israel: Hosea, Amos
- ◆ Judah: Joel, Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
- ◆ Nineveh: Jonah, Nahum

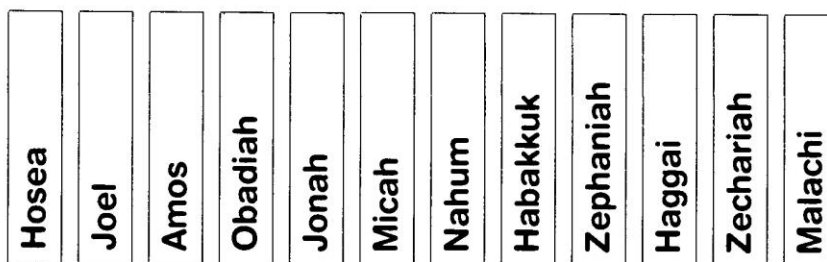
- ♦ Babylon: Daniel
- ♦ Egypt: Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel
- ♦ Exiles: Ezekiel
- ♦ Edom: Obadiah

# Times of the Prophets

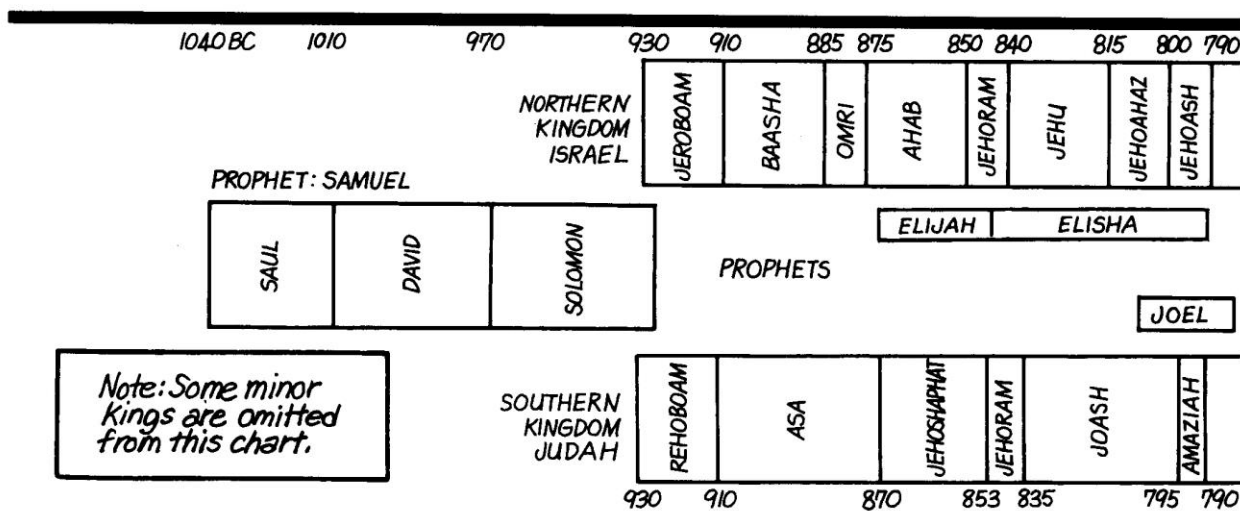
## Books of Major Prophets



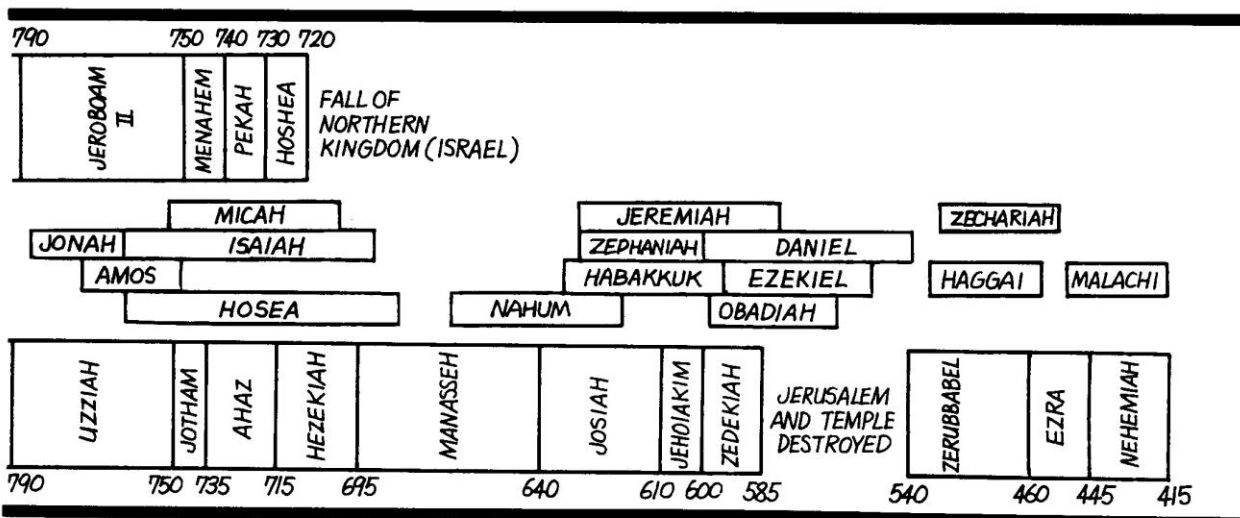
## The Books of Minor Prophets



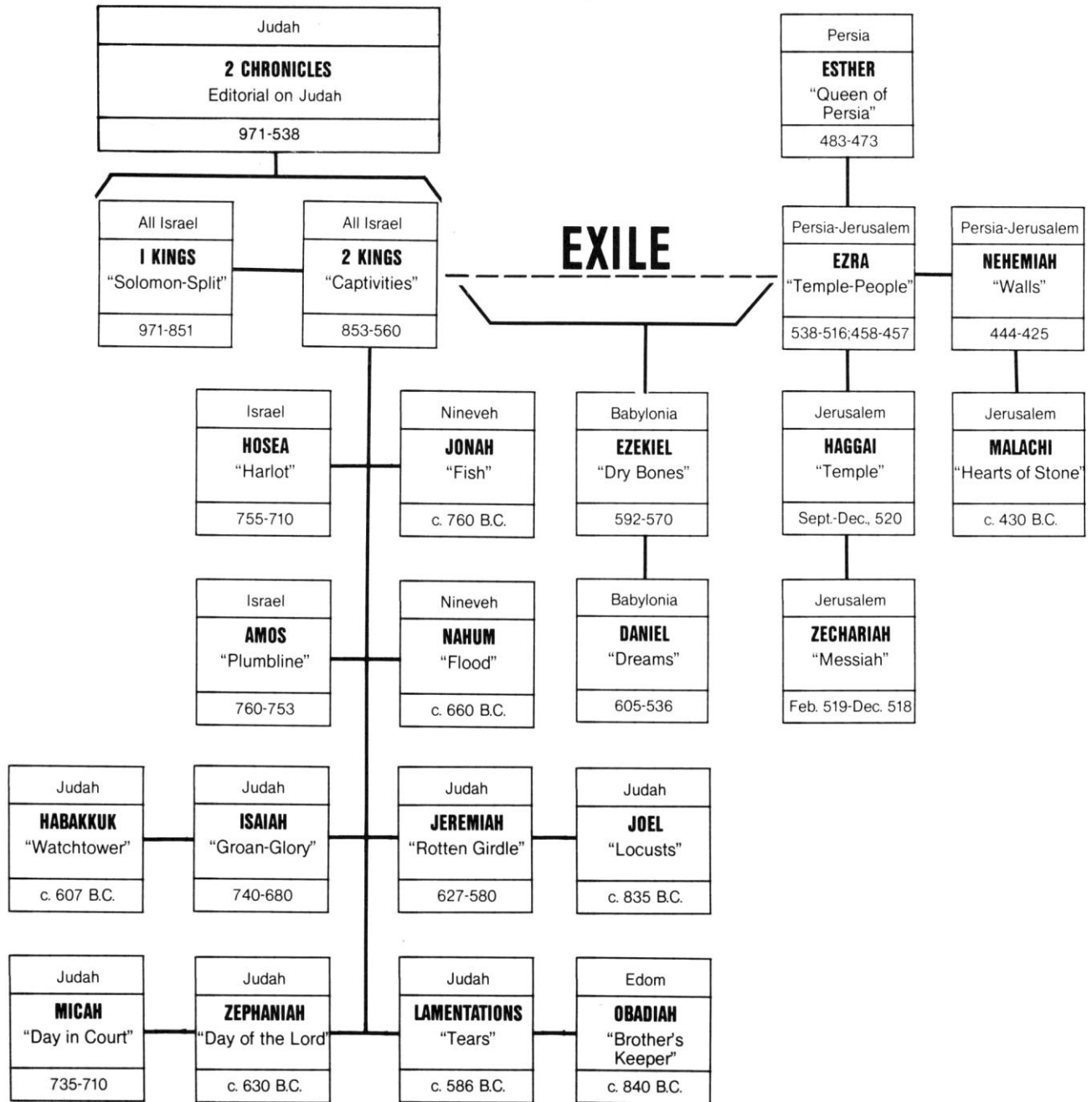
Israel's prophets are a built-in "reformation" aspect of Old Testament faith. The word "prophet" means "to speak out"—to *forth-tell* God's word as much as to foretell the future. They spoke out against hypocrisy, injustice, immorality and idolatry, warning God's people that He would punish them for such continued disobedience. The prophets also foretold the time when God would save a remnant of His people through whom all nations would be blessed.



Note: Some minor Kings are omitted from this chart.



# The Structure of 1 Kings 12 - Esther & Proj



4. An Overview of Prophetic Books

Prophet	Date of Ministry	Where Prophet Lived	Where Prophet Ministered	Political Conditions	Spiritual Conditions	Main Message	Reference in Historical Books
Obadiah	845 B.C.	Judah	Judah	Jehoram king	Discouragement	Encouragement for the Jews and indication of Edom's final doom	2Ch 21:16-17
Joel	835 B.C.	Judah	Judah	Elders and priests dominating scene	Indifference and drunkenness	Call for national repentance	2Ki 11
Jonah	782 B.C.	Israel	Israel or Nineveh Prosperous, fearful of growing	Giants in east and west Great wickedness		Destruction of Nineveh	2Ki 14
Hosea	760 B.C.	Israel	Israel	Golden age of prosperity coming to an end	Approaching lowest point of morality	Spiritual adultery of Israel	2Ki 18
Amos	760 B.C.	Judah	Israel	Height of prosperity	Moral corruption	Judgment on Israel	2Ki 14
Isaiah	739 B.C.	Judah	Judah	Assyria in ascendancy	Period of degeneracy and idolatry	God's plan concerning his people	2Ki 15-20 2Ch 26-32
Micah	735 B.C.	Judah	Judah	Assyria in ascendancy	Low	Judgment of Judah and Israel and Messiah's deliverance	2Ki 15,16 2Ch 28
Nahum	650 B.C.	Judah	Northern Captivity Israel	Instability	Period of degeneracy, idolatry, violence, and arrogance	Nineveh will be destroyed by Babylon	None
Zephaniah	640 B.C.	Judah	Northern Captivity Israel	Social injustice	Very low	Day of Yahweh	2Ki 23

Bible Prophecy, House and Price

Chart 4—An Overview of Prophetic Books (Cont.)

Prophet	Date of Ministry	Where Prophet Lived	Where Prophet Ministered	Political Conditions	Spiritual Conditions	Main Message	Reference in Historical Books
<b>Jeremiah</b>	627 B.C.	Judah	Northern Captivity Israel	Nations jockeying for world power	Complete defection: pagan cults and idolatry rampant	Destruction and restoration	2Ki 22
<b>Habakkuk</b>	609 B.C.	Judah	Northern Captivity Israel	Babylon rising in power	Idolatry rampant	Holiness of God	2Ki 22
<b>Daniel</b>	605 B.C.	Babylon	Southern Captivity Judah	Transition from Babylonian to Persian rule	Discipline and deportation	Sovereignty of God over the nations	2Ki 24
<b>Ezekiel</b>	593 B.C.	Babylon	Southern Captivity Judah	Jews in Babylonian captivity	Under discipline	Restoration	2Ki 24
<b>Haggai</b>	520 B.C.	Judah	Judah	Reforming government and temple	Materialistic	Call for the Jewish remnant to finish the temple	Ezr 5:1
<b>Zechariah</b>	520 B.C.	Babylon and Judah	Judah	Temple not built and country disorganized	Depression	Restoration and cleansing of the nation	Ezr 5; Ne 12
<b>Malachi</b>	433 B.C.	Judah	Judah	Still under foreign yoke but trying to become organized	Cured of idolatry	God condemns the ungodly behavior of his people.	None



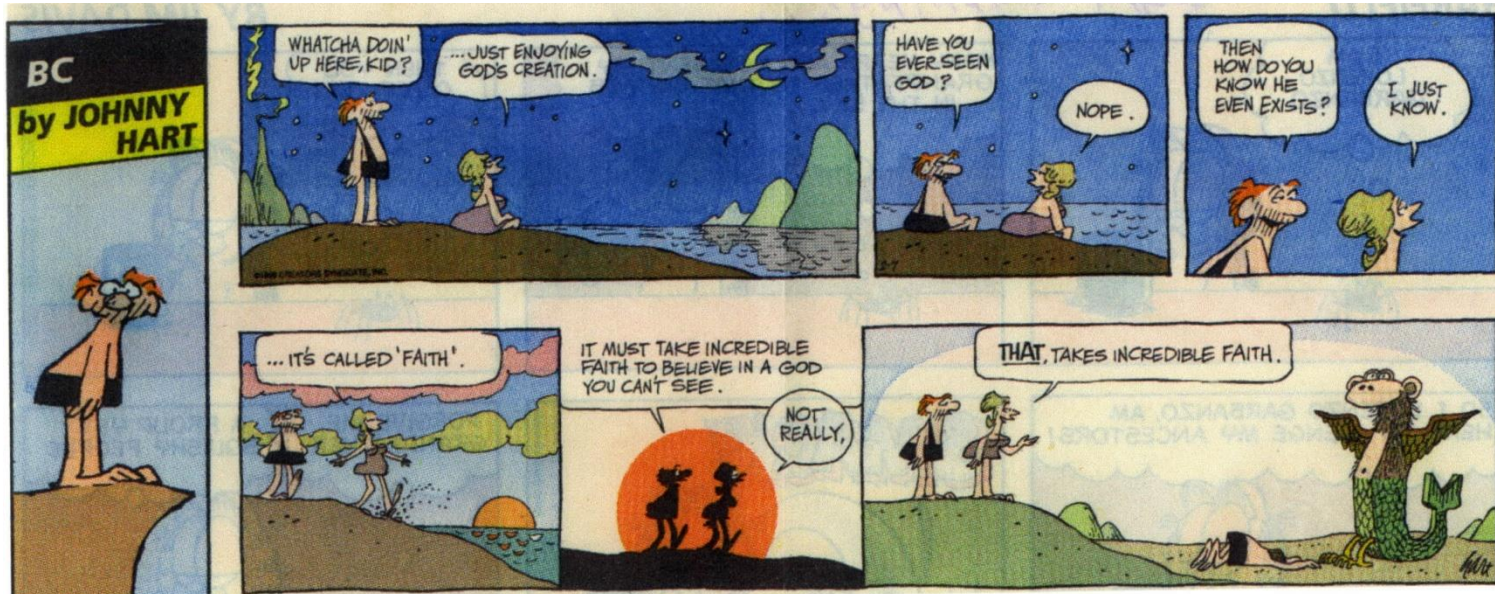
## CHART OF PROPHETIC BOOKS

BOOK	MEANING	DATE	SCRIPTURE	KINGS*	THEME
1. <b>OBADIAH</b>	"Worshiper of Jehovah"	840-830	II Kings 8-12	Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athaliah, Joash (S)	Retribution
2. <b>JOEL</b>	"Jehovah is God"	830-820	II Kings 12	Joash (S)	Visitation
3. <b>JONAH</b>	"Dove"	780-760	II Kings 14	Jeroboam II (N)	Commission
4. <b>AMOS</b>	"Burden bearer"	755-750	II Kings 14	Jeroboam II (N)	Threatened
5. <b>HOSEA</b>	"Salvation"	760-710	II Kings 14-17	Jeroboam II, Zechariah, Shallum, Manahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, Hoshea (N)	Estrangement
6. <b>ISAIAH</b>	"Jehovah is salvation"	740-690	II Kings 15-21	Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh (S)	Salvation
7. <b>MICAH</b>	"Who is like Jehovah"	735-700	II Kings 15-20	Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah (S)	Arraignment
8. <b>NAHUM</b>	"Compassionate" (Counselor, Comforter)	650-620	II Kings 21-23	Manasseh, Amon, Josiah (S)	Doom
9. <b>ZEPHANIAH</b>	"Hidden by Jehovah" (Protected)	630-620	II Kings 22-23	Josiah (S)	Vindication
10. <b>HABAKKUK</b>	"Embraced"	620-605	II Kings 22-24	Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim (S)	Justice
11. <b>JEREMIAH</b>	"Established by Jehovah"	625-585	II Kings 22-25	Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah (S), Nebuchadnezzar	Warning
12. <b>LAMEN.</b>	"Grieving"	585-580	II Kings 25	Nebuchadnezzar	Disconsolate
13. <b>EZEKIEL</b>	"Strength of God"	593-570	II Kings 24-25	Zedekiah (S)	Glory
14. <b>DANIEL</b>	"God is my Judge"	606-530	II Kings 23-25; Ezra 1-4	Jehoiakim (S), Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, Cyrus	Dominion
15. <b>HAGGAI</b>	"Festal"	520	Ezra 5-6	Zerubbabel, Darius I (Persian)	Consider
16. <b>ZECHARIAH</b>	"Remembered by Jehovah"	520-480	Ezra 5-6	Zerubbabel, Darius I, Xerxes	Consummation
17. <b>MALACHI</b>	"My Messenger"	430-420	Nehemiah 13	Artaxerxes, Darius II	Apostasy

\*N = Northern Kingdom  
S = Southern Kingdom

Geisler, A Popular Survey of the Old Testament, p. 231.

219



## 26. Dating the OT prophets

### J.R. Vannoy's order (BTS lectures):

#### Assyrian Period (845-605) ~ PREXILE

Obadiah	840	9 <sup>th</sup> cent
Joel	835	
Jonah	782	8 <sup>th</sup> cent
Amos	760	
Hosea	750	
Isaiah	739	
Micah	735	
Nahum	650	7 <sup>th</sup> cent
Zephaniah	640	

#### Neo-Babylonian Period (605-538) ~ EXILE

Jeremiah	627	
Habakkuk	609	
Daniel	605	
Ezekiel	543	6 <sup>th</sup> cent

#### Medo-Persian Period (538-400) POSTEXILE

Haggai	520	
Zechariah	520	
Malachi 433		5 <sup>th</sup> cent

### W. VanGemeren's order (Prophetic Word, pp. 49-52):

	<u>Israel</u>	<u>Judah</u>
Iddo		Rehoboam, Ahijah
Ahijah	Jeroboam I	
Shemaiah		Rehoboam
Prophet from Judah	Jeroboam I	
Hanani		Asa
Jehu son of Hanani	Baasha	
Elijah (c. 870- )	Ahab	
Anonymous prophet	Ahab	
Micaiah	Ahab	
Elisha (c. 855- )	Jehoram, Jehu, Jehoahaz	
Anonymous	Jehu	
Jehaziel		Jehoshaphat
Eliezer		Jehoshaphat
Zechariah (son of Jehoida)		Joash
Jonah	(793-753) Jeroboam II	
Amos	760 Jeroboam II	
Hosea	750 Zechariah	
Isaiah	740-701	Jotham
Micah	750-722	Jotham
Nahum	ca. 630	Amon
Zephaniah	630	Josiah
Jeremiah	627-585	Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim Jehoiachin, Zedekiah
Habakkuk	ca. 640-598	Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim
Ezekiel	593-571	Jehoiachin
Daniel	601-586	Zedekiah
Obadiah	580	Jerusalem falls in 586
Haggai	520	Cambyses II, Darius, Sheshbazzar
Zechariah	520	Cambyses II, Darius, Zerubbabel, Jeshua
Malachi	ca. 460	Xerxes, Artaxerxes, Esther
Joel	445	Artaxerxes I, Nehemiah

### C.H. Bullock's order (OT Prophetic Books):

#### Neo-Assyrian Period

Jonah: preface to the Prophets  
 Amos: call for moral obedience  
 Hosea: a prophet's dilemma  
 Micah: judgment, hope, and promise  
 Isaiah: prophet par excellence

#### Neo-Babylonian Period

Zephaniah: profile of a people  
 Habakkuk: prophet of transition  
 Jeremiah: prophet to the nations  
 Nahum: reality of judgment  
 Ezekiel: merging of two spheres  
 Obadiah: Edom's day of the Lord  
 Lamentations: reflections of the soul

#### Persian Period

Daniel: witness in Babylonia  
 Haggai: temple and future  
 Zechariah: prophet of the new Kingdom  
 Joel: the day of decision  
 Malachi: prophet of covenant love

### Gerhardus Vos' order (Harry Hobart's notes in Vos syllabus):

1. Moses	1447-1400	Egypt/wilderness
2. Samuel	1100-1000	Israel
3. Elijah	870-852	Israel
4. Elisha	850-795	Israel
5. Joel	835-820	Jerusalem
6. Jonah	800	Israel/Nineveh
<u>8th cent.</u>		
7. Amos	760	Israel
8. Hosea	745	Israel
9. Isaiah	740-698	Jerusalem
10. Micah	735	Jerusalem
<u>7th cent</u>		
11. Zephaniah	630-622	Jerusalem
12. Jeremiah	626-585	Jerusalem
13. Nahum	625-612	Jerusalem
14. Habakkuk	610-605	Jerusalem
<u>Exile</u>		
15. Obadiah	586	Jerusalem/Babylon
16. Ezekiel	592	Babylon
17. Daniel	606-536	Babylon
<u>Post-exilic</u>		
18. Haggai	520	Jerusalem
19. Zechariah	520	Jerusalem
20. Malachi	435	Jerusalem

**Delitzsch's order (OT History of Redemption):****period 1**

Ahijah	1 Ki 11:29
Shemaiah	1 Ki 12:22
Hannani	2 Chron 16:7-10
Man of God	1 Ki 13
Ethan the Ezrahite	1 Ki 5:11; 1 Chron 2:6; Ps 89

**period 2****Israel**

Elijah	Dynasties: Jeroboam
Elisha	Baasha, Omri, Jehu
Micaiah	Son of Imlah, 1 Ki 22

**Judah**

Jehu the seer (son of Hanani)	Jehoshaphat of Judah, Ahab of Israel, 2 Chron 19:1-3
Unnamed prophet	Amaziah, 2 Chron 25:15
Zechariah	Joash, against idolatry, 2 Chron 24:17
Unnamed prophet	Amaziah, 2 Chron 25:7
Jahaziel	Son of Zechariah, under Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron 22:7
Joel	Joash of Judah (contemporaneous with Elisha)
Obadiah	Joram, apostasy of Edom, plundering of Jerusalem, exiles from Judah, (contemporaneous with Elisha), 2 Chron 21:16; 1 Ki 14:25

**period 3**

Written, universal significance for all nations and ages, Babylon is impending judgment, time of silence is approaching, Messianic prophecy comes to the fore.

Amos	Uzziah and Jeroboam II, foreboding, yet hope of restored house of David
Hosea	Spiritual adultery and marriage, the love of God, restoration of Davidic promise
Isaiah	Hezekiah, Jotham, Ahaz, Uzziah, climax of messianic prophecy
Micah	Hezekiah, Messiah from Bethlehem-Ephrathah, Babylonian exile coming, Jer 25:18
Nahum	end of Isaiah's and Micah's ministry, sees fall of Assyria as fall of world-empire
Habakkuk	Manasseh, 2 Ki 21:10-15, "just will live by faith"
Zephaniah	Josiah's reforms, 2 Ki 21:10
Jeremiah	Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin prophet to Gentiles Zedekiah (J. demanded submission to Babylon), new covenant idea arises, law of God is a concern of the living Spirit, not dead letter, Messiah, righteous sprout, Jehovah our righteousness
Ezekiel	Jehoiachin, contemporary of Jeremiah in Babylon "the grandest of all biblical visions," YHWH presented as human, pointing to incarnation.
Haggai/Zechariah	Darius Hystaspis, these two incite the people to resume rebuilding, Ezr 6:1-5
Malachi	Nehemiah, Neh 13:6
Daniel	Selucidae, Cyrus, vision of seventy weeks, high priest called Messiah, world sovereign prince, Christ of God, Messiah-prince. Antichrist and demonology is given clearer presentation.

**W.H. Green's order** (*Prophets and Prophecy*, pp. 29-30):

*Assyrian period* (prior to, and following, invasion):

Israel: Hosea, Amos, Jonah

Judah: Joel, Obadiah, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum

*Babylonian period* (prior to, and following, Nebuchadnezzar and captivity):

Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah

*Exile* (Judah in captivity):

Daniel, Ezekiel

*Restoration* (Cyrus to NT):

Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

**Palmer Robertson's order** (*Christ of the Prophets*, pp. 197-198):

Shaped around three key moments (" . . . it was exile and restoration that provided the unique historical framework for the development of prophetism in Israel," p. 198)

*Pre-exilic* (undetermined date):

Obadiah

Joel

**1. Northern exile (722):**

Amos prophets in pre-exilic 8<sup>th</sup> century

Hosea

Micah

Jonah

Isaiah

**2. Southern exile (587):**

Isaiah

Micah

Nahum prophets in pre-exilic 7<sup>th</sup> century

Habakkuk

Zephaniah

Jeremiah

**3. Restoration (536):**

Ezekiel prophets in exile in mid 6<sup>th</sup> century

Daniel

Haggai prophets after exile in late 6<sup>th</sup> – mid 5<sup>th</sup> centuries

Zechariah

Malachi

# The Divided Kingdom

By Paul Fowler

## Judah

## Israel

### Period of Conflict (930 - 880)

"Battle for Benjamin"

Shishak c. 925 captures cities, to Jerusalem!	<i>Shemaiah</i> <b>Rehoboam (17)</b> • builds defense cities/high places • good-bad - repents • Levites & others come south	931 - 913	✳	<b>Jeroboam I (22)</b> • two capitals, then a third • two religious centers - Bethel/Dan (1Ki 12:27-28) • son Abijah dies	931 - 910	<i>Ahijah</i> Man of God	✳ Philistines at Gibbethon
Zerah c. 900? at Mereshah	<i>Azariah</i> <i>Hanani</i> <b>Abijah (3)</b> • impressive speech <b>Asa (41)</b> • first reform - covenant • no war for 35 years - backslides	913 - 911 911 - 870	✳ ✳	<b>Nadab (2)</b> <b>Baasha (24)</b> <b>Elah (2)</b> <b>Zimri (7 days)</b>	910 - 909 909 - 886 886 - 885 885	<i>Jehu,</i> son of Hanani	✳ Benhadad I takes northern cities/land ✳ Philistines at Gibbethon

### Period of Cooperation (880 - 840)

alliance formed

controls Edom ✳ Moab/Ammon ✳ Edom revolts ✳ Philistines/Arabs ✳	<i>various prophets</i> <b>Jehoshaphat (25)</b> • religious reform; teaches law • expansion policy • fights with Ahab vs. Syria • fights with Jehoram vs. Moab <b>Jehoram (8)</b> • Bad! Bad! - marries Jezebel's daughter • dies from disease <b>Ahaziah (1)</b> • dies with Jehoram	872 - 848 848 - 841 841	✳ ✳ ✳	<b>Omri (12)</b> • new capital, Samaria <b>Ahab (22)</b> • religious upheaval - marries Phoenician • most evil, Baal • no rain for three years <b>Ahaziah (1)</b> <b>Jehoram (12)</b> • wounded by Syria, killed by Jehu • dies with Ahaziah	885 - 874 874 - 853 853 - 852 852 - 841	<i>Elijah</i> a disguised prophet <i>Micaiah</i>	✳ Benhadad II Shalm III c. 853 Qarqar ✳ Moab rebels ✳ Moab defeated war with Syria
--	---	-------------------------------	-------------	---	--	--	--

### Syrian Domination (840-800)

	<i>Joel</i> 830? <b>Athaliah (6)</b> • usurped throne • represents brief period w/o Davidic line <b>Joash (w/ Jehoiada) (40)</b> • religious reform (2Ch 24) • repairs temple • destroys Baal worship • Backslides! Idols! • dies by conspiracy	841 - 835 835 - 796		<b>Jehu (28)</b> • bloodbath with Baal-worshippers • economic base destroyed • relation with Phoenecia dies, and with Judah <b>Jehoahaz (17)</b>	841 - 814 814 - 798	<i>Elisha</i>	✳ Hazael ✳ Benhadad III Damascus falls to Assyria c. 806
--	---	------------------------	--	--	------------------------	---------------	--

### Period of Restoration (800 - 740)

defeats Edom ✳ defeats Philistines ✳ defeats Ammon ✳	<b>Amaziah (29)</b> • backslides and conspiracy • defeated by Israel <b>Uzziah (52)</b> • expansion policy (2Ch 26) • sins by entering temple • becomes a leper • co-reigns with Jotham <b>Jotham (16)</b> • (co-regent from 750)	796 - 767 792 - 740 750 - 735		<b>Jehoash (16)</b> <b>Jeroboam II (41)</b> • expansion policy • social revolution <b>Zechariah (6 months)</b> <b>Shallum (1 month)</b> <b>Menahem (10)</b> • tribute to Pul <b>Pekahiah (2)</b>	798 - 782 793/782 - 753 753 - 752 752 752 - 742 742 - 740	<i>c. 770</i> <i>Jonah</i> <i>c. 760</i> <i>Amos</i> <i>c. 750</i> <i>Hosea</i>	✳ controls Damascus ✳ Assyria
--	--	-------------------------------------	--	--	--	--	----------------------------------

### Period of Deterioration (740 - 700)

defeats Philistines ✳ Tirhaqah (ally vs. Assyria)	<i>Micah</i> 732 - 721 <b>Ahaz (16)</b> • Bad news! • Baal! <b>Hezekiah (29)</b> • expansion policy • religious reform (2Ch 29 - 31) • rebels vs. Syria • many flee south • prayer/tunnel (2Ki 18 - 20) • treaty with Babylon	743 - 727 727 - 697	✳ asks Pul for help ✳ Israel (Pekah) and Syria	<b>Pekah (20)</b> • attacked by Assyria <b>Hoshea (9)</b> <b>Phoenicia = 734</b> <b>Philistia = 734</b> <b>Damascus = 732</b> <b>Samaria = 722</b>	752/740 - 732 732 - 722	<i>Pul III</i> <i>Shalm V</i> <i>Sargon II</i> <i>Sennacharib</i>	✳ Sennacharib suppresses Moab/Ammon rebellion 714
--	--	------------------------	---	--	----------------------------	--	--

### Don't Rock the Boat (700 - 640)

	<b>Manasseh (55)</b> • Bad news! • worst southern king • very idolatrous (2Ki 21) • seals the doom of Judah • tradition: killed Isaiah <b>Amon (2)</b> • killed by servants	697 - 642 642 - 640					✳ Assyria controls
--	--	------------------------	--	--	--	--	--------------------

### Change of Powers (640 - 587)

Necho 609 kills Josiah; comes to help Assyria ✳ Habakkuk c. 606 ✳ Moab, Ammon, Syria raid Judah ✳	<i>Nahum</i> re. Assyria 620? <b>Josiah (31)</b> • Good news! Religious reform • repairs temple; revival, passover • expansion policy <b>Jehoahaz (3 months)</b> • taken captive by Necho <b>Jehoiakim (11)</b> • tribute to Nebuchadnezzar <b>Jehoiachin (3 months)</b> • taken captive <b>Zedekiah (11)</b> • rebels, loses, blinded, dies in exile	640 - 609 609 609 - 598 598 598 - 587					✳ Babylon rises 612 Ninevah falls 605 Carchemish 597 Jerusalem capitulates 587 Final capitulation
--	---	---	--	--	--	--	---

(Jeremiah) (Daniel) (Ezekiel) 593-571 (Obadiah) 586

### Exile (587 - 538)

\*Dates taken from Edwin Thiele's 1983 *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, with slight variations.

TABULAR VIEW OF THE MONARCHY

The Undivided Monarchy (*Approximate Dates*): Saul 1050–1013; David 1013–973; Solomon 973–933

THE DIVIDED MONARCHY

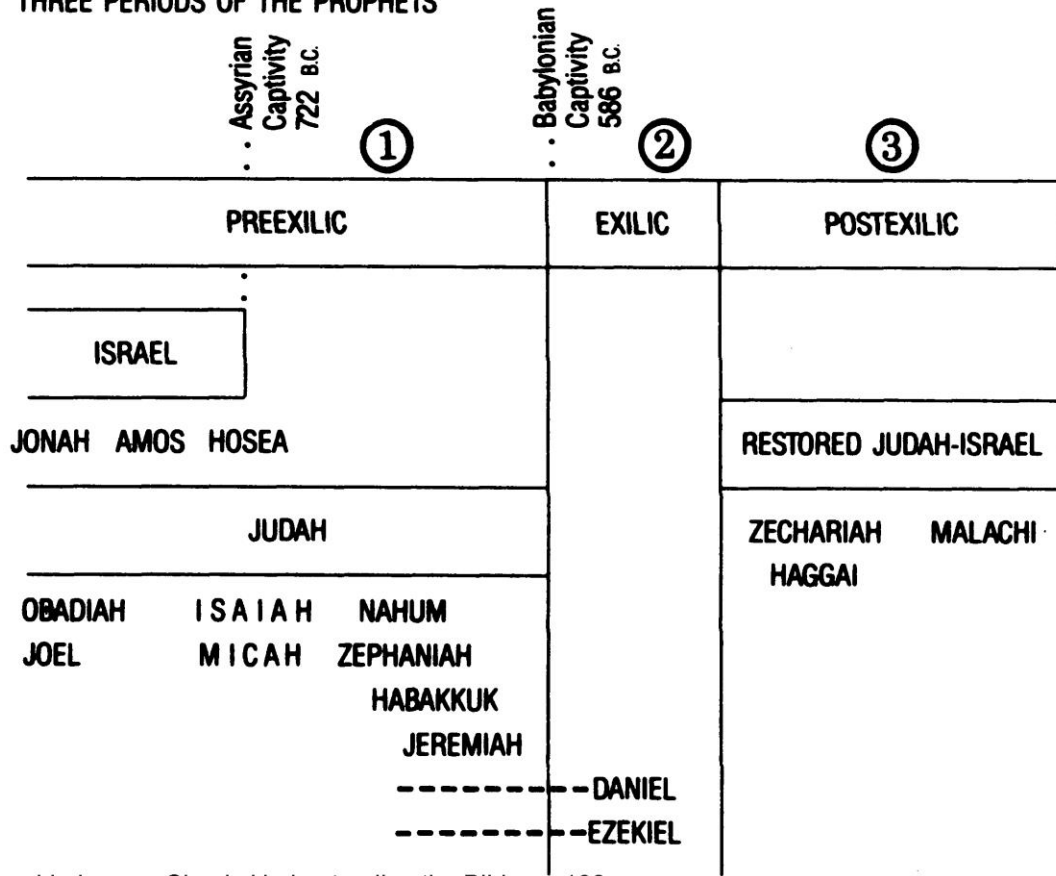
JUDAH	ISRAEL	CHAP. IN KINGS	PROPHETS	EGYPT (E) and BABYLONIA (B)	ASSYRIA
Rehoboam 933-917	Jeroboam 933-912	12-15	Ahijah-Shemaiah	Sheshonk I c. 924 (E)	Adad-Nirari II 911-890
Abijam 916-914	Nadab 912-911	15			
Asa 913-873	Baasha 911-888	15	Jehu		Tukulti-Ninib II 889-884
	Elah 888-887	16			
	Zimri 887				
	Tibni *887-883				Assurnasirabal II 883-860
	Omri 887 (883) 877				
Jehoshaphat 873-849	Ahab 876-854	16-22	Micaiah-Elijah		Shalmanezer II 859-824
	Ahaziah 854-853	II K. 1	Elisha		(Battle of Karkar 854)
Jehoram 849-842	Jehoram 853-842	3			
Ahaziah 842	Jehu 842-815	8			Shamshi-Adad V 823-811
Athaliah 842-836		9-12			
Jehoash 836-797	Jehoahaz 814-798	13	Joel (?)		Adad-Nirari III 810-782
Amaziah 797-779	Jehoash 798-783	14			
	Jeroboam II 783-743				Shalmanezer III 781-772
			Amos		Asshur-dan III 771-754
			Amos		Asshur-Nirari II 753-746
Uzziah 779-740	Zechariah 743	15	Amos-Isaiah-Hosea		
	Shallum 743	15	Amos-Isaiah-Hosea		
Jotham 740-736	Menahem 743-737 (paid tribute to Assyria 738)	15	Isaiah-Micah-Hosea		Tiglath-Pileser III 745-727
			Jonah		
Ahaz 736-728	Pekahiah 737-736	16	Isaiah-Micah-Hosea-Jonah		
	Pekah 736-730	16	Isaiah-Micah-Hosea		
Hezekiah 727-699	Hoshea 730-722	17-20	Isaiah-Micah-Hosea		Shalmanezer IV 726-722
	(Fall of Israel 722)	20			
(Sennacherib invaded Palestine 701)					Sargon II 721-705
					Sennacherib 704-681
Manasseh 698-643		21	Obadiah (?)		Essarhadon 680-669
Amon 643-641		21	Nahum (?)		Assurbanipal 668-626
Josiah 640-609		22-23	Jeremiah	Nabopolassar 625-605 (B)	Assur-tilani 625-620
					Sinshariskun 619-612
Jehoahaz 609		23	Jeremiah-Zephaniah		(Fall of Nineveh 612)
			Habakkuk (?)		Assur-Uballit II 611-609
Jehoiakim 609-598		23-24	Jeremiah-Daniel	Pharaoh-Necho 609-594 (E)	
				Nebuchadnezzar 605-562 (B)	
Jehoiachin 598		24	Jeremiah-Daniel		
Zedekiah 598-587 (Fall of Jerusalem 586)		24-25	Jeremiah-Daniel-Ezekiel		
Gedaliah 587		25	Jeremiah-Daniel-Ezekiel		
		25		Evil-Merodach 561-560 (B)	

THE EXILE

\*According to I Kings 16:21, 22, the people were divided between Tibni and Omri. In the 31st year of Asa, Omri prevailed. "So Tibni died, and Omri reigned."

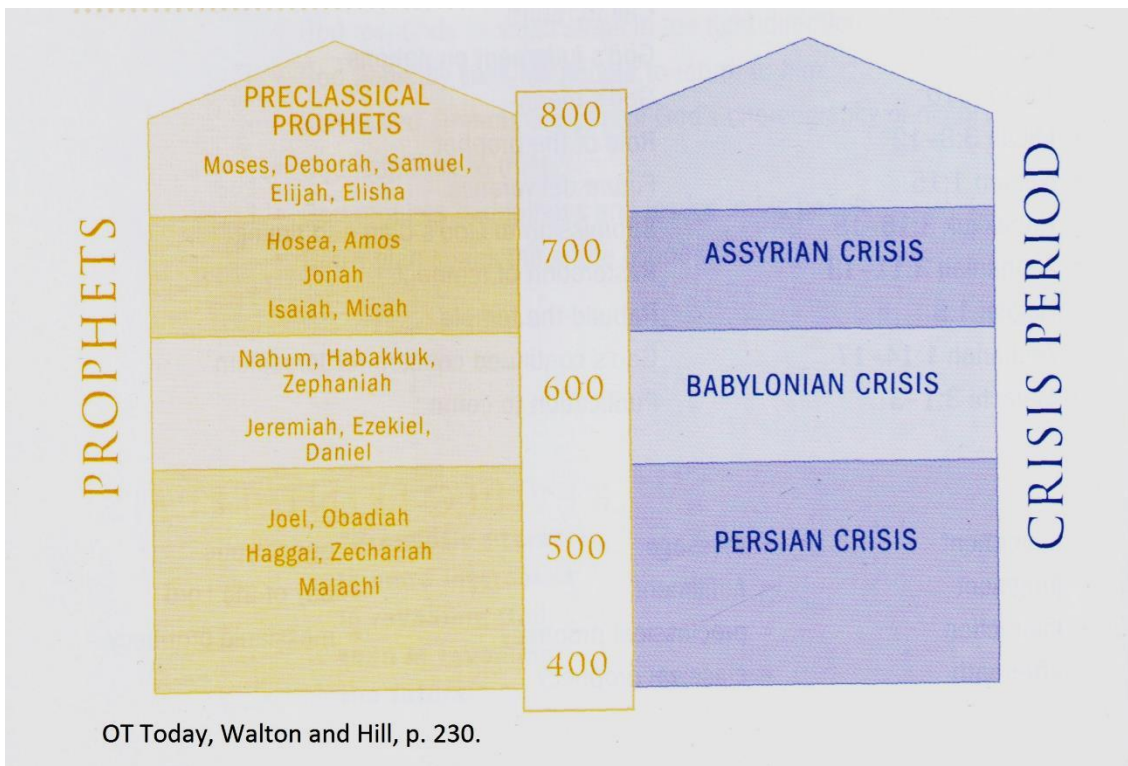


**THREE PERIODS OF THE PROPHETS**



I.L.Jensen, Simply Understanding the Bible, p. 102.

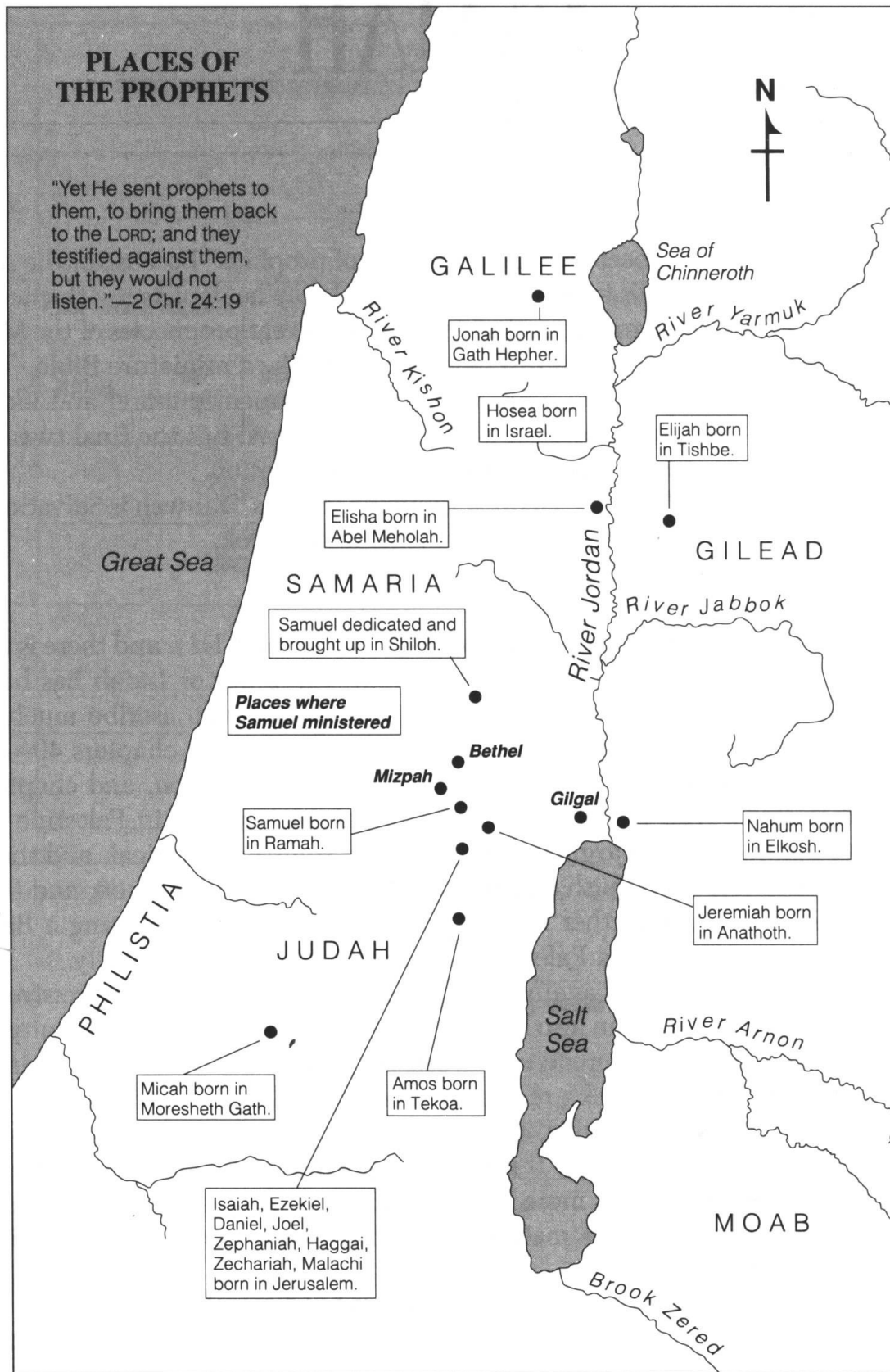
222



OT Today, Walton and Hill, p. 230.



## 27. Geography of the prophets



Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts © 1993 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

<sup>223</sup> Nelson's Bible Maps and Charts, p. 203.

## 28. *Poetry of the prophets: God's messengers*

"The language of eschatology is the language of metaphor."<sup>224</sup>

- See discussion of *literal versus figurative*, p. 72f..
- See essay on symbolic language and poetry, Hague Hermeneutics course-syllabus notes

The poetry of the Prophets plummets the heights and depths of God's deepest anger and compassion, the very heart and mind of God revealed in the most profound beauty and simplicity.

*Comments adapted from Poets/Poetics syllabus:* The poets of the Old Testament were the prophets of God's word: the medium for the revelation of his truth. There is thus a significant distinction to be made between God's prophets and our own artistry; we are not, and will not be, "inspired" for new revelation. We can, however, be inspired in the artistic sense when we glimpse the glory of God in nature, in scripture, and in the marvelous aesthetic deducible from the biblical poets of God. The poets of God did not take lightly the beauty of this created world. Beauty was integral to their world and their art. This does not mean beauty in the limited "romantic" sense, but beauty in the sense of truth-telling, communicating truth and love. The universe was not created for its own sake, for it "declares," "proclaims," and "pours forth speech" (a message) to all the ends of the earth (Ps 19). Even the multitudes of creature that appear to have "purpose" show forth the glorious mind of their maker. They are beautiful with purpose because in their being they show forth design, order, color, and infinite intricacies. The poets of God were inspired to verbalize and proclaim this speech to the ends of the earth. They were also given the task of personalizing the aesthetic relation between God and his people, for the personal depths and heights of thought and feeling in the psalms are unsurpassed. The individual communicating with God in beauty (truth and love) is allowed freedom of expression to communicate his deepest concerns.

There is a beauty in the forms of all created things, human relations, language and communication, personality, science, and human technology. That beauty is communicated in *forms* – forms that allow the communication of meaning. A formless universe would be a contradiction in terms, if created by an infinitely rational Creator. It would be the epitome of irresponsibility, because without form nothing is communicated, known, or shared. Meaning depends on language and our ability to reason coherently. It was out of God's love for us that he has thus spoken so clearly in his creation and his word. Likewise, our aesthetic must pursue a coherent language (structure). The more carefully creative it has been designed and employed the more it bears the mark of its creator. Made in God's image, we thus live out that image partly through our aesthetic. All art and aesthetics communication something. Even if the message is one of meaninglessness, it is still a message (though unbiblical). Meaning, therefore, depends in part on the form of its content: i.e., its structure and unity, coherence and cohesion, truthfully related to the universe as we know it, and reflecting the wisdom of God's revelation. Understanding the forms of biblical content helps us understand the written word of God, though I would argue we do not have to be literary scholars to read correctly. Nor would I suggest that meaning is utterly bound to its genre. Genre enhances the meaning dramatically, but we are never given revelation that is impossible to understand, and to appropriate, because of its difficult forms.

The *poets of God* were the vehicles of the truth of God, and those who say that psalms do not convey a theology that can be systematized may be wrongly dismissing the intent of scripture to communicate the content of God's truth. Certainly the Bible is not a doctrinal treatise; it is far superior as God's revelation of all his counsel, given in poetry, prose, parable, and many other forms. God's flaming revelation shimmers out from every page in the brilliant colors of diverse human language. That revelation is "living and active" like a sword that "penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart (Heb 4:12). Though this revelation is manifold and dynamic it has a "system" of continuity, unity, structure, themes, beauty, and truth. It always exemplifies the nature of the redemptive covenant of God with Israel consummated in Christ and his church. It is a tightly woven tapestry, a masterpiece of integrity. That integrity is found in the aesthetic standards which serve us as creatures and glorify the Creator as God, for the standards are revealed in the very character of God. These standards manifest the most beautiful mind of dynamic rationality – because they reveal the very mind of God.

---

## The past is the present

### If external action is effete

<sup>224</sup> VanGemeren, *Interpreting*, p. 94.

and rhyme is outmoded,  
 I shall revert to you,  
 Habakkuk, as when in Bible class  
 the teacher was speaking of unrhymed verse.  
 He said—and I think I repeat his exact words,  
 “Hebrew poetry is prose  
 with a sort of heightened consciousness.” Ecstasy affords  
 the occasion and expediency determines the form.  
 Marianne Moor, *Selected Poems (1935)* in *The Complete Poems of Marianne Moore*

Over 1/3 of the OT is poetry. Masoretes designated this with poetic accentuation in Job, Proverbs, and Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, and Lamentations, some of Isaiah, and Jeremiah.

Minor prophets: (?) %

Major prophets: (?) %

Historical books: Gen 4:32f.; 49; Ex 15; Nu 21:14f., 27-30; 23-24 (Balaam); Deut 32-33; Josh 10:12-14; Jdgs 5:9-18; 1 Sam 2:1-10; 2 Sam 1:19-27; 3:33f.; 22; 23:1-7.

I rate the value of the operation of poetry and literature upon men's minds extremely high; and from no poetry and literature, not even from our own Shakespeare and Milton, great as they are and our own as they are, have I, for my own part, received so much delight and stimulus as from Homer and Isaiah. To know, in addition to one's native literature, a great poetry and literature not of home growth, is an influence of the highest value; it very greatly widens one's range. The Bible has thus been an influence of the highest value for the nations of Christendom. And the effect of Hebrew poetry can be preserved and transferred in a foreign language, as the effect of other great poetry cannot. The effect of Homer, the effect of Dante, is and must be in great measure lost in a translation, because their poetry is a poetry of metre, or of rime, or both; and the effect of these is not really transferable. A man may make a good English poem with the matter and thoughts of Homer or Dante, may even try to reproduce their metre, or to reproduce their rime; but the metre and rime will be in truth his own, and the effect will be his, not the effect of Homer or Dante. Isaiah's, on the other hand, is a poetry, as is well known, of parallelism; it depends not on metre and rime, but on a balance of thought, conveyed by a corresponding balance of sentence; and the effect of this can be transferred to another language. Hebrew poetry has in addition the effect of assonance and other effects which cannot perhaps be transferred; but its main effect, its effect of parallelism of thought and sentence, can.—Matthew Arnold, *Isaiah of Jerusalem*<sup>225</sup>

OT prophets often used *word-plays*, adding greatly to the poetic and literary nature of their texts. Justice (לְמִשְׁפָּח) and bloodshed (מִשְׁפָּח) sound alike, as well as righteousness (לְצַדִּיקָה) and distress (הִצָּרָה)

Isa 5:7 The vineyard of the LORD Almighty  
 is the house of Israel,  
 and the men of Judah  
 are the garden of his delight.  
 And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed;  
 for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.



Two senses of *stand* here are played off the same word.

Isa 7:9 The head of Ephraim is Samaria,  
 and the head of Samaria is only Remaliah's son.  
 If you do not stand firm (תִּצַּחֲמִינִי) in your faith,

<sup>225</sup> Quoted in Solomon Goldman, *The Book of Books: An Introduction*. Philadelphia (The Jewish Publication Society of America), 1948, p. 311,

you will not stand (לֹא־תִּצְטָק) at all.”



Jer 23:33 “When these people, or a prophet or a priest, ask you, ‘What is the oracle (אִשְׁמָה) of the LORD?’ say to them, ‘What oracle (אִשְׁמָה)? I will forsake you, declares the LORD.’ (NIV) Or, following the LXX and the Vulgate: “then say to them, ‘you are the burden(אִשְׁמָה) . . . .’”

Oracle can also mean *burden*, this heightening the impact of this utterance with a suggestive word-play. See also Mal 1:1

Figurative language is prevalent in the prophets, making interpretation oftentimes difficult. (See discussion of *literal versus figurative*, p. 72f.). See the beautiful *extended metaphor-lament* for the coastal city Tyre as if it was itself a ship (Ezek 27).

Poetic imagery is central to the prophets, and Parker suggests several primary image clusters the prophets:

M. Parker, Exploring Four Persistent Poetic Images

PROPHETIC IMAGES

**FOUR IMAGE CLUSTERS CONVEY THE DIVINE-HUMAN DRAMA**



	ACT I Covenant	ACT II People Rebel	ACT III Punishment	ACT IV Restoration
Sexual Relationships	bride Hos. 2 <sup>1-13</sup> Ez. 16 <sup>8-13</sup>	turned adulteress/ harlot Jer. 3 <sup>8-9</sup>	humiliated by lovers Ez. 16 <sup>36,39</sup>	restored as wife Isa. 54 <sup>4-8</sup>
Animals	domesticated animals Micah 4 <sup>13</sup> Isa. 40 <sup>10-11</sup>	turned wild. Jer. 9 <sup>6-7</sup>	ravaged by wild animals Hos. 13 <sup>6-8</sup>	rescued by rightful master Jer. 50 <sup>19-20</sup> Ez. 34 <sup>11-16</sup> Isa 11 <sup>7-9</sup>
Vineyards	well-tended vineyard Isa. 5 <sup>1-2,4</sup>	grown wild Jer. 2 <sup>21</sup>	ruined Isa. 5 <sup>4-6</sup>	replanted vines are fruitful Amos 9 <sup>13-15</sup>
Drinking of Wine	enjoying wine Isa. 62 <sup>9</sup>	becoming drunk Isa. 5 <sup>11-12</sup>	drinking the cup of God's wrath Jer. 25 <sup>27-28,30</sup>	rejoicing in new wine

226



**29. Old Testament parallelism review from poets/poetics lecture**

Hebrew poetry rhymes thoughts more than words.

- see Kitchen, K.A. “The Basic Literary Forms and Formulations of Ancient Instructional Writings in Egypt and Western Asia.” *Studien zu altägyptischen Lebenslehren*. Edited by E. Hornung and O. Keel. *Orbis et Orientalis* 28 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und

<sup>226</sup> M. Parker, *Exploring Four Persistent Poetic Images*, p. .

Ruprecht, 1979), pp. 270-280.

“Hebrew poetry may open a window into the Hebrew mind. Whereas westerners build logical arguments with many different points, hoping to use supplemental statements to convince, the Hebrews attempted to say the same thing in complimentary or contrasting ways.”<sup>227</sup>

**Synonymous:** idea expressed in the second line repeats the idea expressed in the first line, in different words. May be more than two lines. Alias: *complete* parallelism. See also *emblematic*.

Isa 1:3; Ps 24:2; Job 6:5  
 Isa 1:3 The ox knows his master,  
 the donkey his owner’s manger,  
 but Israel does not know,  
 my people do not understand.

**Antithetic:** idea in second line contrasts with the idea in the first line. Also called *complete* parallelism, although they are not always symmetrical.<sup>228</sup> Prov 14:20, 34; 15:20; Ps 30:6

Prov 15:20 (NASB) A wise son makes a father glad,  
 But a foolish man despises his mother.

**Emblematic:** repeats the idea of the previous line in figurative/symbolic terms; i.e., the second line interprets the previous, *extending* the image/picture through *interpretation*. Considered *synonymous*. Prov 10:26; 25:13; Ps 42:2(1); see esp. Prov 25-27.

Ps 42:2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God;  
 When shall I come and appear before God?

**Introverted/Chiasmic:** reversal of the idea a line (may use antithetic parallelism) Prov 23:15, 16; 10:4, 5

**Chiasm:** (from Dr. F.C. Putnam lecture notes, BTS)

E.g., Ps 121:5(6)

יָוֹם	A	By Day	
הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ	B	the sun	
לֹא-יִכָּבֵד	C	will not strike you	
וְיָרֵחַ	D <sup>1</sup>	nor the moon	
בַּלַּיְלָה׃	A <sup>1</sup>	by night	

**Synthetic:** idea expressed in the second line repeats (symmetrically) the idea expressed in the first line, in different words.<sup>229</sup> May be more than two lines. The second colon varies and thus expands or emphasizes the first. (*correspondent:* Ps 27:1; 35:26,27; *cumulative:* Ps 1:1,2; Isa 55:6,7; Heb 3:17)

Isa 55:6-7 Seek the LORD while he may be found;  
 call on him while he is near.  
 7 Let the wicked forsake his way  
 and the evil man his thoughts.  
 Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him,  
 and to our God, for he will freely pardon.



**Incomplete:** where the entire idea is *not* repeated in the second line

Ps 1:5 (NASB) Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
 Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

### 30. Cessation of OT prophecy: after 400 B.C. no more prophets

➤ See Freeman, *Intro to the OT Prophets*, pp. 130-132.

The last OT prophet was Malachi. During the intertestamental period there were no prophets added to the canon, although we do not know if there were any prophets in ministry during that time period.

<sup>227</sup> Lasor, Hubbard, and Bush, *OT Survey*, p. 308, fn. 5.

<sup>228</sup> Garrett objects to this term, which implies some kind of contradiction, preferring *merismus*, which is when two or more antonyms combine to form a single, unified whole (old and young = all people; heaven and earth = the universe; day and night = at all times). The function of the bicolon thus being “to state a single concept as approached from two perspectives” (*Proverbs*, p. 35). E.g., Prov 15:9.

<sup>229</sup> Garrett objects to this term, saying it is redundant, but also inaccurate because two lines rarely are *fully* synonymous (*Proverbs*, p. 33, fn. 50)..

- a) ***The entire OT was written and available***
- b) ***God's will for 400 year interval between prophecies of Messiah and his coming as added confirmation***

Once Messiah comes, prophecy increases manifold into the NT period.

### ***31. Prophets and prophecy in the New Testament***

➤ See Freeman, *Intro to the OT Prophets*, pp. 130-132.

The ministry of prophecy extends well into the NT and the church age:

John the Baptist, Jesus, Apostles, believers . . .

Lu 7:26-28 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 27 This is the one about whom it is written: "'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' 28 I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

Matt 13:57 (Lu 13:33) And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "Only in his hometown and in his own house is a prophet without honor."

Acts 3:22-23 For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. 23 Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people.'

Consider especially: 1 Cor 12:28; 14:3-4, 23-25, 19, 29-30, 31; Eph 4:8-11; Acts 11:27; 21:10-11; 13:1; 15:32; 1 Tim 4:1, 14; 1:18.

#### ***a) A new period of prophecy/prophesying***

Redemption is accomplished and the church is established.

Mtt 7:22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?'

Act 2:17 In the last days, God says,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,

your young men will see visions,

your old men will dream dreams.

Act 2:18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

1 Cor 13:9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part,

1 Cor 14:5 I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified.

1 Cor 14:31 For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged.

1 Cor 14:39 Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.

Rev 10:11 Then I was told, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings."

Rev 11:3 And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.

It is noteworthy that Jesus' mockers used the ridicule of trying to get him to "prophesy." In these cases it seems like a basically pagan view of prophecy, hoping that Jesus could tell them who was hitting him while blindfolded:

Mt 26:68 and said, "Prophesy to us, Christ. Who hit you?"

Mk 14:65 Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, "Prophesy!" And the guards took him and beat him.

Lk 22:64 They blindfolded him and demanded, "Prophesy! Who hit you?"

In light of this, see the numerous NT texts that express the truth that Jesus was the long awaited Prophet:

Matt 21:11 The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

Matt 21:46 They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet.

Lu 7:16 They were all filled with awe and praised God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said. "God has come to help his people."

#### ***b) Significance of prophecy in NT is entirely clear***

➤ See Jesus and redemption, p. 17.

Jesus is the true prophet as revealer of truth. The most obscure prophecies in the NT are contained the *Revelation of John*. For the most part, the prophecies of the NT clearly point to Christ's fulfilling OT prophecy, showing who he is as God, and what he will do towards our redemption.

#### ***c) References to OT prophets***

Some 100 references to prophets/prophesy. Many more allusions.

### d) *Select and major predictions in NT*

- See full list, see Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp. 668-670
  - See on *prediction*, pp. 50, 148, 159, 200, 200, 223.
  - See Pascal quote on predictions in section “Jesus is the hope”, p. 17.
- Zechariah’s song about John the Baptist’s birth and life (Luke 1:68-79)
  - Gabriel to Mary that she would have a child.
  - Jesus predicts his crucifixion, Peter’s denial, his own return, last judgment, Roman incursions
  - *Revelation of John* predicts many things about the “end times” or “latter times” (unless you are a Preterist)
  - The judgment is predicted in many texts.
  - The second coming of Jesus is predicted in many texts.
  - The tribulation/millennium
  - Cosmic and natural upheavals
  - New heaven and earth.

### e) *Texts of the advancing kingdom*

Matt 11:12 From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it

Mk 9:1 And he said to them, “I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.”

Lk 9:2 and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

Lk 11:20 But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

Lk 16:16 The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.

1 Cor 4:20 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

### f) *Cessation of NT prophecy when Word-revelation completed*

- See Payne’s chart of statistics of predictions and types for both the OT and NT, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp. 673-674 and pp. 668-670.

In light of what was noted above under *prophesying* in the NT era: the words prophecy/prophets: a NT Logos search for “prophets OR prophecy” hit 104x. Prophecy was very much alive in NT times, as well as a general ethos of prophetic thinking and context congruent with OT. My observation (not count) is that the vast majority of NT references to prophecy do indeed point more to the old covenant era than to the new, although the gift of prophecy for the church seems distinctively for the new covenant. It is widely supposed in Reformed circles that all prophecy of revelatory import ceased with the passing of the Apostles of Christ, although many still use this term to refer to a person particularly gifted with spiritual discernment and biblical exhortation to the church.

## B. *The hermeneutics of OT prophecy: “all the prophets testify” (Acts 10:43)*

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets . . .” Mtt 5:17

- See Payne, “Introduction: the Interpretation of Biblical Prediction,” *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp. 3-144.
- See VanGemeren, “Perspectives on Prophecy,” *Interpreting*, pp. 70-99.
- Read Goldsworthy chapter on prophecy in syllabus handouts.
- See Greidanus, *Modern Preacher*, “Preaching Prophetic Literature,” pp. 228-262,
- See Kaiser, *Toward an OT theology*, pp. 182-261.
- See O.T. Allis, “The Law and the Prophets’ not the Prophets *versus* the Law.”
- See Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*: “Biblical Predictions in the Order of Their Fulfillments,” pp. 631-659; “Prophecies Concerning the Foreign Nations,” pp. 660-664; “Prophecies with Personal Reference to Christ,” pp. 665-670.
- See discussions on “prediction,” pp. 148, 159, 222.

### 1. *Primary interpretive considerations for prophetic literature*<sup>230</sup>

#### a) *Do careful grammatical-contextual-theological exegesis*

#### b) *Determine to whom or what passage addresses*

<sup>230</sup> Outline adapted from MacRae, “Prophets and Prophecy,” pp. 875-903.

- c) ***Importance of historical background***
- d) ***Unusual (unique) type of literature***
- e) ***Start at right place: from what is clear and simple***
- f) ***Recognize specific divine purposes***
- g) ***Recognize figurative language, “literal” meaning in pictures***
- h) ***Recognize principle of progressive revelation***
- i) ***Recognize divine oversight of Bible’s contents***
- j) ***Predictive, though not exclusively predictive***
- k) ***Prediction needs special treatment (p. Error! Bookmark not defined.)***
- l) ***Note the occasional ambiguity of person addressed: shifts***
- m) ***Distinguish general principles from specific prediction<sup>231</sup>***
- n) ***Determine single or multiple fulfillment (series of events)(?)<sup>232</sup>***
- o) ***Note that some predictive prophecy is symbolical (spiritual)***
- p) ***Note fulfillment citations in NT: πληρωθη***
- q) ***Note the perspective of the prophecy, predictions relate to purposes of prophecy***
- r) ***Note that predictive prophecy sometimes used terminology that is now “culturally dated”***

For example, such particulars as shields, bows, arrows, camels, chariots, etc., can be said to have meaning for the prophets’ contemporaries but will have an analogous fulfillment through equivalent means. In this case, the items are not by necessity to be taken literally, but where so we can rightly assume an equivalent item will suffice without losing the concrete reality of the fulfillments.

- s) ***Note conditional predictions: parallel predictions with opposite conditions attached, individual conditional predictions, one feature may be conditional though the whole is unconditional***

Note that contingency in biblical predictions correlates with the questions of multiple fulfillment and the fuller sense, pp. 204, 207.

➤ See especially Pratt, “Historical Contingencies.”

Conditions can be contingent on human action, obedience *versus* disobedience. Consider Jonah and the Ninevites.

Jer 18:5-10 Then the word of the LORD came to me: 6 “O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does?” declares the LORD. “Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. 7 If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, 8 and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. 9 And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, 10 and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it.

1 Ki 21:19 Say to him, ‘This is what the LORD says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?’ Then say to him, ‘This is what the LORD says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth’s blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!’”

1 Ki 21:27-29 And it came about when Ahab heard these words, that he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and fasted, and he lay in sackcloth and went about despondently. 28 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 29 “Do you see how

<sup>231</sup> Declarations state what would occur under certain circumstances. Thus, a general principle is presented that could be fulfilled repeatedly (Lev 26; Isa 6:10; Mtt 13:14; Mk 7:6).

<sup>232</sup> See “multiple fulfillment,” p. 204 .



Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days, but I will bring the evil upon his house in his son's days."

Isa 38:1-5 In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to him and said, "This is what the LORD says: Put your house in order, because you are going to die; you will not recover." 2 Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, 3 "Remember, O LORD, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes." And Hezekiah wept bitterly. 4 Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah: 5 "Go and tell Hezekiah, 'This is what the LORD, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life.



## 2. Summary of basic interpretive principles by Payne<sup>233</sup>

### A Summary of Basic Principles for the Interpretation of Prophecy: 22 Characteristics

J.B. Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp. 143-144

		See above, p.:	Illustrations from the mid-years of Isaiah, 711-701 B.C.
<b>The NATURE of Biblical prediction is:</b>			
1. Historical	Prophecy arises out of real situations	4	32:9
2. Transcendent	God's guiding inspiration surpasses human capacities.	5	24:22
3. Moral	Prediction relates closely to contemporaneous preaching.	7	32:6-15
4. Evangelistic	Prophecy motivates men toward commitment to God.	14	31:6-7
5. Predictive	Foretelling occupies a major place in it. <sup>357</sup>	10, 13	Most of chs. 24-35
6. Messianic	Prophecy attains its goal in Jesus.	7	35:4
<b>The FORM is:</b>			
7. Literal	Most prophecy is straightforward in its declaration.	16	30:22
8. Poetic	Exalted feeling may produce Oriental hyperbole.	18	32:14
9. Figurative	Context may demonstrate some language as intentionally nonliteral.	43	30:26
10. Symbolical	A prediction may be acted as well as spoken.	21	20:2
11. Typical	An event may symbolize to its contemporaries a truth later achieved by Christ.	52	36:7
<b>The FULFILLMENT is:</b>			
12. Necessary	Prophecy is inspired and therefore, when noncontingent, must be fulfilled.	60	30:19, 44:26
13. Contingent	Fulfillment may be modified, provided it is near at hand and subject to conditions affectable by its contemporaries.	62-68	38:1
14. Analogous	Other Scriptures are determinative for interpretation.	72-80	25:8 = I Cor 15:54
15. Preferably near	The closest adequate fulfillment is the best. <sup>358</sup>	118-119	Most of chs. 28-34
16. Simple	The meaning of Scripture is not manifold but one.	121-126	29:3
17. Progressive	One context may yet advance through a series of predictions.	129-131	29:14-18
18. Similar	Prophecies may show resemblance without being equivalent.	119	32:15 = Acts 2:4
19. Telescoped	Prophecy may advance directly from a near to a far horizon.	137-140	31:9-32:1
20. Cyclic	Major blocks within a book may reach parallel climaxes.	130-131	24-27, 34-3
21. Eventual	If a prophecy has not yet been fulfilled, it shall be.	60	32:5
22. Occasionally ambiguous	Prophecies vary in perspicuity.	140-142	32:5

<sup>233</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp. 143-144.

*On conditions in prophecy, Payne offers some helpful guidelines.*<sup>234</sup>

Conditional prophecies. Within the category of valid God-given predictions, Scripture distinguishes a special class of revelations whose accomplishment is made contingent upon the fulfillment by men of certain conditions, which are equally God-given. That is to say, God is no changeless, impersonal force but reacts rather, in a living way, to the responses that are made by human persons. In Exodus 9:15, for example, His own words document the reality of divine change, since they foretell what He might have done, but did not because of one man's intercession: "For now I had put forth My hand, and smitten thee [Moses] and thy people with pestilence, and thou hadst been cut off from the earth; but . . ." (cf. II K 20: 1-5). It is not that God's standards, His decrees, or His nature are changeable; it is, in fact, the very immutability of the character of deity which necessitates the application of differing aspects of His fixed principles, in accordance with such changes as may be exhibited by fickle men. Prophecy in particular has been designed by God for moral ends, so as to motivate men into conformity with divine holiness.[24] Should men, therefore, seek to take advantage of its holy assurances, toward nonmoral ends (e.g. as in Jer 7:4, 8-10, or Mi 3:11), change becomes then not only possible but inevitable. God accordingly rebuked the priestly house of Eli, seemingly complacent in its corruption, "I said indeed that thy house should walk before Me for ever; but now . . . be it far from Me; them that honor Me I will honor, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed" (I Sam 2:30).

Contingency is set forth as a principle in Jeremiah 18:7-10:

At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation ... to destroy it; if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And [correspondingly] at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation ... to build it; if they do that which is evil in My sight, that they obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

This theory is then illustrated in practice by the following excerpt from one of Jeremiah's later sermons: "Yahweh sent me to prophesy against this city all the words that ye have heard. Now therefore, amend your ways and obey the voice of Yahweh your God; and Yahweh will repent Him of the evil that He hath pronounced against you," 26:12-13.[25] The concept of conditional prophecy is further confirmed by those of his oracles in which alternative results are laid out before men, depending upon their response to stated conditions; cf. 38:17-18 or 42:10-17,[26] Or Romans 11:22, "To you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

Application of the conditional principle is necessarily restricted. On the basis of what may be observed from the above, Berkhof appears justified when he defines two requirements that must be met if a given prophecy is to be considered conditional: (1) it must be of near application; and (2) it must possess elements that are capable of satisfaction by the prophet's contemporaries.[27] Jonah's famous oracle of doom, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (3:4), meets both of these prerequisites: its realization was imminent; and its relationship to its hearers is explicit, even though its precise conditionality remains unexpressed. The very reason for the prophecy lay in the wickedness of the city (1:2); and the Ninevites' reaction was one of prayer to God and of turning from their evil way (3:8). The result was that God did not execute the evil that He had planned and predicted (3:10).

Notes:

24. See above, pp. 7, 1-15.

25. Cf. the message of his younger contemporary, Ezekiel, "When I say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his righteousness, and commit iniquity, none of his righteous deeds shall be remembered; but in his iniquity that he hath committed, therein shall he die. Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right . . . he shall surely live, he shall not die," 33:13-15.

26. Or Jer 17:2~26 (cf. 22:4): "If ye hearken unto Me, to hallow the sabbath day... then shall there enter in by the gates of this city kings sitting on the throne of David ... and they shall come bringing sacrifices." V. 27, "But if ye will not, then will I kindle a fire in the gate of Jerusalem." The latter is what eventuated.

27. Principles of Biblical Interpretation, p. 150.

<sup>234</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp. 62-63. For more examples from the Bible, see *ibid.*, pp. 64-71.

These conditions can be qualified by the unknowns regarding the return of Christ. There is a sense in which the return of Christ is conditional upon the obedience of his people, thus the time frame is uncertain:

Matt 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Mark 13:10 And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.

2 Pet 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

### a) *Multiple fulfillment, double fulfillment, double sense, and telescoping*

- See related discussion on end-times eschatology pp.81ff, esp. p. 114.
- See “literal and fuller sense (*sensus plenior*),” p. 206; see discussions on “prediction,” pp. 148, 159, 199, 222; see promise and fulfillment, p. 50.
- See Pratt essay, “Historical Contingencies.”
- See “Prefiguration: inter-textuality, inner-textuality, figural representation,” p. 117.

One of the biggest hermeneutical challenges is the question of whether there is a multiple meaning, fulfillment, or sense in biblical prophecy. Some claim that biblical prophecies can relate to two or more different events at the same time. Others claim that there is only one sense to all of scripture, therefore prophecies refer to only one antecedent. The Reformers sought to correct the hermeneutical abuses of allegorizing, unrestrained multiple senses, mystical meanings, threefold sense, etc., by stressing that scripture has a single sense (verssu *sensus plenior*).

Kaiser writes, “. . . even though there are multiple fulfillments throughout history as time advances to the last day, none of these fulfillments constitute double or multiple senses or meanings. They all participate in the one single sense, even though it has had a multiple number of fulfillments over the course of time”<sup>235</sup>

WCF, ch. 1, IX. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself: and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly. [Acts 15:15; John 5:46; II Peter 1:20-21]

It can be proposed that there are prophecies that do have multiple fulfillment in the sense that not all aspects are fulfilled at one time, but each item is fulfilled at different times. That is, each aspect of the prophecy has a single fulfillment, yet at different times. This is often seen in the *telescoping* perspective of the prophets. Strictly speaking, this is different than saying that particular prophecies may mean “multiple” (thus distinctly different) things (that is, it does not mean that particulars of any given prophecy have numerous meanings). It also affirms, however, that the particulars of a given prophecy may have more than one *application*, and that the meanings (referents) are not always single in time or place. Needless to say, making such distinctions is not always possible, for we have yet to see the completion, and contingencies, of many prophecies.<sup>236</sup>

***Telescoping (or foreshortening)***:<sup>237</sup> a term often used to describe the multiple or layered aspect of prophetic fulfillment. As a telescope has different lengths in each section to allow for a view into the distant present, prophecy often is telescoped allowing a view into the distant future. An illustration often used is that of a series of mountain tops receding into the horizon, whose relative distances cannot be determined by sight, and whose sequence is thus indeterminate. That is, the order of presentation is thematic and not always chronological nor according to some predetermined schemata. The prophets had a limited time perspective, even when they may have known the order of future events, as well as a limited revelation of those events. Prophets also had a peculiar time perspective in which time is not stressed in precise terms. Events are often *compressed* into an apparently briefer period of time, although the actual unfolding of those events will occur over long time periods. Strictly speaking, one could say that telescoping is not the same as multiple fulfillment, yet I think that some of the

<sup>235</sup> Kaiser, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, p. 39. See *sensus plenior*, pp. 206-207.

<sup>236</sup> See McRae, “Prophets and Prophecy,” pp. 899-901.

<sup>237</sup> See Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp. 137-140. See Payne below, fnn. (no hard and fast “dispensational” breakdown of periods).

problems posed by multiple fulfillment can be resolved through understanding the distinctively prophetic time-perspective.

See Joel 2 and how Peter quotes it in Acts 2

<sup>28</sup>And afterward,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,  
your old men will dream dreams,  
your young men will see visions.

<sup>29</sup>Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

<sup>30</sup>I will show wonders in the heavens

and on the earth,

blood and fire and billows of smoke.

<sup>31</sup>The sun will be turned to darkness

and the moon to blood

before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

<sup>32</sup>And everyone who calls

on the name of the LORD will be saved;

for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem

there will be deliverance,

as the LORD has said,

among the survivors

whom the LORD calls.



Consider the two following sets of Messianic texts, and it is easy to understand that while the Jews of Jesus' day expected only one Messianic *coming*, that these texts with NT hindsight show us clearly two kinds of Messianic *comings*:

Dan 7:13-14 In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. 14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Ps 72:14 He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight.

Isa 9:1-7 Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan— 2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

3 You have enlarged the nation

and increased their joy;

they rejoice before you

as people rejoice at the harvest,

as men rejoice when dividing the plunder.

4 For as in the day of Midian's defeat,

you have shattered

the yoke that burdens them,

the bar across their shoulders,

the rod of their oppressor.

5 Every warrior's boot used in battle

and every garment rolled in blood

will be destined for burning,

will be fuel for the fire.

6 For to us a child is born,

to us a son is given,

and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty

God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne

and over his kingdom,

establishing and upholding it

with justice and righteousness

from that time on and forever.

The zeal of the LORD Almighty

will accomplish this.

Zech 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion!

Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem!

See, your king comes to you,

righteous and having salvation,

gentle and riding on a donkey,

on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Isa 53:3-5 He was despised and rejected by men,

a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering.

Like one from whom men hide their faces

he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4 Surely he took up our infirmities

and carried our sorrows,

yet we considered him stricken by God,

smitten by him, and afflicted.

5 But he was pierced for our transgressions,

he was crushed for our iniquities;

the punishment that brought us peace was upon him,

and by his wounds we are healed.

Ps 22:10-24 From birth I was cast upon you;

from my mother's womb you have been my God.

11 Do not be far from me,

for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

12 Many bulls surround me;

strong bulls of Bashan encircle me.

13 Roaring lions tearing their prey

open their mouths wide against me.

14 I am poured out like water,

and all my bones are out of joint.

My heart has turned to wax;  
 it has melted away within me.  
 15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd,  
 and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth;  
 you lay me in the dust of death.  
 16 Dogs have surrounded me;  
 a band of evil men has encircled me,  
 they have pierced my hands and my feet.  
 17 I can count all my bones;  
 people stare and gloat over me.  
 18 They divide my garments among them  
 and cast lots for my clothing.  
 19 But you, O LORD, be not far off;  
 O my Strength, come quickly to help me.

20 Deliver my life from the sword,  
 my precious life from the power of the dogs.  
 21 Rescue me from the mouth of the lions;  
 save me from the horns of the wild  
 oxen.  
 22 I will declare your name to my brothers;  
 in the congregation I will praise you.  
 23 You who fear the LORD, praise him!  
 All you descendants of Jacob, honor him!  
 Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!  
 24 For he has not despised or disdained  
 the suffering of the afflicted one;  
 he has not hidden his face from him  
 but has listened to his cry for help.

We have two movements to one symphony presented here, but from both the prophets' viewpoint and all those before Christ, there could be no telling what the sequence in the score would be, nor how such divergent presentations could be fulfilled by the same Messiah.

Isa 61:1-2 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,  
 because the LORD has anointed me  
 to preach good news to the poor.  
 He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
 to proclaim freedom for the captives  
 and release from darkness for the prisoners,  
 2 to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor  
 and the day of vengeance of our God,  
 to comfort all who mourn . . .

Isaiah describes in v. 1 the first coming of Christ, and in v. 2 the second coming of Christ.



***b) Literal and fuller sense: authorial intention, univalence, polyvalence, sensus plenior, and the intentional fallacy***

Words differently arranged have different meanings, and meanings differently arranged have different effects" (Pascal, *Pensées*, p. 23).

**"Two errors: 1. To take everything literally, 2. To take everything spiritually."**<sup>238</sup>

Adapted from STH Hermeneutics of the History of Redemption syllabus.

- See R.L. Pratt, *He Gave Us Stories*; V. Poythress, *NT123 Biblical Hermeneutics*, section 61.8; E.E. Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics*, pp. 337; W. Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, p. 79; S. Greidanus, *Modern Preacher*, pp. 106-113.<sup>239</sup>
- See idea of *telescoping*, p. 204.
- See typology, pp. 203ff.
- See comments on poetic nature of prophets, p. 193f.
- See essay on symbolic language and poetry, Hague Hermeneutics course-syllabus notes

Prophetic literature poses the particularly thorny issue of author's intention and meaning, as it plagues all of modern hermeneutics, but meaning is after all the goal of hermeneutics! Needless to say, the very notion of

<sup>238</sup> Pascal, *Pensées*, Penguin, # 252.

<sup>239</sup> *Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics*, "We affirm that the meaning expressed in each biblical text is single, definite and fixed" (article 7). See Pratt (*He Gave Us Stories*, pp. 114-115) for a nuanced viewpoint which affirms univalence while speaking of an overlapping *original meaning*, *biblical elaborations*, *legitimate applications*, and *full value*. Pratt concludes that "*there is one original meaning, but there are many legitimate summaries of that one meaning . . . Our goal is not to formulate the only proper description of original meaning. It is to formulate an assortment of legitimate descriptions*" (*ibid.*, p. 126). He says he follows V. Poythress and B. Walkte on *full value*. See Poythress, *Symphonic Theology*; Syllabus NT 123, *Biblical Hermeneutics: Old and New Testaments*, Spring, 1992 from Westminster Theological Seminary. He develops a *multiperspectival* approach. Pratt further proposes considering the diverse *paradigmatic* (what the writer chose to say), *syntagmatic* (how it was arranged), *pragmatic* (why he wrote) aspects of meaning (*ibid.*, pp. 87ff., 106, 125, fig. 12, p. 127, fig. 13). R. Lints, strongly disagrees with Pratt, fn. ergent theologies (eschatology or soteriology) .

*intention* is a hermeneutical minefield. The debate originated as early as the dissension between the Alexandrian school (multiple sense in *sensus plenior*) and the Antiochene school (single sense).

### (1) *Sensus plenior*

➤ See W. Kaiser who is strictly opposed to the notion of *fuller meanings* unintended by the author.<sup>240</sup>

The term *sensus plenior* is somewhat problematic, for it raises the question of whether a biblical author always knew all intentions of what he was writing (e.g., prophecy), and whether we can determine fuller meanings beyond what authors plainly “intended.” It also suggests that if a meaning is dynamic and complex (“multiple” or multiplex) that it must not have been intended by the author. Yet, the only way to know what the author intended is by the meaning we have in the text.

As language is limited, it is particularly limited here, for “fuller” or “deeper” are terms applied to substances and spaces, but we interpreters use them to describe the challenging *qualities* of meaning. We all know what we *mean* when we say something is *deep*, but can you tell me precisely *what we mean*?

We should err on the side of caution in assuming that a fuller sense leads to multiple meaning (polyvalence), while we should be cautious in assigning a fuller sense to a text that the author could not have likely intended to communicate. We must acknowledge, for example, that the prophets could not have known all the intentions or meanings of God in their proclamations, although their intentions were indeed a part of God’s revelatory and redemptive intentions (that is, the *details* may have been obscure, not understanding of intention). When considering the many texts at the heart of the millennium debate, one can argue for *telescoping* and progressive fulfillment, and in some cases multiple fulfillment. Yet, as Kaiser points out above (fn. 235), the multiple fulfillment participates in the single sense.

For example, Gen 3:15 “I will put enmity between you and the woman . . .” has a fuller understanding in the NT than the author of Gen 3:15 could have known or *intended*. God intended it, however. This does not mean the author could not have been aware of its prophetic aspects, only that he could not have known precisely what they would be.

Greidanus suggests a safeguard against eisegesis: “The only safeguard against eisegesis at this point is not to deny the reality of the fuller sense but to insist that that fuller sense be established only as an extension of the original sense and solely on the basis of subsequent revelation.”<sup>241</sup>

#### ***Literal or figurative? Fulfilled or not?***

Regarding the many prophecies about possession of *land*: are they typological prediction, or a prediction of literal dwelling in the land, and if the latter when does this occur? Debate about such texts is readily found in commentaries, and it is not easy to resolve. If one concludes that such prophecies were not completely fulfilled in the return from exile (or that the land promise was not fulfilled prior to the exile), then it leaves room for some future land promise being unfulfilled after the return. Whether that was in Israel’s State in 1948, or in the millennium, or the eternal state (new heaven and earth) is not agreed upon. I would propose that we look not on the exilic land-promise as just a typological promise, nor strictly a literal promise (for that would make it purely material). Rather, the initial, conditional land-promise to the Patriarchs was given as a “trust,” or deposit, for the eternal, unconditional promise of redemption. The land-promise *was fulfilled* prior to the exile, and references to the return to the land during exile should not suggest that the original land-promise had not been fulfilled, even if there was an aspect of post-exilic re-entry in view that would reflect that original promise. The fact that the land was given to Israel before and after the exile is proof that the land-promise had been fulfilled already. Further, the temporal blessings of the covenant-land were not to be confused with the eternal blessing of heaven, though naturally they often were. The land deposit serves as a kind of preliminary land grant from the king of heaven, and is essentially Messianic. It is the strongest reminder that the goal of redemption is an eventual “return” to a Paradise far surpassing Eden.

### (2) *Univalence versus polyvalence*

Polarizing these terms may be an improper move in seeking to resolve the dilemma of meaning. In fact, these terms, like *sensus plenior*, are overly loaded and may mislead us more than illuminate us. If the meaning of a text was *intended* and can be discerned reasonably well (*perspicuity*), then perhaps it is overly simple to say a “text” has only one meaning, for meaning is often dynamic and contextual and certainly involves a complex of meaning

<sup>240</sup> Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, p. 113. Yet, it should be noted that Kaiser does not believe the meaning of the text is unidimensional or flat for he expresses well the need to have a combined *contextual* (canonical), *syntactical* (grammatical-literary), *verbal*, *theological*, *homiletical* analyses. He calls it “grammatical-contextual-historical-syntactical-theological-cultural exegesis” (*Exegetical Theology*, p. 90; see esp. pp. 69-165). See *ibid.*, p. 79, for rules about determining authorial intention.

<sup>241</sup> Greidanus, *Modern Preacher*, p. 112.

relations that construct its total “meaning.” That is, even if we are discussing one word in context, we are discussing language and language has an artistic quality unlike equational relations found in the so-called hard maths and sciences. Meaning in sentences and paragraphs is *multifaceted*, and involves a complex of nuances. Thus, as we discuss a phrase or a paragraph we find a complex of dynamic relations that must be translated and interpreted into our *lingua franca*, as well as our cultural context. This is not to say we change (or add to) the meaning, but we must interpret the meaning written, and we find that in any given text a limited variety of intentions of meaning are *possible*. But note, though limited, there is a diverse range of possibilities.

If, however, we must reduce a text to one particular central “point,” or theme, then we must interpret accurately what is *perceived* as the most important meaning. That is to say, we attempt to crystallize the variety of meaning nuances of the text into communicable themes of perceived importance. To say they are *perceived* does not imply they were not really intended or now present in the text, but only to acknowledge the fact that the interpreter is real in the process, and essential.

Pratt says,

Many evangelicals oversimplify original meaning, thinking something like this: “The passage meant what I have said. The passage has only one meaning, so it cannot mean anything else.” With such an outlook, it is not long before we stop exploring the passage and rule out further investigation because we think we have arrived at the only legitimate interpretation.

But the inherent complexities of Old Testament narratives make investigation an ongoing process. We may discover aspects of the original meaning, but there is always more to be unearthed. We may exhaust ourselves as we investigate Old Testament narratives, but we will never exhaust the texts themselves.

As we begin to investigate Old Testament stories, we must remember that *there is one original meaning, but there are many legitimate summaries of that one meaning.*<sup>242</sup>

On the other hand, to say a text has multiple meanings is begging the question, for all texts are made up of words that each have their own *range* of meanings and *possible* meanings, and are each construed in a unique context in distinctive relation to that context as the author intended. The relation of the reader to that dynamic complex of meaning(s) is as interpreter. The process of interpretation is fraught with complexities itself, yet to suggest that a text has multiple and distinct *meanings* is to say that it can not actually communicate any certain meaning. Certain meaning being that which a proper interpretation of the dynamic interplay of words and context can not do without.

The essential meaning of a text is not always reducible to one simple formula, although it may at times, but we should be able to state a major promise or major theme or primary intention, as well as “sub themes,” or extended nuances of meaning that may require more subtle observation and analysis. That is, meaning is not always *simple*, but that does not mean it is multiple in the sense that *polyvalence* suggests.

Polyvalence in its worst form involves a much unwarranted subjectivism in the interpreter, in which the intention of the author is blurred in the interpreter’s quest to scientifically simplify what is dynamic human artistry at work in divinely inspired texts.

In conclusion, I propose that these terms involve oversimplifications, and especially so when polarized in hermeneutics.

One meaning, multiple *summaries*? (see Pratt, *He Gave Us Stories*, fn. 239)

- See Lints who says he disagrees with both Pratt and J. Frame on this point, see *The Fabric*, p. 288, fn. 41.
- See also V. Poythress, *Symphonic Theology*, and other along these lines that propose the notion of multiple perspectives, competing, conflicting, or divergent theologies that somehow are unified.
- There is also some correlation with the theme of *historical contingencies* in biblical predictions (see conditional predictions, p. 200) and Pratt, “Historical Contingencies.”
- Single sense: Luther/Calvin, W. Kaiser, B. Ram, Berkhof, J. Bright, and J.B. Payne who argues strongly for a *single sense* for all scripture (*Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp. 121-129).

Payne seems to back step a bit:

“But while the principle of single fulfillment may restrict a given phrase to but one originally intended meaning in each context and thus produce a diversity of potentialities for the same phrase at different points, it still, on the other hand, leaves open the possibility of a wide usage for prophecy by way of subsequent application.”<sup>243</sup>

Payne resolves this by stressing the *progressive* and *developmental* nature of predictive prophecy:

<sup>242</sup> Pratt, *He Gave Us Stories*, p. 126. R. Lints says he “strongly disagrees with Richard Pratt” on the idea that “the Scriptures themselves contain data that may be organized in any number of conflicting fashions or indeed that there are a variety of competing frameworks in the Scriptures themselves” (Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 288, fn. 41).

<sup>243</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 128.



“Although the individual prophecies of Scripture are best understood each in terms of its one intended accomplishment, there may appear within a broad Biblical context a series of separate forecasts that together exhibit a pater of chronological progress in fulfillment, the whole of which may be identified as a progressive prediction.”<sup>244</sup>

*Developmental fulfillment* involves applying “the principle of progressive fulfillment to a single comprehensive or generalized prophecy,” or a “progressive completion.”<sup>245</sup> This, he says is rare: Gen 3:15; 9:25; 12:7a; 17:4; 25:23a; Lev 3:1; 25:8; Isa 11:1; Zech 13:7c. Thus, he proposes, biblical predictions can be traced in the complex patterns of *repetition, specification, cycles, and telescoping*.<sup>246</sup>

### 3. *Primary principles in interpreting typology*

➤ See literal and fuller sense, pp. 72ff.

#### a) *Allegorizing, spiritualizing, and moralizing*

While I certainly do not want to appear to be carping and critical of the multitude of faithful volunteers who prepare curricula and teach them in Sunday Schools, I get the impression that both tasks are often carried on with little or no understanding of the big picture of biblical revelation. Consequently, children are often taught a whole range of isolated Bible stories, each with its neat little application deemed appropriate to the respective age levels. So much of the application is thus moralizing legalism because it is severed from its links to the gospel of grace. By the time many of these children reach their teenage years they have had a belly full of morality, enough, they would think, to last them for the rest of their lives. They thus beat a retreat to live reasonably decent but gospelless lives.<sup>247</sup>

Directly related to the questions of typology and allegorization is that of spiritualization:

**Spiritualization:** essentially a figure of thought in which the second of two things is said to be similar to the first in a spiritual sense. Example:

1 Cor 10:1-4 For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. 2 They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. 3 They all ate the same spiritual food 4 and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.

*Two characteristics of unscriptural spiritualization (unwarranted figure-finding):*

1. interpreting something as necessarily figurative because the literal does not fit one’s theology.
2. interpreting something as figurative without scriptural warrant, referring them to spiritual realities.

*Three characteristics of scriptural spiritualization:*

1. movement from truth-principle in one context to that same truth-principle in a another context.
2. movement of thought from external physical to spiritual.
3. movement of thought from features of one epoch to corresponding features of another.

The proper determination of typology in scripture depends partly on us following these broad guiding principles. It will be argued that typology differs from allegorization and moralization, while it retains aspects of positive spiritualization (not exemplorization, see pp. ).

#### b) *Proper scriptural figures in biblical typology*

- See Vos, *Eschatology*, pp. 34ff.
- See Clowney, *Unfolding Mystery*
- See Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, pp. 109-114.
- See Mickelson, “Typology,” *Interpreting the Bible*, pp. 236-264.
- See Judges-Esther syllabus, “Messianic Typology of David.”
- See Pascal, *Pensees*, ch. X, “Typologies.”

<sup>244</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 129.

<sup>245</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 134.

<sup>246</sup> See telescoping (fn. 237) in the minds of the biblical authors.

<sup>247</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, p. 151.

- See France, "Typological Use of the OT," *Jesus and the OT*, pp. 38-82.
- See S. Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, pp. 249-261.

We can attempt to resolve this difficult problem of *types*, but we will only be able to propose some guiding principles and describe some cliffs to avoid falling over.<sup>248</sup> It has some correlation with the previous matter of prediction (or the future element) in prophecy.

"Typology sees the type as part of the theological process of revelation that leads to the antitype."<sup>249</sup>

"The prophets portray the future not as another shadow of things to come, but as the solid reality."<sup>250</sup>

A symbol is in its religious significance something that profoundly portrays a certain fact or principle or relationship of a spiritual nature in a visible form. The things it pictures are of present existence and present application. They are in force at the time in which the symbol operates.

With the same thing, regarded as a type, it is different. A typical thing is prospective; it relates to what will become real or applicable in the future.<sup>251</sup>

The main problem to understand is, how the same system of portrayals can have served at one and the same time in a symbolical and a typical capacity. Obviously this would have been impossible if the things portrayed had been in each case different or diverse, unrelated to each other. If something is an accurate picture of a certain reality, then it would seem disqualified by this very fact for pointing to another future reality of a quite different nature. The solution of the problem lies in this, that the things symbolized and the things typified are not different sets of things. They are in reality the same things, only different in this respect that they come first on a lower stage of development in redemption, and then again, in alter period, on a higher stage. Thus what is symbolical with regard to the already existing edition of the fact or truth becomes typical, prophetic, of the later, final edition of that same fact or truth. From this it will be perceived that a type can never be a type independently of its being first a symbol. The gateway to the house of typology is at the farther end of the house of symbolism.

This is the fundamental rule to be observed in ascertaining what elements in the Old Testament are typical, and wherein the things corresponding to them as antitypes consist. Only after having discovered what a thing symbolizes, can we legitimately proceed to put the question what it typifies, for the latter can never be aught else than the former lifted to a higher plane. The bond that holds type and antitype together must be a bond of vital continuity in the progress of redemption. Where this is ignored, and in the place of this bond are put accidental resemblances, void of inherent spiritual significance, all sorts of absurdities will result, such as must bring the whole subject of typology into disrepute. Examples of this are: the scarlet cord of Rahab prefigures the blood of Christ; the four lepers at Samaria, the four Evangelists.<sup>252</sup>

#### ***Basic terms.***<sup>253</sup>

***Literal:*** denotations, factual, unambiguous.

***Figurative:*** connotative, unusual, pictorial.

***Symbol:*** a person, object, or action that is a sign for something beyond itself.

***Type:*** a person, object or action prefiguring, foreshadowing, or looking forward to something else yet future.

***Antitype:*** the fulfillment of the type.

The Rule: A FIGURE OF SPEECH IS ALWAYS A FIGURE FOR SOMETHING LITERAL

<sup>248</sup> Typology is unlike allegory, for it assumes the significance of the historical meaning of the text.

<sup>249</sup> Goldingay, *Preaching*, p. 77.

<sup>250</sup> Goldingay, *Preaching*, p. 108.

<sup>251</sup> Vos, *Biblical Theology*, p. 144.

<sup>252</sup> Vos, *Biblical Theology*, p. 144-145.

<sup>253</sup> Adapted from R. Dunzweiler, Systematic Theology IV lecture, BTS.

**Type/antitype** – Events, people, and institutions have some *typical* relationship to later events, people, and institutions which serve as the antitype. The antitype points back to the type, yet it fills out and *completes* the type.

2 Sam 7:12-13 When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

The first two predictions were fulfilled in Solomon, who was the son who built the temple, but Christ is the Antitype who was the son, builds the temple (resurrection), and whose dynasty is eternal. It is easy to miss the antitype when something incorrect, though logical, is deduced from the type. Thus, Jesus was rejected by his own people in part due to their inaccurate reading of OT typology in the prophets. Are there similar dangers in our own eschatological systems that might overly literalize types or predictions, thus failing to conceive of the actual kind of *eschatos* that is coming? Perhaps modern misconceptions are not as serious with regard to the *final eschatos*, for in my reading “every eye will see him,” yet they can give people a completely misplaced perspective and hope. For example, calls to rebuild the Jerusalem temple and reinstitute the sacrifice have expended much too much time and money of Evangelical believers who have a new High Priest!

Types function like prophecy, but differ in *prefiguring* what is to come, while predictive prophecy *asserts directly* what is to come.

There is quite a division of opinion as to the identification of types. Some hold that we should only expound on types as explicitly set out in the NT. Others, hold that we can allow for a broader sanction of types than the NT explicitly sets out.<sup>254</sup> Payne proposes that “Since a type must be *divine* in its origin, all typical ‘discoveries’ by human interpreters remain in the category of allegorizations, if they cannot be shown to have been part of God’s original intention.”<sup>255</sup> Nevertheless, he proceeds to argue that the *redemptive* character of typology does allow for broader identifications:

There exist a number of matters in the Bible that are clearly parts of redemptive contexts and that occupy, in parallel with other *known* types, a significant place in the ceremonial worship of Israel. Such items may then, by analogy, be recognized as *genuine* types, even though they may never be given explicit elucidation elsewhere in scripture.<sup>256</sup>

That the biblical prophecies were *enacted* prophecies, representing to Israel the same basic salvation that was later accomplished in Christ, produces what is perhaps the most important single principle in the delimiting of typology, namely that a given item must be symbolical to its contemporaries before it can be considered typical for the future.<sup>257</sup>

Mickelsen also seems to allow for typology that is not explicit in the NT, as long as it is rigorously disciplined:

But often typology becomes an excuse for sensationalism in interpretation. Such sensationalism must be firmly repudiated by every honest interpreter. But if an interpreter, fully aware of the unity of the people of God, can show historical correlations while being aware of the differences between the type and the antitype, he certainly may observe such historical parallels. In such an activity the interpreter must discipline himself severely.<sup>258</sup>

Types are *symbolical institutes* expressly appointed by God to prefigure to those among whom they were set up certain great transactions in connection with that plan of redemption which, in the fullness of time, was to be unfolded to mankind.<sup>259</sup>

R. Lints writes, “Typology is simply symbolism with a prospective reference to fulfillment in a later epoch of biblical history. It involves a fundamentally organic relation between events, persons, and institutions in one epoch and their counterparts in later epochs.”<sup>260</sup>

<sup>254</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 309. See Vos on “inborn types” and types “requiring research” (*Biblical Theology*, p. 146). Also called *innate types* and *inferred types*, innate being those explicitly stated in the NT, and inferred being those “established by the general tone of NT teaching” (G.R. Osborne, “Type, Typology,” *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, p.1118).

<sup>255</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 51. He also says that “relatively few individuals warrant designation as types” (*ibid.*, p. 53). See Vos above, fn. either a concern nor a method of .

<sup>256</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 52.

<sup>257</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 52.

<sup>258</sup> Mickelsen, *Interpreting*, p. 262.

<sup>259</sup> L.Alexander (*Connection and Harmony of the Old and New Testaments*, 1841) quoted by Fairbairn in *Typology*, I, p. 25 and quoted by Payne in *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp. 24-25.

Typology differs from allegory in that it “involves a relationship between some ‘essential’ aspect of the type and the antitype, whereas allegory involves a relationship stemming from some accidental or peripheral aspect of the original event, person, or institution.”<sup>261</sup>

For example, the OT understands the exile in light of the Exodus, the Return being greater than simply political deliverance. This, according to Lints, suggests a twofold character to typology:<sup>262</sup>

1. there is a repetition of the promise-fulfillment pattern of redemptive-history
2. there was a difference of degree between the former and latter acts of God

**Redemption promised.  
Redemption realized.**

Typology is the primary means of presenting the promise-fulfillment scheme of the history of redemption. This is the central bipolar theme in that history of redemption. The God who created is the God who delivers and redeems. The Exodus became the paradigmatic event for all the rest of redemption history.

- See promise and fulfillment, p. 50. See creation/exodus themes, p. 55.
- See Payne who argues that types must be redemptive, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 24.

Mickelsen also says the challenge is to avoid allegorization in typologizing:

No area of biblical interpretation needs more careful definition than typology. Some people associate typology with bizarre, fanciful meanings. To them typology and allegorizing are in the same class—worthless procedures for trying to find meaning in written documents. This is far from true. Allegorizing and typology have only one thing in common. They are both figurative methods of interpretation. But here the resemblance ends. They have a different background, a different attitude toward history, and a different way of handling meaning.<sup>263</sup>

Typology as a method of exegesis is “the search for linkages between events, persons or things within the historical framework of revelation, whereas allegorism is the search for second and hidden meaning underlying the primary and obvious meaning of the narrative. The allegorist takes any narrative (even though the original author gives no indication of having his assertions stand for something else) and after ignoring the primary or obvious meaning, he arbitrarily attaches to the narrative the meaning he wants it to convey. In practice he treats the narrative in such a way as almost to deny its historicity, although in theory he may stoutly defend its historicity.”<sup>264</sup>

**Basic principles of types:**<sup>265</sup>

1. **must be to a historical person, object, or action: type and antitype are grounded in actual history (events, persons, institutions)**
2. **must be some indication the resemblance was purposed by God: type is ordained by God to foreshadow antitype**
3. **must be a point of resemblance between type and antitype: types and antitypes have historical and theological correspondence**
4. **there is intensification of the antitype from the type**
5. **must resemble something future.**
6. **must have redemptive import**
7. **must involve a pictorial element or enactment**
8. **must have had some meaning to the original audience, some types were even understood as symbolical to them**

<sup>260</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 304.

<sup>261</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 304.

<sup>262</sup> Lints, *The Fabric*, p. 305. See creation/exodus themes, pp. 46, 56.

<sup>263</sup> Mickelsen, *Interpreting*, p. 236.

<sup>264</sup> Mickelsen, *Interpreting*, p. 238.

<sup>265</sup> See John Currid, “Recognition and Use of Typology in Preaching,” *Reformed Theological Review* 53.3, 1994 (noted in Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, p. 111); Mickelsen *Interpreting*, pp. 262-264.

**9. even where types may be complex they have a unity**  
**10. types should have some warrant from their context**

S.Greidanus:

“Whereas promises are usually words spoken, types are historical events, persons, and institutions. Further, whereas promises point forward to future fulfillment, typology generally moves in the opposite direction, from New Testament fulfillment to the past type.”<sup>266</sup>

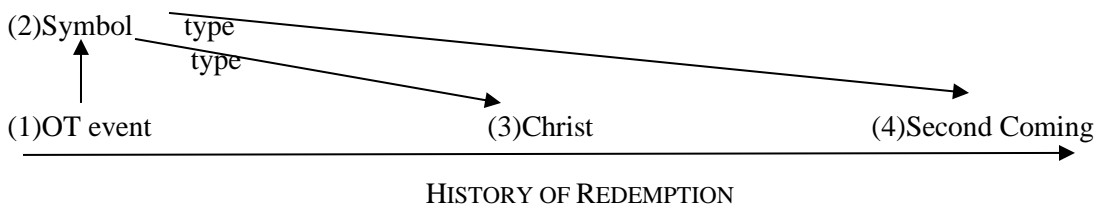
“In general we can say that a genuine type is grounded in God’s design as we see this develop in typical patterns in redemptive history.”<sup>267</sup>

Greidanus gives several key principles to distinguish type from typologizing:<sup>268</sup>

1. a genuine type is *historical* facts, persons, actions, events, institutions
2. a genuine type is *theocentric* focusing on *God’s acts* in the historical facts
3. a genuine type exhibits a *significant analogy* with its antitype with real correspondence
4. the relation of a genuine type to its antitype is marked by *escalation* of something *greater*

Greidanus gives some “rules” for typology:<sup>269</sup>

1. always precede typological interpretation with literary-historical interpretation. Know the author’s message to Israel first.
2. Look for a type not in the details but in the *central message* of the text. Avoid the morass of incidental parallels and farfetched analogies.
3. determine the *symbolic meaning* of the person, institution, or event in OT times. If it has no symbolic meaning in the OT, it cannot be a type.



4. Note the *points of contrast* between the OT type and the NT antitype.
5. In moving from the OT symbol/type to Christ, carry forward the *meaning of the symbol* even as it escalates. Do not switch the sense; uses the same sense with escalation.
6. Do not simply draw a typological line to Christ but *preach Christ*.

See also his discussion of **analogy**, *Preaching Christ*, p. 261ff.

**Macro-typology:**

➤ See hermeneutics of the history of redemption and typology notes, p. ; Goldsworthy charts, p.

Graeme Goldsworthy’s fine book on preaching illustrates this typologically with the following charts:

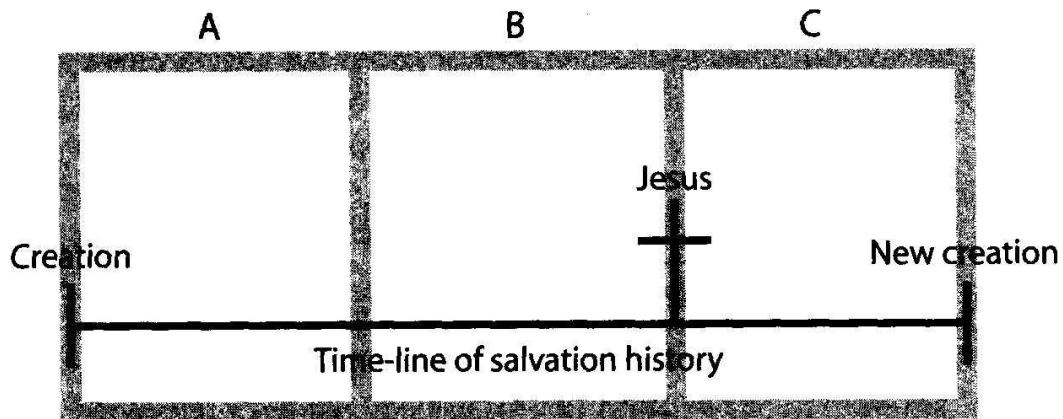
<sup>266</sup> Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, p. 252.

<sup>267</sup> Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, p. 255.

<sup>268</sup> Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, pp. 256-257.

<sup>269</sup> Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, p. 257-259..

# The Epochs of Salvation History



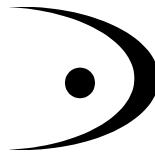
**Type:** The kingdom of God revealed in Israel's history up to the first part of Solomon's reign

**Type confirmed:** The kingdom of God revealed in prophetic eschatology. History contains mainly indications of judgment

**Antitype:** The kingdom of God revealed in the fulfillment of promise and prophecy in Jesus Christ

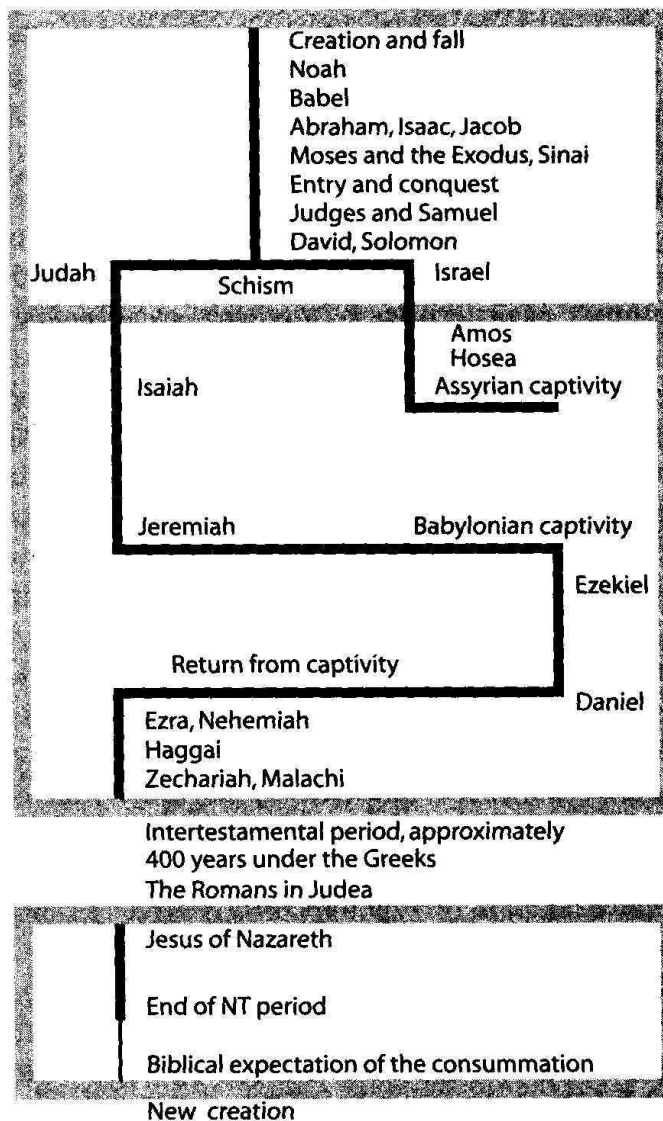
Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*, p. 139.

(above) Epoch of salvation history.<sup>270</sup>



<sup>270</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, p. 139.

## The Typological Structure of the Bible



**1. The kingdom in Israel's history.**  
 In this epoch the type is established in that there is a progressive building up of the pattern of salvation beginning with Abraham and reaching a climax with Solomon and the temple.

**2. The kingdom in prophecy.**  
 In the second epoch, when the history of Israel no longer develops salvation but rather expresses judgment, the prophets are the focus for the projection of a future salvation. They confirm the typology of the historic epoch by using the categories of that epoch as the pattern for the future glorious epoch.

**3. The kingdom fulfilled in Christ.**  
 Finally, the New Testament declares that what was foreshadowed in salvation history and promised by the prophets is fulfilled in the antitype, Christ.

Diagram 7: Macro-typology. The entire epoch of salvation history from Abraham to David and Solomon, is confirmed in prophetic eschatology, and fulfilled Christ. All aspects of Old Testament salvation history bear a typological relationship to Christ.

Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*, p. 112.  
 (above) Typological structure.<sup>271</sup>

A broad principle behind the technical sense: the pattern is broader than just persons, events, institutions, describing whole epochs of revelation. Principles outlined by Goldsworthy:<sup>272</sup>

1. Concerned with the overall correspondence of the epochs described when interpreting theological significance of historical details, characters, or institutions.
2. Historical texts can be related to fulfillment in Christ by relating their theological significance to the prophetic eschatology.
3. Christ as the antitype can be identified as the point of contact with our contemporary situation.
4. Implications of such Christology are deduced from what the NT teaches about our relationship to Christ.

### Typological examples of OT eschatology:

<sup>271</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, p. 112.

<sup>272</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching*, pp. 113-114.

Gen 2 – Paradise-probation in Eden ~ the goal of eschatological revelation is Paradise restored  
 Gen 3:15 – redemptive revelation ~ the ultimate victory over sin, return to Paradise  
 Gen 6-9 – the Flood ~ the last judgment (1 Pet 3:19-20; 4:5-6; 2 Pet 2:5; 3:5-7)  
 Exodus-Joshua – promised land the restoration of Paradise, promised land in heaven<sup>273</sup>  
 Prophets’ “day of the Lord” ~ coming judgment, messianic day of God, day of light, last judgment

### *Typological messianic eschatological presentation*

1. A general type with no human element, YHWH himself “will come”
2. A combined human figure combined with YHWH who “is to come”
3. A combined royal figure with YHWH
4. A combined Davidic royal figure with YHWH<sup>274</sup>

**Adam → Christ (federal head)** (Gen 1:26-27; Rom 5:14; 1 Cor 15:22; Col 1:15; Mtt 4)  
**Melchizidek → Christ (king and priest)** (Gen 14:17-21; Ps 110:4; Heb 7:1-10)  
**Abraham → Sacrifice provided** (Gen 15; 22; Rom 5:6-8; 1 Jn 4:9-12)  
**Moses → Christ (federal representation)** (Jn 1:17; 3:14; Heb 3:3; 9:19-22)  
**David → Christ (Lord’s anointed king of justice, prophet, covenant of eternal kingdom)**  
 (Ps 69; Jn 2:16-17; Rom 15:3)<sup>275</sup>  
**Solomon → Christ (Prince of peace and wisdom)** (2 Sam 7:12-14; Heb 1:5; Rev 21:7)  
**Exodus(captivity) → Deliverance** (Ex 12-14; Col 1:13)<sup>276</sup>  
**Passover lamb → Christ** (Ex 12:1-11; 1 Cor 5:7)  
**Tabernacle & temple → Christ (tabernacles with us: incarnation) and fulfillment of covenant-presence-promise** (Ex 25-40; Jn 1:1-14; Heb 9-10)  
**Sacrifices → Christ is our sacrifice** (Lev 16; Heb 9-10)

We are thus led to recognize that redemptive restoration as depicted in Old Testament typology and actualized in New Testament messianic reality is restoration (and consummation) of the creation order, and particularly restoration of man to the glory of that God-likeness in and for which he was created at the beginning.<sup>277</sup>

The cross is central to the significance of types in the Bible, for types invariably bring us back to Christ. Without the cross of Christ, the stories and typologies of the Bible become “versions of the Sunday comics, where Samson substitutes for Superman. David’s meeting with Goliath then dissolves into the ancient Hebrew version of Jack the Giant Killer.”<sup>278</sup>



<sup>273</sup> See creation/exodus themes, p. 46, 49, 56.

<sup>274</sup> Based on Vos, *OT Eschatology*, p. 45.

<sup>275</sup> See Kirkpatrick pages in Judges-Esther Syllabus under “Messianic typology of David.”

<sup>276</sup> See creation/exodus themes, p. 46, 49, 56.

<sup>277</sup> Kline, *Images of the Spirit*, p. 489.

<sup>278</sup> Clowney, *Unfolding Mystery*, p. 13.



**Biblical Types<sup>1</sup>**

J.B. Payne, Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy, p. 671.

*Numbered listing  
under which  
discussed*

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Meaning<sup>2</sup></i>	
Adam's status	Christ's achieving Adam's lost dominion, at His ascension	Gen 1
Tree of life	Perfected life in the New Jerusalem (per. 18)	Gen 3
Adam's fall	The contrasting act of representative justification by Christ the "last Adam"	Gen 5
Edenic testament	Christ's suffering to reconcile men to God	Gen 6
Ark of Noah	Baptism, washing away what is wrong and mediating salvation (per. 14)	Gen 13
Noachian testament	The preservation of the redemptive seed	Gen 16
Melchizedek:		
as without genealogy	Christ's non-Levitical descent	Gen 26
as priest	His Melchizedek-like ministry	Gen 27
in his greatness	His superiority to Leviticalism	Gen 28
Abrahamic testament	God's own life made forfeit, to become "their God"	Gen 30
Circumcision	New life made available in Christ	Gen 42
Passover	Christ's sacrifice as a redemptive substitute	Ex 31
Paschal lamb:		
without blemish	Christ's sinlessness	Ex 32
no bone broken	Christ's body, similarly preserved	Ex 33
Cloud at the Red Sea	Baptism as protection in the believer's new life (per. 14)	Ex 37
Crossing through the Sea	Baptism as the way to God's inheritance (per. 14)	Ex 38
Manna	Christ's incarnation, bringing men the bread of life from heaven	Ex 39
Sabbath	The "rest" achieved by Christ's ministry	Ex 41
Water from the rock	Eternal life provided by Christ	Ex 42
Altar	Christ's giving His life for men	Ex 44
Sinaitic testament	Salvation through the elect nation of Israel	Ex 45
Feast of Tabernacles	The ingathering of the nations to God (per. 16)	Ex 46

1. On the nature and interpretation of typology, see above, pp. 21–26, 51–56, 89–91.

2. All are fulfilled in period 13, in the life of Christ, unless indicated to the contrary.

Biblical types.<sup>279</sup>

<sup>279</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 671.

J.B. Payne, Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy, p. 672.

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Meaning<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>Numbered listing under which discussed</i>
Tabernacle-temple	God's presence with man in Christ's incarnation	Ex 55
Ark of Yahweh	Christ's divine presence achieving testamentary salvation	Ex 56
Mercy seat	His serving as an "atoning cover" between God and men	Ex 57
Veil	His bodily incarnation, veiling His deity, yet opening up the way to God	Ex 58
Priests	His execution of the ultimate, atoning sacrifice	Ex 59
Priests' garments	Christ's priestly purity	Ex 60
Miter plate	The holiness of Christ	Ex 61
Priests' consecration	His devotion to the work of priestly atonement	Ex 63
Atonement money	His atoning for the soul of each member of Israel	Ex 66
Laver	His washing of men from their sins	Ex 67
Sacrifice	Christ's atoning death	Lev 2
Burnt offering	His life as wholly surrendered to God	Lev 3
Meal offering	His consecrated, righteous fulfilling of the law	Lev 4
Peace offering	The restoration of man's communion with God (2nd stage in per. 16)	Lev 5
Sin offering	Christ's passive bearing of the penalty of men's sins	Lev 6
Trespass offering	His active redressing of the claims of God	Lev 7
A freed bird (at the cleansing for lepers)	His removal of men's sins	Lev 14
Scapegoat	His carrying of sins back to their Satanic author	Lev 18
Day of atonement	His full atonement for sins, presented to God in heaven	Lev 19
Blood, revered	His shed blood	Lev 20
Year of Jubilee	His proclamation of deliverance (2nd stage, per. 16)	Lev 27
Ashes of the red heifer	His cleansing of men's consciences	Num 27
Brazen serpent	His being lifted up in crucifixion, that all who see may live	Num 30
Levitical testament	Salvation through priestly atonement	Num 43
Davidic testament	Inheritance of salvation through the seed of David	II Sam 19
Millennial temple	Unimpared fellowship with God in the New Jerusalem (per. 18)	Isa 8
Gomer:		
her redemption	Christ's repurchase of men to God at a price of 30 pieces of silver	Hos 14
her seclusion	Judaism's present lack of redemption (per. 14)	Hos 15
Joshua's crowns	Christ's combined priesthood-kingship	Zech 13
Pre-Calvary baptism	New life to be made available in Christ	Lk 27
Lord's Supper	The Messianic marriage feast of the Lamb (per. 15)	Lk 69
Christ's breathing upon the apostles	Their receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (per. 14)	John 42
The <i>āgāpē</i> (love feast)	The Messianic feast (per. 15), as similarly foreshadowed by the Lord's Supper, above	Jude 3

Biblical types.<sup>280</sup><sup>280</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp. 671-672.

### The use of the *typos* word-group in the Greek Bible

#### *typos*

Ex. 25:40	'the (pattern, design, pattern) . . . shown you on the mountain'
Am. 5:26	'your (images, images, images)'
Jn. 20:25	'(print, mark, marks) of the nails'
Jn. 20:25	'(mark, place, where [the nails] were) of the nails'
Acts 7:43	'(figures, images, idols) which you made to worship'
Acts 7:44	'the (pattern, pattern, pattern) that he had seen'
Acts 23:25	'a letter (to this effect, to this effect, as follows)'
Rom. 5:14	'Adam, who was a (type, foreshadows, pattern)'
Rom. 6:17	'obedient . . . to the (standard, pattern, form) of teaching'
1 Cor. 10:6	'these things are (warnings, symbols to warn, examples) for us'
Phil. 3:17	'as you have an (example, model, pattern) in us'
1 Thes. 1:7	'an (example, model, model) to all the believers'
2 Thes. 3:9	'an (example, example, model) to imitate'
1 Tim. 4:12	'set the believers an (example, example, example)'
Tit. 2:7	'show yourself . . . a (model, example, example) of good deeds'
Heb. 8:5	'the (pattern, pattern, pattern) . . . shown you on the mountain'
1 Pet. 5:3	'being (examples, an example, examples) to the flock'

#### *typikōs*

1 Cor. 10:11 'happened to them as (a warning, symbolic, examples)'

#### *antitypos*

Heb. 9:24 'a (copy, symbol, copy) of the true one'  
 1 Pet. 3:21 'Baptism, which (corresponds) to this' (RSV)  
 'This water (prefigured, symbolizes) baptism' (NEB, NIV)

#### *hypotypōsis*

1 Tim. 1:16 '(example to, typical of, example for) those who . . . believe'  
 2 Tim. 1:13 'Follow the (pattern, outline, pattern) of the sound words'

David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible*, p. 186

The use of *typos* in the Greek Bible by Baker.<sup>281</sup>

WCF, Ch 7, V. This covenant was differently administered in the time of the law, and in the time of the gospel:[2 Cor. 3:6-9] under the law, it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and ordinances delivered to the people of the Jews, all foreshadowing Christ to come;[Heb. 8-10; Rom. 4:11; Col. 2:11-12; 1 Cor. 5:7] which were, for that time, sufficient and efficacious, through the operation of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah,[1 Cor10:1-4; Heb 11:13; Jn 8:56] by whom they had full remission of sins, and eternal salvation; and is called the old testament.[Gal 3:7-9, 14; Ps 32:1-2, 5]

<sup>281</sup> Baker, *Two Testaments*, p. 186. See also entire chapter on Typology (*ibid.*, pp. 179-201 and bibliography).

**Blaise Pascal on typology from *Pensées* (1660)** translated by W. F. Trotter (WWW public domain book)

670 (selection)

All that tends not to charity is figurative.

The sole aim of the Scripture is charity.

All which tends not to the sole end is the type of it. For since there is only one end, all which does not lead to it in express terms is figurative.

God thus varies that sole precept of charity to satisfy our curiosity which seeks for variety, by that variety which still leads us to the one thing needful. For one thing alone is needful, and we love variety; and God satisfies both by these varieties, which lead to the one thing needful.

The Jews have so much loved the shadows and have so strictly expected them that they have misunderstood the reality, when it came in the time and manner foretold.

The Rabbis take the breasts of the Spouse for types, and all that does not express the only end they have, namely, temporal good.

And Christians take even the Eucharist as a type of the glory at which they aim.

677. A type conveys absence and presence, pleasure and pain. A cipher has a double meaning, one clear and one in which it is said that the meaning is hidden.

678. Types.- A portrait conveys absence and presence, pleasure and pain. The reality excludes absence and pain.

To know if the law and the sacrifices are a reality or a type, we must see if the prophets, in speaking of these things, confined their view and their thought to them, so that they saw only the old covenant; or if they saw therein something else of which they were the representation, for in a portrait we see the thing figured. For this we need only examine what they say of them. When they say that it will be eternal, do they mean to speak of that covenant which they say will be changed; and so of the sacrifices, etc.?

A cipher has two meanings. When we find out an important letter in which we discover a clear meaning, and in which it is nevertheless said that the meaning is veiled and obscure, that it is hidden, so that we might read the letter without seeing it, and interpret it without understanding it, what must we think but that here is a cipher with a double meaning, and the more so if we find obvious contradictions in the literal meaning? The prophets have clearly said that Israel would be always loved by God and that the law would be eternal; and they have said that their meaning would not be understood and that it was veiled.

How greatly, then, ought we to value those who interpret the cipher and teach us to understand the hidden meaning, especially if the principles which they educe are perfectly clear and natural! This is what Jesus Christ did, and the Apostles. They broke

the seal; He rent the veil, and revealed the spirit.

They have taught us through this that the enemies of man are his passions; that the Redeemer would be spiritual, and His reign spiritual; that there would be two advents, one in lowliness to humble the proud, the other in glory to exalt the humble; that Jesus Christ would be both God and man.

679. Types.- Jesus Christ opened their mind to understand the Scriptures.

Two great revelations are these. (1) All things happened to them in types: *vere Israelitae, vere liberi*, true bread from Heaven. (2) A God humbled to the Cross. It was necessary that Christ should suffer in order to enter into glory, "that He should destroy death through death." Two advents.

680. Types.- When once this secret is disclosed, it is impossible not to see it. Let us read the Old Testament in this light, and let us see if the sacrifices were real; if the fatherhood of Abraham was the true cause of the friendship of God; and if the promised land was the true place of rest. No. They are therefore types. Let us in the same way examine all those ordained ceremonies, all those commandments which are not of charity, and we shall see that they are types.

All these sacrifices and ceremonies were then either types or nonsense. Now these are things too clear and too lofty to be thought nonsense.

To know if the prophets confined their view in the Old Testament, or saw therein other things.

681. Typical.- The key of the cipher. *Veri adoratores.\* Ecce agnus Dei qui tollit peccata mundi.\** (2)

\* John 4. 23. "True worshippers."

\*(2) John 1. 29. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

683. Types.- The letter kills. All happened in types. Here is the cipher which Saint Paul gives us. Christ must suffer. A humiliated God. Circumcision of the heart, true fasting, true sacrifice, a true temple. The prophets have shown that all these must be spiritual.

Not the meat which perishes, but that which does not perish.

"Ye shall be free indeed." Then the other freedom was only a type of freedom.

"I am the true bread from Heaven."

684. Contradiction.- We can only describe a good character by reconciling all contrary qualities, and it is not enough to keep up a series of harmonious qualities, without reconciling contradictory ones. To understand the meaning of an author, we must make all the contrary passages agree.

Thus, to understand Scripture, we must have a meaning in which all the contrary passages are

reconciled. It is not enough to have one which suits many concurring passages; but it is necessary to have one which reconciles even contradictory passages.

Every author has a meaning in which all the contradictory passages agree, or he has no meaning at all. We cannot affirm the latter of Scripture and the prophets; they undoubtedly are full of good sense. We must, then, seek for a meaning which reconciles all discrepancies.

The true meaning, then, is not that of the Jews; but in Jesus Christ all the contradictions are reconciled.

The Jews could not reconcile the cessation of the royalty and principality, foretold by Hosea, with the prophecy of Jacob.

If we take the law, the sacrifices, and the kingdom as realities, we cannot reconcile all the passages. They must then necessarily be only types. We cannot even reconcile the passages of the same author, nor of the same book, nor sometimes of the same chapter, which indicates copiously what was the meaning of the author. As when Ezekiel, chap. 20., Says that man will not live by the commandments of God and will live by them.

685. Types.- If the law and the sacrifices are the truth, it must please God, and must not displease Him. If they are types, they must be both pleasing and displeasing.

Now in all the Scripture they are both pleasing and displeasing. It is said that the law shall be changed; that the sacrifice shall be changed; that they shall be without law, without a prince, and without a sacrifice; that a new covenant shall be made; that the law shall be renewed; that the precepts which they

have received are not good; that their sacrifices are abominable; that God has demanded none of them.

It is said, on the contrary, that the law shall abide for ever; that this covenant shall be for ever; that sacrifice shall be eternal; that the sceptre shall never depart from among them, because it shall not depart from them till the eternal King comes.

Do all these passages indicate what is real? No. Do they then indicate what is typical? No, but what is either real or typical. But the first passages, excluding as they do reality, indicate that all this is only typical.

All these passages together cannot be applied to reality; all can be said to be typical; therefore they are not spoken of reality, but of the type.

*Agnus occisus est ab origine mundi.\** A sacrificing judge.

\* Rev. 13. 8. "The Lambs slain from the foundation of the world."

686. Contradictions.- The sceptre till the Messiah-without king or prince.

The eternal law- changed.

The eternal covenant- a new covenant.

Good laws- bad precepts. Ezekiel.

687. Types.- When the word of God, which is really true, is false literally[in the letter]0, it is true spiritually. *Sede a dextris meis:\** this is false literally, therefore it is true spiritually.

\* Ps. 109. 1. " Sit then at my right hand."

### c) *Types of τυπος in the NT*<sup>282</sup>

**τυπος** (*typos*) 17x – pattern, model, example, and corresponding representation

**τυπικως** (*tipokos*) – pertaining to that which serves as a model or example -- 1x

#### **Archetype, Corresponding Type (Antitype) (58.63-58.69)**<sup>283</sup>

58.63 τυπος ε , ου m ; παραβολη β , ης φ : a model or example which anticipates or precedes a later realization - `archetype, figure, foreshadow, symbol.' τυπος Αδαμ, ος εστιν τυπος του μελλοντος `Adam, who was a figure of one who was to come' [Ro 5.14.] παραβολη β · ητις παραβολη εις τον καιρον τον ενεστηκοτα `which is a symbol of the present time' He 9.9. In a number of languages it may be difficult to find a lexical item equivalent to `symbol,' but one can often employ a relatively close paraphrase. For example, in referring to certain aspects of the tabernacle as being a παραβολη, one may render the first clause of He 9.9 as `this says something to us about the present time.' In other languages one may sometimes use a term which means `picture,' for example, `this is a picture for the present time' or `this contains some meaning for the present time.'

58.64 58.69 αντιτυπος, ον : pertaining to that which corresponds in form and structure to something else, either as an anticipation of a later reality or as a fulfillment of a prior type - `correspondence, antitype, representation, fulfillment.' ο και υμας αντιτυπον νυν σωζει βαπτισμα `which corresponds to baptism which now saves you' 1 Pe 3.21; χειροποιητα ... αγια ... αντιτυπα των αληθινων `a sanctuary ... made with hands ... corresponding to the true sanctuary' He 9.24.

<sup>282</sup> OT use of this concept is unfounded. LXX translates מִבְּנֵי הַבַּיִת, "pattern" of the sanctuary as τυηπο".

<sup>283</sup> Louw & Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of Semantic Domains*.

The sense of example, model, copy, illustration. In the NT, it does not detract from the original historical-redemptive significance of the events seen as a type. That is, in the examples below the foreshadowing quality of certain historical events does not remove either the source event or the target application from their historical contexts. There is redemptive-historical continuity, and it is sanctioned by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We are not licensed to follow suit according to our own whims.

Jn 3:14, 15; Num 21:8,9 “Just as (καθως) Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up.”

This uses an analogy that corresponds, according to Jesus, to Jesus’ crucifixion. The word τυηπο" is not, however, used here.

Jn 13:15 – Jesus sets an example for his disciples, that they should “wash one another’s feet.” I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

1 Cor 10:6 –Now these things [the deliverance from Egypt and subsequent rebellion] occurred as examples (τυποι) to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.

Heb 11:19 (NASB) He considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him back as a type (παραβολη)

1 Tim 1:16 – Paul is an example to others. υηποτυψωσιν

But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.

1 Tim 4:12 - Exhortation to be an example to those who believe.

Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

1 Pet 2:21 – Christ left us an example (υπογραμμον) in his suffering.

To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

Phil 3:17 – exhortation to follow the example of the Apostles.

### *The archetypal meaning:*

Rom 5:14 – Adam prefigures, types (τυπος), the One who was to come. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.

## **4. *Sum sum summary of standard divergent interpretations***

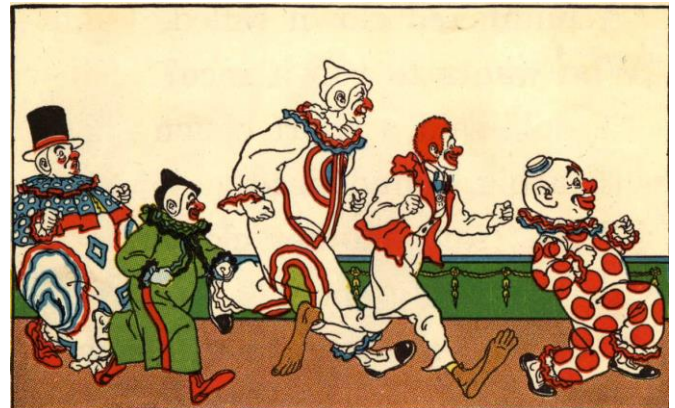
- See discussion of literal and figurative, p. 72f and typology, p. 203f.
  1. William Cox: problem lies in basing presuppositions on a hyper literal interpretation of certain passages of the Bible.
  2. Floyd Hamilton: literal interpretation unless there good is NT evidence or contradiction.
  3. Charles C. Ryrie: consistent literalism in all places
  4. O.T. Allis: a thoroughly literal interpretation of scripture is not possible.
  5. John F. Walvoord: literal interpretation.
  6. Martin J. Wyngaarden: spiritual interpretation not allegorical.
  7. George L. Murray: not strictly literal or spiritual, but NT should be allowed to explain the OT.
  8. Gerald B. Stanton: grammatical-literal with acceptance of spiritual sense where warranted.
  9. Louis Berkhof: literal with exceptions to the rule.

## **5. *Naturalistic presuppositions & explanations of OT prophecy***<sup>284</sup>

### **a) *Three false categories***

**(1) *Mechanistic, naturalistic explanation, atheistic***

**(2) *Theoretical believers who deny God***



<sup>284</sup> Outline adapted from MacRae, “Prophets and Prophecy.”

**communicated****(3) Believers who say God reveals through acts not words****b) Denials of predictive prophecy****(1) Began with Celsus in second century, Daniel written after the fact****(2) To assert predictions have been intentionally fulfilled****(3) To assert certain prophecies were not actually fulfilled****c) Rise of historical criticism: division of Pentateuch and Prophets into sources**

➤ “Critical folks,” pp. 223ff.

**(1) Unwillingness to believe prophecies could be made prior to events****(2) Application of literary critical method****(3) Form criticism and tradition-historical approach**

Gunkel stressed “situation in life,” long oral tradition, and final form much later.

**d) Sociological approach**

Perceiving prophets as social reformers.

**e) Derivation of prophetic movement from other ancient cultures**

The search for antecedents of the prophets in other lands has turned up no real evidence of real similarity.

**f) A summary of critical folks and their “issues”**

➤ See naturalistic explanations, p. 199ff.

➤ Sources: Smith, “Prophet: Prophecy,” Vos, *Eschatology of the OT*, Vannoy lectures on prophets at BTS, MacRae, “Prophets and Prophecy.”**(1) Eschatology, ethical monotheism, and prophecy**

Wellhausen: the religious value of the OT is found in its ethics. There is no eschatological element in the OT, that is, there is no “wider” outlook than Israel itself and its ethical concerns. Thus, the prophets are *purely ethical* in concern. Even the messianic idea arose only as a protest against the present king or kingdom, thus they present the ideal kingdom. (Others argue here that the messianic elements are later redactions.) There was a break when Ezekiel emphasized reflection, speculation, and literary inspiration. Stressing non ethical elements such as physical “new heaven and earth.”

Vos counters this view in saying that “the ethical and soteric elements are not irreconcilable,” for the “redemptive idea is central.” He also rightly says that “Eschatology is the matrix of the entire concept of salvation.”<sup>285</sup>

H. Gunkel and H. Gressman claimed that there was intensive Babylonian eschatological influence on early Israel, believing that they had a two sided eschatology of dread of woe and hope of weal. Vos responds, saying, they “underethicize the popular eschatology (weal) while hyperethicizing the prophetic eschatology (woe).”<sup>286</sup> G. & G. claimed this ancient eschatological material in Israel’s religion was popularized in a nonethical, mythological form, that was first ethicized by the prophets.

---

<sup>285</sup> Vos, *OT Eschatology*, p. 66.

<sup>286</sup> Vos, *OT Eschatology*, p. 68.

They also claimed that there were *nature elements* in the prophetic and the popular eschatology. From Wellhausen they understand the physical element in the prophets to be a later degeneration which the prophets enlarged with a cosmic aspect. Vos counters this, saying,

The various eschatological elements seem to have been coordinate as far as the time of their origin is concerned. And if there is any distinction to be made in the order of these elements, it would be as follows: calamity, war, Assyria. In pre-prophetic times this element of natural upheaval can be found among the populace in the same way that any eschatology can be traced to the people. This knowledge is assumed on the part of the people by the prophets. It is very illogical for Wellhausen to pronounce these elements a creation of the prophets because Palestine itself was not subject to these natural upheavals. Therefore, this material could hardly be Palestinian and, if it is a derived element, it must be older and it must have its source outside Palestine. The content of these physical elements shows that it is usually drawn from theophanies. Much of this material is, however, foreign to Palestine. Earthquakes, tempests (especially the southeast wind), and floods were distinctly Palestinian. Volcanic eruptions are not to be found in Palestine, yet they are repeatedly referred to (cf. Nah 1:6; Mic 1:3-4, 6; Mal 3:19; Deut 32:22; Ps. 97:5). Then, too, these elements are found in the prophets unharmonized. If this material were invented, we would expect to find an attempted unification. In Amos, we find famine, fire, war, and calamity placed side by side without any attempt at harmonization. Then, too, the nature imagery is sometimes changed to military invasion, e.g., the flood Isaiah 28:1ff. is changed into Assyrian invasion. The original idea, however, is still maintained.<sup>287</sup>

Gunkel and Gressman also thought that the law was older than the prophets.

## (2) *Temple worship and prophecy*

- See O.T. Allis, "Law and Prophecy."

Wellhausen's Hegelian principles contrasted prophets and priests, the Pentateuch developed from a synthesis of these two opposing groups.

### (1) *Dialectical tension between priests and prophets*

- Wellhausen and others contrasted the priests and the prophets in a typically Hegelian dialectic of tension in which the prophets acted in opposition to the priests. This is the background, as well, to his view of the development of the Pentateuch. In contrast, others hold that the prophets and priests were in league.
- P. Volz proposed that the prophets wanted to return to a cultless Mosaic religion away from formalism.
- L. Köhler proposed that Israel, not God, instituted its formalized cult from heathen cults, and thus the prophets opposed it.

*As background to the notion of opposed priests and prophets, see*

Hos 6:6 – "I desire mercy, not sacrifice . . ."

Isa 1:11-17 – Lord desires not a multitude of sacrifices, but justice

Micah 6:6-8 – thousands of rams do not please the Lord

Jer 7:21-23 – Lord's commands not just about burnt offerings and sacrifices

Amos 5:21-25 – feast days, solemn assemblies. Much debate over translation and meaning of this one. "Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings?" appears to be answered, in the negative. The essence of the passage seems to be saying that sacrifice in itself is not adequate. (See Vannoy notes p. 4 in outlined form)

Yet, much scripture, including the above, is not anti-cultic, and Israel was never truly cult-less. True religion can not exist without some formalization, and further, the sacrificial cult system in Israel was revealed and commanded by God. The prophets actually condemned *hypocritical religion* and pagan religion and encouraged that which God had commanded in the law. Pagan elements often did enter into Israel's religion, and these were always condemned. Hypocritical formalism without faith is "dead" religion because it leaves God out of the equation. On the other hand, cultless, informal religion is not what God instituted. Rather, true faith, and true worship of God, would by necessity carry out the explicit commands of God given in the Torah concerning the cult. This was the *means* for reconciled relations with God. Thus, the prophets were not anti-cultic nor cultic functionaries, but rather they were the medium of God's revelation to all, whether priest, king, or farmer. Their call was to bring covenantal redemption through the twofold goal of internal conformity to the spirit of the law (heart truly loves God), and external expression of moral uprightness and obedience (ritualistic worship in the sanctuary stipulations). There was to be a horizontal expression of love to one's neighbor corresponding to one's vertical expression of love towards God.

<sup>287</sup> Vos, *OT Eschatology*, pp. 69-70.



It is a profound confusion to assume that a critique of cult or culture is equal to condemnation of their institutions themselves. To argue they are equal is at best simplistic, worse it is fallacious reasoning.

### (2) *Priests and prophets in league (collusion) with one another*

As most things in critical debates, there are always pendulum swings and antithetical views entrenched along immovable lines. In contrast to those who claim opposition between priests and prophets, are those who hold that the prophets were cultic functionaries, closely linking the priests and prophets. Mowinckel, developing from G. Hölscher,<sup>288</sup> proposed that there were cult prophets, because God sometimes speaks directly in psalms in the same form and style as in the prophets. Thus, all the psalms originated in the cult through prophets linked with cultic ritual.

#### *As background to the notion of colluding priests and prophets, see*

1 Sam 3 Samuel was linked with sanctuary and was at Shilo.

1 Sam 9 – Samuel was at a Bamah (hm;B;') (near Ramah, Samuel's hometown), a high-place of sacrifice

2 Sam 24:1ff – prophet Gad tells David to build an altar on Araunah's threshing-floor

2 Sam 7:1f. – Nathan was involved with building the Temple

Isa 28:7 – drinking partners

Priests and prophets stagger from beer

and are befuddled with wine;

they reel from beer,

they stagger when seeing visions,

they stumble when rendering decisions.

Jer 4:9 "In that day," declares the LORD,

"the king and the officials will lose heart,

the priests will be horrified,

and the prophets will be appalled."

Jer 6:13 From the least to the greatest,

all are greedy for gain;

prophets and priests alike,

all practice deceit.



A similar critique of this viewpoint can be made as that made of the previous viewpoint (opposed priests and prophets). Correlations between the work and ministry of some prophets with the priesthood does not make "cultic prophets" out of the OT prophets. Rather, it was God's prerogative whether he called priests or farmers to be his spokesmen. That is, simply because some prophets had personal links with the priesthood it does not mean that all or any prophets are what could be classified as "cult prophet." Indeed, it needs also to be said that any such links did not negate that the prophet spoke solely for God himself, and was accountable to none other. Prophetic indictments and critique of cultic hypocrisy was common enough to engender the viewpoint above that priests and prophets were opposed. While the fact that there were prophetic links to the priesthood raises doubts that prophets and priests were thus opposed, the fact that the prophets consistently critique the cult, holding them accountable to the word of God, is evidence that the prophets were not the lackeys of the priesthood.

"Both the prophets and the priests were engaged in making the will of God known to the people, but with this fundamental difference: the priests were teachers, transmitting the teaching which was found in the law (Dt. 33:7-11); the prophets were persons who received a clear and immediate message from God to take, as messengers, to king or people."<sup>289</sup>

### (3) *Monarchy and prophecy*

➤ See comments on monarchy, p. 162.

Comparative religion studies have proposed a close relationship between the kings and the prophets, based on correlations with Mesopotamian analogies.

Traditionally it has been understood that negative pronouncements defined the prophet and king relationship. That is, by and large the prophets were sent during times of apostasy within the kingship, priesthood, and people. Naturally, those pronouncements would be largely negative, yet there are numerous instances where the relation between godly kings and prophets was positive. The role of the prophets thus wavered between exhortation/condemnation and



<sup>288</sup> G. Hölscher, *Die Profeten*, 1914, p. 143.

<sup>289</sup> Martens, *Plot and Purpose*, p. 150.

encouragement/guidance, often including prediction of either blessing or judgment depending on the spiritual state of the king and nation. The prophets had a major role in the history of redemption in being the “teachers” and “preachers” of the word of God. They served essentially the same function as our present teachers and pastors, yet with divine inspiration (though not all they said or did was inspired).

There is no evidence that such relations of a diplomatic or semi-diplomatic kind were ever cultivated by the prophets. What we find is rather an aversion to all political entanglements and alliances. But this is not based on superior political insight on the part of the prophets. It simply results from their staunch maintenance of the theocratic principle, that Jehovah is King, and Israel is bound to rely exclusively on Him (Isa 7:30:1-5; Hos 7:11; 12:1).<sup>290</sup>

#### (4) *Wisdom and prophecy*

- See discussion of wisdom, pp. 72.
- ◆ J. Lindblom proposed that Israel’s prophets knew foreign wisdom writings, and that Hebrew wisdom was a product of a Royal Wisdom School in Jerusalem.
- ◆ W. McKane drew a distinction between the official court officials and the ethical wisdom of the prophets.
- ◆ H.W. Wolf proposed that the roots of Israelite wisdom are to be found in the folk ethos of tribal society before wisdom school was established.

#### (5) *Covenant law and prophecy*

- See on covenant and prophecy, p. 277.
- See “The law and the prophets” and the covenants, p. 60.

Wellhausen proposed that the OT prophets were primarily teachers of ethical monotheism, and created Israel’s faith. He also believed that the prophets did not know the covenant concept.

~ Yet, the prophets’ primary role was to call Israel *back* to its monotheistic foundation, not to introduce monotheism! (See Eichrodt who, contrary to Wellhausen, tried to show that the covenant concept is found throughout the prophets.)

Rowley and Mendenhall proposed that Israel’s prophets inherited their religious traditions. R.E. Clements proposed the theory of a covenantal redaction of Amos and Hosea.

Compare:

Jer 18:18 They said, “Come, let’s make plans against Jeremiah; for the teaching of the law by the priest will not be lost, nor will counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophets. So come, let’s attack him with our tongues and pay no attention to anything he says.”



“That is, while the wise, Israel’s compilers of proverbial wisdom, were inspired to communicate principles for the direction of life, and while the Levitical priests, informed by Yahweh’s book, were equipped for the restoration of those who had fallen short of the divine standards, it was the prophet who occupied that central position of revealing God’s will, His specific ‘word’ for men, reproving their sin against His ‘counsel’ and guiding them repentantly to seek His ‘law’ from the priest.”<sup>291</sup>

#### (6) *Ecstasy and prophecy*

- See Wood, L., *The Holy Spirit*, pp. 90-112.
- See Young, *My Servants*, “Were the Prophets Ecstatics?,” pp. 164ff, 180-190.
- See Freeman, *Intro to the OT Prophets*, pp. 58-66.<sup>292</sup>
- See ecstasy, p. 155.
- For a contemporary Jewish (existential) perspective, see A.J. Heschel, *The Prophets* (Harper), pp. 104-146.

<sup>290</sup> Vos, *Biblical Theology*, pp. 186-187.

<sup>291</sup> Payne, ?? Also, See Payne, “The Law and the Prophets.”

<sup>292</sup> For other such theories see Freeman (*Intro to the OT Prophets*, pp. 66-71):

- Diffused consciousness theory
- Corporate personality theory
- Extension of personality theory
- Sympathetic-Pathos theory

Ecstasy in relation to OT prophets is understood to be a state of mind in which the prophet was somehow “manic” or “out of his mind.” It can also suggest a suspension or suppression of the prophet’s own mind and personality in the prophetic “ecstatic experience.”

*Assertions that prophets were simply in a state of ecstasy they interpreted as divine inspiration:* Hölscher (also Giesbrecht, Knobel, Stade, Gunkel, Jacobi, T. Robinson, Hertzberg, A. Lods, Lindblom) proposed that all prophets experienced ecstasy.

Linblom proposed that prophetic ecstasy was normative throughout the world, while he denoted two kinds (*absorption* and *concentration*). Absorption ecstasy involves the fusion of the personality with God and concentration ecstasy involves deep soul-concentration that obscures the prophet’s consciousness.

~ Yet, the OT presentation of God prohibits any such notion of absorption, for God is distinct from man and *vice versa*.

Mowinckel proposed a distinction between early ecstatics who received the Spirit of God and later non-ecstatic writing prophets who received God’s word [polarizing the word and the Spirit]. The ecstatics were false prophets, and the non-ecstatics were true prophets.

~ Yet, there is no evidence that the writing prophets rejected or denied the Holy Spirit. The Spirit and the Word should never be polarized or separated:

Mic 3:8 But as for me, I am filled with power,  
with the Spirit of the LORD,  
and with justice and might,  
to declare to Jacob his transgression,  
to Israel his sin.

#### *Concluding thoughts:*

Although there are some incidents of “abnormal” behavior among the prophets, implicit in these historical-critical assumptions is the idea that the OT prophetic experience was *arational, irrational, or mystical*. There is also sometimes the notion that this prophetic experience was basically human and not a natural aspect of the prophetic revelation of God. That is, as ancient peoples often are said to have had such mystical and ecstatic experiences, interpreters often assume this was analogous to the OT prophetic experience. In other words, the visionary experience of the OT prophets is often described in terms that incline us to view it either sociologically or psychologically.

Even where the experience may be seen as somehow “supernatural,” it is often envisaged at a level outside its context in God’s unfolding revelation of redemption (indeed, it was not *magic* related). This revelation was received in diverse forms and experiences, yet it was always consistent with the nature of God. The prophets had a rational, though miraculous, experience that while it did not negate strong emotion, it produced a coherent word from God who was intent on communicating rational revelation. Further, the OT prophetic experience particularly was not about the prophet, his ecstasy, nor his experience. Rather it was about God revealing himself and his redemptive purposes. Indeed, the OT prophetic experience is set apart from the ANE at just this point, for the OT prophets were always *cognizant, rational, and coherent* in their experience and their message. The OT prophets were not deluded, roving, frenzied madmen “with a chip on their shoulder” or a personal vendetta, nor were they paranoid (Philo) or insane.<sup>293</sup> Indeed, it can be proposed that such people would never have been called to the prophetic ministry. The impression from much of the discussion on ecstasy in OT prophets is akin to the modern (Romantic) notion of the poet, painter, or musician who is a creative genius that must be insane and unstable to produce great art. Rather, the OT prophets all had a message from God that they were responsible to relay; it was not a “personal experience” of ecstasy, nor was it something originating in their own minds.

Further, the prophets did not *lose consciousness*, but rather experienced a *changed consciousness* wherein they could receive and perceive spiritual realities. Both during sleeping-visions and waking-visions the prophets were conscious and cognizant, and always *remembered* what was revealed to them.

Acts 10:10 He[Peter] became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance.  
Acts 22:17 When I[Paul] returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance.

Therefore, the Scriptures do not deny the reality of some form of an ecstatic experience to the Hebrew prophets, but describe it as a *divinely induced revelatory condition* of a more or less restrained nature which was not in a continuum with pagan

<sup>293</sup> Platonic notions are in the background here: the body/spirit dichotomy assumes that the rational mind is driven out when the Spirit comes in.



always



prophetism. The heathen and false prophets, on the other hand, induced an aberrant, ecstatic state or trance themselves by artificial means through the use of drugs, mass excitation, flagellation, frenzied dancing and magical ritual. In the case of Israel's true prophets it was a divinely induced state of the mind preparatory to the reception of revelation, the proclamation of the divine word (either verbally or by symbolic act), or the exalted expression of praise or worship (cf. Exodus 15; Judges 5; I Sam. 2). In contrast, magic and sorcery were resorted to by the heathen in an attempt to produce a self-induced ecstatic trance conducive to divination, so that through contact with the spirit world some favor or revelation of hidden knowledge could be secured from the gods or spirits.<sup>294</sup>

Vos writes: Biblical prophecy is not a process in which God dislodges the mind of man. Its true conception is that it lifts the human mind to the highest plane of discourse with God. And it is the very essence of biblical religion that its exercise lies in the sphere of consciousness. The prophets while in the visionary state, retained the faculty of reflection and introspection.<sup>295</sup>

Also, the notion that the prophetic experience was somehow pathological has no support in the Bible. That they experienced dementia, hysteria, epilepsy, or some other such pathology, is contradicted by the biblical record. The prophets all came from and returned to ordinary lives and work whenever their prophetic ministries were completed. It could also be affirmed that their prophetic ministry transpired through "ordinary" means using ordinary people to receive extraordinary revelation from God. Revelation is extraordinary not on account of its *form* or *impact* so much as on account that *it is revelation* from God.

2 Ki 9:11 When Jehu went out to his fellow officers, one of them asked him, "Is everything all right? Why did this madman[Elisha] come to you?" "You know the man and the sort of things he says," Jehu replied.

Rather than proof that prophets were thought of as ecstasies, this is proof that people *listened* to the prophets, *understood* what they said, and often *did not like* what they heard.

Jn 10:20 Many of them said, "He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?"

Jesus, like the prophets before him, was not rejected because of some ecstatic ravings or experience he claimed, but rather for *what he said*.

### (7) *Apocalyptic and prophecy*

Wellhausen dichotomized Israel's prophets from apocalypticism of postexilic Judaism.

Rowley saw a fundamental unity between prophecy and apocalyptic thinking.

Suggested sources: Hellenism, Gnosticism, Zoroastrianism, Jews critical of the temple worship, wisdom literature, etc....

#### *Conditional predictions in the OT:*

Some predictions were conditional, and in fact resulted in results dependent on human response.

Payne says that conditional predictive prophecy hinges on whether it has a near application and has elements that are capable of satisfaction by the prophet's contemporaries.

#### Consider texts:

Jonah 3:4 – Nineveh will be overthrown according to Jonah's message, yet the people repented when Jonah preached and judgment was thwarted - 3:10

Jer 18:15-10

1 Ki 11:38 - A condition Jeroboam did not fulfill -- 1 Ki 15:29

1 Ki 21:17f. – Elijah's prophecy against Ahab was withheld once he humbled himself before God (v. 27). The prophecy is fulfilled in a different time – 2 Ki 9:26

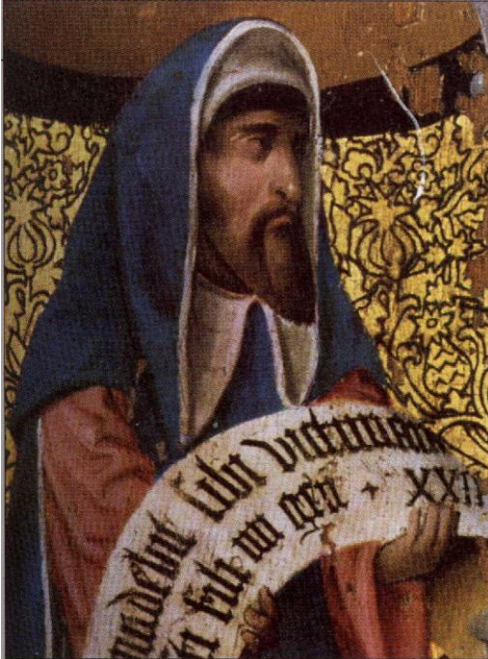
Isa 38:1-5 – Lord adds fifteen years to Hezekiah's life

<sup>294</sup> Freeman, *Intro to the OT Prophets*, p. 62.

<sup>295</sup> Vos, *Biblical Theology*, p. 226.

## II. ASSYRIAN PERIOD PROPHETS: PREXILIC (845-605 B.C.)

### A. *Obadiah* עֲבַדְיָהּ (Judah/Babylon ~ 840 or 586)



296  
Obadiah from a 16<sup>th</sup>c. panel in a French church now in the Musée de Cluny

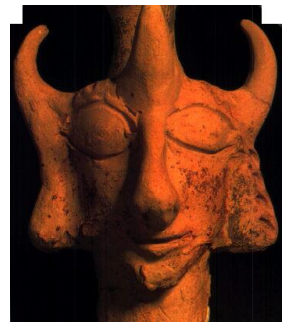
#### 1. *Title, author, and dates*

1. Obadiah (840) is the author עֲבַדְיָהּ (“servant of the Lord[YHWH]”) with no further positive identification. Thirteen people have this name in the OT.
  2. Crux in dating is the plundering of Jerusalem (vss 10-11):
    - a. during the reign of Jehoram in Judah (848-841) Edom assisted Philistine/Arabian coalition against Israel (2 Chron 21:8-20; 2 Ki 8:20-22). *Jehoram (Joram) of Judah* was the first-born son of Jehoshaphat of Judah (873-848) and reigned in Jerusalem eight years (853-841) (2 Ki 8:16-24; 2 Chron 21:5-10, 20). Do not confuse with Joram (Jehoram) of Israel (852-841). Jehoram of Judah’s reign was one of evil. He married Athaliah, a daughter of Ahab (and possibly Jezebel). This alliance would not bode well for Judah.
      - b. Destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (586), yet no mention of destruction and deportation (cf. Jer 49:7). The description of the attack on Jerusalem in Obad 11 does not appear to be a complete destruction, as in the Babylonian destruction of 586.

Obad 11  
On the day you stood aloof  
while strangers carried off his wealth  
and foreigners entered his gates  
and cast lots for Jerusalem,  
you were like one of them.

- c. Attack on Judah by Syria and Edom during time of Ahaz (ca. 735-715) (cf. 2 Chron 28:17-18 (Payne)).
3. **Pre-exilic dates** (ca. 840ff.): G.L. Archer, H.E. Freeman, M.F. Unger, E.J. Young, Keil and Delitzsch, R. Vannoy, W.H. Green
4. **Exilic dates** (ca. 600-586): W. VanGemeren, E.B. Pusey, J.A. Thompson, New Schofield Reference Bible, G.H. Livingston, C.L. Feinberg, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, C.H. Bullock, R. Dillard and T. Longman, R.F. Pfeiffer, Aage Bentze, G. Fohrer, P. Craigie,
5. **Post-exilic & later dates**: R.K. Harrison (450 BC)
6. Conclusion: Obadiah is more likely to have been called sometime in the pre-exilic era, either at the beginning or near the end. Calvin said dating cannot be resolved.
7. Similarities with Jer 49:
  - a. common source?
  - b. Borrowing? Obadiah has element of hope contrasted with Jeremiah. Does that suggest it must be exilic? (VanGemeren)
8. Shortest book in the OT. Why? First serious warning?

**Background:** see ANE backgrounds section, Edom/Edomites, p. 605. Edomites were descendents of Esau who dwelt in the hill country of Seir (Gen 36:8). References: Gen 25:36:1; 8, 9; 27: 28, 39; Nu 20 (refused passage); Deut 2:2-8; Nu 33:37; Deut 23:7 (treat as brothers); 2 Sam 8:13-14; 1 K 11:14-25; 2 Chron 20; 1 Ki 8:20-22; 2 Chron 21:8-10; Ezek 35:5 (see “themes” below”). (right



<sup>296</sup> From *The Bible Through the Ages*, p. 79.

picture)The national horned god of Edom was Qaus (Qos) which may mean “bow” (storm god?) like the god Hadad of Aram. Also see Ps 60 title.

**Occasion of book:** at some time, the Edomites took delight in the destruction of Jerusalem and partook of its plunder. Obadiah, apparently from Judah, was sent to predict God’s destruction of Edom for judgment on them, apparently for not coming to the aid of Judah when being invaded. The end result would be that Judah would be given Edom’s land. The *promised land* theme is prominent.

A psalm that contains an important allusion to such an event (the Babylonian attack on Jerusalem, 586), especially for those who would date Obadiah late:

Ps 137:7 Remember, O LORD, what the Edomites did  
on the day Jerusalem fell.  
“Tear it down,” they cried,  
“tear it down to its foundations!”

**Prophets possibly contemporary to Obadiah, if written earlier:**

- ◆ Elijah (875-848)
- ◆ Micaiah (865-853)
- ◆ Elisha (850)
- ◆ Jehu (853)

**Prophets possibly contemporary to Obadiah, if written later:**

Jeremiah (627-586) – especially see parallels between Obad 1 and Jer 49:<sup>297</sup>

Obad 1-9 The vision of Obadiah.  
This is what the Sovereign LORD says about Edom—  
We have heard a message from the LORD:  
An envoy was sent to the nations to say,  
“Rise, and let us go against her for battle”—  
2 “See, I will make you small among the nations;  
you will be utterly despised.  
3 The pride of your heart has deceived you,  
you who live in the clefts of the rocks  
and make your home on the heights,  
you who say to yourself,  
‘Who can bring me down to the ground?’  
4 Though you soar like the eagle  
and make your nest among the stars,  
from there I will bring you down,”  
declares the LORD.  
5 “If thieves came to you,  
if robbers in the night—  
Oh, what a disaster awaits you—  
would they not steal only as much as they wanted?  
If grape pickers came to you,  
would they not leave a few grapes?  
6 But how **Esau** [descendent of Edom] will be ransacked,  
his hidden treasures pillaged!  
7 All your allies will force you to the border;  
your friends will deceive and overpower you;  
those who eat your bread will set a trap for you,  
but you will not detect it.  
8 “In that day,” declares the LORD,  
“will I not destroy the wise men of Edom,  
men of understanding in the mountains of **Esau**?  
9 Your warriors, O **Teman**, will be terrified, [see Job 2:11]  
and everyone in Esau’s mountains  
will be cut down in the slaughter.

Jer 49:7-22 Concerning Edom:  
This is what the LORD Almighty says:  
“Is there no longer wisdom in **Teman**?  
Has counsel perished from the prudent?  
Has their wisdom decayed?



<sup>297</sup> Yet , it should be said that parallels can not *prove* borrowing, dating, or sources. Yet, see Archer’s argument for Jeremiah’s borrowing from Obadiah (*A Survey*, p. 335)

8 Turn and flee, hide in deep caves,  
 you who live in Dedan,  
 for I will bring disaster on **Esau**  
 at the time I punish him.  
 9 If grape pickers came to you,  
 would they not leave a few grapes?  
 If thieves came during the night,  
 would they not steal only as much as they wanted?  
 10 But I will strip **Esau** bare;  
 I will uncover his hiding places,  
 so that he cannot conceal himself.  
 His children, relatives and neighbors will perish,  
 and he will be no more.  
 11 Leave your orphans; I will protect their lives.  
 Your widows too can trust in me.”  
 12 This is what the LORD says: “If those who do not deserve  
 to drink the cup must drink it, why should you go unpunished?  
 You will not go unpunished, but must drink it. 13 I swear by  
 myself,” declares the LORD, “that Bozrah will become a ruin  
 and an object of horror, of reproach and of cursing; and all its  
 towns will be in ruins forever.”  
 14 I have heard a message from the LORD:  
 An envoy was sent to the nations to say,  
 “Assemble yourselves to attack it!  
 Rise up for battle!”  
 15 “Now I will make you small among the nations,  
 despised among men.  
 16 The terror you inspire  
 and the pride of your heart have deceived you,  
 you who live in the clefts of the rocks,

who occupy the heights of the hill.  
 Though you build your nest as high as the eagle’s,  
 from there I will bring you down,”  
 declares the LORD.  
 17 “Edom will become an object of horror;  
 all who pass by will be appalled and will scoff  
 because of all its wounds.  
 18 As Sodom and Gomorrah were overthrown,  
 along with their neighboring towns,”  
 says the LORD,  
 “so no one will live there;  
 no man will dwell in it.  
 19 “Like a lion coming up from Jordan’s thickets  
 to a rich pastureland,  
 I will chase Edom from its land in an instant.  
 Who is the chosen one I will appoint for this?  
 Who is like me and who can challenge me?  
 And what shepherd can stand against me?”  
 20 Therefore, hear what the LORD has planned against  
 Edom, what he has purposed against those who live in  
 Teman: The young of the flock will be dragged away;  
 he will completely destroy their pasture because of  
 them.  
 21 At the sound of their fall the earth will tremble;  
 their cry will resound to the Red Sea.  
 22 Look! An eagle will soar and swoop down,  
 spreading its wings over Bozrah.  
 In that day the hearts of Edom’s warriors  
 will be like the heart of a woman in labor

## 2. *Historical-critical matters*

1. G. Fohrer ~ a cult prophet in Palestine after the Babylonian deportation, expectation of just retribution, the Day of the Lord will be judgment against the nations and appended promise places it in eschatological framework (p. 440).
2. E.W. Heaton, ~ “the shortest and perhaps the least illuminating book in the Old Testament. It is mainly a denunciation of Edom, concocted (as the marginal references of the RSV indicate) from other prophetic writings.”<sup>298</sup>
3. B.W. Anderson, ~ “Obadiah reflects the vindictive feelings of the small Jewish community, squeezed into a narrow area and surrounded by people who resented its presence.”<sup>299</sup>
4. J.G. Eichorn, H.C. Lanchester, R.H. Pfeiffer, O. Eisseldt ~ divide the book into diverse sources written at different times, though no consensus on the sources.
5. B.B. Trawick, ~ “The short book of Obadiah is notable not as a record of lofty religious views but as a forceful expression of hatred and thirst for revenge.”<sup>300</sup>

## 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

### a) *The Day and Day of the Lord (יִוֹם-יְהוָה) – Obad 15*

➤ See “day of the Lord,” p. 82f.

**OT** – the day is a light for YHWH and his people, while it is darkness for sinners

The day forms a part of structuring in Dorsey’s outline:

a b c(day of judgment) 1-11  
 d (indictment) 12-14  
 c(day of judgment) b a 15-21

<sup>298</sup> Heaton, *OT Prophets*, p. 20.

<sup>299</sup> Anderson, *Understanding the OT*, p. 47.

<sup>300</sup> Trawick, *Bible as Literature*, p. 227.

The word “day” plays a role in contrasting the day that Edom became implicated in violence against Judah and the day of God’s judgment:

Obad 8 “In that day,” declares the LORD, “will I not destroy the wise men of Edom, men of understanding in the mountains of Esau?”

Obad 11 On the day you stood aloof while strangers carried off his wealth and foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem, you were like one of them.

Obad 12 You should not look down on your brother in the day of his misfortune, nor rejoice over the people of Judah in the day of their destruction, nor boast so much in the day of their trouble.

Obad 13 You should not march through the gates of my people in the day of their disaster, nor look down on them in their calamity in the day of their disaster, nor seize their wealth in the day of their disaster.

Obad 14 You should not wait at the crossroads to cut down their fugitives, nor hand over their survivors in the day of their trouble.

Obad 15 “The day of the LORD is near for all nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your own head.

- On casting lots, see p. 262.

#### 4. Major themes: doom for Edom

- See Edom in foreign nations prophecies in Payne chart, p. 177.
- See Edom/Edomites, pp. 605f.

1. Pronouncement of judgment on Edom (also see Joel 3:19) descendants of Esau in *ultimate outworking* of the Jacob/Esau conflict (Gen 25:19-26, 29-34; 36:1-43; Edom’s hostility Nu 20:14-22; 33:37; Deut 2:2-8; also 2 Sam 8:13-14; 1 Ki 11:14-25; 2 Chron 20:2; 21:8-10; 2 Ki 8:20-22; Jer 49:7-22; Ezek 25:12-14; 35:1-15), yet it is not to be restricted to Edom alone, which is largely representative of all nations hostile to Yahweh and his kingdom.<sup>301</sup> Edom had been a long time enemy to Judah. This demonstrates God’s universal reign over the nations, not just Israel. There can be no claim (as in historical critics) that YHWH was some “tribal deity,” or “national god,” to the Israelites! NT links with this theme are found in the Idumean descendent of Edom, Herod the Great who failed to have Jesus killed after the Magi told him of the birth of a king (Matt 2). See also Rom 9:13 where Paul draws on the Jacob/Esau conflict in discussing divine election:

Rom 9:10-13 Not only that, but Rebekah’s children had one and the same father, our father Isaac. <sup>11</sup> Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God’s purpose in election might stand: <sup>12</sup> not by works but by him who calls—she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” <sup>13</sup> Just as it is written: “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

Note: Balaam’s oracle also contained a prediction that Edom would be conquered, and interestingly this is in the context of a Messianic prophecy that a star would come out of Jacob (Num 24:17):

Nu 24:17-18 I see him, but not now;

I behold him, but not near.

A star will come out of Jacob;

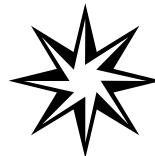
a scepter will rise out of Israel.

He will crush the foreheads of Moab,  
the skulls of all the sons of Sheth.

18 Edom will be conquered;

Seir, his enemy, will be conquered,

but Israel will grow strong.



2. Application: family hostility and hatred, feuds, *even this* God uses to bring about his redemptive purposes for Israel and the world. Envy and Jealousy are very destructive, nevertheless, and can be past on for generations. Jealousy is a raging fire . . . (*Song of Songs*). Edom was to serve his younger brother Jacob according to God’s word (Gen 25:34; 27:27-40), thus the Edomites betrayal was a familial one, and not just an impersonal external enemy.
3. *The Day of the Lord* theme: possibly the first time in OT and Joel, perhaps the expression was well known to the people? They should not assume it would be judgment on their enemies and blessing for them. Joel uses expression regarding the locust plagues.
4. God’s general and specific judgment. God’s *justice* would be realized for both Edom and the nations:
  - Obad 15 The day of the LORD is near for all nations.
  - As you have done, it will be done to you;
  - your deeds will return upon your own head.
5. Final triumph of the righteous on the Day of the Lord.

<sup>301</sup> VanGemeren, *Prophets*, p. 143.



## 5. Major prophecies

1. Judgment on Edom (vv. 1-9)
2. Jerusalem destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (vv.12-14)
3. Scattering of Israel and Judah (vv. 20, 21)
4. Esau (Edom) reduced to rubble by the Jews (vv. 18-21)
5. Return of Israel/Judah from exile and dominion extended over Edom during Maccabean (“deliverers”) era (v. 18-21).
6. Temple (“holy place,” קֹדֶשׁ קַדְשֵׁי) rebuilt (v. 17).
7. Establishment of future Messianic kingdom of YHWH (v. 21).

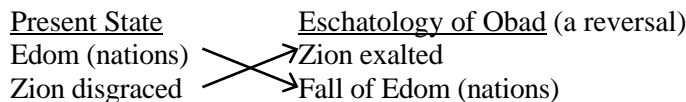
According to Payne, in relation to its length, Obadiah has the second (Zephaniah being the first) highest number of predictions of any book of the Bible: 81% (prophecies in 17 of 21 verses).

## 6. Outline, structure/composition, genre

1. G.Fohrer<sup>302</sup> ~ a five part division into five sayings with supplements:
 

a	threat against Edom: oracle	1b-4
b	threat against Edom	5-7
c	threat against Edom: oracle	8-11
d	threat against Edom	12-14, 15b
e	threat against Edom	15a, 16-18
f	promise for Israel	19-21

2. W. VanGemeren<sup>303</sup> a reversal



There have been quite a variety of structural outlines done on Obadiah with greatly varying sections. Dorsey notes that most commentators see five units, while G. Fohrer identifies six units. Dorsey, proposes seven units. He considers the book a *theodicy* for placing the center of the book at the indictment of Edom’s guilt for its violence against Israel, as well as concluding the book with encouragement to Judah. Despite appearances, evil will not prevail. YHWH is sovereign, and the books will be balanced *in the end*. The conclusion of Obadiah presents a future Messianic kingdom as the hope of Judah. Edom will be ruled by deliverers sent by God (מְוֹשְׁעִים) and the kingdom will be YHWH’s (v.21).

## 7. Exposition and the history of redemption themes

Sela - Petra, the city of rock lost to Nabatean Arabs, eight jussives not as future of the past, but as past

Dorsey notes the “ever-worsening” disasters:<sup>304</sup>

1. Defeated
2. Plundered
3. Slaughtered
4. Annihilated

### a) Judgment proclamation: Edom’s doom, Obad 1-9

Obadiah is given a *vision/revelation* (חִזְיוֹן עֲבֹדָיָה) – though it is not a theophanous vision, so much as a prophetic insight into future events. This word can be used to title a prophetic book. This vision can be considered a *national oracle*.

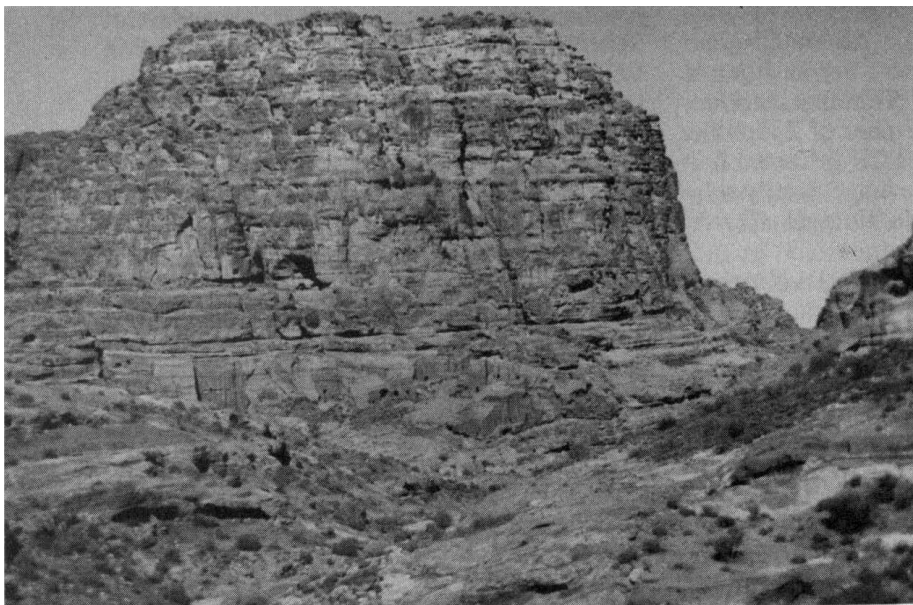
<sup>302</sup> Fohrer, “Die Sprüche Obadjas, *Studia Biblica et Semitica: Theodoro Christiano Vriezen* (Wageningen: Veenam & Zonen, 1966): 81-93. Discussed by Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, p. 283.

<sup>303</sup> VanGemeren, *Prophets*, p. 144.

<sup>304</sup> Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, p. 288.



(below) Cliffs of Petra.



v. 2 – Q pf s. נָתַתִּיךָ, “I will make” (NIV, NASB, RSV), “I have made” (KJV). A “prophetic perfect” predicting coming judgment or past event?

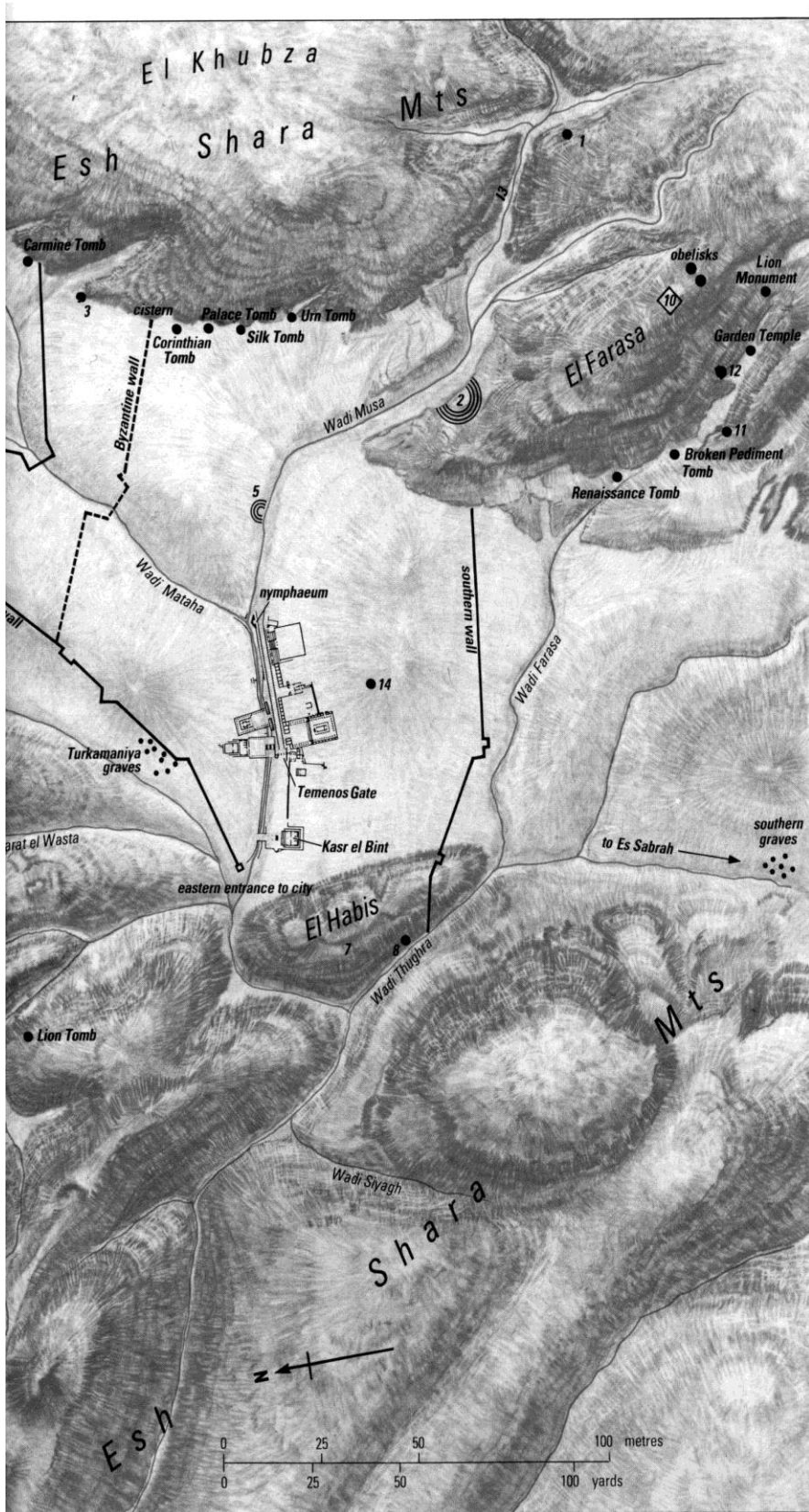
Num 24:18 Edom will be conquered;  
Seir, his enemy, will be conquered,  
but Israel will grow strong.

vv. 4-9 – Prophecy against Petra (סַלְעַ, “cliffs” or “rocks”): Edom’s loss of Petra at the hands of the Nabataean Arabs is predicted. Pride had been their downfall; they had taken false security in their rock fortress.

**Petra:** this remarkable city was lost for nearly 1,000 years until Johann Ludwig Burkhart rediscovered it in 1812. Harrison Ford got to film there in his search for the holy grail! The present remains of Petra are later than the period immediately concerning Obadiah, for they are sixth century Nabataean remains from the period following the occupation of Edom by the Nabataeans. A common identification of the Edomite stronghold when Amaziah killed 10,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt, renamed Jothkeel (2 Ki 14:7), is held by some to be a site 1,000 feet above the site (Umm el-Biyyara) of Petra.

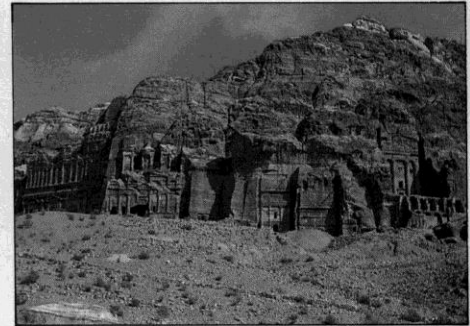
(left) Treasury in Petra.<sup>305</sup>

<sup>305</sup> The treasury in Petra is actually a temple to Isis built by Hadrian. The façade is some 130’ high.



The rock-cut tombs at Petra (above). **E Palace Tomb** one of the largest of the monuments of Petra, with a broad and complex facade (c. 1st century AD). **F Urn Tomb** tall Classical facade with large tomb-chapel and three burial chambers. Probably the burial place of one of the last of the Nabataean kings (1st century AD). **G Corinthian Tomb** an early Nabataean experiment with the Hellenistic style of architecture, perhaps the burial place of a 1st century BC king of Petra.

These extraordinary tombs form part of a complex (below) cut into the cliffs to the east of the city.



The remains of Petra (left) lie largely on a terrace in a broad valley which runs on a north-south axis. The valley is contained by a series of steep sandstone escarpments, which are veined with shades of purple, red and yellow. The landscape has been dissected by numerous seasonal watercourses or wadis, the principal of these being the Wadi Musa.

**1 Khasneh or Treasury** one of the first Hellenistic-inspired monuments of Petra (1st century BC), with rock-cut facade 28m wide and 40m high. **2 Theatre** with 33 rows of seats cut in the rock, faced by remains of stage and dressing rooms. Roman (2nd century AD). **3 Sextus Florentinus Tomb** a simple facade with inscription showing it to be the tomb of a Roman governor of Arabia of the early 2nd century AD. **4 Moghar en Nassara** an important suburb of Petra. Tomb facades are carved into the low cliffs of this area. **5 Small theatre**. **6 Turkamaniya Tomb** with Nabataean inscription which lists the elements of the tomb complex, including garden, terrace, *triclinium* (chamber for funeral feasts **12**), dwelling places, courtyard and porticoes in addition to the rock-cut facade and tomb chambers which are all that survive today. **7 Convent Group** buildings of various dates on the summit of the rocky outcrop of El Habis, centred on a garden area and sunken courtyard. **8 El Habis High Place** a shrine or offering-place with block altar on the western edge of the El Habis outcrop overlooking the wadi below. **9 The Deir** largest of the rock-cut monuments of Petra, probably built late 1st century AD. A boldly carved temple facade with central doorway 8m high leading to large rock-cut chamber. A stepped processional way led up to the levelled court in front of the Deir. **10 Attuf Ridge** 'High Place of Sacrifice', a shallow rectangular levelled area reached by three steps with raised altar equipped with rock-cut drains and basins for the blood of sacrifices and for washing. Reached from the city below by a stepped rock-cut processional way. **11 Roman Soldier Tomb** Classical facade with three statue-niches at 1st floor level, the central one holding a figure in Roman armour. The principal tomb chamber has arched recesses for corpses or coffins. **12 Triclinium** (2nd century AD) decorated internally with half-columns and pilasters. **13 The Siq** a narrow ravine lined with monuments which was the eastern entrance to Petra. Along the sides of the Siq are remains of earthenware pipes and a rock-cut channel, which brought water into the city from the east. **14 Faroun Pillar** originally one of a pair of ritual pillars in front of a temple of which little survives.

(above) Topographic map of Petra.<sup>306</sup>

Edom was but a colony in David's time, and was gradually reduced to virtual dispersion through the intertestamental period up through the Roman conquest of Jerusalem.

<sup>306</sup> *Past Worlds: Harper Collins*, p. 185.

## b) *Judgment justified: Edom's behavior, Obad 10-14*

### (1) *Violence against brothers: Obad 10-11*

The primary reason for the judgment on Edom is that they were violent towards their own brothers. Nothing could be worse than betraying God's people when they are your own family. Whether they were directly involved, or only bystanders unwilling to help Israel and Judah, is irrelevant. Either implication is worthy of judgment from God.

### (2) *Rejoicing over disaster of brothers: Obad 12-14*

Note that there are eight jussives here with לֹא, suggesting a warning for future(?). This is debated, as to whether it is past, present, or future. The future seems to be the best answer here, in reference to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586.

## c) *Judgment proclamation: the nations' doom on the day of YHWH, Obad 15-16*

This is a future judgment on all the ungodly. "Day of the Lord" (יְוֹם־יְהוָה) first use as special times of God's judgment/punishment (see p. 231), if we follow the early date. The day of judgment is not necessarily one particular day, nor does it necessarily refer here to end-times eschatology. Here, it does clearly denote a time (or times) of God's judging the world. Edom is not the only nation standing under God's judgment, but is indeed representative of that judgment that will go to all the people and nations of the earth.

the day of the Lord upon all nations in ver. 15, the judgment upon all nations and that upon the Edomites were thought of as inseparably connected, or that this induced Obadiah to place opposite to the sins of the Edomites, not their own punishment, but the punishment of all nations, more especially as, according to ver. 11, it must necessarily be assumed that the foreign nations participated in the sin of Edom. For this leaves the question unanswered, how Obadiah came to speak at all (ver. 15) of the day of the Lord upon all nations. The circumstance that, according to ver. 11, heathen nations had plundered Jerusalem, and committed crimes like those for which Edom is condemned in vers. 12-14, does not lead directly to the day of judgment upon all nations, but simply to a judgment upon Edom and the nations which had committed like sins. The difficulty is only removed by the assumption that Obadiah regarded Edom as a type of the nations that had risen up in hostility to the Lord and His people, and were judged by the Lord in consequence, so that what he says of Edom applies to all nations which assume the same or a similar attitude towards the people of God. From this point of view he could, without reserve, extend to all nations the retribution which would fall upon Edom for its sins. They should drink *tāmīd*, i.e. not at once, as Ewald has rendered it in opposition to the usage of the language, but "continually." This does not mean, however, that "there will be no time in which there will not be one of the nations drinking the intoxicating cup, and being destroyed by drinking thereof; or that the nations will come in turn, and therefore in a long immeasurable series, one after the other, to drink the cup of intoxication," as Caspari supposes, but "continually, so that the turn never passes from the heathen to Judah, Isa. li. 22, 23" (Hitzig). This drinking is more precisely defined as drinking and swallowing (שָׁבַע, in Syriac, to devour or swallow, hence שָׁבַע, a throat, so called from the act of swallowing, Prov. xxiii. 2), i.e. drinking in full draughts; and the effect, "they will be like such as have not been, have never existed" (cf. Job x. 19), i.e. they will be utterly destroyed as nations.

(above)Day of the Lord in Obadiah.<sup>307</sup>

## d) *Restoration proclamation: Israel's deliverance, Obad 17-21*

Obad 17-21: interpretations

1. spiritualized: extension of God's Kingdom through Gospel (Laetsch)
2. prediction of return of Israel to her possession from exile and judgment of Edom (Payne/Alders/Vannoy)
3. prediction of literal restoration to land yet to be fulfilled, double fulfillment (F. Gaebelein)

<sup>307</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Minor Prophets*, p. 367.

As in Joel, the prophet concludes with an affirmation of the covenant-promise, a restoration and a reversal of the covenant-curse. The prophetic message of such restoration after judgment always prepares for the gospel of grace: God has mercy on undeserving people!

The people referred to in this section are the Israelite/Judahite exiles returning to the land of Canaan:

- v. 17b – house of Jacob
- v. 18a – house of Jacob
- v. 18b – house of Joseph
- v. 19a – people from the Negev
- v. 19b – people from the foothills
- v. 20a – company of Israelite exiles
- v. 20b – exiles from Jerusalem

The restoration on Mt Zion of God's presence, the nation's progeny and prosperity. These all point forward to the Messiah.

## **8. History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling**

[These sections at the end of each book are meant to be *suggestive* of application, and to provide food for thought and class discussion. At present, only select books have been treated]

### **a) Revelation and redemption from YHWH**

The frequent theme of judgment and the holiness of God in the prophets sends the message to our modern liberal "God-is-a-nice-guy" theology that God is a holy jealous God who will not tolerate idolatry, apostasy, heresy, and rebellion. This will be such a frequent theme in the prophets that we can not possibly note every case, but we should keep in mind the importance of the prophetic message that God is holy and just, while also compassionate.

#### **(1) Who God is**

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ ~ Lord God, sovereign Lord (v. 1). (Compare this title for God to Obadiah's name, which clearly echoes within the opening verse of the vision.) YHWH can and will bring down, *for he is able*, despite the proud people who live in the rocks claiming that no one can bring them down (vv. 3-6). The Lord will even destroy the "wise men," the warriors, and all who seek shelter in their rock fortress (vv. 8-9). The "day of the Lord" is a day in which the books *begin* to get balanced, a day set apart, like the Sabbath, to teach humanity that God is still Lord. This is his special day to remind them that their pride will one day bring them to the pits of Sheol. The day of the Lord is a day of mercy in judgment, for he allows us all to see that he still withholds his *final* judgment, even while he executes preliminary judgments.

- ✦ Intolerant of rebellious pride.
- ✦ Intolerant of compassionless complicity in the suffering of God's people.
- ✦ Committed to his covenant people.

#### **(2) What God has done**

- ✦ Judge of the nations who defy him.
- ✦ Defender and deliver of his own people.
- ✦ God's justice does prevail in spite of human/angelic rebellion.

#### **(3) What God has promised**

- ✦ To bring down nations that trust in themselves, their power, technology, wealth.
- ✦ To deliver his people Israel and Judah. This echoes the land-promise, as well, for the Edomites would be dispossessed of land (vv. 17-21).
- ✦ To judge the Edomites for their violence against God's people, a representative judgment for all nations.

### **b) Humankind and redemption**

#### **(1) Worship of redeemed**

Humility before God is prerequisite to blessings from God. This is what the Edomites had failed to grasp. To deny God's people, and worse to do violence against them, is to deny God himself. The idols of Edom became the snare of Edom.

## (2) *Work of redeemed*

Honest labor unto the Lord is prerequisite to blessings before God. The Edomites were proud, warring, hoarding (v. 6), violent, ruthless, plunderers, while at the same time they drank to victory on YHWH's holy hill (v. 16).

## (3) *Ethics of redeemed*

Justice is a prerequisite to blessing from God. To stand aloof from a brother under attack is to be implicated in the brother's attack. Edom was "like one of" the foreigners who plundered Jerusalem (v. 11). They were also haughty, "looking down on" their brothers (v. 12), boasting over their calamity (v. 12), seizing their wealth (v. 13), "waiting at crossroads to cut down their fugitives" (v. 14).

*Pascal on Justice and the reason of effects*<sup>308</sup>:

291. In the letter On Injustice can come the ridiculousness of the law that the elder gets all. "My friend, you were born on this side of the mountain, it is therefore just that your elder brother gets everything." "Why do you kill me?"

292. He lives on the other side of the water.

293. "Why do you kill me? What! do you not live on the other side of the water? If you lived on this side, my friend, I should be an assassin, and it would be unjust to slay you in this manner. But since you live on the other side, I am a hero, and it is just."

294. On what shall man found the order of the world which he would govern? Shall it be on the caprice of each individual? What confusion! Shall it be on justice? Man is ignorant of it.

## B. *Joel יוֹאֵל (Judah ~ 835-820)*



Joel by Michelangelo, Sistine Chapel

### 1. *Title, author, and dates*

1. Joel (835-820) was a son of Pethuel. The date is ascertained only indirectly (no identification with other twelve Joels in the OT). Concern with Judah and Jerusalem may suggest his location or origins.

2. **Pre-exilic:** at time of Joash (835) with prominent eschatological elements: J.A. Credner, G.C. Aalders, E.J. Young: enemies (ch 3) fit pre-exilic time best, Assyria/Babylon unmentioned, absence of mention of king, prominence of priests, time of regency of high priest in Joash's childhood, position of book in order of "minor prophets," comparisons of parallel passages.<sup>309</sup> *Joash*, son of Ahaziah and Zibiah of Beersheba, reigned in Jerusalem forty years (835-796) (2 Ki 11:21-12:21; Chron 24:1-14, 23-27). His father Ahaziah was killed in Jehu's purges when he was a child, and he was rescued by Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram of Judah, the sister of Ahaziah. Joash introduced reforms into the temple, in which he organized with great difficulty to remove the corruption

surrounding the repairs to the temple. Joash's reign was characterized by faithfulness from the start, but he declined along with the kingdom after Jehoiada's death. Also, the high places were still not removed. After Jehoiada's death, Joash listened to the officials of Judah and served the Asherahs and idols (2 Chron 24:17-19). The spiraling descent-pattern is all too familiar:

3. **Post-exilic:** Dillard/Longman (*Intro to OT*, p. 365): written after the locust plague (ch 1); presumes the existence of the temple, therefore any date between 586-516 can be eliminated. Absence of Assyria and Babylon, suggests a date prior to the hegemony of Assyria on the Mediterranean coast (mid eighth cent.) or after the fall of Babylon (late sixth cent.). The leadership is the priests and elders with no mention of kings or royalty: either postexilic, or

<sup>308</sup> Pascal, *Pensées*, Trotter, #292-294.

<sup>309</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 328.

limited monarchy (Joash in late ninth cent.) There is no mention of the Northern kingdom: suggests a time when the north was carried into exile. References to dispersions may refer to the Assyrians, not necessarily to the Babylonians. Style and date of language are not conclusive for dating (366). The absence of polemic against syncretized worship as in the pre-exilic prophets points towards a post-exilic date. [All their arguments are from silence.]

4. VanGemeren (120ff): a post-exilic social milieu. Significance of priests and elders, centrality of the temple, Joel's language. Shortly after the completion of Nehemiah's wall (445 B.C.). He notes Calvin who says it is not vital to pin down his date. His message is universal.

*Conclusion:* no decisive basis for fixing the date of Joel, yet seems to fit pre-exilic period.

## 2. *Historical-critical matters*

1. Duham, B- authored by two individuals: a pre-exilic prophet of the locust oracles and a later apocalypticist of the Maccabean period incorporated the earlier material into the Day of the Lord passages. See *apocalyptic* below.
2. Heaton, E.W.: post-exilic, apx. 400 B.C., confirmed by the prophet's extensive borrowing from his predecessors (pp. 18-19).
3. Recent scholarship tends to view it as a unity by a single author.

### a) *Interpretations of Joel 1-2*

#### (1) *Apocalyptic*

➤ See *apocalypticism*, p. 240.

Joel 1 is literal past locust plague

Joel 2 is figurative future invasion of enemies (Freeman)

#### (2) *Allegorical*

Both chapters are figurative of future series of enemy invasions: Representations of the Babylonians, Medo-Persians, Greeks, and Romans.

#### (3) *Literal*

- Two locust plagues (second ushers in future Day of the LORD).
- First plague is devastation of country side, second is in the city (Ridderbos).
- Real locusts that represent real armies of God's judgment.

Bullock categorizes the different interpretations:<sup>310</sup>

- historical-literal: locust plague during his lifetime.
- allegorical: four invading armies, Assyro-Babylonia/Medo-Persian/ Greek/Roman.
- apocalyptic eschatological: extraterrestrial invaders usher in Day of LORD.

Chronological sequence: obscurity complicates understanding:

- Bullock: divides lamentation about the plague 1:1-2:17 and the future blessing for repentance 2:18-3:17.<sup>311</sup>
- Vannoy: "Day of the LORD" is coming, same day, parallel accounts form structure of book (2:10,31;3:15).

## 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

### a) *Day of the Lord* (יִּוֹם-יְהוָה)

- See "day of the Lord," p. 82f.
- See Obadiah who introduces this theme, p.

## 4. *Major themes*

1. Linguistic parallels to Amos, Micah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. If early, perhaps they quoted him or

<sup>310</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, pp. 330-331.

<sup>311</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 331.

*vice versa*. Or Joel employed a common stock of prophetic idioms (Dillard/Longman, p. 366).

2. The holiness of God, sovereignty, compassion in regard to his elect.
3. Repentance from sin must involve a changed heart (2:12-17), sacrifices will not suffice.
4. Satire: the locusts pointed to the reversal, where Israel expected deliverance from enemies, the Lord would use their enemies to punish them.
5. The Lord is sovereign over creation, the nations and their history. Primary theme: 5x, also in Oboadiah.
6. The Day of the Lord, The day of salvation, the Spirit will restore, the kingdom will be established. There is hope.
7. See VanGemeran for further interpretation (*Interpreting*, pp. 122-127).

## 5. Major prophecies

1. Locust plague of judgment of God.
2. Coming Holy Spirit before Day of the LORD.
3. The desolation of Edom.
4. Judgment on the nations.
5. Deliverance of Israel/Judah from captivity.

## 6. Outline, structure/composition, genre

1. Some suggest a national lament perhaps used as a liturgical text (Hans Walter Wolf, VanGemeran<sup>312</sup>).
2. Employs creative language of parallelism, metaphor, repetition, symmetry.

Among critical scholars, *apocalyptic* literature was written in late post-exilic times (ca. 200-130 BC). Thus, the “apocalyptic sections” of Joel would have to be later additions. Therefore, a distinction between biblical/nonbiblical apocalyptic must be made (L. Morris):

### *Nonbiblical*

- ♦ dualism: eschatological contrast of present/future which were unrelated
- ♦ pessimism: about history, God is absent
- ♦ determinism: no sovereignty of God
- ♦ ethical passivity: no sense of sinfulness & need for repentance

### *Harrison defines apocalypticism:*

The visionary material of Daniel has frequently been described in terms of "apocalypticism," which is popularly understood to have originated in Zoroastrianism, the religion of ancient Persia, and to comprise a dualistic, cosmic, and eschatological belief in two opposing cosmic powers, God and the evil one, and in two distinct ages, the present one, which is held to be under the power of evil, and the future eternal age in which God will overthrow the power of evil and reign supreme with His elect under conditions of eternal righteousness. While this approach has elements in common with the thought of certain Old Testament writers, it is important for a distinction to be drawn between Biblical and non-Biblical apocalyptic, and to avoid reading into the canonical Scriptures thought that either occurred in Jewish apocryphal and pseudepigraphal literature of a subsequent period, or that was foreign to the thought of Judaism altogether. In this connection it should be noted that the prophets of Israel placed the final redemption of the elect in this world. While the new order to be established by the coming of the divine kingdom would be continuous with the present world sequences, it would be different in that suffering, violence, and evil would be absent from the scene (Isa 11:6ff.). This new era would be instituted by a divine visitation, and not by forces working immanently in history (Isa 26:21). The course that events would take might be revealed as part of a vision, as in Daniel and Revelation. In fact, it is from the Greek word meaning disclosure that the term "apocalypse" has been derived. While developed apocalyptic writings generally contain the distinctive characteristics of dualism, determinism, pessimism about the conditions of the present age, and an ethical passivity on the part of the authors that precluded them from announcing divine judgments upon the people as did the prophets, caution should be urged in any approach to Biblical apocalyptic lest it be assumed that the visionary material in a book such as Daniel, or the non-visionary apocalyptic passage in Isaiah 24-27, is characteristic of oriental apocalypticism.<sup>313</sup>

Joel<sup>314</sup>



<sup>312</sup> VanGemeran, *Prophetic Word*, p. 121.

<sup>313</sup> Harrison, *Intro to the OT*, p. 1132. See also *ibid.*, p. 1202.

<sup>314</sup> From [www.o.ca.org/.../Bible-and-Church-History/Prophets.html](http://www.o.ca.org/.../Bible-and-Church-History/Prophets.html).



## 7. *Exposition and the history of redemption themes*

1. The promise of a locust plague is the forerunner of “the great and dreadful day of the Lord” (2:31).
2. The plagues give reason to call on all to repent, old and young (1:2-3); drunkards (1:5); farmers (1:11), and priests (1:13).
3. The locusts are like the Lord’s army coming to bring judgment on Israel.

### a) *Locust plague brings judgment: Joel 1:1-12*

Warning to the elders and to all the corrupted: v. 2

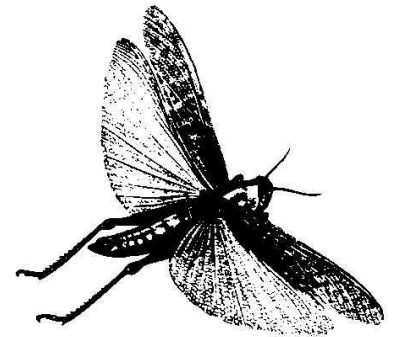
Immediate & eschatological application (see p. 239f.)

#### (1) *Locusts point to foreign invasion: Joel 1:1-12*

“Locust” is not allegorical, but involves a variety of Hebrew words, a provisional divine judgment pointing to Day of the Lord. Despite claims that the locusts here are symbolic or allegorical, there is every reason to assume they were literal. They are literal, yet contain eschatological import regarding impending judgment. Chapter 2 depicts the coming army *like an army of locusts*, associating the present locust plague with the coming human army.

Three stages of a locust:

1. *larval*: wingless, hopping locusts
2. *pupal*: wings encase, walking locusts
3. *adult*: fly in swarms



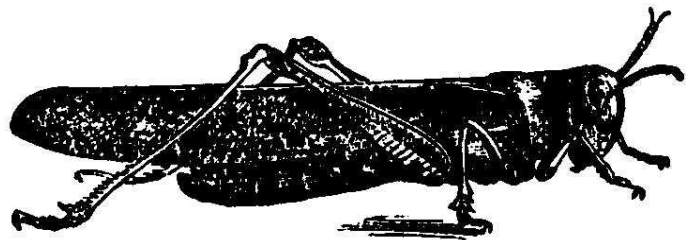
Locusts are related to and look like grasshoppers, and the terms are often used interchangeably. Cicadas are also often called locusts. Locusts were ritually clean in the OT, and have served as a staple food since ancient times. Locusts swarmed in such numbers to devour everything in their path, and produced a terrific noise. This alludes to the Exodus plague-judgment on Egypt (Ex 10:1-20). As Egypt was judged, so judgment was coming this time upon God’s people (as promised in Deut 28:38 – You will sow much seed in the field but you will harvest little, because locusts will devour it.)

ANE literature often used locusts to depict armies (Sumerian, Ugaritic, Egyptian, and Neo-Assyrian texts contain such references). There are some fifty references to locusts in the OT. Locusts that are eating figs and vines are locusts who have already eaten everything else!

Four different Heb words are found in Joel 1:4 to describe the locust, but it is uncertain if they refer to the same insect, stages of the locust, or to different insects (cf. 2:25 in which the same words are used in a different order):

1. הַגָּזָם
2. הָאֲרָבָה (2x)
3. הַיִּלֵּק
4. הַחֲסִיל

Joel 1:4 What the locust swarm has left  
the great locusts have eaten;  
what the great locusts have left  
the young locusts have eaten;  
what the young locusts have left  
other locusts have eaten.



Locust imagery is used again in the NT (ajkrivdwn):

Rev 9:7-11 The locusts looked like horses prepared for battle. On their heads they wore something like crowns of gold, and their faces resembled human faces. 8 Their hair was like women’s hair, and their teeth were like lions’ teeth. 9 They had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the thundering of many horses and chariots rushing into battle. 10 They had tails and stings like scorpions, and in their tails they had power to torment people for five months. 11 They had as king over them the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek, Apollyon.

A description of a modern locust infestation in Israel:<sup>315</sup>

<sup>315</sup> National Geographic, December, 1915, p.

One evening it was heard that the locusts had already reached the German colony and the railroad station and as we went out the next day to see them, scarcely had our carriage swung around from the Jaffa Gate than we found the white road was already black with them. Ever in the same direction they pushed up the 'Western Hill' still commonly called Zion, even entering the houses about the 'Tomb of David'. The roads now became so slippery from the masses of the little, greasy bodies crushed beneath the horses hoofs that the horses could scarcely keep a footing and had consequently to be driven slowly and with great care. Afterward it was heard that likewise trains throughout the country had been stopped for hours at a time, notably on the Damascus-Haiffa line near the Lake of Galilee.

Below the Lower Pool of Gihon old olive trees, yesterday green, were now nothing but bare trunks and twigs, and further up the valley a couple of beautiful mulberry trees had just been attacked, the leaves falling like rain, and already the ground was deeply strewn with them, and long before evening they, too, were leafless. This, however, proved to be but a sample of coming things.

The locusts, when advanced into the second or pupa stage, walk like ordinary insects, leaping only when frightened into a quicker pace, which they readily accomplish by the use of their two long and powerful posterior legs. However, while still in the first or larva stage, they seemed to hop much like fleas, so that when anything neared their thickened masses it seemed as if the entire surface of the ground moved, producing a most curious effect upon one's vision and causing dizziness, which in some was so severe as to produce a sensation not unlike seasickness. The same was also true when watching them undisturbed on tree or field.

One of our most interesting experiences, while noting the locusts methodical but stubborn moves, occurred when they first reached Jerusalem. Countless numbers of the young locusts poured into the broad, walled road leading into the city from the west, past the United States Consulate to the Jaffa Gate. For three or four days an incessant and unending stream filled the road from side to side, like numberless troops marching on parade, and in spite of the traffic at this junction, which to this city is like lower Broadway to New York, their ranks, although thinned, entered the ancient gateway and the New Breach, 'Though in among the weapons they fall they shall not stop' (Joel 2:8).

## (2) *Call for religious leaders to lead repentance: Joel 1:13-14*

➤ See Ninevites, p. 265.

The corruption of the nation had captured the leaders, thus there must be reformations and repentance for judgment to be forestalled. Priests, ministers before God, and elders. See *Realpolitik*, p. .

*Sackcloth* (כִּשְׂמֹנִים) of goat or camel hair: often associated with ashes of mourning which corresponds to the ashes of burnt cities after battle and conquest, as well as to the notion of *the fire of God's judgment*. Sackcloth is an image of humility and humiliation, as well as repentance. In light of human mortality in the face of judgment and destruction, it is an appropriate symbol in Joel for the priests of God to humble themselves thereby.

Esther 4:1 he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city,

Esther 4:3 weeping and wailing. Many lay in sackcloth and ashes. 4 When Esther's maids

Isa 58:5 like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast

Dan 9:3 petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. 4 I prayed to the LORD

Mt 11:21 would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 But I tell you, it will

Lk 10:13 repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 But it will be more be

## b) *Day of the Lord in locust plague announced: Joel 1:15-20*

The conditional, temporal signs of the covenant-promise will be revoked unless there is repentance. This theme will reappear countless times in the other pre-exilic prophets all the way up to Nebuchadnezzar's siege on Jerusalem recorded in Jeremiah (587/6 B.C.). Repentance was possible even when judgment was in full force.

### (1) *Provisions are ruined: Joel 1:15-17*

Land of milk and honey provisions comes under covenant curse on *prosperity*.

### (2) *Land is ruined: Joel 1:18-20*

Land of the promise comes under the covenant-curse on *land*.

**c) Day of the Lord as invincible locust plague: Joel 2:1-27**

**(1) Locust plague and drought: Joel 2:1-11**

Eschatological symbols of human invaders from north. Eschatological symbols of the affect of sin on nature and the relationship of man to nature. The creational theology of God as Almighty Creator is counterbalanced with Joel’s portrayal of post-Edenic alienation and animosity between humankind and nature. God is still sovereign creator, yet he must use that creation to bring judgment in order to bring redemption. As creation came through the word of God, so also judgment will come through the voice of God. Likewise, redemption also comes through the word of God.

There is a particular force to the picture of YHWH *present before* these armies in the use of the term **יְהוָה** that plays such a central role in the presence theme in the OT (this correlates with the following in Joel 2:12-17 where the age-old question “where is God” arises). Imagery of the Egyptian plagues and Exodus are also ever in the background, while the imagery of real locusts is used to connote the impending military, though divine, judgment.

Joel 2:11 The LORD thunders at the head [יְהוָה] of his army; his forces are beyond number, and mighty are those who obey his command. The day of the LORD is great; it is dreadful. Who can endure it? *[will give his voice] Sinai imagery*



Compare:

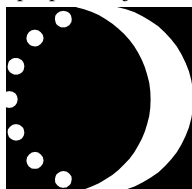
Joel 3:16 The LORD will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the sky will tremble. But the LORD will be a refuge for his people, a stronghold for the people of Israel. *[roars from Zion, and gives his voice] Sinai imagery*

Jeremiah 25:30 “Now prophesy all these words against them and say to them:”The LORD will roar from on high; he will thunder from his holy dwelling and roar mightily against his land. He will shout like those who tread the grapes, shout against all who live on the earth. *[will roar from on high, will utter his voice] Sinai imagery*

Compare:

Zeph 1:14 The great day of the LORD is near—near and coming quickly. Listen! The cry on the day of the LORD will be bitter, the shouting of the warrior there.

Mal 4:1,5 “Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire,” says the LORD Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will be left to them. 5 “See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes.”



Matt 24:29 Immediately after the distress of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.

**(2) Nation called to repentance: Joel 2:12-17**

➤ See Dorsey’s consideration of this as the center of Joel, *Literary Structure*, p. 275.

Even in the very heart of a most dark and foreboding prophecy of judgment, the Lord extends his hand of mercy . . .” Even now (עַתָּה). . . return to me with all your heart . . .” (Joel 2:12). Reminiscent of the central principle of the Torah:

Deut 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

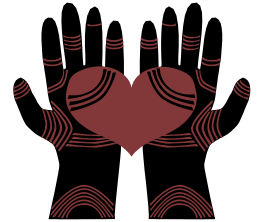
With all your heart: Dt 4:29; 6:5; 10:12; 11:13; 13:3; 26:16; 30:2; 30:6, 10; Jos 22:5; 23:14; 1 Sa 12:20, 24; Pr 3:5; 4:4; Je 29:13; Zeph 3:14; Mt 22:37; Mk 12:30, 33; Lk 10:27; Col 3:23

➤ See law and spirit of the law, p. 72f.

The objective of repentance is not to tear one's garments in remorse but to change one's heart. God will show mercy to those who turn to him in genuine repentance. The law of the spirit written on the heart may be accompanied by external acts such as fasting and weeping. The question is not whether outward, external displays of repentance are acceptable, rather that outward displays *without* the internal reality are unacceptable.

Even in the presence of judgment from God, the prophet proclaims the remarkable truth that God is compassionate and will relent if they repent:

Joel 2:13 Rend your heart  
and not your garments.  
Return to the LORD your God,  
for he is gracious and compassionate,  
slow to anger and abounding in love,  
and he relents from sending calamity.



### Compare

Ex 34:6 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,

The rhetorical question in Joel 2:17, "Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?,'" is thematically central to the history of redemption and the covenant-promise. This motif of the presence of YHWH is primary background to all that is happening in Joel: the covenant-presence-promise was at risk. This theme of asking where Israel's God was had a long history:

See also Joel 3:21 Their bloodguilt, which I have not pardoned, I will pardon." The Lord dwells in Zion!

Ex 17:7 And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the LORD saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

Num 14:13-16 Moses said to the LORD, "Then the Egyptians will hear about it! By your power you brought these people up from among them. 14 And they will tell the inhabitants of this land about it. They have already heard that you, O LORD, are with these people and that you, O LORD, have been seen face to face, that your cloud stays over them, and that you go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. 15 If you put these people to death all at one time, the nations who have heard this report about you will say, 16 'The LORD was not able to bring these people into the land he promised them on oath; so he slaughtered them in the desert.'

Deut 28:37 You will become a thing of horror and an object of scorn and ridicule to all the nations where the LORD will drive you.

1 Ki 9:7 then I will cut off Israel from the land I have given them and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. Israel will then become a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples.

Mic 7:10 Then my enemy will see it  
and will be covered with shame,  
she who said to me,  
"Where is the LORD your God?"  
My eyes will see her downfall;  
even now she will be trampled underfoot  
like mire in the streets.

Ps 22:6-8 But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people. <sup>7</sup> All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads: <sup>8</sup> "He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him."

Ps 42:3,10 My tears have been my food  
day and night,  
while men say to me all day long,  
"Where is your God?"  
10 My bones suffer mortal agony  
as my foes taunt me,  
saying to me all day long,  
"Where is your God?"



When it seemed the Lord had indeed abandoned his people, he mercifully reverses judgment and gives promise of redemption (Joel 2:18-27) in response to their hypothetical repentance (2:15-17).

### (3) Nation reassured of covenant-promise: Joel 2:18-27

The reversal of the covenant-curse of locust army judgments. Future restoration envisioned. Vv. 19ff: grain, oil, trees, figs, rivers restored.

Cf. Obad 17-21.

*Translation problem:* Joel 2:18 (“jealous,” “zealous,” Pi impf with vav conversive אֶזְבֹּבֶנָּה and “have pity,” Qal with vav conversive of (וַיִּחַמְלֵנוּ):

- The Lord was zealous (KJV)
- The Lord will be zealous (NIV)
- The Lord will be zealous (NASB)
- The LORD became zealous (RSV)

A prophecy or account of what happened? If it describes something *past*, then a change results and major division (Bullock, Keil & Delitzsch), yet the rest of the passage does not follow as past (vv. 19[Qal vav conversive], 20[Hi impf], 25-27[Pi pf, Qal pf]), and there is no mention of actual repentance occurring. It is thus far only hypothetical repentance, the call to repentance.

Ridderbos translates *future*: a) impf with *waw* cons represents future action b) vocalize verbs as jussive, not as wish but as jussive with conjunctive *waw* (apodosis of conditional clause), thus it would make it imperfect. This can be called the *prophetic imperfect*, a rhetorical device according to Joüon and Muraoka.<sup>316</sup> If this is correct, could it then be translated, “Then the Lord *would be* jealous . . .”? That is, imperfect consecutives can represent *future actions*, depending on the conditions.<sup>317</sup>

“Undoubtedly this use of the jussive (in conditional sentences) is based on its original *voluntative* meaning; let something be so and so, then this or that must happen in consequence. Certain other examples of the *jussive*, however, show that in the consciousness of the language the *voluntative* has in such cases become weakened almost to a *potential* mood, or may be expected.”<sup>318</sup> [voluntative = volitive (modal verbal aspect expressing will)] comparable to the jussive or cohortative

If the prophecy is future-conditional, then the possibility of forgiveness, through God’s relenting from judgment, is only hypothetical until repentance.

*Contextual problem:* Joel 2:23b – אֶת-הַמּוֹרֶה לְצִדְקָה – Some take as “teacher” (הַמּוֹרֶה, *mōreh*) of righteousness, some as “early rain” (*yōreh*). Solution is in identification of dittography where מ (*mem*) was written instead of ׀ (*yōd*), making “teacher” Messianic. According to W.Kaiser, the “writer deliberately plays on the word *mōreh*, meaning ‘teacher’ and ‘rain’ to indicate that the coming of God’s teacher will signal, as one mark the coming of the autumn and spring rains in their seasons . . .” The rain is connected with the Messiah’s role as a teacher of his people because rain is used metaphorically to describe the coming of divine righteousness on the land.”<sup>319</sup>

- autumn rains in righteousness (NIV text)
- teacher for righteousness (NIV note)
- the former rain moderately (KJV)
- early rain for your vindication (NASB)
- early rain for your vindication (RSV)
- food unto righteousness (LXX) βρωματα εις δικαιοσυνην

אֶת-הַמּוֹרֶה לְצִדְקָה וַיִּנְדֹּד לָכֶם גֶּשֶׁם מוֹרֶה וּמִלְקוֹשׁ בְּרֵאשׁוֹן

. . . the autumn rains[or teacher of] in righteousness. He sends you abundant showers, both autumn and spring rains, as before.

מוֹרֶה - m.n. teacher, verb יָרָה - to throw (rain?) or shoot, or instruct(15x).

יֹרֶה - m.n. early rain

גֶּשֶׁם - rain shower

<sup>316</sup> Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar*, 112h p. 363.

<sup>317</sup> Gensenius, *Hebrew Grammar*, 111w, p. 329.

<sup>318</sup> Gensenius, *Hebrew Grammar*, 109b, p. 323.

<sup>319</sup> Kaiser, pp. 141-142.

## מִלְקָיִשׁ - latter rain

Considering the “rain” context, and that the noun מִלְקָיִשׁ is used in the latter half of the same verse to describe rain, it is reasonable to propose a dittography for the noun הַמִּלְקָיִשׁ in the first part of the verse. That is, the copyist wrote a מ (mem) instead of a י (yod). If we accept the word is original, then the teacher of righteousness would have messianic implications (or possibly, but unlikely, a reference to the prophet himself<sup>320</sup>).

## Compare:

Hosea 10:12 Sow for yourselves righteousness,  
reap the fruit of unfailing love,  
and break up your unplowed ground;  
for it is time to seek the LORD,  
until he comes  
and showers righteousness on you.  
(עֲדֵי-יִבְוֹא וְיִרְהַ צְדָקָה לְכֶם:)

Also, see water in Joel 3:18 and compare Ps 72:5-7. On rains, see promises in Lev 26:3-4; Deut 11:11-15  
Warning: Jer 3:3; Hos 6:3

In America, the goal of life is to accumulate wealth. Is this the primary reason for our unplowed ground? The one thing everyone wants eludes them . . . .



## (4) Nation reassured of promised Spirit: Joel 2:28-32

Restoration, part 2, reversal of the covenant-curse in giving spiritual blessings.

Most interpreters understand this prophecy to have been fulfilled at Pentecost, while many also consider that it still continues through the church age.

*Five interpretations (derived from Freeman, OT Prophets, pp. 154-157):*

1. *Termination* at Pentecost: fulfillment began in Joel’s day, complete at Pentecost (Grotius).
2. *Fulfillment* at Pentecost: Spirit poured out in Messianic age (Acts 2) (E.J Young).
3. *Nonfulfillment/Eschatological*: not fulfilled until end of age (A.C. Gaebelein).
4. *Typical* fulfillment: fulfilled in “earnest” at Pentecost, completely realized in Millennium (Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown).
5. *Continuous* fulfillment: continuous fulfillment from Pentecost until eschatos (R.A. Torrey, H.E. Freeman). “And afterward” in Acts 2:17 is placed “in the last days” indicating a break in MT here, beginning with 1st Advent culminating in 2nd. - “I will pour out my spirit on all people” not limited to certain leaders, extends beyond Israel.

<sup>320</sup> See Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* p. 408, fn. 11. Keil & Delitzsch argue that it cannot be exclusively messianic, for it has allusions to all those who are teachers of righteousness, as were Moses, the priests, and the prophets preceding Joel (*Minor Prophets*, pp.206-207).

*Israel & Church*: one people of God, two distinct forms of organization, continuity of salvation by grace through faith, discontinuity from national to supra-national spiritual body.

Joel 2:28-29 ~ HS given to all, what Keil and Delitzsch call “rhetorical individualizing,” meaning that their sons, daughters, (my)servants (יְהוָה עֲבָדָיו), etc., would receive God’s Spirit and gifts. That is, the gifts would not be given narrowly in the sense that only sons and daughters prophesy and old men “dream dreams.”

Of the five interpretations outlined by Freeman, the fifth seems the best: this event begins at Pentecost and continues through last days (*continuous fulfillment*). Whereas interpretations one and three are not viable options, option two is true, yet it does not allow for *continued* outpouring of the Spirit after Pentecost.

### Three great works of God: Creation/Incarnation/Pentecost

*Regeneration in OT*: (see below L.Wood, *Holy Spirit in the OT*) deduce from NT that OT saints were regenerated receiving saving grace, NT work: regeneration/indwelling/sealing/filling/empowering/baptism (baptism was only thing NEW to unite all into one).

- See also on the HS in OT believers: Kaiser, *Toward Rediscovering the OT*, pp. 135-141; Dunzweiler, “Regeneration and Indwelling in the OT Period” (available at IBRI on the www).

Leon Wood, pp. 74-74. **THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

which he knows he cannot meet alone; an opportunity to witness to a person arises when words seem naturally to fail; an assignment to speak in a place or situation is given, for which one feels himself wholly inadequate — these and many other challenges come for the believer, and the Spirit is ready to grant special ability — as He did to an Othniel, a Bezaleel, a David, a Paul — and this should be a source of both confidence and joy for every child of God.

#### D. Baptism by the Spirit Began at Pentecost

The one aspect of work by the Spirit left for discussion is baptism, and this is the one aspect which did begin at Pentecost. The other aspects — regeneration, indwelling, sealing, filling, and empowerment — were common to both Testaments. There is nothing about them particularly Old Testament in kind or New Testament. The situation is different with baptism, however; it is definitely limited to the New Testament.

The reason for this is that baptism has to do with the church, and the church did not begin as a distinct organism until Pentecost. In fact, it was the baptism of believers by the Holy Spirit that inaugurated the church. It was not that the church began and then was baptized. It began when believers were baptized to form it. This happened when the Spirit came upon the believers assembled in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-12).

Baptism, when used in the sense here intended, has nothing to do with water. Baptism by water is an important New Testament truth, but it is quite different in subject matter than baptism by the Spirit. The truth of baptism by the Spirit is set forth in 1 Corinthians 12:13: “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” Several other passages also make reference to it: Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16; Galatians 3:27; and Ephesians 4:5. The reader of the New Testament should notice that each of these passages which concern time preceding Pentecost speak of this baptism as yet future, while each which follow it as past.<sup>9</sup> This is further indication that baptism was first carried out on that day. Since the church did not exist before Pentecost, baptism could not have been carried on in Old Testament time.

The baptism of the Spirit is that work which joins Christians

<sup>9</sup>See Walvoord, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 139; also Cambron, *Bible Doctrines*, p. 131.

#### SPIRITUAL RENEWAL IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

together into a common bond of church relationship. It unites them, giving them an organic oneness. It provides them with a sense of mutual love, and sets before them a common purpose. It is because of this unifying baptism that Christians, wherever they meet, feel an immediate closeness of friendship. They are of one group, a part in one grand enterprise.

When the church was first instituted at Pentecost, there was need that baptism be granted to many at one time. The idea of church is quite meaningless apart from a collection of several people. Therefore, on Pentecost, the Spirit came in baptism on an assembled group of believers, probably 120 in number (Acts 1:15). Since that time each believer is individually baptized into that body then begun. The baptism of believers as a collective group is no longer necessary, for a church already exists. Individuals need only be baptized into it and thus joined to it.

The moment of baptism is the same as the moment of regeneration; in fact, it is the same also as the moment when indwelling and sealing begin. The Holy Spirit imparts new life in regeneration, as He comes into the person to indwell him and so seal him as a permanent child of God, and at the same time baptizes him into the church body. Filling and empowerment may also occur at the same moment, but not necessarily. One should be filled then, for he should yield himself to the Spirit’s will from the very first. Empowerment, however, will only come when this person is faced with a challenge calling for special strength or ability.<sup>10</sup>

The reason for baptism’s being instituted at Pentecost — which is another way of stating the reason for the inauguration of the church — was that there was need for the spread of the gospel message. Christ had now lived and died and the good news of salvation was ready to be taken to a lost world. Through Old Testament days, God had in large part segregated His Word in Israel, until the provision for man’s salvation might be made in the work of Christ. Now that this had been done, there was no longer need for segregation. The world at large should hear of the wonderful provision. No longer should there be a special people — in terms of a nation — but a universal people, without barrier or “middle wall of partition” (Eph. 2:14; cf. Gal. 3:28) between them. For this reason, a new organism was called for,

<sup>10</sup>One type of empowerment is an exception, empowerment for gospel proclamation, see pp. 76,77.

*Holy Spirit in OT* by Leon Wood<sup>321</sup>

<sup>321</sup> Wood, *Holy Spirit in the OT*, pp. 74-75.

Joel 2:30-32 wonders in heaven are still *future* (prophetic time perspective juxtaposing the first and second comings of Christ in *last days* which are separated by a period of time, immanency is thus prominent). Billows of smoke and fire are images of material and/or cosmic war. War is a sign of judgment.

Joel 2:31 “dreadful day of the LORD”: inferences

1. fullness of kingdom not yet revealed
2. this period is the period of the Spirit
3. 3:1-21 Judgment of nations & salvation of God’s people



The description of the red moon and dark sun is akin to a complete solar/lunar eclipse. Eclipses were seen as foreboding omens in the ANE. Even today, many see astrological significance in them. In Joel, God is the one they are to fear, and these signs are portents of *real disaster*, not just superstitious omens. Compare this with 3:15. See also Mtt 24:29.

### (5) *Judgment of the nations reaffirmed: Joel 3:1-16*

Restoration, part 3, judgment on enemies, restoration of Judah/Jerusalem.

Joel 3:2 Valley of Jehoshaphat: “the Lord has judged” may be symbolic, yet tradition says valley of Kidron. That is uncertain. The name means “YHWH judges,” and simply may refer symbolically to the valleys around Jerusalem (See Macmillan map # 133. Possible background in 2 Chron 20:1-30. Jehoshaphat saw victory over enemies Moab, Ammon, Meunites [Mt Seir, Edom] or Aram?)

The valley of Jehoshaphat is the valley of judgment or decision: [Heb 4:2, 12] יְהוָה שֹׁפֵט וְנִשְׁפָּטָיו (note the rhyme). The Lord would “decide,” execute his judgment. His שֹׁפֵט could include both condemnation of sin and vindication of the righteous.

Judgment includes the victory of Lord at his appearing or Matt 25 (latter is problematic).

“Beat your plowshares into swords” reverses Isaiah’s and Micah’s “Beat their swords into plowshares” (Isa 2:4; Mic 4:3).

The sun and moon and stars (v. 15): the astronomical gods of the ANE are here silenced, for the glory of YHWH is greater than even the heavenly bodies. YHWH is sovereign over all of his creation. Eschatological/apocalyptic imagery.

Joel 3:14[4:14] “valley of decision” (בְּעֵמֶק הַחֲרֹץ) corresponds to the Valley of Jehoshaphat above (3:2). This is the decree of YHWH being proclaimed in his חֲרֹץ. From חָרַץ, bestir oneself, decide, decree, determine. In Joel, the decision of the Lord cannot be altered, it is firm like something inscribed (as in a clay tablet).

### (6) *Covenant-promise reaffirmed to God’s people: Joel 3:17-21*

➤ See covenant-promise, p. 73.

Restoration continued. Covenant-promise restored: prosperity/land – progeny – presence of God

The promise to know the Lord and to know that he is God:

Joel 3:17 ‘Then you will know that I, the LORD your God,  
 dwell in Zion, my holy hill.  
 Jerusalem will be holy;  
 never again will foreigners invade her.

The promise that the hills would flow with wine, milk, and water (v. 18) echoes the exodus and wanderings, particularly the promise of a land flowing with milk and honey. Exodus imagery is important here in light of the judgment coming upon the nations and upon Edom (cf. Egypt at the Passover), as well as for Israel that is promised deliverance and return and restoration (see Exodus imagery, p. 55). Redemption of God’s people is pictured in this new deliverance, but in the meantime Joel has already warned of impending judgment on Israel in the coming exile. Compare Amos:

Amos 9:13 “The days are coming,” declares the LORD,  
 “when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman  
 and the planter by the one treading grapes.  
 New wine will drip from the mountains (see Joel 3:18)



and flow from all the hills.”

**Water** flowing (Joel 3:18; see also Rev syllabus on water) from the temple has enormous eschatological significance in the history of redemption. The heavenly source of life is represented in the water flowing from God himself in YHWH’s “house” (בֵּית יְהוָה, 3:18), presumably in heaven but represented by his sanctuary in Jerusalem. The rivers in the garden of Eden, the water pouring miraculously from the rock in the desert, Jesus’ claim to be the living waters, and the river of life John sees coming from God’s throne in heaven are images of God’s life giving redemption:

Rev 22:1-2 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

**Presence restored:** The promise that the Lord would  *dwell*  on Zion (Joel 3:21). This is extremely important for the entire history of redemption, for it corresponds with the loss of the sanctuary that would come in the exile, the apparent loss of the covenantal-presence of God, and the threat to the covenant-promise to know the Lord. Messianic in essence, the promise to dwell in Zion points to the fulfillment of the covenant-presence-promise. The eternal kingdom of God is thus ever in the background in this closing section of Joel’s prophecy. Most importantly, the promise of forgiveness (3:21) is also Messianic, for this is the ultimate goal of redemption, restoring God’s people to God’s presence.

**Pardon and presence are the heart of the covenant-promise.**

Implicit in the promise to restore the land are the correlative motifs of land in Eden, the promised land of the covenant, and the future eschatological kingdom of God. These themes all tie together in a comprehensive plan to create a place and a people to the glory of God, to restore the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve to paradise.

**Judgment:** Yet, in Joel 3:19, Egypt will be desolate and Edom a desert waste (both plundered Israel on the past).

## 8. *History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling*

### a) *Revelation and redemption from YHWH*

#### (1) *Who God is*

- Holy Judge on Israel and Israel’s enemies, yet merciful on Israel and all of the nations who repent.

#### (2) *What God has done*

The creational theology of God as Almighty Creator is counterbalanced with Joel’s portrayal of post-Edenic alienation and animosity between humankind and nature. God is still sovereign creator, yet he must use that creation to bring judgment in order to bring redemption. As creation came through the word of God, so also judgment will come through the voice of God. Likewise, redemption also comes through the word of God.



#### (3) *What God has promised*

Even in the very heart of a most dark and foreboding prophecy of judgment, the Lord extends his hand of mercy . . .” Even now (וְגַם-עַתָּה) . . . return to me with all your heart . . .” (Joel 2:12). Reminiscent of the central principle of the Torah:

Deut 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

Even in the presence of judgment from God, the prophet proclaims the remarkable truth that God is compassionate and will relent if they repent:

Joel 2:13 Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.



When it seemed the Lord had indeed abandoned his people, he mercifully reverses judgment and gives promise of redemption (Joel 2:18-27) in response to their hypothetical repentance (2:15-17).

The promise to know the Lord and to know that he is God.

Implicit in the promise to restore the land are the correlative motifs of land in Eden, the promised land of the covenant, and the future eschatological kingdom of God. These themes all tie together in a comprehensive plan to create a place and a people to the glory of God, to restore the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve to paradise.

## **b) Humankind and redemption**

The corruption of the nation had captured the leaders, thus there must be reformations and repentance for judgment to be forestalled.

**Judgment of the nations reaffirmed** (God is concerned with the nations): Joel 3:1-16

Joel 3:2 Valley of Jehoshaphat: “the Lord has judged” may be symbolic, yet tradition says valley of Kidron. That is uncertain. The name means “YHWH judges,” and simply may refer symbolically to the valleys around Jerusalem. The valley of Jehoshaphat is the valley of judgment or decision: [Heb 4:2, 12]

יְהוָה שֹׁפֵט וְנִשְׁפָּטָיו (note the rhyme). The Lord would “decide,” execute his judgment. His שֹׁפֵט could include both condemnation of sin and vindication of the righteous. Yet also in 2:28 “all the nations” will be blessed with the Spirit (Abrahamic covenant).

Judgment includes the victory of Lord at his appearing or Matt 25 (latter is problematic).

“Beat your plowshares into swords” reverses Isaiah’s and Micah’s “Beat their swords into plowshares” (Isa 2:4; Mic 4:3).

The sun and moon and stars: the astronomical gods of the ANE are here silenced, for the glory of YHWH is greater than even the heavenly bodies. YHWH is sovereign over all of his creation.

Joel 3:14[4:14] “valley of decision” (בְּעֵמֶק הַחֲרוֹץ) corresponds to the Valley of Jehoshaphat above. This is the decree of YHWH being proclaimed in his חֲרוֹץ. From חָרַץ, bestir oneself, decide, decree, determine. In Joel, the decision of the Lord cannot be altered, it is firm like something inscribed (as in a clay tablet).

### **(1) Worship of redeemed**

**Sackcloth** (בְּשָׂלִיִּים) of goat or camel hair: often associated with ashes of mourning which corresponds to the ashes of burnt cities after battle and conquest, as well as to the notion of *the fire of God’s judgment*. Sackcloth is an image of humility and humiliation, as well as repentance. In light of human mortality in the face of judgment and destruction, it is an appropriate symbol in Joel for the priests of God to humble themselves thereby.

Esther 4:1 he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city,  
 Esther 4:3 weeping and wailing. Many lay in sackcloth and ashes. 4 When Esther’s maids  
 Isa 58:5 like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast  
 Dan 9:3 petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. 4 I prayed to the LORD  
 Mt 11:21 would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 But I tell you, it will  
 Lk 10:13 repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 But it will be more be

### **(2) Work of redeemed**

The law of the spirit written on the heart may be accompanied by external acts such as fasting and weeping, but the important thing is a renewed loyalty and obedience to the Living God.

### **(3) Ethics of redeemed**

Prophet Jonah, Woodcut from the *Zurich Bible*. Switzerland – Zurich.  
16th c.<sup>322</sup>

## C. *Jonah יוֹנָה (Judah/Nineveh ~785-775)*

### 1. *Title, author, and dates*

- Jonah (785-775) was a son of Amittai, 2 Ki 14:25 states he was from Gath Hepher in the N. Kingdom (three miles NE of Nazareth), during the time of Jeroboam II (793-753) and Azariah/Uzziah in Judah (792-740), contemporary of Amos (760-750) and Hosea (750-715).
- No author is stated, and though Jonah may well have been the author there is no threat to its authenticity or inspiration to suppose someone else wrote it.
- Importantly for OT history, Jonah is referred to as a historical figure in the Former Prophets (for all those who make Jonah into a parable, including some Evangelicals (see critical matters):

2 Ki 14:25 He [Jeroboam II] was the one who restored the boundaries of Israel from Lebo Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, in accordance with the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, spoken through his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath Hepher.

- Elisha had also predicted the resurgence of Israel (2 Kings 13:17-19). The time period (of Jeroboam II in Israel and Azariah/Uzziah in Judah) was one of prosperity, and indeed for the northern kingdom the peak of its entire existence. It was such a prosperous time that moral/spiritual decadence and carefree living characterized the nation (sound familiar?).
- Amos prophesied 760-750 (10 years after Jonah) impending judgment on Israel for their sin, despite the rise in their prosperity and expansion of the kingdom (Amos 2:6, 31ff; 4:2; 5:2; 5:27; 6:14). Hosea (750-715) was also calling Israel back to faithfulness to God, in light of their idolatries (Hos 4:1; 10:6; 11:5). Israel/Judah was in a period of political/economic resurgence, yet the prophets were bringing explicit messages of judgment for spiritual adultery. Jonah's message was implicitly the same: the *principle of replacement* was reiterated, in that the Lord's prophet is sent to a foreign nation with the message of forgiveness (cf. Elijah in Sidon and at Brook Kerith)..
- Prexilic:** clearly set in pre-exilic Israel, and Jonah is said to have prophesied to Jeroboam II (793-753) (J.B. Payne). If so, his preaching repentance to Assyria, and their repentance, may be the very reason the northern kingdom, Israel, fell to Assyria in 722.
- Postexilic** (after 500 B.C.): the claim that we can not trace events in the book, and its universalism addresses Israel's postexilic tendency to exclusivism (V.H. Matthews, H.E. Freeman). Yet, exclusivism was not a particularly post-exilic problem, nor can universalism be said to be the exclusive claim of any particular era.

*Israel's Assyrian encounters as background to Jonah:*

- Ahab and alliance battled against Shalmaneser III in 853 at Qarqar on Orontes River.
- Shalmaneser III (858-824) spoiled Syria and got tribute in 841 from Jehu in Israel (Black Obelisk).
- Jehoahaz of Judah (814-798) paid tribute in 803 to Adad-nirari III (810-783).
- Assyria was involved in struggle with Urartu (or Nairi according to Assyrians) in the north (eventually Armenia) pushing close to Nineveh.



1. Nebi Yunus



2. Quyundjiq (André Parrot)  
André Parrot, *Nineveh and the Old Testament*, p. 33.

<sup>322</sup>From Emory university at <http://www.pitts.emory.edu/dia/booklis>

Some say Jonah's message got results because of this situation, also Jonah's reluctance to go to enemy Assyria with message of mercy.<sup>323</sup> The declined position of Assyria at the end of a period of unrest, anarchy, and loss of power suggests a greatly weakened Assyria when Jonah was sent there. His cry of an imminent collapse would thus have had particular poignancy.

**Nineveh**, capital of Assyria, falls to Babylonia (from 705-612): Nimrud founded Nineveh, "the great city" (Gen 10:9-12). Approximately 120,000 people lived in Nineveh in Jonah's day, but later it grew to some 300,000 people.



III. The site of Nineveh today

Nineveh<sup>324</sup>

Two mounds have been found on ancient Nineveh: Qiyundjiq and Nebi Yunus. Qiyundjiq is the only one excavated, for Nebi Yunus contains a village settlement with a burial ground, mosque, and the tomb of Jonah. Nineveh is one of the very oldest cities in Mesopotamia, having some sixty-four feet of debris. A cuneiform tablet from the twenty-first century BC gives the name drawn with an ideogram of a fish in the middle of the city, which alludes to the goddess Nina.<sup>325</sup>

## 2. Historical-critical matters

Historical/non-historical?

<sup>323</sup> "Until the rise of the great Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III in 745, Urartu's influence overshadowed that of Assyria in N Syria" (Yamauchi, "Urartu," *Dictionary of Biblical Archeology*, p. 463). See especially Yamauchi's *Foes from the Northern Frontier*. Others claim a total eclipse in 763 led to Assyria's sudden repentance (Payne), while others claim a famine in 765, or an earthquake during the reign of Jeroboam II sometime between 765-758 (Amos 1:1).

<sup>324</sup> Andre Parrot, *Nineveh and the Old Testament*, p. 22.

<sup>325</sup> See Parrot, *Nineveh and the Old Testament*, pp. 23-26.

In contrast to other prophets, the prophecy of Jonah is distinctive in having the prophet as the central figure in the narrative. It is similar to Elijah and Elisha in this regard. Nevertheless, it leads some to conclude that its historical value is uncertain, and that it is rather a didactic work to teach a particular lessons to Israel.

#### *Nonhistorical viewpoints:*

1. *allegory*: Jonah is people of Israel, Nineveh is heathen world, the fish is captivity, call to make truth known to Gentiles.
2. *fiction*: author-invented prose fiction (E.W. Heaton - “didactic fiction – a kind of extended parable – written around the name of one of the ancient prophets” p. 21).
3. *parable*: intended to teach lesson, denial of historicity. Inspiration of story, not the history. The majority viewpoint.<sup>326</sup>
4. *legend*: historical kernel with legendary expansion and accretions, legendary motif (deliverance from sea-monster).
5. *satire*: targets people, typically targets stereotypes, vices, folies, etc., or parodies objects of the lampoon

#### *Comments on non historical viewpoints:*

1. There are no textual reasons for denying historicity (the supernatural is a natural component of divine revelation).
2. 2 Ki 14:25 (above) mentions Jonah.
3. NT citation of Christ in Mt 12:38-41; 16:1-4; Lu 11:29-32 indicates his and his audience’s acceptance of Jonah’s historicity, as well as his redemptive historical significance as a sign for the Messiah. Does Jesus also hint that the same fate of the northern kingdom (at the hand of the Assyrians) was awaiting the Jews of his day who rejected him, while the gospel would go out to all people?
4. Jonah’s inclusion in the canon and ancient references all show acceptance of historicity



V. Slaves at work (relief from Nineveh) (from Layard, *Monuments of Nineveh, II, p. 16*)

#### *Reasons for non historical view:*

1. Events are viewed as improbable or impossible due to miraculous elements. Such rationalism that excludes even the possibility of supernatural elements in a biblical narrative cannot be a biblical view of scripture.
2. The “fish story” viewed as derived from myths & legends, parallels lack correspondence. There are several other (pagan) stories of people being saved from sea monsters, but these are all much later than Jonah, and are dramatically different in every regard.

#### *Comments on allegorical:*

This approach suffers the same problem here as everywhere else in the Bible: when details are pressed many problems arise in the analogies when correspondence would be expected (see Ezek 17:2-10[two eagles]; 19:2-9[lion and cubs]). Typology does not demand a point for point correspondence like allegory, and it is impossible to find correspondences for the many details of the story of Jonah.

#### *Comments on parabolic:*

1. Point for point comparison found in parables is not found in Jonah (eg., bramble as king parable[Judg 9:8-15], Nathan’s parable[2 Sam 12:1-4], parable of wise woman of Tekoa[2 Sam 14:6-7]). Jonah does not seek to make one point.
2. OT parables: very short, pointed, clearly one point of correspondence is made (the moral). No parables are as long as Jonah.
3. In parables, there is a direct indication of intent.
4. Parables refer to generic places, people, events. Jonah references actual people, places, and events. If These actual geographical, national, and personal referents are taken parabolically, then we must spiritualize or

<sup>326</sup> The viewpoint of Dillard and Longman is very convoluted in my view. Taking it as parabolic, they argue that the way that Jesus referred to Jonah was the same as a modern “preacher today who exhorts the congregation to be like the Good Samaritan” (*Intro to the OT*, p. 393).

typologize all the details of the historical narrative.

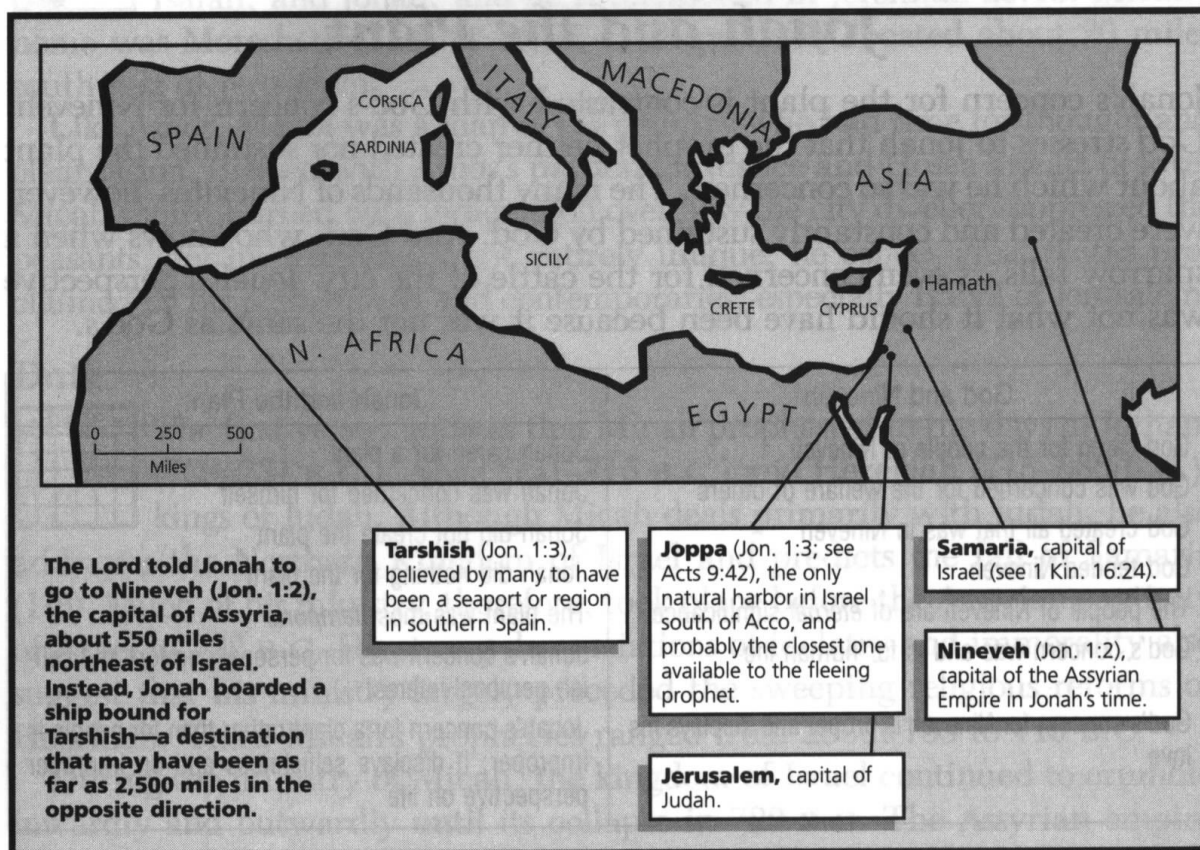
5. Miraculous elements do not occur in parables, making Jonah unique if it is a parable (parables parallel ordinary life to teach a lesson).

*Conclusions on the historicity of Jonah:* the author intended to give a record of real historical events. VanGemeran notes that the book of Jonah is *historical with a parabolic force*: “A parable need not be unhistorical; its purpose lies in the perspective it offers for wise living.” Jonah is negatively patterned after Elijah.<sup>327</sup>

I consider Jonah to be an actual pre-exilic prophet in Judah, an individual, sent to Assyria c. 782 BC to warn of God’s impending judgment. Despite modern tendencies (and among Evangelicals of late) to reduce this profound book to a parable, etc., largely because of naturalistic tendencies to dis-believe accounts of miraculous events, it is a reliable (though terse) historical record. Nonetheless, if the miraculous and profound are reason to discredit *historicity*, then much more of the OT than Jonah has through all ages been wrongly thought of as historical narrative! As noted, Nineveh’s repentance at Jonah’s preaching may have aided Assyria in the eventual capture of Israel in 722.

*Note:* the literary form of the book and its historicity are two separate questions: *i.e.*, a finely constructed narrative does not imply that it is not historical. As for the widely suggested parabolic form, it is unlikely that a parable could contain the personal name of a historical figure, and prophet, and extend it to parabolic meaning. It may be suggested that scholars who do this must account for the fact that such a form is unprecedented in the Bible. As for the Book of Jonah, its theological significance is intimately related to its historicity.

## The Geography of Jonah



### 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

- a) “*Flee from the Lord*” (1:3)
- b) “*Who made the sea and the land*” (1:9)

<sup>327</sup> VanGemeran, *Prophetic Word*, p. 147.

## 4. Major themes

The Prophet was called to incite jealousy in God's people by means of a nation that was not God's people because God's people were unrepentant, and also to teach them the *principle of replacement (or grafting in of Gentiles)* (i.e., Israel was/is not indispensable to God's plan of redemption) which always meant that when God's people reject God's message then God would reject his people. Jonah's mission was relevant to both. Whereas, Amos and Hosea were sent to Israel with the message of impending judgment during this time of prosperity, Jonah is sent *outside* Israel to their very enemy, that would indeed eventually be used to bring that judgment on Israel, with the message of forgiveness for that enemy (cf. Elijah being removed from Israel and sent outside Israel to their enemies in Sidon).

### Purposes:

1. Jonah's ministry contrasts with rebellious Israel when Nineveh repents at his word. His mission is real. His mission reflects back on Israel's: if a prophet is sent to preach repentance to the enemies of Israel, then Israel itself ought to repent as well.
2. Jonah's mission served to illustrate for Israel that they did not have exclusive claim on the Lord's salvation.
3. Jonah's mission shows that a righteous *remnant* is found among the Gentiles.
4. Jonah plays a representative role as:
  - 1) man and his relationship with God (Jonah's rebellion)
  - 2) object lesson to prophets and prophetic ministry
  - 3) of Israel, the people of God, and their future history, God is able to use even the prophet's sin in His purposes of salvation, highlights the **dominant theme**: sovereignty of God in his purposes despite man's sin. God is gracious and forgiving (Jonah is still read at the climax of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement)
5. God is shown as absolute sovereign lord over history, nations, and nature (the sea, storms, whales, plants, sun).
6. Jonah is unexpectedly successful in his mission, and contrasts ironically with the many other prophets who did not demonstrate such rebellious unwillingness to prophesy as did Jonah.
7. E.J. Young: fundamental purpose of Jonah is an illustration of the death of the Messiah, not to illustrate a universalistic missionary message.<sup>328</sup>
8. J.B. Payne: Jesus used Jonah to illustrate his own death, but it is not a type of Christ.<sup>329</sup>
9. Jonah despite being the shortest book of all the prophets, is perhaps the most famous of all the prophets: "Jonah seizes our imagination by reenacting the archetypal attempt to run away from God."<sup>330</sup> The narrative contains the most dense action and characterization found in any literature, and the human elements draw us in: Jonah is a flesh and blood prophet, and the people he must face are equally so. All of Jonah's quirks are universal. He does not get any "idealization" here, and shows us how God uses entirely flawed individuals to work out his redemptive purposes. "Although God uses Jonah in spite of himself, he is a small-minded, ill-tempered ethnocentrist who thoroughly disapproves of the universal mercy of God."<sup>331</sup> Jonah is the best OT example of antiprophet, refusing to go, who is on an anti-quest, thinking he can flee the presence of God.
10. Jonah also illustrates the death-rebirth archetype, especially seen in his prayer-poem. The fish depicts the larger theme of salvation-redemption. The sea represented to the Hebrew mind God's judgment (e.g., Leviathan).

### Remnant remains:

A very frequent theme in the prophets is that of the remnant people of God, that God will preserve his people, even if in a small remnant. That is, the promises will be fulfilled because God will always preserve his people. Contrary to some critical scholars, the remnant idea appears very early in Israel's history.<sup>332</sup> The introduction of this idea is found after the Flood (after which Gen 7:23b reads that only Noah was *left* [נשאר]). It also appears in the Joseph story, the deliverance from Egypt, the Elijah battle with Baal, and throughout the pre-exilic, exilic, and postexilic prophets. The remnant is dependent upon God for its existence. The remnant idea develops expansively as it unfolds, portraying the remnant of genetic Israel as well as the promise of universal deliverance of the Gentiles. In essence, the Israelite remnant provides the line of messianic descent which will preserve (through deliverance) the remnant of God's people from all the nations. The remnant idea contains positive and negative aspects: positively, the "righteous remnant" and negatively the "remaining remnant" (i.e., after judgment).

<sup>328</sup> Young, *Introduction to the OT*, p. 280.

<sup>329</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 423.

<sup>330</sup> *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, p. 459. Jonah represents the classic "flight" story.

<sup>331</sup> *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, p. 459.

<sup>332</sup> See Sang Hoon Park, "נשאר," *NIDOTTE*, vol. 4, pp. 11-17. See Heaton who claims that the remnant idea is exilic, thus he says, "It is evident that the so-called 'doctrine of the Remnant', which is often ascribed to Isaiah, arose among the exilic residue" (*OT Prophets*, p. 146). See also G.F. Hasel, *The Remnant*.

“The remnant motif is a crucial theological concept at turning points in history when human life and existence are threatened by extermination. The remnant signifies a small number who will escape danger. They are a bridge linking the threat of punishment with the promise of restoration. The remnant has its origin in the saving action of God.”<sup>333</sup>

“In exilic times the ‘nothingness’ of the remnant becomes something out which God can create, as with Noah and his remnant. The ‘remnant is a bridge concept mediating between those of doom and salvation both semantically and in the narrative flow of Genesis. In the latter prophets, judgment must precede restoration.”<sup>334</sup>

Acts 15:17-18 That the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things 18 that have been know for ages.

### **Comparing Jonah and Jesus:**

The sign of Jonah: Mtt stressed three days and three nights, linking the death and resurrection, whereas Luke leaves out this link and stresses preaching, repentance, and judgment. Did the Ninevites see Jonah’s deliverance from the fish as a sign from God of the authenticity of Jonah’s message? Should Jesus’ audience see the sign of his resurrection as authentication of his message? Was there more to this sign than the resurrection? Was there intended some aspect of Jesus’ willingness to die for his people, as did Jonah? Does it point to judgment on Jews and Gentiles, as in Jonah’s day and in the fall of Israel to Assyria? Was there some aspect of the repentance of the Gentiles bringing the ruin (or loss of special, exclusive status) to the Jews?

In the light of Matthew’s overall presentation of Jesus as the Messiah who inaugurates the kingdom of God/heaven through his death and resurrection, it is likely that Matthew saw in the ‘sign of Jonah’ a picture of God’s mercy being extended to the Gentiles and divine judgment coming upon the present unbelieving generation of Jews.<sup>335</sup>

The repentance of Nineveh at the preaching of Jonah was used by Christ to accentuate the obduracy and impenitence of the Jewish nation which had been granted a unique privilege—the presence and preaching of the Son of God himself. He contrasts the repentance of the Gentiles in Nineveh, who possessed so little spiritual light and understanding, with the unbelieving Jews who were the recipients of the revelation which testified of the One whom they now reject. Hence, the repentance of the unenlightened Gentiles was to serve as a rebuke to the privileged Jews of Jesus’ day, and it will be the cause of their severer judgment at the second advent: “The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here.”<sup>336</sup>

### **Other cities to where God sent a prophet:**

- ◆ Sodom and Gomorrah? (Gen 3)
- ◆ Jerusalem, etc. (Jer 26:9, 12; 32:3; Dan 9:24; Re 22:19. Jesus and Apostles)
- ◆ Nahum (663-612) also prophesied against Nineveh, though this time their destruction was certain. (In the LXX, Nahum is placed after Jonah as a compliment to Jonah.)
- ◆ Many prophets prophesied against other nations and cities, but were not necessarily sent to them.

## **5. Major prophecies**

- Jonah predicted that the storm and sea would calm, if the sailors threw him into the sea (1:12).
- Jonah predicted in his prayer that he would again have hope of deliverance (2:4, 9) and that his prayers would be answered (3:7). Fulfilled, for he was delivered, and then went to Nineveh.
- Jonah prophesied that Nineveh would be destroyed, unless they repented of their wickedness (3:4). The conditional side to the prophecy was fulfilled at their repentance, and the city was spared (3:10) *momentarily* (Indeed, Nineveh was destroyed later for its sin). See *conditionality* in prophecy, p. 200. See Pratt, “historical Contingencies.”

## **6. Outline, structure/composition**

The following illustrations attempt to outline the book of Jonah according to the actions of the actants, God, Jonah, Sailors, and Ninevites. Both illustrations are basically the same, but illustrate the structure in different ways.

<sup>333</sup> Sang Hoon Park, “שָׂאֵר,” *NIDOTTE*, vol. 4, p. 17.

<sup>334</sup> M.W. Elliott, “Remnant,” *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, p. 724.

<sup>335</sup> T.D. Alexander, “Jonah (Person),” *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, p. 606.

<sup>336</sup> Freeman, *Introduction to the OT Prophets*, p. 164.



**Jonah (Bullock)**

- I. The Lord's First Word to Jonah (1:1-17)
    - A. Jonah's call and flight (1:1-3)
    - B. His plans complicated (1:4-10)
    - C. The miraculous calm (1:11-16)
    - D. Judgment on Jonah (1:17)
  - II. Jonah's Response to Divine Mercy (2:1-10)
    - A. His prayer (2:1-9)
    - B. His deliverance (2:10)
  - III. The Lord's Second Word to Jonah (3:1-10)
    - A. Jonah's second call and mission (3:1-4)
    - B. Nineveh's response to the prophet (3:5-9)
    - C. God's response to Nineveh's repentance (3:10)
  - IV. Jonah's Response to Divine Mercy (4:1-5)
    - A. His prayer and God's response (4:1-5)
  - V. Final Dialogue Between God and Jonah (4:6-11)
- 

**Jonah (NIV Study Bible)**

- I. Jonah flees his mission (Chs. 1-2)
  - A. Jonah's commission and flight (1:1-3)
  - B. The endangered sailors' cry to their gods (1:4-6)
  - C. Jonah's disobedience exposed (1:7-10)
  - D. Jonah's punishment and deliverance ((1:11-2:1; 2:10)
  - E. Jonah's prayer of thanksgiving (2:2-9)
- II. Jonah reluctantly fulfills his mission (chs. 3-4)
  - A. Jonah's renewed commission and obedience (3:1-4)
  - B. The endangered Ninevites' repentant appeal to the Lord (3:5-9)
  - C. The Ninevites' repentance acknowledged (3:10-4:4)
  - D. Jonah's deliverance and rebuke (4:5-11)



**God condescends**

[The Catalyst]  
 speaks his Word to Jonah  
 casts [טול] a storm  
 prepares a fish  
 causes fish to spit Jonah out  
 speaks to Jonah  
 relents from wrath  
 (Cf. 3:8; 3:10; 4:1; 4:2; 4:6)

**Jonah’s descent, ascent, and descent**

[Descent]  
 flees and descends [ירד] to Joppa into ship into recesses of ship  
 [Interlude in descent]  
 Jonah sleeps is awoken is questioned answers (last question) that storm is caused by God (creator of sea and “dry land”)

[Ascent/Descent]  
 is lifted up is cast [טול] into the sea is swallowed by a fish prays (to YHWH) is spit onto shore obeys God’s Word (goes to Nineveh) preaches at Nineveh

[Descent]  
 is displeased [חרה] and angry (3:8; 3:10; 4:1; 4:2; 4:6) asks God to take his life goes outside the city waits to see what will happen to the city rejoices over the vine grieves [חרה] over its loss requests to die claims his right to be angry

**The sailors’ descent and ascent**

[Descent]  
 fear (storm) cast [טול] luggage out cry out (to gods) cast lots ask Jonah four questions fear (terrified by answer) two questions row against the storm (to “dry land”)  
 [Ascent]  
 call to the the Lord lift up Jonah cast [טול] Jonah into the sea fear God (sacrifice)

**Nineveh’s descent and ascent**

[Descent]  
 sin greatly  
 [Ascent]  
 repent at God’s Word are spared by God



**God speaks to Jonah**

casts [טול] a storm  
 prepares a fish  
 causes the fish to spit Jonah out  
 commands Jonah to go to Nineveh  
 relents from his wrath [נחם]  
 causes a vine to grow and wither for Jonah  
 speaks to Jonah about his anger [חרה]  
 speaks to Jonah about His compassion for the city

**Jonah flees (descending action)**

descends [ירד] to Joppa  
 descends [ירד] into ship  
 descends [ירד] into recesses of ship

**Interlude in his descent (climax/choice)**

Jonah sleeps in recesses of ship  
 is awoken and questioned  
 answers last question that storm is caused by God (creator of sea and “dry land”)

**Jonah is lifted up (ascending-descending action)**

is cast [טול] into the sea

is swallowed by a fish

↗ prays to YHWH  
 is spit onto shore  
 obeys God's word (goes to Nineveh)  
 preaches at Nineveh

↘ is displeased [חרה] and angry  
 asks God to take his life  
 goes outside the city to build a booth  
 and wait to see what would happen to the city  
 rejoices over the vine and then grieves [חרה] over its loss  
 ↘ requests to die and claims he is right to be angry



**The sailors** (descending/ascending action)

↘ fear  
 cast [טול] luggage  
 cried out (to gods)  
 threw lots  
 four questions to Jonah  
 are terrified by answer  
 two questions  
 ↘ row against the storm (to "dry land")

↗ call to the the Lord  
 lift up Jonah  
 cast [טול] Jonah into the sea  
 fear God (sacrifice)

**Ninevites**

↘ sin greatly

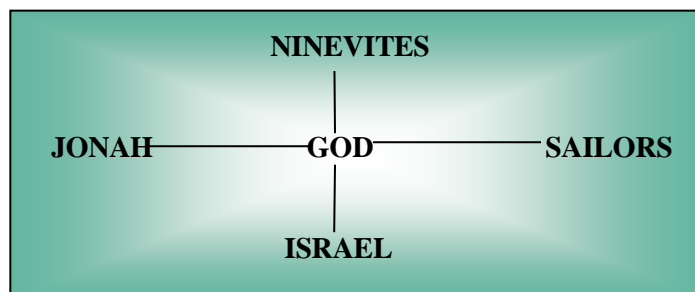
↗ repent at the prophet's word  
 spared by God



**Geographical setting:**

**land - shore - sea - fish - shore - land - city - desert**

**Character and action:** God is the central character who is the catalyst for all the action





(left) Jonah Cast into the Sea

Unknown, Franco-Flemish, probably Lille, about 1270  
 Tempera colors and gold leaf on parchment  
 MS. LUDWIG I 8, V2, FOL. 181

**Marquette Bible:** Beginning the section of the Bible concerned with the prophet Jonah, the initial *E* houses a depiction of the most memorable event of his story. Jonah disobeyed the Lord's command to go to Nineveh and instead boarded a boat, which was then caught in a ferocious storm. Drawing lots to divine the cause of the storm, the sailors determined that God's rage at Jonah's disobedience had brought it on. In the Bible's letter *E*, two sailors throw the prophet overboard and into the mouth of an enormous fish. The artist was clearly interested in decorative pattern, but he or she was also concerned with naturalistic visual effects, such as the transparency of the water, through which the boat, the fish, and Jonah himself can be seen.<sup>337</sup>

## 7. Exposition and the history of redemption themes

Jonah had good reason to fear Assyria, as well as *good reason* to dislike the thought of them escaping God's judgment. He himself says that the reason he fled was because he knew that God was "gracious and compassionate" (4:2). Assyria had been the thorn of all thorns in Israel's side, and a ruthless foe they dreaded for many a year. We in the USA have to imagine what

it was like to have such an enemy, and then we must be told to go and preach a message of repentance and forgiveness! Yet, Jonah is in for a very difficult lesson about enemies.

*Shalmaneser III's (858-824) annals about his fight against the Aramean coalition:*

*At that time [Ashur, the great lord. . . gave me scepter, staff] ... necessary (to rule) the people, (and) I was acting (only) upon the trust-inspiring oracles given by Ashur, the great lord, my lord, who loves me to be his high priest and... all the countries and mountain regions to their full extent. [I (am) Shalmaneser ... conqueror from] the sea of the Nairi country and the sea of the Zamua country which is nearer (to Assyria) as far (text. and) the Great Sea of Amurru. I swept over Hatti, in its full extent (making it look) like ruin-hills (left) by the flood. ... (thus) I spread the terror-inspiring glare of my rule over Hatti.*

*On my (continued) march to the sea, I made a stela (representing) myself as the supreme ruler and set it up beside that of the god Hirbe. . . . I marched [to the Great] Sea, washed my weapons in the Great Sea; I offered sacrifices (there) to my gods. I received the tribute from all the kings of the seacoast. [I made a stela representing myself as king and warrior] and inscribed upon it [the deeds which] I had performed [in the region of the] sea[coast]; I set it up by the sea.<sup>338</sup>*

According to Bullock, the story of Jonah is a triumph of God's will over Jonah's:

The reader is left hanging on to the rhetorical question at the end, but it is rhetorical only in a formal sense because the answer has already been given in the Lord's mercy on Nineveh. Indeed, Jonah had admitted against his own obstinate judgment that Yahweh was that kind of God (4:2). It was a forced resolution that showed the prophet's will vanquished by divine mercy.<sup>339</sup>

<sup>337</sup> From [www.getty.edu/art/collections/images/m/00350001.jpg](http://www.getty.edu/art/collections/images/m/00350001.jpg).

<sup>338</sup> Pritchard, *ANET*, p. 277.

<sup>339</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 49.

<b><u>The dichotomy: the Lord’s will or Jonah’s?</u><sup>340</sup></b>	
<b>The Lord’s word to Jonah</b>	<b>Jonah’s thanksgiving</b>
<b>1:1</b>	<b>2:1</b>
<b>The Lord’s Second word</b>	<b>Jonah’s lament</b>
<b>3:1</b>	<b>4:2</b>
<i>Resolution</i>	
<b>Final dialogue between God and Jonah</b>	

**a) *Disobedience to God’s word leads to dire consequences: the descent of Jonah, the pagan sailors, and the Ninevites***

Having already outlined Jonah above in a chronological way, I offer a more topical arrangement of the themes next.

**(1) *God commanded him to “go” and preach against Nineveh: Jonah 1:1***

**(2) *Jonah “descends” to Joppa to flee YHWH: Jonah 1:1-3***

Jonah’s descent begins with turning away from Assyria and heading towards Joppa in order to go to Tarshish. Joppa was one of three major seaports on the Mediterranean coast, along with Dor and Acco, controlled by the Phoenecians.

The location of Tarshish has not been resolved, yet we can assume it was as far as he felt he could go in order to escape his call.



Tarshish (תַּרְשִׁישׁ, *tarsîš*) - Numerous references to Tarshish in the OT. It is identified by most as Tartessus in SW Spain. Yet, see:

1 Ki 10:22(NASB) For the king had at sea the ships of Tarshish with the ships of Hiram; once every three years the ships of Tarshish came bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks.

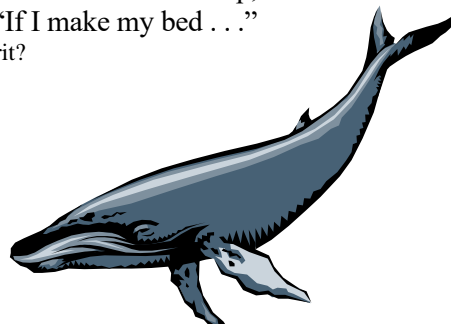
1 Ki 22:48 Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold, but they did not go for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber.

These references suggest someplace along the Red Sea or in Africa, while ruling out the Mediterranean identification. Note: Phoenicians are frequently associated with Tarshish.

Jonah further removes himself into the recesses of the ship, reminiscent One of David’s psalms seems to echo Jonah’s experiences: “If I make my bed . . .”

Ps 139: 7-10 Where can I go from your Spirit?

Where can I flee from your presence?  
<sup>8</sup> If I go up to the heavens, you are there;  
 if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.  
<sup>9</sup> If I rise on the wings of the dawn,  
 if I settle on the far side of the sea,  
<sup>10</sup> even there your hand will guide me,  
 your right hand will hold me fast.



Jonah is swallowed by the fish, and goes into recesses of its belly. Despite much debate about the fish that swallowed Jonah, it is not a particularly difficult problem when we consider it a miraculous intervention and preservation. We need not always be compelled to find “natural” explanations for spectacular events in the Bible. Even though humans have been found swallowed whole by whales, we need not speculate as to how Jonah was preserved, though it is an “interesting question.” This supernatural intervention of God displays God’s absolute power over his creation, and that Jonah’s efforts to escape the Lord and his call are futile.

Jonah’s actions are a dramatic illustration of the consequences of rejecting God’s word and call: Jonah is no less culpable than the Ninevites for rebellion, which makes him a perfect vehicle of God’s grace. Yet, he himself dramatically missed the point in wanting, and waiting, to see Nineveh destroyed.

<sup>340</sup> From Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 49.

“In spite of all his privileges, Jonah’s response is contrasted unfavorably with that of the sailors and the Ninevites. All the other characters in the story, including the animals, obey God without hesitation.”<sup>341</sup>

As illustrated with the diagrams above, the nature-tensions between the land, the sea, humans, and the sea creatures all portray that God is *omniactive* ~ sovereign, personal, and *involved*. Centrally, the story narrates in colorful humor that despite all human attempts to contravene God’s word and work, they can not be thwarted. This is true on both the spiritual and natural levels, the two being intrinsically interwoven, that God’s word and work of redemption are being manifested supernaturally in the natural world. This wonderful, short tale is so skillfully packed with beauty, surprise, human interest, theological import, and universal truth that it is safe to wager it is the very best such story (as a record of history) ever written.

### (3) *Sailors allow Jonah to flee the Lord with them: Jonah 1:3-13*

- ⊕ Sailors are told that Jonah is fleeing the Lord (1:10), apparently when he boarded ship.
- ⊕ At sea, the sailors fear for their lives in a violent storm.
- ⊕ They cried out to their gods (idolatry).<sup>342</sup> These soldiers are extremely superstitious. Even though Jonah had told them he was fleeing YHWH, they did not add it up until the lots were cast. They undoubtedly assumed that any one of them could be in trouble with their gods, and they seem to have assumed his “patron deity” might rescue them all. Sailors want to *appease* God, not repent. Pagan appeasement, “what shall we do to you” (1:11)
- ⊕ They cast all the cargo/luggage/equipment into the sea (*resisting* God’s work). Depending on whether they were delivering or receiving, they may have had to return to port empty-handed. In either case, they paid a price for complicity in Jonah’s rebellion.
- ⊕ They threw/drew **lots** (גִּוְרָלוֹת) and question Jonah. The use and nature of “lots” was consistent in the ANE world, many peoples used them for divining the future by the will of their gods. They consisted of stones or other dice-like objects. In Israel’s use of the lot, the fundamental principle was that they were given unto the sovereign Lord to guide their course. The decision was from the Lord alone, and not to any occultic, magical, soothsaying.
- ⊕ Jonah *testifies* to the Lord (1:9) See Dorsey who says it is the climax of ch 1 (*Literary Structure*, p. 293).

The lots pictured below with Hebrew names were found in the Masada Fortress after the final stage of the Jewish holdout ended in AD 63-70. Josephus claims they were used to determine who would die next.<sup>343</sup>



Lev 16:8 He is to cast lots for the two goats—one lot for the LORD and the other for the scapegoat.

Josh 18:6 After you have written descriptions of the seven parts of the land, bring them here to me and I will cast lots for you in the presence of the LORD our God.

Josh 18:10 Joshua then cast lots for them in Shiloh in the presence of the LORD, and there he distributed the land to the Israelites according to their tribal divisions.

1 Ch 24:31 They also cast lots, just as their brothers the descendants of Aaron did, in the presence of King David and of Zadok, Ahimelech, and the heads of families of the priests and of the Levites. The families of the oldest brother were treated the same as those of the youngest.

Esther 3:7 In the twelfth year of King Xerxes, in the first month, the month of Nisan, they cast the *pur* (that is, the lot) in the presence of Haman to select a day and month. And the lot fell on the twelfth month, the month of Adar.

Ps 16:5 LORD, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure.

Ps 22:18 They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.

Job 6:27 You would even cast lots for the fatherless and barter away your friend.

Joel 3:3 They cast lots for my people and traded boys for prostitutes; they sold girls for wine that they might drink.

Obad 11 On the day you stood aloof while strangers carried off his wealth and foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem, you were like one of them.

Mt 27:35 When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

Ac 1:26 Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.

<sup>341</sup> J. McKeown, “Jonah,” Book of,” *NIV Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, p. 248.

<sup>342</sup> Phoenician gods: Yamm (god of the sea and chaos); Baal-Shamern, Baal-Malige, Baal Zaphon (god of the heavens), patron gods of the Phoenician sailors (Walton, *OT Today?* p. 106).

<sup>343</sup> *Revell Bible Dictionary*, p. 650.

- ⊕ They ask Jonah to pray, but their understanding is basically pagan:  
Jonah 1:6 The captain went to him and said, “How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us, and we will not perish.”
- ⊕ Jonah does not pray(?)

The key here is “perhaps or “maybe” he will take notice! (אִי־יָדַע? יְהוָה). There is some similarity to the Assyrian king’s response to Jonah: “Who knows? (כִּי־יִדְרַע) God may yet relent . . .” (3:9). In both cases, they are people with limited knowledge of God. Jonah’s message to the Ninevites was strikingly brief, so they had little further to go on apart from what they may have known of the Lord already. The sailors and captain may have known about the Lord, but we can only speculate. All we know is that they were sea-faring, and god-fearing idolaters.

- ⊕ They disobey the word of the prophet and row against the storm. They also greatly underestimate the living God, thinking they could escape with the Lord’s prophet!

#### (4) *Ninevite’s were very wicked and were in danger of judgment*

The enemies of Israel. Idolaters and violent people, yet Jonah only mentions the latter factor (3:8). Nahum (663-612) elaborated on Nineveh’s sins at a later time. We can imagine these sins had some continuity with their former lifestyle before their temporary repentance during Jonah’s ministry to them:

Nah 1:11 From you, O Nineveh, has one come forth  
who plots evil against the LORD  
and counsels wickedness.

Nah 2:12-13 The lion killed enough for his cubs  
and strangled the prey for his mate,  
filling his lairs with the kill  
and his dens with the prey.  
13 “I am against you,”  
declares the LORD Almighty.  
“I will burn up your chariots in smoke,  
and the sword will devour your young lions.  
I will leave you no prey on the earth.  
The voices of your messengers  
will no longer be heard.”

Nah 3:1 Woe to the city of blood,  
full of lies,  
full of plunder,  
never without victims!

Nah 3:4 all because of the wanton lust of a harlot,  
alluring, the mistress of sorceries,  
who enslaved nations by her prostitution  
and peoples by her witchcraft.

Nah 3:16 You have increased the number of your merchants  
till they are more than the stars of the sky,  
but like locusts they strip the land  
and then fly away.

The sins of Nineveh were undoubtedly great, but Jonah’s rebellious fleeing from the Lord is no less so. In fact, the greater the light the greater the responsibility. A most sobering thought for those of us who spend our lives in studying the scriptures.

As we read from the Shalmaneser quote below, the Assyrians were *bloodthirsty*, and proud of it. In contrast, Israel was never to exhibit such an attitude. The *ban* was ordered by God himself, not the product of an expansionist empire, and was to be limited to the conquest of the land. For Israel, cruelty and injustice were not tolerated in the treatment of their enemies.

*Compare another very typical example of Shalmaneser III’s (858-824) annals about his fight against the Aramean coalition:*

*I fought with them (assisted) by the mighty power of Nergal, my leader, by the ferocious weapons which Ashur, my lord, has presented to me, (and) I inflicted a defeat upon them. I slew their warriors with the sword, descending upon them like Adad when he makes a rainstorm pour down. In the moat (of the town) I piled them up, I covered the wide plain with the corpses of their fighting men, I dyed the mountains with their blood like red wool. I took away from him many chariots (and) horses broken to the yoke. I erected pillars of skulls in front of his town, destroyed his (other) towns, tore down (their walls) and burnt (them) down.<sup>344</sup>*

#### (5) *Jonah descends into despair at Nineveh’s pardon*

<sup>344</sup> Pritchard, *ANET*, p. 277.

Even after all that he had seen, been told directly by God, and knew of the truth, Jonah was weak and fell into anger and bitter despair at the mercy shown to Nineveh.

**b) Obedience to God’s word leads to blessing: the ascent of Jonah, the pagan sailors, and the Ninevites**

**(1) Jonah tells the sailors the truth and what to do: Jonah1:10-12**

Jonah did not hide anything from the sailors initially, but they apparently did not take it too much to heart at first when he told them he was fleeing the Lord’s call. Yet, on his second confession they are decidedly determined to escape the wrath of Jonah’s “God of heaven, who made the sea and the land (1:9).”

Jonah’s ascent to grace begins with his confession of belonging to YHWH and his moral failing (1:9). His confession is particularly clear and poignant, for he begins with the claim that he worships YHWH, and that YHWH is lord over everything in heaven, earth, and sea.

Jonah 1:9 He answered, “I am a Hebrew and I [worship] the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land.” (NASB, RSV, I fear the LORD). אֶל־הַיְיָ אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם אֲנִי יְהוּדָא -- “the God of heaven, I fear” conveys the reverent fear of Israelite faith. It was a clear confession of his belonging to, and worshipping, YHWH.

Jonah’s confession was both one of belief and sin. By his confession of faith, he condemns his own actions of disobedience. Jonah also later condemns the idols of the sailors as “worthless (הַכִּלְי־שָׁוְיָא, 2:8), though implicit in his claim that YHWH is the God of heaven and the seas was a “slap in the face” of the sailors’ gods, for in the ANE the god of the sea was seen as the most powerful of all gods. As God stopped the waters of the Jordan before Israel crossing over into the land of promise, all the miraculous stories in the Bible concerning water are a reaffirmation that YHWH is indeed the Supreme God of all.

Josh 3:10 This is how you will know that the living God is among you and that he will certainly drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites and Jebusites.



As the Lord’s prophet, Jonah had to tell the sailors the word of the Lord they sought to save their lives: he had to tell them the truth that he must be thrown into the sea. Jonah may have been suicidal, but it appears he was simply speaking the truth and entrusting himself into the hands of the Lord. Perhaps, considering his later desire to die (4:8), he had hoped to die at the hands of the sailors. It does seem peculiar that he did not just jump off, but said they had to throw him in the sea for the storm to calm. Was this to protect him from the charge of suicide? Was it a test to the sailor’s faith? Or a prophetic challenge to their idols? Was

Jonah being compassionate to these sailors in telling them the truth? Or was he deeply hoping to escape seeing Nineveh forgiven? Did he know/think he would die at sea, thus continuing his rebellion against God’s command? Did he possibly overestimate his importance? Could not God have raised up a host of missionaries to go to Nineveh! Did the sailors ever find out what happened to Jonah?

**(2) The sailors obey the word of the prophet: Jonah 1 :14-17**

- ⊕ They prayed to the LORD and throw Jonah overboard.
- ⊕ They feared the LORD. Compare the fear of YHWH that Jonah confesses above to the following “fear” of God among the sailors: יַיִרְאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים יְרֵאָה גְדוֹלָה:

Jonah 1:10(NASB) Then the men became extremely frightened and they said to him, “How could you do this?” For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. יִרְאָה - to fear God, reverence God.

- ⊕ This is repeated again after they throw Jonah into the sea:  
Jonah 1:16 At this the men greatly feared [יַיִרְאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים יְרֵאָה גְדוֹלָה] the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows to him.
- ⊕ The sailors *sacrificed* (וַיִּזְבְּחוּ לַיהוָה) to the LORD. This is the proper response to being in the presence of the holy Creator God of heaven! The nature of this sacrifice is uncertain, but being on a wooden (flammable) ship it seems reasonable to suppose it was a grain offering..
- ⊕ The sailors *vowed* (וַיִּנְדְּרוּ) to the Lord. Vows are a central feature in the ANE, and keeping them was paramount. Yet, as in the later case of the Ninevites, this kind of vow or repentance did not necessarily refer to conversion to monotheistic faith in YHWH. We simply do not know what became of the sailors, but we do know what became of the Ninevites. Cf. Jonah’s indeterminate vow in 2:9[2:10] (אֲשֶׁר נִדְּרָתִי).



➤ See below on worship, p. 267f.



### (3) *Jonah prays to the LORD: Jonah 2:1-9*

- See the widely circulated, and disputed, James Bartley story in which he claims to have been swallowed by a whale and survived for fifteen hours before being rescued (he was said to have been bleached and blinded).

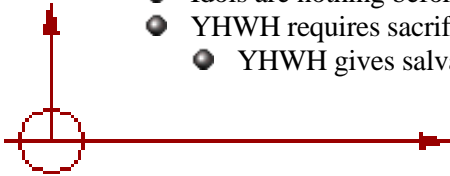
Prayer 1: this prayer contrasts starkly with his latter prayer of anger. Here God saves him, later God saves Nineveh!

Compare David's prayer:

2 Sam 22:18 He reached down from on high  
And took hold of me;  
He drew me out of deep waters.  
He rescued me from my powerful enemy  
From my foes, who were too strong for me.

Jonah's confession of faith in his prayer included:

- YHWH answers prayer (2:1).
- YHWH listens to the cries of his people (2:2).
- YHWH punishes rebellion (2:3).
- YHWH's covenant-presence can be lost (2:4).
- YHWH preserves his people with hope (2:4).
- YHWH hears prayer in his holy temple (heaven) (2:7).
- Idols are nothing before YHWH (2:8).
- YHWH requires sacrifice (2:9).
- YHWH gives salvation (2:9).



Jonah obeys the Word of the LORD: Jonah preaches in Nineveh. He has to travel some 550 miles from Joppa to Nineveh. Nineveh was known as the great city in the ancient world, which was not primarily a reference to its size but to its significance. Nevertheless, Nineveh was a sizable city in Jonah's day, and speculations as to precisely how large it was vary dramatically. In later years, it grew considerably.

### (4) *Ninevites repent in sackcloth at the prophet's word: Jonah 3:1-10*

- See sackcloth, p. 242.

Nineveh gets the message of judgment. It seems "unconditional," but the emphasis on forty days indicates sufficient time to repent. It was not essentially a "missionary message" of forgiveness, but one of judgment that in forty days Nineveh would be destroyed with no hope offered. See conditionality article by R. Pratt. They may have had good reason to expect being overturned (see Yamauchi, *Foes From the Northern Frontier*), yet the king clearly understood that the cause was their "evil ways and violence" (4:8). This theme of violence plays a central role in what precipitates God's judgment in the history of redemption. The cause of the flood and many subsequent judgments were directly related to violence. A sobering truth for our generation that has known violence possibly comparable to that of the days of Noah. There may be a tendency in our Western Christian culture to think of moral (particularly sexual) sins as the root cause of judgment, but we should not diminish the seriousness of violence in that equation. Many have argued that abortion is just one example of such violence. Consider also the number of people who have died on account of communist/socialist ideology: somewhere in the rough estimate-range of 400-600 million people.

They understood that sackcloth was an appropriate extend that even to the animals, which seems to Animals can not be forgiven or redeemed, thus did show their seriousness about being spared God's judgment. They had a sense of divine judgment/justice.



attire to display contrition and repentance, yet they go far beyond the biblical understanding of sin. cannot show signs of contrition. Nevertheless, it

Even though the Ninevites recognized YHWH's power over nature, their gods, and the will of his prophet, they did not necessarily convert to monotheism. They had little room for monotheism, being polytheists. The question is, did they know much about YHWH? Most likely. Recognition, in a pantheist world, of God's power may not have mean much more than it does to New Age pluralist-polytheist-Gnostics today. As people often today acknowledge the power of God, yet do not bow their knee to him. We can only speculate as to the conversion of *individuals* at this time, but we need not speculate as to the final condition and end of Nineveh in subsequent history.

“God had compassion” (Jonah 3:10) and relented from destroying Nineveh (cf. same verb in Num 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29).

The sailors had “repented,” Jonah repented and returned to his call, the fish responded to God’s command and relented, the Ninevites repented and God relented. This entire story is a study in contrasts of repentance and sincerity, obedience and reluctance. Interestingly, it serves to illustrate by contrast the spiritual and moral condition of Israel which was being called to repentance by both Amos and Hosea (see p. 251). The principle of replacement was one that Israel never took to well, and we can empathize.

### (5) *Jonah is angry at God’s compassion: Jonah 4:1-11*

Prayer 2: Jonah’s prayer 1 was a beautiful affirmation of faith in God’s mercy. Prayer 2 is angry about God’s mercy on Nineveh. Jonah prays concerning his distress that God had compassion on Nineveh: Jonah 4:4-9. In this prayer he reiterates one of the most profound truths about God that was revealed much earlier in redemptive history:

Jonah 4:2 He prayed to the LORD, “O LORD, is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.

See also Ex 34:6; Neh 9:17; Ps 86:15; Joel 2:13.

*Jonah’s orthodox view of God:*

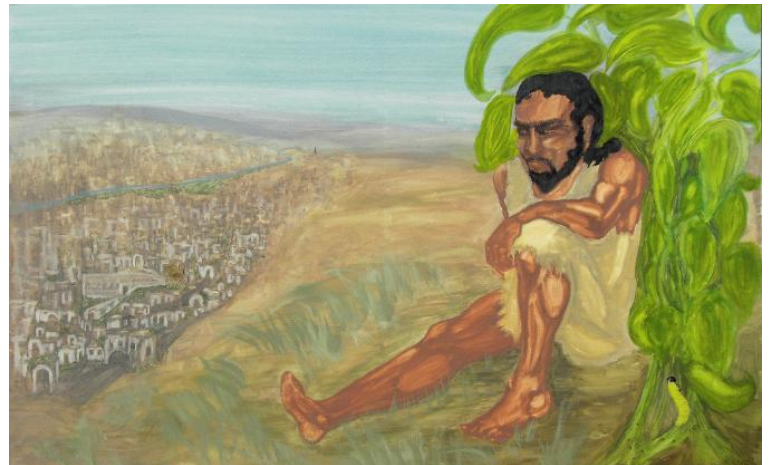
Dorsey says 4:5-11 is the climax of the book, *Literary Structure*, p.

- Love (חסד).
- Grace (חֲנוּן).
- Compassion (רחם).
- Slow to anger (אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם).
- Relents from calamity (וַיִּנְחָם עַל-הַרְעָה).

Ex 34:6-7 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming,

“The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious

God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, 7 maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.”



*God works another miracle in the history of redemption: he sustains his angry prophet (Jonah 4:10-11).*

Assuming that Jonah was not waiting for weeks or months, this plant must have grown miraculously at the command of God, enough even to shade Jonah. God is gracious to ungracious Jonah. The Lord *provided* (appointed, וַיִּקְרָא) both the vine and the worm to destroy it, as well as the scorching wind that made Jonah faint with the heat. The stress in the narrative is on the Lord’s work, he does what he wills. His word is also paramount, for the spokesman of God’s word is the one in particular need himself of the word of the Lord.

We all marvel that after all he had been through that Jonah is still quite obstinate and uncompassionate towards the Assyrians. Yet, Jonah was apparently wrestling with the age-old Jewish exclusivism that could not conceive the notion that Gentiles might be forgiven. Even worse, that Gentiles might be freely admitted into the covenant community through simple repentance. Even the sailors were more compassionate to Jonah than Jonah was to an entire city of people. This story of Jonah and Nineveh in the history of redemption *should have* silenced all calls by believers for God’s judgment on the lost, for the wrath of God is revealed against *all who have transgressed the law*. Jonah had no “right to be angry,” for, though God is holy, he is compassionate.

The Ninevites did not know “their right hand from their left” (sounds contemporary!). They did not have the benefit of *divine revelation* like Israel.

**Compare all that Jonah has had to learn with what Jesus repeatedly stressed in different ways:**  
**Matt 5:44 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,**

The final dialogue between God and Jonah echoes themes of that between God and Job:

Job 38:4 “Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand.”

Jonah 4:10 But the LORD said, “You have been concerned about this vine, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight.

Also, compare the Prodigal Son whose brother resented the mercy shown to his brother.

God is Lord over nature, history, and nations.

Jonah under the vine outside Nineveh, Woodcut from the *Zurich Bible*.<sup>345</sup>



## 8. *History of redemption themes in teaching, preaching, counseling*

### a) *Revelation and redemption from YHWH*

#### (1) *Who God is*

Jonah 4:2 He prayed to the LORD, “O LORD, is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.

God is creator of all that is. God controls the sea, the plants, the weather, fish of the sea, the winds.

Ps 95:5 The sea is his, for he made it,  
and his hands formed the dry land.

God is holy and just. God is merciful and compassionate. These attributes are shown here as mutually complementary, and indeed hint at the gospel of the Messianic age. Indeed, the remarkable truth is that Jonah’s was a living example of mercy, himself sent to the Assyrians living in sin and needing repentance. Yet, even after experiencing God’s mercy, Jonah still wanted to see the Ninevites destroyed. Similar to Jesus’ parable of the workers, the earlier ones resenting the full pay to those who came later. The minister of the gospel of grace must never forget his “former place” nor his new position.

#### (2) *What God has done*

- ✦ Mercy shown to Nineveh.
- ✦ Mercy shown to Jonah.
- ✦ Mercy shown to the sailors.
- ✦ Mercy shown to Israel.
- ✦ Mercy shown to the Gentile nations (us).

The Lord was fulfilling a much earlier prophecy:

Deut 32:21 They made me jealous by what is no god  
and angered me with their worthless idols.  
I will make them envious by those who are not a people;  
I will make them angry by a nation that has no understanding.

#### (3) *What God has promised*

- The inclusion of the Gentiles in the promise.
- The retaining of Israel as his covenant people, while keeping his promise to remove the conditional blessings from the nations if they rebel, and allowing foreign nations a place in the covenant: the principle of replacement.

### b) *Humankind and redemption*

#### (1) *Worship of redeemed*

*The confession of the sailors:*

- ✦ Believed that Jonah was being punished and pursued by God, for fleeing his divine call (1:10).
- ✦ They were initially afraid to harm Jonah, especially after telling them who he was (1:12-13).
- ✦ They cried to the Lord, believing he would answer (1:14).
- ✦ They asked for forgiveness for throwing Jonah into the sea, believing God would forgive them (1:13).

<sup>345</sup>From Emory university at <http://www.pitts.emory.edu/dia/booklist5.cfm?ID=131>.

- ✦ They acknowledged that the Lord is sovereign and does as he pleases (1:14).
- ✦ They obeyed the word of the Lord's prophet and threw the prophet overboard (1:15-16).
- ✦ They offered sacrifices and vows to the Lord, believing they should and could atone for their sins (1:16).

We can not answer the question of their salvation, but it would seem to this reader that the encounter with Jonah and his Lord must have made a big impact on these pagan sailors. Certainly, they would not forget too soon this most remarkable of evenings at sea, and the power of God displayed in it. They must have always wondered what happened to Jonah in the sea, for we can only speculate whether or not they saw him get swallowed by a whale or whether they ever heard word of, or from, him after his return from Nineveh. It is interesting to speculate, but we do not have to regarding their immediate response which is outlined in this striking confession of faith in the true Lord outlined above.

Pagan confessions of faith or spiritual understanding are not unprecedented in OT history. See the widow from Zarephath whom Elijah ministered to, Ruth, Rahab, and NT Samaritan woman.

Jonah did not reject his faith and doctrine in God, he only rejected his call. As noted, he confesses to “fear” (worship) YHWH. Jonah also confessed in his later prayer that idols were “worthless” (הַקְּבִלִי-שָׁוְאָה).

---

Compare the subsequent “fear” of God among the sailors above, p. 264.

---

Yet, by running from the Lord, futilely thinking Jonah can escape God's presence, he denies what he believes about the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land” (1:9). He became a “practical atheist.” Jonah's confession to the pagan sailors was also true to his doctrine and his faith, and he even acknowledged that only his being thrown into the sea (presumably his death) would bring about the calming of the sea. He was willing to die that the sailors might live. He did not apparently know that the Lord would save him from the sea, for he had every reason to believe he would rightly die in it. The Lord's compassion saves Jonah, and he is re-enlisted to complete the call of God. In his prayer from the belly of the whale he acknowledges the Lord in very sound theology, that God is the one who hears and delivers, that idols are worthless, that he would be delivered, that God was sovereign over the seas and his own life, that sacrifice is required, and that salvation comes only from YHWH.

Jonah also confesses that he knew God was gracious and compassionate, being the very reason he initially fled his call, making Jonah a complex figure, for he knows much yet fails to apply it properly in his own life-walk and worship. The ironies of Jonah's life are many: despite direct communication and relationship with YHWH, he fails to listen. It takes general revelation (storms, fish, gourds) to teach him. These ironies have broad application to Israel in that despite all of their privileged blessings of revelation and redemption, Israel had failed to obey the Lord. Jonah and Israel both paid the price for walking away from divine revelation.

## (2) *Work of redeemed*

The call of Jonah from God was his mission to the foreign enemy of Assyria.<sup>346</sup> He initially rejected his call out of disregard for the fortunes of those standing under judgment. His lack of compassion was inexcusable, considering he came from a people who had been shown God's glory, compassion, forgiveness, and revelation. It is one thing for a foreign nation to have judgment upon them when they have had no revelation from God, it is quite another thing for God's people to have his revelation yet live in unbelief and rebellion. The call to witness to Nineveh led Jonah to think he could escape the presence and power of God. He acknowledged to the sailors that he was running away from God.

The work of the redeemed is in part to be a blessing to the nations. This was Israel's missionary and Messianic mandate, to be a blessing to all the nations, through the law and the prophets, and particularly through the promised Messiah.<sup>347</sup> Though they often became internal looking, xenophobic, losing their mission of blessing to the nations. That blessing went far beyond the eschatological to include the ethical, cultural, and moral. Wherever the law and revelation of God touch human life they transform it (see culture, p.121). Jonah was to be a blessing to Nineveh, even though it appeared to him to contradict all sense, and perhaps he thought it would pose a threat to Israel.

In light of the “ban,” we can empathize with their propensity to exclude foreigners, yet even the law contained provisions for the foreigners: Gen 17:27, “And every male in Abraham's household, including those born in his

---

<sup>346</sup> Many interpreters claim that Jonah's mission was not “missionary” in the true sense, but only prophetic of judgment. This distinction seems undue in my opinion.

<sup>347</sup> Freeman qualifies the missionary aspect of OT Israel by saying that there was no *command* to make proselytes in a missionary effort. He says that Israel was called to 1) be the recipient and custodian of true revelation 2) to exhibit to the world true religion through separation to obedience and holiness 3) to prepare the way for the Messiah (*Introduction to the OT Prophets*, p. 163).

household or bought from a foreigner, was circumcised with him.” This would include proselytizing, discipling, baptizing, and circumcising Gentiles into the community of Israel.

Ex 12:48 An alien living among you who wants to celebrate the LORD’s Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat of it.

Deut 23:7 Do not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother. Do not abhor an Egyptian, because you lived as an alien in his country. 8

The third generation of children born to them may enter the assembly of the LORD.

1 Ki 8:41 (2 Ch 6:32) As for the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of your name—

Isa 56:6 And foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD

to serve him, to love the name of the LORD,

and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it

and who hold fast to my covenant—

This is seen expressly in the new covenant initiated at the Cross:

Eph 2:17-19 He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. <sup>18</sup>For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household,

Compare the reaction of the Jews in Paul’s encounter at Jerusalem. After rioting against Paul, they were eventually quieted to listen to Paul’s testimony. They were attentive to him until got to the place in the story where Jesus told Paul that he would be sent to the Gentiles:

Acts 22:22 The crowd listened to Paul until he said this. Then they raised their voices and shouted, “Rid the earth of him! He’s not fit to live!”

### (3) *Ethics of redeemed*

Failure to have compassion for the lost standing under God’s judgment, led Jonah to embrace an ethic that was bizarrely out of accord with the very Lord he was in direct communication with. He even failed to demonstrate a biblical ethic after God saved him from the whale’s belly and after God spared the Ninevites from destruction. His lack of heart for the Assyrians is remarkable in light of all that he had personally been given. Sadly, it is not unusual for God’s people to be self-centered and self-serving, and it does seem that much revelation does not guarantee much obedience, for faith is the pre-requisite.

Jn 1:10-13 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup> He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. <sup>12</sup> Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— <sup>13</sup> children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

## D. *Amos עָמוֹס (Israel ~ 760-750)*

### 1. *Title, author, and dates*



(left) Amos woodcut from the *Zurich Bible*.<sup>348</sup>

1. Amos was a herdsman (בֹּקֵר, 1:1, shepherd בֹּקֵר, 7:14) of Tekoa. Tekoa is in Judah ten miles south of Jerusalem and six miles southeast of Bethlehem, today the site is, as of yet, unexcavated and marked Khirbet et-Tequ'. Tekoa borders the desert of Judea, which explains the farming/herding career of Amos, a shepherd and a “tender” (cut open) of sycamore trees (וּבֹלֵס שִׁקְמִים, 7:14). Jeremiah predicts the siege of Judah with a pun on the name of Tekoa: “sound (תִּקַּע) the trumpet in Tekoa” (תִּקְעוּ שׁוֹפָר).
2. Amos is confirmed as the author of his book: 7:8, 10, 12; 8:2.
3. Place of prophetic ministry: sent from Judah primarily to N. Kingdom of Israel. He appeared first in Bethel (like Hosea) at a festival to which he proclaims a bold and sobering message of judgment amidst their present peace and affluence (see Bethel below, p. 271).
4. Time: Uzziah (767-740) in Judah and Jeroboam II in Israel (782-753), contemporary of Hosea, two years before an earthquake. Compare Zech 14:5 for confirmation of this earthquake in Uzziah’s days.
5. Political/social conditions: Uzziah and Jeroboam increase in power and prestige being relieved of

<sup>348</sup>From Emory university at <http://www.pitts.emory.edu/dia/booklist5.cfm?ID=131>.

Assyrian/Syrian pressure. Contrasts of great wealth and poverty, warns of fall of Northern kingdom.

## 2. *Critical matters*

The question of “anticultic” prophet *versus* sanctuary arises in Amos. See p. 224f.

## 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

a) *Pedestal of your idols (5:26)*

b) *Star of your god (5:26)*

➤ See NIV translation note, the LXX, and Acts 7:42-42.

c) *Consuming fire (7:4-5)*

d) *Builders’ plumb line (7:7-9)*

e) *Basket of summer fruit (8:1-6)*

f) *Smitten sanctuary (9:1-4)*

g) *My people*

Am 7:8 And the LORD asked me, “What do you see, Amos?” “A plumb line,” I replied. Then the Lord said, “Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.

Am 7:15 But the LORD took me from tending the flock and said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel.’

Am 8:2 “What do you see, Amos?” he asked. “A basket of ripe fruit,” I answered. Then the LORD said to me, “The time is ripe for my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.

Am 9:10 All the sinners among my people will die by the sword, all those who say, ‘Disaster will not overtake or meet us.’

h) *For three transgressions of . . . , even for four . . .*

➤ See p. 273.

## 4. *Major themes*

- Judgment on Israel for social injustice/religious formalism/apostasy, justice of God emphasized. Amos prophetically denounced the extravagant lifestyles of the rich and their exploitation of the poor, loose morality, corruption and abuses.
- Obedience to the Lord was the pre-requisite to national survival.
- The Day of the Lord would bring judgment (cf. Mal 12:17).
- Judgment would come through the Assyrians (6:1) “strange work” yet Assyria would fall (see Nahum)
- The nations will be judged, and the people of Judah will be judged, and Israel will be judged. These three themes can be understood to form the structure of the book.
- Amos also brought a message of grace and mercy
- The corruption of religious life (of the cult) (see discussion on cult and prophet, p. 224f.), and the spirit of true religion. Amos taught the ethical/spiritual intentions of the sacrificial laws (the gospel of the OT) over against the false form of worship that Israel had devised in following a form of ritual (religious formalism) without true piety, as well as apostasy:



Amos 5:21-25 “I hate, I despise your religious feasts;  
I cannot stand your assemblies.  
22 Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings,  
I will not accept them.  
Though you bring choice fellowship offerings,  
I will have no regard for them.  
23 Away with the noise of your songs!  
I will not listen to the music of your harps.  
24 But let justice roll on like a river,  
righteousness like a never-failing stream!

25 “Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings  
forty years in the desert, O house of Israel?”

*Bethel, the main religious center in Israel, features in Amos:*

Bethel had long ceased to be a YHWH honoring religious site in the time of Amos, even though during the Judges period it had been the resting place of the ark of the covenant itself. Bethel became the center for the idolatrous worship of Jeroboam I (930-910) (1 Ki 12:25-33). See fn. 359. Bethel became a longstanding source of trouble for Israel, for even Jehu did not (could not?) remove the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, an act that appears inexplicable after his destruction of the ministers of Baal.

Am 3:14 On the day I punish Israel for her sins,  
I will destroy the altars of Bethel;  
the horns of the altar will be cut off  
and fall to the ground.

Am 4:4 Go to Bethel and sin;  
go to Gilgal and sin yet more.  
Bring your sacrifices every morning,  
your tithes every three years.

Am 5:5 do not seek Bethel,  
do not go to Gilgal,  
do not journey to Beersheba.  
For Gilgal will surely go into exile,  
and Bethel will be reduced to nothing.”

Am 5:6 Seek the LORD and live,  
or he will sweep through the house of Joseph like a fire;  
it will devour, and Bethel will have no one to quench it.

Am 7:10 Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent a message to Jeroboam  
king of Israel: “Amos is raising a conspiracy against you in the very  
heart of Israel. The land cannot bear all his words.

Am 7:13 Don’t prophesy anymore at Bethel, because this is the king’s  
sanctuary and the temple of the kingdom.”

## 5. Major prophecies

- ❖ Judgments on the nations
- ❖ Judgments on Judah and Israel
- ❖ Restoration of the remnant

## 6. Outline, structure/composition

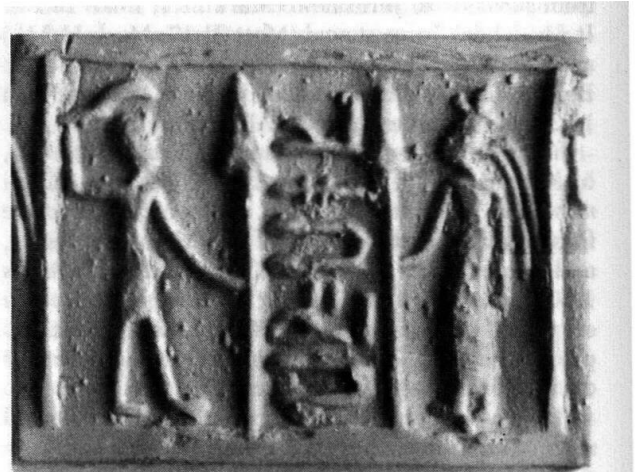
- ❖ Judgment on nations.
- ❖ Judgment on Judah.
- ❖ Judgment on Israel
- ❖ Final hope for Israel.

Judgment is conveyed in the imagery of: “Hear this word” (of the Lord)

- ❖ Grasshoppers
- ❖ Consuming fire
- ❖ Builders’ plumb line
- ❖ Basket of summer fruit
- ❖ Smitten sanctuary

Bullock outlines the oracles against the nations as part of the structure, noting that they are a distinctive genre:

(right) Cylinder Seal from Bethel<sup>349</sup>



Part of cylinder seal from 13th century B.C., found in Bethel. The figure on the right is the goddess Astarte, whose name is written in Egyptian hieroglyphics in the center. On the left is the god Reshep. Courtesy Israel Dept. of Antiquities and Museums. NIV Dict of Bib Arch, 98

<sup>349</sup> *New International Dictionary of Biblical Archaeology*, p. 98.

Oracles Against the Nations

	Damascus (1:3-5)	Gaza (1:6-8)	Tyre (1:9-10)	Edom (1:11-12)	Ammon (1:13-15)	Moab (2:1-3)	Judah (2:4-5)	Israel (2:6-16)
1. Introductory formula: "Thus says the Lord"	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
2. Yahweh's irrevocable judgment: "For three transgressions of . . . and for four I will not revoke its punishment."	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
3. Indictment proper: "Because they/he . . ."	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
+ details								
4. Punishment: "So I will send fire upon . . . And it will consume the citadels of . . . (her citadels)"	-----	-----	-----	-----	"So I will kindle a fire" (v. 14)	-----	-----	"Behold, I am weighted down beneath you" (v. 13)
+ other details								
5. Concluding formula: "Says the Lord"	-----	"Says the Lord God"	//////	//////	-----	-----	//////	"Declares the Lord" (Oracle of the Lord)

----- = repeated  
 //// = does not occur

Hassel Bullock, Introduction to the Old Testament Prophetic Books, p. 58.

350

"The oracles against the nations obviously had a cumulative effect, whose sum was the absolutely inescapable judgment of Israel."<sup>351</sup>

What VanGemenen calls "hymnic fragments" (*Interpreting*, pp. 131-132) can be seen as poetic praises of God by the prophet that invoke a profound creation theology:

These poetic praises seem sudden in their contexts, though not forced or out of place. Judgment and creation (**bold**) are juxtaposed in a complementary relationship, a reminder to Israel/Judah that their creator God was bringing judgment upon them. Of all the nations, they should know most clearly that God alone is God and that he would bring to pass what he decreed concerning them. The primary reason for their knowledge was the Exodus-deliverance (underlined) from Egypt, which equally functions in these poems to complement the themes of judgment/creation. Flood imagery is also suggested in several of the lines, but seems to be suggestive of the creation and the parting of the Red Sea, as well – denoting the almighty power of sovereign YHWH. In each stanza the emphasis is on *naming* the LORD as God, echoing the covenant-promise to know the Lord as God. In Amos "Adonai YHWH (21x) יְהוָה יְאֵדֹנָי

➤ See creation theology, p. 55.

<sup>350</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 64.

<sup>351</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 66.



Amos 1:2 He said: “*The LORD* roars from Zion and **thunders** from Jerusalem; the **pastures** of the shepherds dry up, and the **top of Carmel withers**.”

4:13 He who **forms** the mountains, **creates** the wind, and **reveals** his thoughts to man, he who **turns dawn to darkness**, and **reads the high places** of the earth—*the LORD God Almighty* is his name.

5:8-9 (he who **made** the Pleiades and Orion, who **turns blackness into dawn** and **darkens day into night**, who **calls for the waters of the sea** and pours them out over the face of the land—*the LORD is his name*—  
9 he **flashes destruction** on the stronghold and brings the fortified city to ruin),

9:5-6 The *Lord, the LORD Almighty*, he who **touches** the earth and it melts, and all who live in it mourn—the whole land rises like the Nile, then sinks like the river of Egypt—  
6 he who **builds** his lofty palace in the heavens and **sets** its foundation on the earth, **who calls for the waters of the sea** and **pours them out** over the face of the land—*the LORD is his name*.

## 7. Exposition and the history of redemption themes

- Pattern of “For three transgressions of \_\_\_\_\_, even for four I will not turn away” indicates fullness of their injustice.

Am 1:3 This is what the LORD says: “For three sins of Damascus, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her three transgressions, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her iniquity.”

Am 1:6 This is what the LORD says: “For three sins of Gaza, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her three transgressions, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her iniquity.”

Am 1:9 This is what the LORD says: “For three sins of Tyre, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her three transgressions, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her iniquity.”

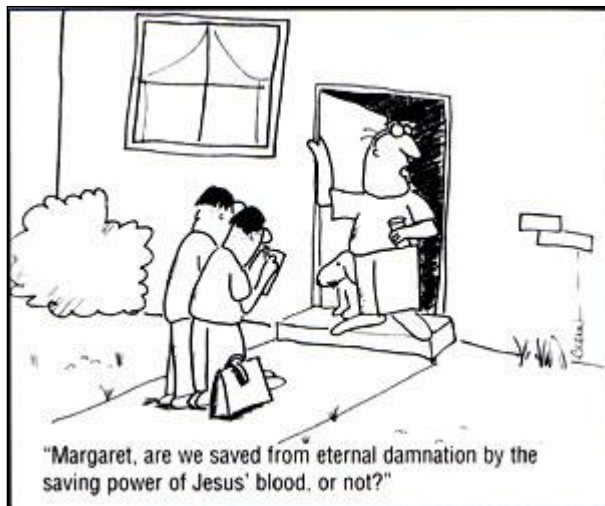
Am 1:11 This is what the LORD says: “For three sins of Edom, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her three transgressions, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her iniquity.”

Am 1:13 This is what the LORD says: “For three sins of Ammon, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her three transgressions, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her iniquity.”

Am 2:1 This is what the LORD says: “For three sins of Moab, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her three transgressions, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her iniquity.”

Am 2:4 This is what the LORD says: “For three sins of Judah, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her three transgressions, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her iniquity.”

Am 2:6 This is what the LORD says: “For three sins of Israel, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her three transgressions, even for four, I will not turn away from her, because of her iniquity.”
- Pattern of order of nations: foreign/cousins/brother/Judah/Israel. This progression serves to gradually introduce the prophetic confrontation, easing them into it, so to speak.





352

**a) Prophecies against the nations: Amos 1:3-2:3**

**(1) Damascus: Amos 1:3-5**

➤ See Tel Dan Stele of Aramean defeat of the “House of David.”

Damascus was the capital of Aram/Syria (see p. 602). Syrian barbarity in war against Israel at Gilead. Prediction against Damascus of captivity (Amos 1:5b) was fulfilled by Tiglath-Pileser III 732:

2 Ki 16:9 The king of Assyria complied by attacking Damascus and capturing it. He deported its inhabitants to Kir<sup>353</sup> and put Rezin to death.

<sup>352</sup> From Barry L. Bandstra, “Amos Oracles against the Nations,” Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible (www).

Threshing sleds (1:3) had stones of fragments of iron fastened underneath and were dragged over grain stalks to release the grain. Though some interpreters claim that this was a literal dragging over fallen men from Gilead, it can not be certain, but it is an image of particular cruelty:

2 Ki 13:7 Nothing had been left of the army of Jehoahaz except fifty horsemen, ten chariots and ten thousand foot soldiers, for the king of Aram had destroyed the rest and made them like the dust at threshing time.

Threshing has connotations of judgment from God in the NT:

Matt 3:12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.



(left) Threshing floor near Bethlehem.<sup>354</sup>

(right) Threshing sleds reconstructed according to the archeological material and the textual descriptions for the Bronze Age in Mesopotamia, with a raft like structure and blades stuck between the staves using bitumen.<sup>355</sup>



Previous to Amos' period, Syria had greatly afflicted Israel: see Jehu (841-814) when Hazael took territory from Israel (2 Ki 10:32). See the same during Jehoahaz's reign (814-798) (2 Ki 13:22). Things had improved on this front by the time of Amos:

2 Ki 13:25 Then Jehoash son of Jehoahaz recaptured from Ben-Hadad son of Hazael the towns he had taken in battle from his father Jehoahaz. Three times Jehoash defeated him, and so he recovered the Israelite towns.

2 Ki 14:25 He was the one who restored the boundaries of Israel from Lebo Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, in accordance with the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, spoken through his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath Hopher.

## (2) *Gaza: Amos 1:6-8*

- See Philistines, Sea People who settled Gaza apx 1200 BC (p. 619f.)
- The largest Philistine city of the time

Philistines engaged in slave trading (of Israelites?) with Edom (same as Phoenicians): see

2 Chron 21:16-17 The LORD aroused against Jehoram the hostility of the Philistines and of the Arabs who lived near the Cushites. 17 They attacked Judah, invaded it and carried off all the goods found in the king's palace, together with his sons and wives. Not a son was left to him except Ahaziah, the youngest.

Compare: Joel 3:4 (NASB) "Moreover, what are you to Me, O Tyre, Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia? Are you rendering Me a recompense? But if you do recompense Me, swiftly and speedily I will return your recompense on your head. 5 "Since you have taken My silver and My gold, brought My precious treasures to your temples, 6 and sold the sons of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks in order to remove them far from their territory, 7 behold, I am going to arouse them from the place where you have sold them, and return your recompense on your head. 8 "Also I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the sons of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a distant nation," for the LORD has spoken.

Four of the main five Philistine cities come under judgment in Amos.

- Ashkelon fell to Tiglath-Pileser in 734. See Ashkelon materials
- Ekron fell to Sennacherib in 701.
- Gaza and Ashdod fell to Nebuchadnezzar in 605-562.

<sup>353</sup> The location of Kir is uncertain. See Isa 22:6.

<sup>354</sup> From reserve article by Patricia Anderson "Threshing in ancient and present-day Syria," at <http://www.earth.arts.gla.ac.uk/Activities/Anderson.htm>.

<sup>355</sup> From reserve article by Patricia Anderson "Threshing in ancient and present-day Syria," at <http://www.earth.arts.gla.ac.uk/Activities/Anderson.htm>.

- Gath is not mentioned, since it had been destroyed in 815 BC by Hazael of Aram (2 Ki 12:17)

**(3) Tyre: Amos 1:9-10**

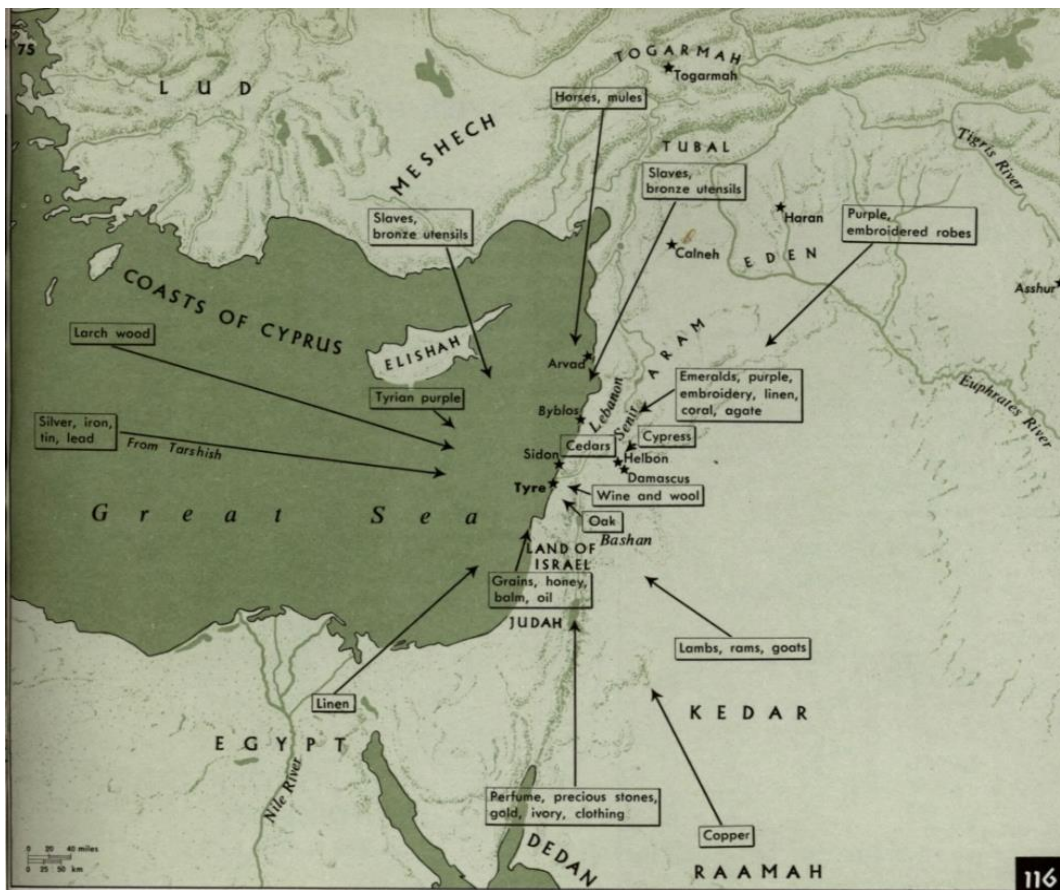
- See Phoenicians, p. 627f.
- Tyre was a proud maritime city that produced glass and purple die from murex mollusk.

*The covenant of brotherhood (kinship)*  
Amos 1:9

כִּי אָמַר יְהוָה עַל-שְׁלֹשָׁה פְּשָׁעֵי-צֹר וְעַל-אַרְבָּעָה לֹא אֲשִׁיבֶנּוּ עַל-הַסְּגִיָּוִם  
גְּלוֹת שְׁלֵמָה לְאֶדוֹם וְלֹא זָכְרוּ בְרִית אֲחִים:

9 This is what the LORD says: “For three sins of Tyre, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath. Because she sold whole communities of captives to Edom, disregarding a treaty of brotherhood,

“They disregarded a treaty of brotherhood” (1:9): Phoenician slave trading (of Israelites?) with Edom. Perhaps there is a background reference here to a formal agreement between Tyre and Israel during the David/Solomon era (and during the reign of Ahab who “married into the family” though Jezebel):



1 Ki 5:12 The LORD gave Solomon wisdom, just as he had promised him. There were peaceful relations between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty.

1 Ki 9:11 King Solomon gave twenty towns in Galilee to Hiram king of Tyre, because Hiram had supplied him with all the cedar and pine and gold he wanted.

1 Ki 16:31 He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him.

Prediction of judgment fulfilled by incursions of Tiglath-Pileser, Sargon, Nebuchadnezzar’s siege of Tyre (585-573), and Alexander the Great’s destruction of Tyre in 332.

(left) The extensive trade of Tyre (10<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> centuries

B.C.)<sup>356</sup>

Ezek 27:3 Say to Tyre, situated at the gateway to the sea, merchant of peoples on many coasts, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: “You say, O Tyre, “I am perfect in beauty.”’

**(4) Edom: Amos 1:11-12**

- See Edom, p. 605.
- See Obadiah on Edom, and the Jacob/Esau tension, pp. 229, 233.
- Temon – the S.capital; Bozrah was W.fortress

<sup>356</sup> Macmillan Bible Atlas, p. 75.

“He pursued his brother” (1:11) – Israel’s brother (descendants of Jacob and Esau), pursued them without compassion, violent, and angry.

Prediction of judgment fulfilled by Assyrian invasions in 711 and 701 and when they eventually were driven from their land by Nabatean Arabs. After the Roman era they disappeared as a distinct people group.

### (5) *Ammon: Amos 1:13-15*

- See Ammon, p. 601f.
- See Lot, Gen 19:37-38; Deut 2:9, 19.
- See Mesha Stele (Moabite Stone). King Mesha retained Moabite lands.

“Ripped open the pregnant women” – Brutality in war of aggression/aggrandizement against Israelites of Gilead. What could be more graphically and morally disturbing than this picture? As in abortion, the genocidal destruction of children is sought for the sinful ends of men. In this case, the destruction of infants had political import in their greed for land. Although Jeremiah confirms this prophecy, the incident with Gilead is not mentioned elsewhere.

Jer 49:3 Wail, O Heshbon, for Ai is destroyed!  
Cry out, O inhabitants of Rabbah!  
Put on sackcloth and mourn;  
rush here and there inside the walls,  
for Molech will go into exile,  
together with his priests and officials.

Prediction of judgment fulfilled in Nebuchadrezzar’s campaign(?), possibly ca. 582.

### (6) *Moab: Amos 2:1-3*

- See Moab, pp. 618f.

Moab’s desecration of the grave of Edom’s king was done out of sheer spite, as commonly practiced in the ANE to refuse a person a decent burial and peace.

Prediction of judgment fulfilled in the campaign of Sargon II in 715 who devastated the land as he advanced to Arabia. Gradual elimination of nation occurred over the following centuries through a series of rises and falls until they ceased to exist as a nation, even though Moabites were known as a people into the intertestamental period.

### b) *Prophecies against Judah & Israel: Amos 2:4-6:14*

*Judah*: transition to brother nation (where he was from) for despising the Law of the Lord and idolatry

*Israel*: covenant law suit form related to treaty covenant analogy, messenger sent to call other side to account form

The covenant and the prophets: critics long denied prophets were concerned with covenant because בְּרִית is infrequent, but this consensus has changed. The following outlines some of the more recent areas of acknowledgment of prophetic interest in the covenant theme.

- See covenant and prophecy, p. 226.

*Covenant law-suit form:*

1. accusations for indictment 2:6-8
-------------------------------------

<table border="1"> <tr> <td>a. social evil</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. moral/religious apostasy: sacred prostitution, Canaanite religion</td> </tr> </table>	a. social evil	b. moral/religious apostasy: sacred prostitution, Canaanite religion
a. social evil		
b. moral/religious apostasy: sacred prostitution, Canaanite religion		

2. recital of gracious acts of the Lord 2:9-11
--

3. the sentence 2:13-16
-------------------------

**Three aspects of covenant motifs gaining scholarly consensus:**<sup>357</sup>

1. *covenant terminology* in prophetic pronouncements: “you only have I known” (עָדָךְ) (Amos 3:2) has wide range of meaning:

<sup>357</sup> Drawn from J.R. Vannoy, *OT Prophets* lecture, BTS.

two technical-legal senses:<sup>358</sup>

(1) to recognize as legitimate suzerain or vassal: the people of Israel exclusively know God and are known by God. This is not mystical nor intellectual knowledge, but rather the doing of God's will by those who love God. In this sense, love is action.

(2) to recognize treaty stipulations as binding, covenant recognition is closely related to people's conduct. For example, to defend the poor is to know the Lord (see Jer 22:13-16) To know is to obey. NT: to love is to obey. The infrequent use of בְּרִית is not proof that covenant ideas are held by prophets. Rather, the extensive use of covenant ideas is proof that the covenant ideal is always in the background: love, serve, bless, curse, witness, etc.

## 2. literary pattern of covenant lawsuit:

consists of four elements: (see Mic 6:1-8; Jer 2:4-13; Isa 1:2 which follow this pattern to varying degrees)

(1) introduction: gives the scene of judgment.

(2) plaintiff's address: questions of accusation heard from judge, no adequate reply possible.

(3) resume': of past magnificent (benevolent) acts of plaintiff and ingratitude of accused.

(4) indictment: of accused in form of active judgment.

3. covenant curses: prophet's were not arbitrary in their use of figures to relate the covenant message, they were like lawyers quoting the law in light of the covenant curses (source in Deut 28; Amos 4:6-10; Hos 13:4, 5; Jer 24:7) calling the people back to the covenant. In this they were also true reformers, not innovators.

Hosea 4:1-2 Hear the word of the LORD, you Israelites,  
because the LORD has a charge to bring  
against you who live in the land:  
"There is no faithfulness, no love,  
no acknowledgment of God in the land.  
2 There is only cursing,  
lying and murder,  
stealing and adultery;  
they break all bounds,  
and bloodshed follows bloodshed.



The language of the covenant is most explicit in the phrase "my people Israel":

Am 2:11 Is this not true, people of Israel?" declares the LORD.

Am 3:1 LORD has spoken against you, O people of Israel—against the whole family I

Am 6:1 foremost nation, to whom the people of Israel come!

Am 7:8 setting a plumb line among my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.

Am 7:15 said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.' 16 Now then, hear the word

Am 8:2 The time is ripe for my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.

Am 9:14 I will bring back my exiled people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities

## (1) Prophecies against Judah: Amos 2:4-5

### Judah in Amos

Am 1:1 earthquake, when Uzziah was king of Judah and Jeroboam son of Jehoash

Am 2:4 LORD says: "For three sins of Judah, even for four, I will not

Am 2:5 I will send fire upon Judah that will consume the fortresses

Am 7:12 seer! Go back to the land of Judah. Earn your bread there and do

A transition occurs here in Amos' message, turning directly to the people of God. After describing judgment on Israel's enemies for their sin, he makes it plain that they are not going to be treated in a special way. They are just another one of the nations now standing under judgment. This is really quite remarkable, in light of the Jewish conviction of an exclusive people with an exclusive covenant. They had forsaken their covenant, and will pay the price as just another nation in the roster of rebellious nations. The principle of in-grafting of Gentiles (incorporation into the covenant-blessings) is at work here, for God has not forsaken his people, but when they forsake him he can raise up a people from anywhere he chooses. This sends the message that Israel should not be proud and think more highly of themselves than they ought to think.

<sup>358</sup> Legal and technical senses of בְּרִית in the ANE are discussed by H. Huffmon, "The Treaty Background of Hebrew בְּרִית," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, 181 (1966): 31-37.

The sobering truth: They were given God’s covenant and God’s law – but “they have rejected the law of the Lord” and even gone after false gods (2:4). A people who have no excuse can only plead one thing: the pure grace of God. Not that the law was the means of redemption, but that obedience was the pre-requisite to retaining the blessings of the covenant. (Temporal progeny was conditional upon obedience, yet the line of the Messiah was unconditional in that the Lord would send his Messiah to fulfill the Abrahamic promise of “descendants” more numerous than the stars.). This foreshadows the NT gospel that Paul outlines, that the Jews through their rejection of the Messiah have been made equals in salvation:

Rom 10:12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him  
Romans 11:32 For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.  
Ga 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Turning first to the southern kingdom protected Amos, of Judah, from the charge of partiality. Even though the north was politically/economically stronger, the south always took pride in having the temple, even though they had become corrupted idolaters. Probably a superstitious, magical view had come to prevail which believed they would be protected by the presence of the sanctuary and ark, even though the presence of YHWH was rejected.

## (2) *Prophecies against Israel and Judah: Amos 2:6-6:14*

### *Israel in Amos*

Am 1:1 Tekoa—what he saw concerning Israel two years before the earthquake  
Am 1:1 Jehoash was king of Israel. 2 He said: “The LORD  
Am 2:6 “For three sins of Israel, even for four, I will not  
Am 2:11 Is this not true, people of Israel?” declares the LORD.  
Am 3:1 spoken against you, O people of Israel—against the whole family I  
Am 3:14 On the day I punish Israel for her sins, I will destroy  
Am 4:12 his is what I will do to you, Israel, and because I will do this  
Am 4:12 prepare to meet your God, O Israel.” 13 He who forms the mountains  
Am 5:1 Hear this word, O house of Israel, this lament I take up concerning  
Am 5:2 Fallen is Virgin Israel, never to rise again, deserted  
Am 5:3 out a thousand strong for Israel will have only a hundred left  
Am 5:4 the LORD says to the house of Israel: “Seek me and live;  
Am 5:25 in the desert, O house of Israel? 26 You have lifted up the  
Am 6:1 to whom the people of Israel come! 2 Go to Calneh and  
Am 6:14 against you, O house of Israel, that will oppress you all  
Am 7:8 a plumb line among my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.  
Am 7:9 and the sanctuaries of Israel will be ruined; with my sword  
Am 7:10 a message to Jeroboam king of Israel: “Amos is raising a conspiracy  
Am 7:10 against you in the very heart of Israel. The land cannot bear all his  
Am 7:11 will die by the sword, and Israel will surely go into exile,  
Am 7:15 ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel.’ 16 Now then, hear the word  
Am 7:16 ‘Do not prophesy against Israel, and stop preaching against  
Am 7:17 in a pagan country. And Israel will certainly go into exile,  
Am 8:2 he time is ripe for my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.  
Am 9:7 s the LORD. “Did I not bring Israel up from Egypt, the Philistines  
Am 9:9 and I will shake the house of Israel among all the nations  
Am 9:14 back my exiled people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined  
Am 9:15 fruit. 15 I will plant Israel in their own land, never again

The progression of thought in Amos’ prophecy goes from social evil to religious apostasy, a natural progression. Sarcasm enters into his tone when he describes their sin alongside their religious formalism:

Amos 4:4 “Go to Bethel and sin;  
go to Gilgal and sin yet more.  
Bring your sacrifices every morning,  
your tithes every three years.

They also *brag* and *boast* about their religiosity (4:5), yet the covenant and its curses are invoked in the following:

- **Famine** from drought (4:6-6): a sure sign of the curse (Deut 28:23-24).. Exodus motif.
- **Locusts plagues** (4:9): a sure sign of the curse (Deut 28:38). Exodus motif.
- **Disease plagues** and mildew (4:10): a sure sign of the curse (Deut 28:22). Exodus motif.
- **Military defeats** (4:10-11). A sure sign of the curse (Deut 28:26, 32, 36). Exodus motif.

➤ See covenant issue, pp. 277, 226

Further to the covenant theme in Amos, the Lord leaves open the door to return to the covenant: “Yet, you have not returned to me, declares the Lord” (4:11b). He naturally concludes, “Therefore, this is what I will do to you.” And,

in profoundly covenantal language, he says “prepare to meet your God, O Israel.” There is a bitter irony to this last expression, for it affirms the covenant-promise to “be their God,” but it is in the context of their impending death and destruction through which they will finally *meet* God. God’s presence will become one of judgment (5:17).

This declaration of judgment, and the description of that judgment, are linked by one of the poetic hymns of praise to God as creator and revealer (4:13a). The creator of all things is the destroyer of rebellion.

The Lord Almighty is his name” (4:13b).

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי־צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ

The climax of the covenant curse is always the loss of the promised land, to be carried off into exile (“beyond Damascus, Amos 5:27,: *i.e.*, Assyria):

Deut 28:49 The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the ends of the earth, like an eagle swooping down, a nation whose language you will not understand,

Lev 26:27-33 If in spite of this you still do not listen to me but continue to be hostile toward me, 28 then in my anger I will be hostile toward you, and I myself will punish you for your sins seven times over. 29 You will eat the flesh of your sons and the flesh of your daughters. 30 I will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars and pile your dead bodies on the lifeless forms of your idols, and I will abhor you. 31 I will turn your cities into ruins and lay waste your sanctuaries, and I will take no delight in the pleasing aroma of your offerings. 32 I will lay waste the land, so that your enemies who live there will be appalled. 33 I will scatter you among the nations and will draw out my sword and pursue you. Your land will be laid waste, and your cities will lie in ruins.

Amos 5 suggests that, although judgment is inevitable (5:15), there is still a door open for repentance (5:4-7, 14-15) (yet, not to circumvent judgment). The tone of the judgment language makes this offer all the more ironic, for it seems to convey little hope of Israel actually repenting. May we suppose that even if the judgment is fixed at this stage, that the call for *individuals* to return to the Lord was still active? Much like any prophecy of judgment against a nation, it provides the best opportunity for individuals to repent.

2 Cor 6:2 For he says, “In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation.

*Catalogue of Israel’s transgressions (Amos 5:10-12):*

- ✓ Hate justice (5:10a)
- ✓ Despise the truth (5:10b)
- ✓ Trample the poor (5:11a)
- ✓ Love lavish lifestyle (5:11b)
- ✓ Oppress the righteous (5:12)
- ✓ Take bribes (5:12)
- ✓ Deprive the poor of justice (5:12)

They are given opportunity to repent (5:4-7, 14-15), and the second one even promises God’s covenantal-presence with them! Nevertheless, the day of the Lord is coming, YHWH *will pass through their midst* (5:17) in Exodus Passover imagery and they will not be passed over this time.

The day of the Lord is coming (5:18) – Amos shows Israel that their understanding of the day of the Lord is backwards: instead of blessing, they will have judgment, and even by the hand of their enemies they assumed would be judged on that day. The enemy will overrun them and they will lose the land of the promise (6:14).

- See “day of the Lord” in Mal 12:17 where they anticipated the wrong kind of day of the Lord.
- See the day of the Lord, pp. 82f., 231.

*Catalogue of Judah’s transgressions (Amos 6:1-7):*

- ✓ Complacency (6:1)
- ✓ Prosperity mixed with indulgence and extravagance (6:4-5)
- ✓ Decadence, drunkenness, and gluttony (6:3-6)
- ✓ Indifference to the ruin of Israel (6:6)

Ivory inlaid beds had become popular and common. Sennacherib boasted that Hexekiah gave such beds as part of their tribute to Assyria (ANET, p. 228b).

### c) *Visions of judgment against Israel: Amos 7:1-9:10*

Covenant-curse on the land . . .

#### (1) *Grasshoppers/locusts: Amos 7:1-3*



Locusts' devastation contrasts with the harvested king's share, and has the covenant-promise of the land of milk and honey as background. See Joel's locust plagues.

## (2) *Consuming fire: Amos 7:4-6*

Fiery devastations contrast with the blessing of God, fire represents judgment and has the covenant-promise of guidance and provision (see Exodus fire and food) as background.

## (3) *Builders' plumb line: Amos 7:7-9*

A plumb-line of devastation contrasts with the ideal of a people and sanctuary built according to God's specifications (Exodus-Numbers) as background. Judgment will involve the destruction of the high places and idolatrous sanctuaries in Israel.

### (a) *An interjection: the repression of God's prophetic word (Amos 7:10-15)*

Amaziah, the priest of Bethel (see Bethel, p. 271), opposed the prophet of God. There was no collusion, but contention, between a corrupted priesthood and a godly prophet.<sup>359</sup>

*Realpolitic sustained by Vox Populi:* Amaziah appealed to the political powers to try and stop the word of God (7:10) and preserve the *status quo*. Amaziah is so wrong in what he affirms it is difficult to find any truth at work in his thinking:

- ⊕ The land cannot bear the prophet's words.
- ⊕ The prophet's words are not true.
- ⊕ The prophet should listen to Amaziah's threats and return to Judah.
- ⊕ That the prophet was prophesying to make money.
- ⊕ Claimed that the sanctuary/temple at Bethel belonged to king Jeroboam II. (True, in the sense that it was unauthorized idol worship, but underscored by the utterly false notion that a sanctuary could *belong to* a king of Israel).

Amos responded to Amaziah:

- ⊕ He was not a prophet by "profession," but had been a shepherd and farmer,
- ⊕ But God had called him to prophesy to Israel.
- ⊕ The word of the prophet *was the word of God*.
- ⊕ Amaziah would suffer terrible punishment for his sins against God and Amos. (No record of fulfillment.)
- ⊕ Israel would certainly go into exile (regardless of what Amaziah thought).

---

<sup>359</sup> This episode has interesting similarities to one many years earlier in the divided monarchy when a "man of God" came from Judah to prophesy against Jeroboam I's false altars in Bethel (1 Ki 13:1-34). Bethel had early on been converted from a place of true worship to one of apostate worship of golden calves (see Judges-Esther notes). This prophet remains unnamed, but his word predicted that the false priests of Bethel would be destroyed by one named Josiah (who came some 300 years later and fulfilled this prediction, 2 Ki 23:15-16, 30).

**Amos: Call for Moral Obedience**

(right) Amos' visions.<sup>360</sup>

**ANALYSIS OF VISIONS**

	<i>Vision 1 (7:1-3)</i>	<i>Vision 2 (7:4-6)</i>
1. Introductory formula	Thus the Lord God showed me,	Thus the Lord God showed me,
2. Optical content	and behold, He was forming a locust-swarm (v. 1)	and behold, the Lord God was calling to contend with them by fire (v. 4)
3. Prophet's intercession	And it came about, when it had finished eating the vegetation of the land, that I said, [lit. "and I said"] "Lord God, please pardon! How can Jacob stand, for he is small?" (v. 2)	Then I said, [lit. "and I said"] "Lord God, please stop! How can Jacob stand, for he is small?" (v. 5)
4. Yahweh's response	The Lord changed His mind about this. "It shall not be," said the Lord (v. 3).	The Lord changed His mind about this. "This too shall not be," said the Lord God (v. 6).
	<i>Vision 3 (7:7-9)</i>	<i>Vision 4 (8:1-3)</i>
1. Introductory formula	Thus He showed me,	Thus the Lord God showed me,
2. Optical content	and behold, the Lord was standing . . . a plumb line in His hand (v. 7)	and behold, a basket of summer fruit (v. 1)
3. Dialogue	And the Lord said to me, "What do you see, Amos?" And I said, "A plumb line."	And He said, "What do you see, Amos?" And I said, "A basket of summer fruit."
4. Interpretation	Then the Lord said, "Behold, I am about to put a plumb line in the midst of My people Israel."	Then the Lord said to me, "The end has come."
5. Irrevocable verdict	'I will spare them no longer' (v. 8)	'I will spare them no longer' (v. 2).
6. Concluding judgment	"The high places of Isaac will be desolated" (v. 9).	"The songs of the palace will turn to wailing." (v. 3).
	<i>Vision 5 (9:1-4)</i>	
1. Introductory formula	I saw the Lord (v. 1a)	
2. Yahweh's command	"Smite the capitals . . . and break them" (v. 1b-c)	
3. Yahweh's judgment	"Then I will slay the rest of them" (vv. 1d-4a)	
4. Concluding verdict	"And I will set My eyes against them for evil and not for good" (v. 4b)	

+ appendix 9:5-15

Hassel Bullock, Intro to the OT Prophetic Books, p. 71.

**(4) Basket of summer fruit: Amos 8:1-14**

A basket of ripe fruit contrasts with the fruitful devastation coming on Israel, and has the covenant-promise of a fruitful land and people as background (Eden, Pentateuch). Hypocrisy, dishonesty, stealing, exploitation, cheating, injustice are the fruit of Israel's pride, but the end will be bitterness. Worse than the judgment, will be a famine of the prophetic revelatory word of God (8:11). Silence from God is judgment. Silence is the covenantal-absence of God.

1 Sam 28:6 He inquired of the LORD, but the LORD did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets.

Ezek 7:26 Calamity upon calamity will come, and rumor upon rumor. They will try to get a vision from the prophet; the teaching of the law by the priest will be lost, as will the counsel of the elders.

Mic 3:4,7 Then they will cry out to the LORD,

<sup>360</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 71.

but he will not answer them.  
 At that time he will hide his face from them  
 because of the evil they have done.  
 7 The seers will be ashamed  
 and the diviners disgraced.  
 They will all cover their faces  
 because there is no answer from God.”

### (5) *Smitten sanctuary and the altar: Amos 9:1-10*

Destruction of the sanctuary brings devastation that contrasts with the hope of the covenant-presence of God, the redemption of God’s people, the entire sanctuary symbolism of the covenant, and has the covenant-promise as background. Paradise is again despoiled and God’s people cast out. Eden and Exodus-Sinai motifs throughout.

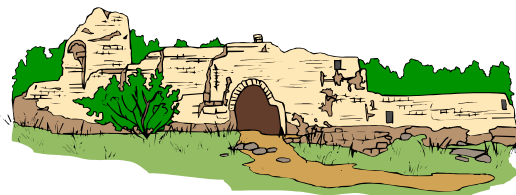
### d) *Messianic promise of future blessing: Amos 9:11-15*

Authenticity of this section is frequently challenged by those who do not believe that the historical background is that of Amos’ time.

#### *Interpretation of Amos 9:11-15 and use of by James in Acts 15:14-17:*

Acts 15:15-18 The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written:

16 “After this I will return  
 and rebuild David’s fallen tent.  
 Its ruins I will rebuild,  
 and I will restore it,  
 17 that the remnant of men may seek the Lord,  
 and all the Gentiles who bear my name,  
 says the Lord, who does these things’  
 18 that have been known for ages.



#### Question:

- What time period(s) do these texts refer to? Post exilic? First Advent? Second Advent? All the above?
- What is the relationship of Amos 9:11-13 and 9:13-15?

#### 1. *Amillennial: figurative interpretation*

Amos 9:11 – restoring David’s fallen tent = the present preaching of gospel.

Amos 9:12 – possessing Edom = the conversion of Gentiles (seek after the Lord).

Yet, some (premill) counter this by noting that James quotes the LXX’s ζῆτεω (seek, search or look for; try, attempt, strive) the Lord as ἐκζητεω (seek or search diligently; charge with, require from), whereas MT reads שׂר (I. qal 1. take possession of, get 2. inherit from). MT & LXX may have had originally agreed on the meaning as *seek* (scribal confusion of ם and ך would change the meaning from “seek” to “possess”). Different wording in Acts and MT may mean that LXX and MT were the same at Jerusalem Council (the issue of discussion at Jerusalem Council: circumcision of the Gentiles in the church):

- James summarizes Peter’s reference to Cornelius’s conversion.
- James said the words of Amos agree with this: the issue was not conversion of Gentiles, but circumcision.
- James quotes Amos “after this” pointing to eschatological kingdom to show the way it will be then.

Yet, in response to this, it can be affirmed that the *particular* issue was circumcision of Gentiles, but also more broadly the question of how to include Gentiles in the community of believers, for the concluding Jerusalem Council letter seeks to avoid placing burdens on the Gentiles by simply having them abstain from food offered to idols, sexual immorality, and the meat of strangled animals. The underlying question in Acts 15 is the place of the OT law in the life of the Gentile believer. James quotes Amos in this broader context *in reference to the question of circumcision and the OT law* (Acts 15:5, 19).

Another difficulty in the Acts 15:17 passage is the reference to “the Lord,” who will be “sought.” If the MT originally read “seek,” then does it make sense to say that Israel would “seek the remnant of Edom”? (And, conversely, how would Israel “posses” the Lord?) Perhaps James is quoting loosely, and perhaps more than one source(?). In either case, James applies the Amos text to



the new covenant context, that though Israel was forsaken in the exile God would do far more than just restore the nation, he was going to enlarge the nation to include the Gentiles. (The textual variation between Amos and Acts is not easily resolved, however.)

Also, the phrase, “after this” in Acts 15:16 is sometimes used to argue temporal sequentiality from 15:14, “at first,” said to refer to the inclusion of the Gentiles, and the “after this” is said to refer to a later time period after this inclusion. This fails to retain the unity of the passage which is simply stating that the inclusion of the Gentiles is in accord with the prophets. Comparing the other *difference* between the Amos text and the Acts text should show us that the Hebrew “in that day” and the Greek “after this” should also restrain our conclusions. The main point is that the Gentiles were now included in the covenant as the prophets had repeatedly promised, and he seems to be saying “So, why are you all so surprised?.”

Amos 9:13-15 – descriptive of the Christian church. Yet, it clearly contains imagery of a physical return from exile with its abundant fruitfulness of the land, wine flowing, rebuilding cities, and the promise of a permanent remnant. “Never again” to be uprooted means there will be no more exiles like the one they would experience in Babylon (cf. God’s promise to never flood the earth again, Gen 9). The restoration to the land was only the beginnings of the fulfillment that would be culminated in the Messiah, the land always being a figure for the eternal kingdom. The land-promise was fulfilled in the OT.

➤ See discussions on figures and types, p. 221, 206, 209, 209, 50 in which it was affirmed that the goal of eschatological revelation is Paradise restored.

## 2. Premillennialists: strictly literalist interpretation

Amos 9:11-12 – refers to the Second Advent, because Peter was not addressing conversion of Gentiles, rather circumcision.

Amos 9:13-15 – refers to the millennium, for it describes the conditions that will exist during the mill.

## 3. Other nuances of interpretation:

- Payne: mediating position – Amos 9:11 refers to first Advent, 9:12 refers to the engrafting of Gentiles into the church, 9:9-10 refers to post-exilic situation, and 9:13-15 as millennial prosperity (premill), placing long time period between vv. 11-12 and 13-15.
- Aalders: two separate prophecies (Messianic[Davidic]/Exilic return), two subjects, two time periods (amill).
- Keil: fulfillment in church, land is domain of church.
- Hoekema: new earth, eternal state, literal future (amill).
- Robertson: circumcision is the issue in Acts, Amos 9:13-15 is being fulfilled in present age) as the first stage of God’s consummation activity which is progressive (amill).

As in most difficulties of interpreting prophecy, the time variable is central, as the issue of figurative *versus* literal aspects form the background to that issue. We tend to look for smooth time transitions and sequences in predictive prophecy because we naturally read that way. Also, we tend to want to find one simple application or “meaning.”

➤ See interpreting predictive prophecy and *sensus plenior*, pp. 200, 200, 204, 206.

The poetic beauty of such prophecies can be quickly lost when we wrangle endlessly over their difficulties. Therefore, I recommend we do not get hung up on the details, but strive to see the beauty of the Lord here in his redemptive historical work. The hope of redemption Amos outlines is remarkable in light of the impending exile. It seems reasonable, that Amos spoke Messianically of the eternal hope for all the nations, while as *background* he also saw the restoration of Israel to the land as kind of “deposit” to the eternal promise of redemption. It also is certain to this interpreter that James was discussing (Acts 15:14-17) the inclusion of Gentiles into the covenant-promise in his quoting Amos, and he was not doing so just to address the issue of circumcision, but rather more broadly the ongoing Jewish-Gentile problem made manifest by the new covenant.

## 8. *History of redemption theme for teaching, preaching, counseling*

### a) *Revelation and redemption from YHWH*

#### (1) *Who God is*

- ⊕ The Lord is holy and brings wrath upon those who reject his word and law, and upon those who worship idols.
- ⊕ The Lord is a covenanting God who holds his people accountable, but is also always faithful to his

covenant both in the case of covenant blessings and covenant curses.

- ⊕ The Lord is a revealing Lord, he gives his law and his prophets.
- ⊕ God is creator, sustainer, destroyer, restorer. God is ever-present, yet can absent his blessings, which is akin to his PERSONAL absence. The curse of the covenant is evidence that the living God is not bound to endless longsuffering, indeed he is only so because he is compassionate. God is free as to his mercy, while still bound to his own covenant.

**(2) What God has done**

- ⊕ Created the universe (see “hymnic poems”)
- ⊕ Delivered Israel from Egypt (2:10; 9:7)
- ⊕ Raised up prophets and revealed his will to them (2:11; 3:7).
- ⊕ Created all things (4:13; 5:8-9; 9:5-6)
- ⊕ Judged his people (4:6-9)
- ⊕ Sends plagues (4:10; 7:1-2)
- ⊕ Brings fire (7:4)
- ⊕ Brought enemy nations to punish Israel and Judah (2:13-16; 3:11-15; 5:1-3, 27;6:7, 14; 7:17)

**(3) What God has promised**

- ⊕ God promised to remain faithful to his covenant: and the negative side was the removal of his people from the land of the promise if they were persisted in rebellion. Many years of rebellion through the Judges era and the monarchy/divided kingdom era led to this final desperate state. It could never be said that the Lord was not long-suffering with Israel and Judah, for their judgment came only after a protracted rebellion of the worst kind. It is not simply a question of some few sins but the ongoing apostasy of the nation through idols and social injustice. Considering the impact of false gods on a people reveals that contrary to the life-giving impact of true faith in the Lord, and proper worship, idols bring confusion to all aspects of human life, morally, spiritually, ethically, culturally, socially, economically. One could argue that the greater the number of gods and idols the greater the death and darkness in these areas of human life.

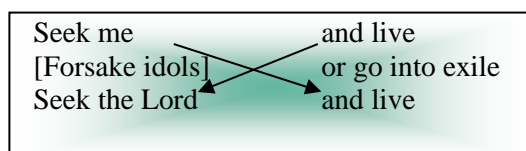
➤ See p. 121f.

- ⊕ Preserves a remnant (9:8) – the remnant is in essence a re-creation of the people, for they are brought to nothing and then restored to the covenant promises. They are preserved in the meantime, in greatly reduced numbers, but the importance matter is not numbers but FAITH. God wants a faithful people, and preserves those who are faithful. This theme has great significance in the history of redemption, for it encapsulates the gospel, that those who remain are those who believe.
- ⊕ Return the exiles to the land (9:14) – the immediate preservation of the people of God was of paramount importance to the prophets. The genetic remnant would return to the land of the promise. Despite debates about the time-frame of this event described in Amos, we can affirm that is was an assurance that God would also preserve a spiritual remnant, that the eternal promise to Abraham would be fulfilled through the countless faithful who believe. Distinguishing the temporal and the eternal blessings discussed in the prophets is practically impossible, for they do seem to overlap. At times it appears Amos is addressing the immediate exiles in Babylon, while also intending this to include Messianic foreshadowing.

**b) Humankind and redemption**

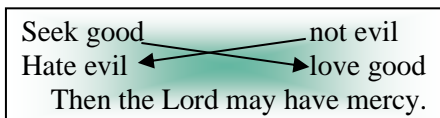
**(1) Worship of redeemed**

Pride is abhorrent to the Lord (6:8), and will not go unpunished. Doing what is right is intrinsically related to proper worship in Amos. There can be no proper religiosity without true obedience that flows from the heart. Religious feasts and festivals will procure nothing from the Lord but judgment, especially when the state of the people’s hearts is corruption. The theme of *seeking the Lord* implies that the Lord will forgive, and relent from his plans of judgment, if they will seek him. Seeking him is the worship of the redeemed; it is more than “searching,” but involves serving and fulfilling his will (5:4-6):



[Forsake idols] or be destroyed

To hate evil and love good will procure life within the covenant of God (5:14-15):



(2) *Work of redeemed*

Building, planting, harvesting, rebuilding are some of the activities in store for the renewed remnant, whether that is a description of the returned exiles, the millennium or the eternal kingdom (9:13-15). However we interpret this reference, we know that the work of the redeemed will be unto the Lord. Amos’s call to prophesy took precedence for a time over his earthy task of shepherding and farming, yet this is not to be taken in some principal fashion as placing such labors lower in God’s sight than those of a prophet. Nevertheless, there is a sense in which the call to prophesy could be deemed a “higher calling.” The work of the redeemed was to be honoring to God, yet the people of God had forsaken even honest labors, being more interested in extravagant leisure and pleasure and cheating the poor.

(3) *Ethics of redeemed*

Ethics had been completely trampled underfoot in Israel and Judah for so long (consider the entire Judges period) that the people of God were virtually indistinguishable from their neighbors. The Canaanization of Israel was complete and the prophet Amos was sent to call the nation back to repentance. This repentance was a gracious offer from the Lord, but as already stressed, it was probably more “rhetorical” than would be a reality. There are many moral and ethical issues addressed by Amos that are contemporary for us.

The principles of the law were to be written on the heart, and the extent of Israel’s hypocrisy (religious externalism and legalism alongside immorality and idolatry) was complete. Genuine obedience to the ethical demands of the law was to come from the heart, yet Israel had replaced the spirit of the law with the works of the flesh and religious pluralism. Their *syncretism* of the ethics of the pagans with the Torah was the harbinger of destruction, for what does Baal have to do with the Lord? Compromise with the priorities of the pagan world involved repression of the word of God (especially the prophetic word, 7:10-15), the adoption of unethical business and social practices, religious formalism and hypocrisy, as well as leaving undone what should be done (so-called “sins of omission”).



E. *Hosea הוֹשֵׁעַ (Israel ~ 750-715)*



With their silver and gold  
they make idols for themselves  
to their own destruction. Hosea 8:4

(left) Hosea from illuminated MS of 14<sup>th</sup> century Bible, 1995-97.<sup>361</sup>

1. *Title, author, and dates*

1. Hosea (“salvation”), son of Beeri, was native to the northern kingdom. He also delivered his message at Bethel (like Amos) and Gilgal, making him a home-missionary. He was married to Gomer. A contemporary of both Amos (760-750) and Isaiah (739-681). Some believe Hosea’s style and metaphors influenced Jeremiah and Ezekiel. About ten years after Amos prophesied to the northern kingdom, Hosea was raised up there. His ministry lasted some forty years. Amos probably wrote his book, and may have written it in Judah after the fall of Samaria, based on numerous references to Judah in the book. Hosea was the only writing prophet from Israel.

<sup>361</sup> From Christian Computer Art <http://www.cumber.edu/acad/rel/hbible/HebrewBible/images/HOSEA1.GIF>

2. Background: Jeroboam II in Israel (782-753) gained control of Damascus and extended the northern kingdom considerably. Subsequently, Hosea witnessed the disastrous decline of Israel through the murder-  
usurptions of kings Zechariah (753-752), Shallum (752), Menahem (752-742), Pekahiah (742-740), and  
Pekah (740-732), and the capture of Hoshea (732-723) by the Assyrian king Shalmanaser V (727-722) who  
also captured Samaria, ending the northern kingdom. In Judah reigned Uzziah[Azariah] (792-740), Jotham  
(750-740), Ahaz (743-715), and Hezekiah (715-686). See more under Isaiah, p. 313.
3. Primary features: the rise of Assyrian domination under Tiglath-Pileser[Pul] (745) in the ANE theater.  
Hosea may allude to the tribute Menahem paid to Tiglath-Pileser (8:8-10; 12:1; 7:6). The alliance of king  
Rezin of Aram-Damascus with king Pekah of Israel. They attack Judah in the Syro-Ephraimite War in 734.  
The Assyrian sponsored counterattack (inspired by king Ahaz of Judah) against N. Israel occurred in 733-  
732.
4. As noted under Amos, there was an upsurge of material prosperity during this period related in part to the  
decline of Syria under Benhadad II, revival of trade, commerce, and culture, which resulted in an  
increasing divide between the rich and the poor. Pagan religion and idolatry were rampant.

## 2. *Critical matters*

1. Critics claim that because there is no reference in Hosea to the fall of Samaria, the kings of Israel,  
Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, or Hoshea, that the references to Hezekiah, Uzziah,  
Jotham, and Ahaz are later glosses.
2. The marriage of Hosea to a prostitute is seen by many as a major moral problem.
3. The references to Judah are seen by many as late redactions to highlight the differences between faithful  
Judah and apostate Israel.
4. Passages of hope are also often assigned to a late redaction because it is claimed they do not reflect the  
prophet's point of view.

## 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

### a) *My people*

- See "covenant-promise," p.  
Hos 1:9 Then the LORD said, "Call him Lo-Ammi, for you are not my people, and I am not your God.  
Hos 1:10 "Yet the Israelites will be like the sand on the seas, which cannot be measured or counted. In the place where it was said  
to them, 'You are not my people,' they will be called 'sons of the living God.'  
Hos 2:1 Say of your brothers, 'My people,' and of your sisters, 'My loved one.'  
Hos 2:23 I will plant her for myself in the land; I will sow her my love to the one I called 'Not my loved one.' I will say to those  
called 'Not my people,' 'You are my people'; and they will say, 'You are my God.'"  
Hos 4:6 my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.  
"Because you have rejected knowledge,  
I also reject you as my priests;  
because you have ignored the law of your God,  
I also will ignore your children.  
Hos 4:8 They feed on the sins of my people  
and relish their wickedness.  
Hos 4:11-12 to prostitution,  
to old wine and new,  
which take away the understanding of my people.  
They consult a wooden idol  
and are answered by a stick of wood.  
A spirit of prostitution leads them astray;  
they are unfaithful to their God.  
Hos 7:1 Whenever I would restore the fortunes of my people,  
whenever I would heal Israel,  
the sins of Ephraim are exposed  
and the crimes of Samaria revealed.  
They practice deceit,  
thieves break into houses,  
bandits rob in the streets;  
Hos 11:7 My people are determined to turn from me.  
Even if they call to the Most High,  
he will by no means exalt them.



The covenant-promise (pp. 25-29) is perhaps the central underlying motif in Hosea, for the covenant-relationship between God and Israel stood in jeopardy and that eternal promise “I will be your God and you will be my people” was to have a temporary, temporal interlude of abandonment to exile.

### **b) They exchanged [their/my] Glory (4:7)**

Ps 106:20 They exchanged their Glory  
for an image of a bull, which eats grass.

Jer 2:11 Has a nation ever changed its gods?  
(Yet they are not gods at all.)

But my people have exchanged their Glory  
for worthless idols.

Hos 4:7 The more the priests increased,  
the more they sinned against me;  
they exchanged their Glory for something disgraceful.

Rom 1:23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

The *extent* of Israel’s sin is the background to all that transpires in Hosea’s prophecy. They did the unthinkable, worshipping created things instead of the Creator. For the people of God to reject him for worship of what is *nothing* was the worst form of apostasy they could have devised.

The glory of God, YHWH, is his glorious being, who he is. To clarify the two terms often collapsed in discussing God’s glory:

**holiness:** the [holy-separate]sinless perfections (purity) of the attributes of God’s glory (his essential being). [This should not be taken to suggest any separation of God’s attributes from his essence.]

**glory:** the [holy-separate]sinless perfections (magnificence) of God’s essential being.

### **c) Out of Egypt I called my son (11:1)**

This phrase occurs some 141 times in the Bible, and thus can be safely said to be a key theological motif!

Matt 2:15 where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

The subject of Egypt occurs repeatedly in Hosea, forming one of the central motifs in regards to a complex of themes: God’s deliverance, the covenant and promises, the plagues, judgment on Egypt, Israel’s apostasy and idolatry, the promised land and exile, and future remnant and return from exile.

**Adoption** is the essential meaning of redemption. The lost children are purchased through adoption. The homeless, the widow, the forsaken, the fatherless have been received into the home of God through his adopting them. See thoughts on home and homelessness (Biblical Theology syllabus). Those who were not a people have become the people of God! In the Messiah, we become the true children of God from all the nations.

- See
- Spiritual Israel: “They are not all Israel who are of Israel . . .” p. 37.

## **4. Major themes**

Judgment on Israel for social injustice/religious formalism/apostasy, justice of God emphasized. Baalism was a serious threat to the faith of Israel, and Hosea proclaimed doom for Israel. On the other hand, Hosea stressed beautifully the love of God for his people Israel, using the powerful harlotry and monogamy illustrations to convey this point. The covenant-promise to know the Lord involved a marriage of God to his people, requiring fidelity of the people. When Israel forgot the Lord for idols, they had broken their troth and committed spiritual adultery (see F. Schaeffer, *The Church Before the Watching World, The Church at the End of the Twentieth Century*, etc.).

The primary motif of Hosea is faithful *marriage*. Marriage is such a powerful image to illustrate the relationship between God and his people, that it is invoked many times in scripture. But, it could be argued that the marriage theme reaches its pinnacle in Hosea’s life of prophetic-enactment.





Hos 13:4 But I am the LORD your God,  
 who brought you out of Egypt.  
 You shall acknowledge no God but me,  
 no Savior except me.

Hos 14:1 Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God.  
 Your sins have been your downfall!

Hosea prophesies strong indictments against Israel, his own people, yet he is always compassionate and personal, never impersonal or heartless. There is a depth of feeling in Hosea akin to Jeremiah.



Allusion to the Abrahamic covenant is significant, for in the midst of his illustrating Israel’s harlotries, he reiterates the promise of God to Abraham:

Gen 22:17 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies,

Hos 1:10 Yet the Israelites will be like the sand on the seashore, which cannot be measured or counted. In the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’

Allusions to Egypt feature in Hosea, rooting the prophet’s message in their historical memories of God’s great love and mighty deliverances, and correlating the themes of spiritual adultery and idolatry with their abandonment of his covenant made in the wilderness. There are at times a double allusion, in that the kings of the divided kingdom who appealed to Egypt for help were severely reprimanded in every allusion to God’s great deliverance from Egypt:



Hos 2:15 in the day she came up out of Egypt.  
 Hos 7:11 senseless— now calling to Egypt, now turning to Assyria.  
 Hos 7:16 be ridiculed in the land of Egypt.  
 Hos 8:13 sins: They will return to Egypt.  
 Hos 9:3 Ephraim will return to Egypt and eat unclean food in  
 Hos 9:6 They escape from destruction, Egypt will gather them, and Memphis  
 Hos 11:1 I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.  
 Hos 11:5 “Will they not return to Egypt and will not Assyria rule over  
 Hos 11:11 me trembling like birds from Egypt, like doves from Assyria.  
 Hos 12:1 and sends olive oil to Egypt. 2 The LORD has a charge  
 Hos 12:9 brought you out of Egypt; I will make you live in ten  
 Hos 12:13 The LORD used a prophet to bring Israel up from Egypt, by a prophet he cared for  
 Hos 13:4 brought you out of Egypt. You shall acknowledge no God

The ridiculous desire of Israel to return to Egypt for help was nothing new, this was one of their first reactions to being the wilderness. Further, longing for Egypt was also

reminiscent of the disastrous episode at Beth Baal Peor, where Israel turned to detestable idolatry:

Num 25 While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, <sup>2</sup> who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate and bowed down before these gods. <sup>3</sup> So Israel joined in worshiping the Baal of Peor. And the LORD’s anger burned against them.

Hos 9:10 “When I found Israel,  
 it was like finding grapes in the desert;  
 when I saw your fathers,  
 it was like seeing the early fruit on the fig tree.  
 But when they came to Baal Peor,  
 they consecrated themselves to that shameful idol  
 and became as vile as the thing they loved.

Thus, Hosea reminds us that the apostasy of Israel had deeper roots than Canaan’s idols.



There is another very interesting allusion to the Exodus era and the revelation of the divine covenantal name YHWH:

Hosea 1:9 Then the LORD said, “Call him Lo-Ammi, for you are not my people, and I am not your God.

The last phrase, “I am not your I AM” לֹא־אֱהִיָּה לְכֶם, echoes Ex 3:14 – “God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM (אֱהִיָּה אֲשֶׁר אֲהִיָּה). This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” There can be nothing more covenantal than to name this covenantal name YHWH revealed to Moses at Sinai.

Also, the essence of the marriage analogy is to illustrate the first commandment in light of the rampant Baalism. This gives us another Exodus/Sinai correlation. They had even gone so far as to call YHWH, Baal:

Hos 2:16-17 “In that day,” declares the LORD,  
 “you will call me ‘my husband’;  
 you will no longer call me ‘my master.’ [Baal]  
 17 I will remove the names of the Baals from her lips;  
 no longer will their names be invoked.

Also related to the images of spiritual adultery are those that suggest turning to Assyria for help is akin to forsaking their first love. The irony is that this would be turned on Israel, for Assyria would be the one to devour Israel:

Hos 8:8-10 Israel is swallowed up;  
 now she is among the nations  
 like a worthless thing.  
 9 For they have gone up to Assyria  
 like a wild donkey wandering alone.  
 Ephraim has sold herself to lovers.  
 10 Although they have sold themselves among the nations,  
 I will now gather them together.  
 They will begin to waste away  
 under the oppression of the mighty king.

---

Israel’s obligation was covenantal faithfulness and love to YHWH and knowledge of YHWH:

- ⊕ *Covenantal faithfulness* (חֶסֶד) in Hosea: Hos 2:21; 4:1; 6:4, 6; 10:12; 12:7.
- ⊕ *To know* (יָדַעַ) in Hosea: Hos 2:10, 22; 5:3, 4, 9; 6:3; 6:3; 7:9; 8:2, 4; 9:7; 11:3; 13:4, 5; 14:10.

Israel’s inclinations to faithlessness and rejection of YHWH:

- ⊕ *Prostitution/harlotry* (זָנָה, זָנִינִים) in Hos 1:2; 2:4, 6, 7; 3:3; 4:10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18; 5:3; 4, 9:1.
- ⊕ *Adultery* [נָאֵר] in Hos 3:1; 4:2, 4:13, 14, 7:4.
- ⊕ Also, *foreign alliances*

“The detailed description of sexual activities indicates that the sexual language had a double function: it served as a metaphor for defection from Yahweh but it also referred to sexual behaviour that was part of the Canaanite cult.”<sup>364</sup>

Hosea reiterates the ideal of the covenant expressed in the Pentateuch, and which is at the very heart of the law of God, that is to *know* God and his law (to have them written on the heart), practicing mercy implies exercising *true faith* and practice:

Hos 6:6 For I desire mercy, not sacrifice,  
 and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.

Hosea presents the option of *returning to YHWH*:

**Return** (שׁוּב) draws on the illustration of Hosea’s wife who returns to him: Hos 2:9, 11; 3:5; 4:9; 5:4, 15; 6:1, 11; 7:10, 16; 8:13; 9:3; 11:5, 9; 12:3, 7, 10, 15; 14:2, 3, 5, 8. This returning is in essence the OT conception of *repentance*. Dorsey considers the entire structure of Hosea to rest on this word of returning (see 6:11-7:16, pp. 298-302). Dorsey notes that closing the book on this note “suggests that the book’s central purpose is to encourage the audience to repent. Although Israel has been utterly unfaithful to the Lord, he still invites them to return to him and be forgiven.”<sup>365</sup> Suggestive also with this motif of turning is the promised *turning away* of the wrath of YHWH (14:4[5]).

Note: *return* (שׁוּב) appears most frequently in Jeremiah (111x), and, in order of frequency, many times in Psalms, Genesis, Ezekiel, Kings and Chronicles, and Isaiah. All expressions of penitence are summed up in the word שׁוּב. It comprises the complimentary polar principles of *turning from* sin and *turning back* to the Lord, while including the notion of the Lord *turning from* his wrath. It is interesting linguistic background to remember also the parallel theme of *returning from exile* that features in the prophets (Ezr 2:1; Neh 7:6; Isa 10:22; Jer 22:10).

<sup>364</sup> N.E.L. Bostrum, “Hosea,” *New International Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, p. 239.

<sup>365</sup> Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, p. 272.

Hos 14:4 “I will heal their waywardness [מְשׁוּבָהֶם]  
and love them freely,  
for my anger has turned away [שָׁב] from them.

A synonym for שׁוּב is the word נָחַם (*nḥm*) which illustrates God’s relenting from judgment and wrath (Hos 13:14; 11:8; Jer 18:8, 10; Amos 7:3; Jon 3:10):

Hos 11:8 How can I give you up, Ephraim?  
How can I hand you over, Israel?  
How can I treat you like Admah?  
How can I make you like Zeboiim?  
My heart is changed [נִדְּפַרְךָ from הִפְךָ] within me;  
all my compassion is aroused.  
[עָלַי לִבִּי יִתְדַר נִכְמְרֶךָ נְחוּמֶיךָ;  
[כִּמְר - to become tenderhearted or warm ]

What the Lord tells Israel, in the warmest terms in Hebrew, is that “all my heart is gathered and warmed and compassionate . . .”

We can be fairly confident that Hosea’s message did not get through to his contemporaries: the response of Israel was thankless infidelity.



## 5. Major prophecies

Payne claims there are 28 predictions in Hosea which involve 111 of his 197 verses (*Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 396f.).

- ⊕ Desolation of Ephraim, collapse of Samaria.
- ⊕ Exile of Israel.
- ⊕ Restoration of Judah and Israel.
- ⊕ Messiah is son, savior
- ⊕ Engrafting of the Gentiles.
- ⊕ A new covenant of righteousness.
- ⊕ The destruction of death and the resurrection.

## 6. Outline, structure/composition

The style of Hosea is mixed in regards to form, for some of the poetry in chapters 1-3 is not typical Hebrew parallelism, while some have claimed chapters 4-14 the most poetic of all prophetic texts. There have been a variety of solutions to these distinctives.<sup>366</sup>

<sup>366</sup> See Bullock for elucidation, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 87.

**TABLE 10**  
**Predictive Cycles in Hosea 1-3<sup>11</sup>**

	<i>Hosea 1-2:1</i> <i>Extent of the kingdom</i>	<i>Hosea 2:2-23</i> <i>Character of the kingdom</i>		<i>Hosea 3</i> <i>Process of the kingdom</i>
Predeportation sin II K 15:8-12	1-4a Whoredom from God Vengeance on Jehu's dynasty	2 Whoredom to be put away	8 Gifts used for Baal	1 God loves Israel despite their other gods
Assyrian punishment II K 17:16-18	4b-9 Israel to cease Judah saved, 701 B.C.	3-5 Slay her with thirst	9-13 Her mirth to cease	
Exilic repentance Ezek 18:30-32		6-7 Her way hedged, so return to Husband	14-17 Baal taken away	
Present kingdom Rom 9:24-26	10 Numerous children Sons of God		The <i>b'rith</i> : 19-20 Thou shalt know God	2-4 I bought her Israel kingless
Future kingdom Rom 11:25-27	1:11-2:1 Judah with Israel under One Head		18 Break the sword	5 Israel return to David their king

11. J. B. Payne, ETSP (1954), 21.

(above) Predictive Cycles in Hosea<sup>367</sup>

Payne says there are two sections:

- 1) symbolical prophecies in Hos 1-3
- 2) direct prophecies in Hos 4-14.

The first three chapters show corresponding cycles, but the latter chapters are much less patterned in organization, stressing themes of sin, judgment, and restoration.

<sup>367</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, p. 395.

(right) The Palistrophe of Hosea  
1-3. Bullock calls Hos 1-3 a  
*palistrophe* (three part sandwich),  
while Hos 4-14 is an expansion of  
the prophecy of Hos 1-3:<sup>368</sup>

- A (1:2-9) Hosea's marriage and birth of children**
- B (1:10-2:1) Renewal of covenant  
Cancellation of judgment  
(children's names changed)**
- C (2:2-4) Yahweh's judgment on Israel  
using the imagery of harlotry**
- D (2:5-8) Indictment and Judgment  
*because Israel does not  
know the Lord***
- C<sub>1</sub> (2:9-13) Yahweh's judgment on Israel,  
using the terms of the Baal  
fertility cult**
- B<sub>1</sub> (2:14-23) Renewal of covenant  
Cancellation of judgment  
(children's names changed)**
- A<sub>1</sub> (3:1-5) Reunion of Hosea and his adulterous wife**

This pattern does justice to the theology of the book as a whole because it identifies the fundamental sin of Israel to be the lack of knowledge of the Lord. As we shall discuss later, that is a foundational theme of the prophecy, the theme, in fact, with which the second part of the book opens (4:1). <sup>Bullock, p. 93.</sup>

(right) The Prophets Hosea and Jonah by Raphael 1510,  
National Art Gallery Washington DC

Dorsey acknowledges the longstanding difficulties with the structure of Hos 4-14, yet proposes a sevenfold structure, comprising seven smaller units, that unifies the material. The center is Hos 6:11-7:16 which highlights that fact that despite the efforts of YHWH, Israel has not turned back to him. According to Dorsey, the symmetry of the book underscores the message that Israel has *refused to return* (שוב) to her husband.<sup>369</sup> (The prophecy is thus structured to move the audience towards repentance.) This is a compelling thematic center, regardless of how one may differ with the details of Dorsey's outline.

➤ See *return* (שוב), p. 291.

## 7. *Exposition and the history of redemption themes*

### a) *The Lord instructs Hosea to marry: Hosea's wife of harlotry: Hos 1-3*

*Hosea's marriage is considered:*

1. A prophetic vision or dream (M. Maimonides).
2. A parable or allegory (Calvin, Kimchi, Keil and Delitzsch[see fn. 371]).
3. A stage play (Y. Kauffmann<sup>370</sup>)
4. A literal marriage to a harlot, conveying prophetic symbolism.



<sup>368</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 93.

<sup>369</sup> Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, pp. 271-271.

<sup>370</sup> Kaufmann, *Religion of Israel*, pp. 368-69.

5. A literal marriage to a woman who became a harlot, conveying prophetic symbolism.

Keil and Delitzsch call Hosea's marriage a "parable" and "poetical fiction," leaving unanswered the question of exactly how the prophet could have in any way enacted or conveyed this act if it was symbolical and not literal.<sup>371</sup> It also poses the problem of what to do with the superfluous details of the historical narrative (eg. Gomer's father and the price Hosea paid to buy her back). Must all the apparently historical aspects be spiritualized, and if so what are they going to mean? That is, the command to take a wife is explicit and literal, and can be construed in no other way. He is not told to go and act it out symbolically, as some suggest today, in some kind of "stage play."<sup>372</sup> There is simply no suggestion of this in the text.

"The literal interpretation, although perhaps offensive to our moral decorum, does justice to the personal involvement of the prophet in his message."<sup>373</sup>

*Diverse interpretations of Hosea 1-3:*<sup>374</sup>

1. Different events involving different women.
2. Different events involving the same woman.
3. Parallel events which have two interpretations of the same event.

It can be proposed that the "two accounts" complement each other.

*Reflections on the issue of Hosea's marriage to a harlot:*

The complexities of the views put forth to vindicate the nature of God, prophet, and scripture, when it is suggested that Hosea was commanded to marry a harlot, have created a long history of unfortunate debate. Unless appeal is made to the explicit teaching of antecedent and subsequent scripture it is difficult to come to final conclusions, because the text of Hosea alone leaves many questions unanswered. Underlying much of the debate seems to be the idea that the marriage of a prophet to a harlot is morally reprehensible, and that adultery altogether precluded the option of marriage. An examination of scripture makes it very difficult to substantiate any suggestion that Hosea's marriage to a harlot was against the Law of God for a prophet, even if it was unlawful for the Levitical priests. There is also no evidence to support the suggestion that an adulterous harlot could never marry. In fact, though all forms of adultery were expressly forbidden in the Law, there are numerous examples of adulterers who in fact did marry and even played a vital role in Israel's history: eg., Rahab the harlot, King David, Solomon (including other bigamous figures) to name a few. And, if in formulating an opinion on this matter the concept of marrying a harlot is morally reprehensible, what shall we do with the fact that this seems to be the very principle God is trying to reveal to Israel: *i.e.*, that he has and will again take back his adulterous bride Israel? There of course was nothing pleasant or desirable intended in this symbolic portrayal of marriage to a harlot. Indeed, its very design was crafted to show the horror of Israel's spiritual harlotries and the awful necessity of God's complete abandonment of his unfaithful bride. Nevertheless, the story has a hopeful reversal despite all the odds, in which God mercifully receives back his bride. This latter, as pictured in Hosea's marriage, is hopeful even if it is not to be taken as a preferable or desirable state of affairs for Israel. It is thus concluded that Hosea married a harlot (1:2) who left him after bearing him three children until he bought her back (3:1-3). Contrary to much scholarly opinion I suggest that the various aspects of exegesis will confirm this view.

Gomer was a literal woman and a real harlot, otherwise the reality and seriousness of Israel's breach of faith would lose all its forcefulness. If the narrative is taken as allegorical it not only loses its historicity, it would also force an unnatural reading of the text by spiritualizing all the smaller details such as the fact that Gomer was named and had a father. The analogy rests in the historical fact of his marriage to a particular harlot and the bearing of real children. The prophet is demonstrating through symbolic historical acts the spiritual reality of Israel's idolatry. The simple 'figure' of a marriage to a harlot would not point out the reality of human adultery (although that was undoubtedly an aspect of the idolatries), but rather the reverse which shows a literal marriage pointing to the spiritual reality of spiritual adultery. This was in fact the very reason given to Hosea in marrying a harlot: "because the land is full of the vilest adultery in departing from the Lord" (1:2). As noted, the book is permeated with the theme of marriage and adultery, and it does no justice to the text to make one figure spiritualize another figure.

<sup>371</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament: Minor Prophets*, vol. X (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), p. 36.

<sup>372</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 88. This is the view of Kaufmann.

<sup>373</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 88.

<sup>374</sup> See Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, pp. 88-92.

The ambiguities in the text between 1:2 and 3:1-3 have led many scholars, who consider this a literal historical narrative, to wrongly conclude that “a wife of whoredoms” or “harlotry” simply “intimated to the prophet what Gomer was going to be.”<sup>375</sup> This suggestion is nothing more than an argument from silence, and is not supported by the language of the text. The word in 1:2 (זְנוּנִים) translated as “adulterous wife” (NIV), “wanton” (NEB), “harlotry” (NAS, RSV), and “wife of whoredoms” (KJV), as well as “children of harlotry” (זְנוּנִים זְנוּנֵי) preclude such a conclusion. It would also fail to serve as an apt analogy to the present continuing sense of Israel’s apostasy contrasted with the Lord’s faithfulness which the prophet was commanded to portray by marrying an undesirable woman. Also, the following title for Gomer of “adulteress” (זִמְנָאֵת) in 3:1 indicates that she had *become* an “adulteress” (NEB, NIV, RSV, KJV). If she had gone from being a woman with potential for becoming a harlot why is she called a harlot in 2:1 and then an adulteress in 3:1? Following their analogy that “harlot” intimates what she would become, when the text states that she became an “adulteress,” would again make impossible the analogy of the Lord “marrying” the harlot Israel and buying her back when she apostatized. Further, there are no textual grounds for suggesting that the woman/wife in 3:1 is not Gomer the harlot now become an adulteress.



(right) Hosea DSS Scroll<sup>376</sup>

There is also the religious context that would give support to the literal interpretation of Hosea’s marriage to Gomer. That is, if there is to be any substantial analogy between his marriage and the covenant relationship of God and Israel. As noted, it is widely accepted that the idolatry of Israel was connected directly with the Baal cults of Canaan and that this was a fertility cult whose “primary goal was the guarantee of a good harvest, and the renewal of all nature.”<sup>377</sup> This idolatry of Israel and Judah was largely Canaanite Baalism which had a “sphere of influence including agriculture, animal husbandry, and human sexuality.”<sup>378</sup> Baalism had a major introduction into Israel through King Ahab’s marriage to Jezebel, and later in Judah when Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, married King Jehoram. Baalism is referred to in Hosea in connection with these things: Hos 2:8 (fertility of land); 2:13 (prostitution); 9:10 (sexual immorality; Nu 25:1-3); 11:2 (sacrifice); 13:1 (human sacrifice). The central image of importance is the *husband-wife* picture. This image of the husband who has been abandoned by his fickle wife serves as the spine of the entire narrative, and is interwoven with numerous references to fruitfulness in regards to children which serve to point out the barrenness of following Baal contrasted with the fruitfulness of serving the Lord. This analogy retains its force *only* if Gomer was a real woman and was connected with the real sin of Israel’s apostasy.

There are also numerous examples of agricultural images of grain, wine, bread, grapes, figs which serve to illustrate the contrast between Baal’s inability to provide and the Lord’s ability. These images of fruitfulness are used to portray the spiritual realities that the Lord wanted them to see: that they must turn from the barrenness and death of Baalism: “Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground” (10:12). There are also abundant references to the earth and land intend to demonstrate that Baal is in fact no god at all and that only the Lord is actually Lord of creation. If these images taken from the concrete world of

<sup>375</sup> William Kelly, *Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Prophets* (Ill: Bible Truth Publishers, 1874), p. 4. And more recently, F.I. Anderson and D.N. Freedman, *The Anchor Bible: Hosea* (New York: Doubleday, 1980), p. 116 (“...cset zenunim describes a wife who become promiscuous, not a prostitute or promiscuous woman who become a wife...” “...the terms emphasize the woman’s character rather than her activity,” *ibid.*, p. 159). And Walter Kaiser, “Preference should probably be given to that historical view that argues that Gomer was *not* a harlot when Hosea was instructed to marry her” (*Toward Old Testament Ethics*, p. 280).

<sup>376</sup> From <http://www.ibiblio.org/expo/deadsea.scrolls.exhibit/full-images/hosea-b.gif>

<sup>377</sup> Ralph L. Martin, “Major Motifs of Hosea,” *Southwestern Journal of Theology: Studies in Hosea*, vol. 18, no. 1 (1975), p. 22. Also, Gunner Ostborn, *Yahweh and Baal* (Stockholm: Lund, 1956), p. 79 (the contrast alluded to in Hosea of “divine marriage” inherent in Baalism and other ancient Near Eastern religions, “divine marriage is the marriage between the chief god and his female counterpart the goddess”). See also, J.N. Boo Heflin, “The World of Hosea,” *Southwestern Journal of Theology: Studies in Hosea*, vol. 18, no. 1, p. 20 (Contrast of Israel with Canaanite practices of sacred prostitution used to “manipulate their gods” and their concept of cyclical nature in which the gods were trapped).

<sup>378</sup> Howard F. Vos, “Baal,” *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*: “In order to bring Baal up from the realm of Mot and thus insure initiation of the fertile rainy season, the Canaanites engaged in orgiastic worship that included human sacrifice as well as sexual rites (Jer 7:31; 19:4-6). Sacred prostitutes evidently participated in the autumnal religious ritual.”



daily life were taken as purely figurative, as some take Hosea's marriage to Gomer, then we must again ask at what point do we stop the rampage of spiritualization of historical narrative detail?

To conclude, the message of the book of Hosea hinges on this question of Hosea's marriage to Gomer: will Israel and Judah return to the Lord and put away their Baals, or must the Lord punish them and then buy them back from slavery? This message is clear only if we allow that Gomer was really a harlot who in God's sovereign plan became Hosea's wife and then gave herself back to her slavish life of harlotries. The birth of sons to the couple also should be mentioned as part of that plan to emphatically illustrate this principle of fruitfulness from the Lord, yet also that punishment must come for the past sins of the house of Jezreel as well as for the present sins of Israel.

### b) *The Lord's charge against Israel: Israel's harlotries: Hos 4-5*

The law-suit (רִיב) in 4:1 that YHWH announces against his people defines the covenantal context:

- There is no knowledge of God in the land (4:1).
- So, let no-one else bring a law-suit (רִיב) (4:4).

The Lord is the only adequate judge, and he brings his charges against his covenant-people like a lawyer or judge in a courtroom.

The catalogue of sins here is comparable to Sodom and Gomorrah's, or pre-Flood sins: "Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence" (Gen 6:11):

**Cursing, lying, murder, stealing, adultery, spiritual ignorance, corrupt priests, prostitution, drunkenness, idolatry on high places, arrogance, religious hypocrisy.**

*Prostitution* theme in this section: some 10x in Hos 4-5 there is a reference to their harlotry

➤ See above Harlotry and adultery, p. 291.

The *whirlwind* (צָרָר רִיחַ, Hos 4:19, see also 8:7 below, p. 303) Assyrians who were sought for help, instead of the Lord, would be the ones who turn against Israel to tear them to pieces.

Perhaps there is a play on words in 4:19-5:4, in which the *wind* is used to describe the whirlwind (רִיחַ, 4:19) that will sweep them away, as well as the *spirit of prostitution* (רוּחַ, 5:4) that is in their hearts. Instead of the spirit of the law being written on their hearts, there is corruption (see spirit of the law, p. 72). This same spirit of prostitution will bring the winds of judgment from the very source of their prostitutions. This is suggested repeatedly in Hosea:

Hos 4:12 They consult a wooden idol  
and are answered by a stick of wood.  
A spirit of prostitution leads them astray;  
they are unfaithful to their God.

Hosea 4:19 A whirlwind will sweep them away,  
and their sacrifices will bring them shame.

Hosea 5:4 Their deeds do not permit them  
to return to their God.  
A spirit of prostitution is in their heart;  
they do not acknowledge the LORD.

Hos 8:7 They sow the wind  
and reap the whirlwind.  
The stalk has no head;  
it will produce no flour.  
Were it to yield grain,  
foreigners would swallow it up.

Hos 9:7 [NRSV The days of punishment have come,  
the days of recompense have come;  
Israel cries, "The prophet is a fool,  
the man of the spirit is mad!"  
Because of your great iniquity, your hostility is great.

Hos 12:1 Ephraim feeds on the wind;  
he pursues the east wind all day  
and multiplies lies and violence.  
He makes a treaty with Assyria



and sends olive oil to Egypt.

Hos 13:15 even though he thrives among his brothers.  
An east wind from the LORD will come,  
blowing in from the desert;  
his spring will fail  
and his well dry up.  
His storehouse will be plundered  
of all its treasures



The most devastating news in this section is the announcement that the *presence of YHWH* will be removed (5:6, 15). (This becomes a prominent theme in the exilic prophet Ezekiel.) The covenant curse reaches its apex in with the “absence” of God from his covenant-people. The entire history of redemption involves the restoration of humankind to the presence of God, the entire sanctuary and religious life of Israel centers on restoring the presence of God *via* sacrifice and ritual-atonement, the Messianic promises all point to the restoration of the presence of God, and the Final Revelation of God will be the revelation of the glorious presence of God in Christ in the new Jerusalem in the new heaven of his presence. Thus, for Israel to be told that God will withdraw from them is sobering and devastating news. Even though they “seek” him, he will not be found, unless they first *repent*.

The next section (6:1-4f.) outlines this theme with a parody on false repentance that is often taken as a genuine prayer by commentators (see “praise song” based on Hosea 6:1-4). I will propose that this “prayer of repentance” is really nothing but a “prayer of pretense.” These two sections are illustrative of the main theme of the prophet: return to the Lord on his terms, not your own, and he might forgive. Therefore, I will more extensively discuss them in the following.



**c) *The Lord’s response to Israel: Hos 6:1-13:16***

**(1) *Repentance, not pretense, and mercy, not sacrifice: Hos 6:1-***

16

(a) *Israel's prayer of pretense: comparison of Hos 6:1-3 and 14:1-6*

**Hosea 6: 1-4**

1. Come, and let us  
**return** unto the LORD:  
 he will heal us; he will bind us up.  
 he will raise us up,  
 we shall live in his sight.  
 Then [if] his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us, as the rain,  
 as the latter [and] former rain unto the earth.

2. will he revive us:  
 he will raise us up,  
 we shall live in his sight.  
 shall we know, we follow on to know the LORD:  
 his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us, as the rain,  
 as the latter [and] former rain unto the earth.

3. after two days  
 on the third day  
 and

4. O Ephraim,  
 O Judah,  
 what shall I do unto thee?  
 what shall I do unto thee?  
 for your goodness  
 [is] as a morning cloud,  
 and as the early dew it goeth away.

**Hosea 14:1-6**

1. O Israel,  
**return** unto the LORD thy God;  
 for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.

2. Take with you words, and  
 turn to the LORD:  
 say unto him,  
 Take away all iniquity and  
 receive [us] graciously: so will we render the fruit of our lips.

3. Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses:  
 neither will we say any more to the work of our  
 hands, [Ye] are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.

4. I will heal their backsliding,  
 I will love them freely:  
 for mine anger is turned away from him.

5. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.  
 His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive  
 tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

6.

A comparison of these two passages strikingly reveals the extent of Israel's hypocrisy and presumption as well as the Lord's tremendous long-suffering and compassion. A cursory reading of these two passages reveals a remarkable correspondence of theme, vocabulary, imagery, and structure. Nevertheless, despite the surprising conclusion of many scholars that the prayer in chapter six is genuine, I suggest that the comparison of these passages is essentially a contrast of opposites. Although the correspondences are undeniable, the contexts and the language reveal very different attitudes.

Preceding 6:1-4 there is a warning of impending judgment against Israel for their "spirit of prostitution" and their failure to "acknowledge the Lord" (5:3). The prophet also accuses them of "arrogance" and "unfaithfulness," and says that the Lord will come like a "lion...and tear them to pieces . . ." The following verses must be thus read in light of chapter five:

1. “Come, let us return to the Lord.” There is a surprising touch of irony here, that immediately after being told that they stand under judgment, and that the Lord “has withdrawn himself from them” (5:6), that they presume to be free to “return?” There is no coincidence that immediately before this the Lord had just said that he was going back to his place “until they admit their guilt.” An examination of the following verses (6:1-3) shows no intimation of Israel admitting their guilt, but in fact the converse is evidenced in their blame shifting. The need for a “return” is itself not in question. A comparison with 14:1 shows that a return is necessary, but the contrast of manner and motive is stark, as will be seen.

6:1a He has torn to pieces  
but he will heal us;  
he has injured us  
but he will bind up our wounds

The first clear indication that the manner in which Israel is entertaining a return to the Lord is on their own terms is seen in this part of the verse: it is a masterpiece of false repentance through blame shifting the cause of their plight to the Lord himself. And it is done cleverly, using the very words of the Lord to cover their sin. It is the Lord that they claim has hurt them “like a lion,” but they fail to include the previous context was Ephraim’s turning to Assyria for help, and the Lord’s subsequent promise to carry them off to captivity (5:13-14). It should be noted that the corresponding verse 14:4 uses the same word (רפף) “to heal” but with very different meanings: in 6:2 the healing is a restoration from what the Lord had done to them, but in 14:4 the healing is a restoration from the “backsliding” (apostasy) of Israel which has undisputable connotations of forgiveness.<sup>379</sup> This phrase in 6:1 is perhaps the most presumptuous of all, in that the motivation for returning is to be healed (not forgiven). Here is where the two passages under consideration radically part ways: one is full of presumption and lack of repentance and the other is truly a humble exhortation to pray for forgiveness:

14:1 Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God.  
Your sins have been your downfall!

2 Take words with you and return to the Lord.  
Say to him: forgive all our sins  
and receive us graciously, that  
we may offer the fruit of our lips.

The way the cohortative ה is translated in 14:1 with “O Israel” reflects the reverence present in this section with the lack thereof in 6:1 as simply “Come, and let us . . .” There is also the conspicuous presence of “your God” in 14:1 and simply “the Lord” in 6:1. But the real divergence of meaning between these passages is seen in the remarkable absence in chapter six of the one small word “sin,” and its centrality in chapter fourteen. The reason Israel needed healing was not because the Lord had hurt them but because their sin had been their downfall. The words of the Israelites in 6:1-3 show no repentance, but rather impertinence:

6:2 After two days he will revive us;  
on the third day he will restore us,  
that we may live in his presence.

Not only is there the effrontery that the Lord could be blamed, there is here the assumption that he will restore them to his presence. But, there is no apparent awareness of the seriousness of their condition, nor of the reasons for their present abandonment by God. How could they plan to live in the presence of a holy God without repentance of sin?<sup>380</sup>

As noted, some interpreters consider the passage in Hos 6 as a sincere prayer of repentance.<sup>381</sup> Such conclusions may have their arguments that should be dealt with at greater length to show their inadequacy, but for here it will have to suffice to rely on the points established already that would clearly contradict those conclusions. The contexts immediately following both passages are also very significant and must be considered in determining the meaning of each passage. In 6:4 there is the exasperated question from the Lord following Israel’s unsatisfactory proposal to return to the Lord, “O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?” (KJV). The imagery of the dew will be discussed below, but it also connects the passage for those who might suggest the prophet has shifted to a new context: Israel assumes the Lord will come like rain, yet the Lord

<sup>379</sup> Other occurrences of רפף, to heal Ho 5:13; 6:1; 7:1; 11:3; 14:4.

<sup>380</sup> There is a “praise song” taken from this text which assumes a genuine prayer is being offered. Harmless in itself, such careless regard for contexts sets a dangerous hermeneutical precedent.

<sup>381</sup> I was amazed to find that even in a book on biblical exegesis this passage is taken as an oracle of “one of several promises of restoration found in Hosea . . . as a reminder that Yahweh will never completely and finally destroy his people” (Douglass Stuart, *Old Testament Exegesis: A Primer for Students and Pastors* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980), pp. 66-67.) The amazing thing about this blunder is that it immediately follows a section on the importance of seeing every passage within its biblical context, and he then proceeds to exegete the passage with no regard for its biblical context! That author is not alone in his assessment. Grace I. Emmerson calls this a “penitential song clearly intend as a response to the threat of Yahweh’s withdrawal in 5:15.” Despite this claim, she nevertheless later states that the passage is “more probably to be regarded as the superficial penitence of a complacent nation” (*Hosea: An Israelite Prophet in Judean Perspective*, JSOSS, 28, 1984, p. 71). Also, Keil and Delitzsch call it an “address by the prophet in the name of the Lord to the people, whom the Lord had smitten or sent into exile” (*Minor Prophets*, p. 94).

says that their love disappears like the dew. But in 14:8, after receiving the beautiful prayer and repentance of Israel and promising to be like the dew to Israel, the Lord says, “O Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you.”(NASB) The contexts show that the Lord did not receive the pseudo-repentance in chapter six, but he would receive true repentance as described in chapter fourteen.

The second conspicuously absent factor in chapter six is any mention of the **nature** of their sin: *i.e.*, *idolatry* and *foreign alliances*. Nevertheless this confession constitutes the heart of the prayer in chapter fourteen: 14:3 Assyria cannot save us;

We will not mount war-horses.  
We will never again say, ‘Our gods’  
to what our own hands have made . . .

This was the prayer the prophet was telling Israel would be acceptable, and it contrasts vividly with the exhortation in chapter six which has no mention of idolatry or foreign alliances. Again it should be remembered that the sin of Ahab’s turning to Assyria, and Jezebel’s Baalism were the two main factors for Israel’s punishment and exile. Unless they recognized this they could not “return.” The prophet repeats this theme throughout the book that Israel could not return because they would not subject themselves to his covenant-conditions:

Hos 5:4 Their deeds do not permit them  
to return to their God.  
A spirit of prostitution is in their heart;  
they do not acknowledge the LORD.

Hosea 6:3 foolishly proceeds in boldness to urge Israel to “Let us know, let us press on to know the Lord”

Let us acknowledge the Lord;  
let us press on to acknowledge him.

Once again the *total lack of sorrow for sin*, or even any indication that there is a problem, is manifested in the indication that they could return to “know” the Lord without real repentance of their sin. They reduced the omnipotent holy Creator-God to the level of their idols. They had a stiff-necked refusal to do what was necessary:

There can be no knowing the Lord according to man’s standards,  
and that is precisely what Israel was attempting as clearly expressed in 6:1-3.

The last sections of these two passages conclude with contrasting portraits of the Lord which flow out of the previous exhortations. Perhaps it should be mentioned that the exhortation in chapter six does not in any sense even have a suggested prayer within it as does the exhortation in chapter fourteen. It is another factor in what produces quite different fruit in these two passages: the first one makes what appears to be a harmless assertion that the Lord’s “going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain” (KJV).

6:3b As surely as the sun rises, he will appear;  
he will come to us like the winter rains,  
like the spring rains that water the earth.

In the context of chapter fourteen this could be a beautiful picture of God’s loving return to Israel, but here in this context it becomes the capstone of arrogance upon the tower of Israel’s ignorance. Certainly the Lord is as constant as the morning and the spring rain, but the Lord turns his back upon Israel by ironically pointing out that their love is itself as temporal as the morning mist and “the early dew that disappears” (6:4; 13:3). Then he goes on to say that this was the very reason he had rejected them and “slain them by the words” of his mouth. they lacked true love for the Lord, and they lacked true knowledge of the Lord: “I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, and in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings” (6:6 NASB). Because they lacked both loyalty and knowledge, the Lord would not heal them nor return to them. In fact, the one thing they should expect to remain constant was his wrath against their unrepented sin: “You are destroyed, O Israel, because you are against me...” (13:9).

The last section of the passage in chapter fourteen has quite a different understanding of God from what we have seen in chapter six. The portrait given of God here is in fact given by God himself, who speaks in the first person in answer to Israel’s prayer for forgiveness for all their iniquities.

14:4 I will heal their waywardness  
and love them freely,  
for my anger has turned away from them.  
I will be like the dew to Israel;  
he will blossom like a lily.

The **need** for healing conveyed in 6:1 was itself true, but as said, the **context** makes all the difference in our interpretation. Where we see the corresponding passage in 14:4 differ from 6:1 in meaning is not in regard to Israel needing *healing*, it is in the *manner* in which that healing is presumed in each case. (That is, the healing of 6:1 is in principle desirable, but the motive and manner do not allow for it.)

In 14:4 the promise comes from God himself to heal their “waywardness” (apostasy) not the wounds inflicted upon them due to their own sinful action. That is, he will forgive them of their sin when they come to him

with the appropriate “words” of repentance and the following actions of repentance from their evil deeds. It will only be then, when their transient love, which is like the morning mist (6:4), becomes repentant love, that the Lord’s love will be as dew that waters them and causes them to grow profusely once again (14:5-6).

The *spirit of true repentance, religion, and faith*, involves the Spirit of God writing the law of God on the heart. There must be rebirth, not just externalization of the law. “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power” (2 Ti 3:5) is a dangerous place to be. Bad theology mixed with religious formalism is always a recipe for disaster.

The Lord’s answer in chapter fourteen beautifully parallels by contrast and contradiction the faulty conclusions expressed in chapter six made by unrepentant Israel. There can be no blessing unless the Lord’s anger is turned away; there can be no “return” to the Lord unless there is repentance from sin; there can be no spring rains of fruitfulness poured out unless they are given in accord with his holy character. And, when he does come to his people as the rain, we can be sure he will withhold nothing from them as is expressed exquisitely in 14:5b-6:

Like a cedar of Lebanon  
he will send down his roots;  
his young shoots will grow.  
His splendor will be like an olive tree,  
his fragrance like a cedar of Lebanon.

**(b) Mercy not sacrifice: Hos 6:4-7:16**

After Israel’s pretentious prayer, the Lord asks “What can I do with you, Ephraim? What can I do with you, Judah?” (6:4). This should close the question as to the genuineness of their prayer in 6:1-3, for he then proceeds to catalogue some very serious sins and the important redemptive-historical principle of the spirit of the law: “I desire mercy, not sacrifice” (6:6). The theme of the spirit of the law *versus* the letter of the law is told in sum with the theme that God requires *mercy* (covenantal love, רַחֲמִים) and knowledge of God (יְדִיעוּת אֱלֹהִים) in obedience, for sacrifice and ritual without the spirit of the law written on the heart is but dead legalism. Both mercy and knowledge are at the heart of the covenant promise to know his people and to be their God. See mercy and knowledge, p. 291.

1 Sam 15:22 But Samuel replied:  
“Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices  
as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD?  
To obey is better than sacrifice,  
and to heed is better than the fat of rams.

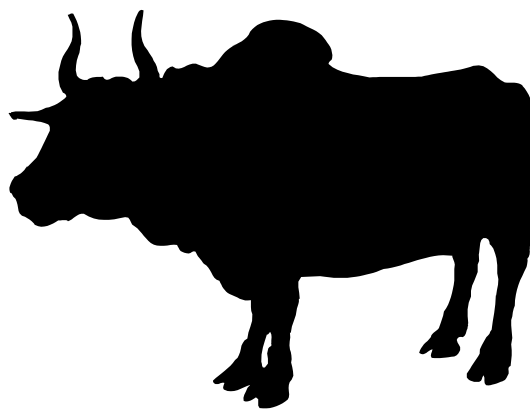
Mic 6:8 He has showed you, O man, what is good.  
And what does the LORD require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy  
and to walk humbly with your God.

Isa 1:11 “The multitude of your sacrifices—  
what are they to me?” says the LORD.  
“I have more than enough of burnt offerings,  
of rams and the fat of fattened animals;  
I have no pleasure  
in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.

Ps 40:6-8 Sacrifice and offering you did not desire,  
but my ears you have pierced;  
burnt offerings and sin offerings  
you did not require.  
7 Then I said, “Here I am, I have come—  
it is written about me in the scroll.  
8 I desire to do your will, O my God;  
your law is within my heart.”

Ps 50:8-9,14 I do not rebuke you for your sacrifices  
or your burnt offerings, which are ever before me.  
9 I have no need of a bull from your stall  
or of goats from your pens,  
14 Sacrifice thank offerings to God,  
fulfill your vows to the Most High,

Mt 9:13 But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”  
Mt 12:7 If you had known what these words mean, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the innocent.



The catalogue of sins in this section includes: “Like Adam<sup>382</sup>” (Hos 6:7) they have broken the covenant” (עֲבָרוּ בְרִיתִי) (see covenant and prophets, p. 226): Murder, marauding, corrupt priests, shameful crimes, prostitution, lies, deceit, thieving, bandits, adultery. drunkenness, murder of rulers, no calling on the Lord, foreign alliances, speak lies against YHWH.

Note: Adam’s sin broke the covenant he had with God to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was a probationary covenant, but not a trifling matter. Some call this period the covenant of works, for God had covenanted with man to work the soil and to care for the garden.

WCF 7.2 The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam; and in him to his posterity,<sup>2</sup> upon condition of perfect and personal obedience. (Gal 3:12; Rom 10:5; 5:12–20; Gen 2:17; Gal 3:10).

As difficult as it is to name the worst in this catalogue of sins, certainly *speaking lies against the Lord* could take first prize. To misrepresent the revealed truth of God, the word of God, the character of God is the worst form of blasphemy. This is Satan’s tool to deceive, who brought the first lies about God into human life.

**Inconsideration of God, or misrepresentation of his nature, are as agreeable to corrupt nature, as the disowning the being of a God is contrary to common reason.**<sup>383</sup>

**He that denies any essential attribute, may be said to deny the being of God.**<sup>384</sup>

(2) *Reaping the whirlwind: Hos 8:1-10:15*

Similarly to Hos 7, the central theme in this section is the *broken covenant* (עֲבָרוּ בְרִיתִי, 8:1), and the covenant is based upon the Torah-law of God (וְעַל-תּוֹרַתִי, 8:1). Rejection of God’s covenant-law is a rejection of the covenant-relationship, and this will bring disaster though an enemy who will invade and take the covenant-land from the covenant-people.

Hos 8:7 “They sow the wind reap the storm-wind” (רוּחַ יִזְרְעוּ וְסוּפָתָהּ)

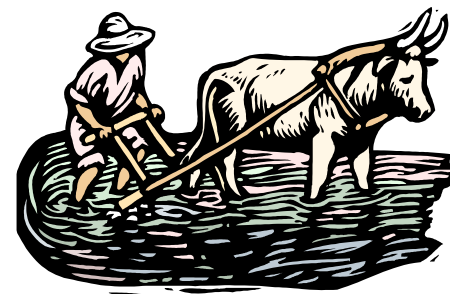
BDB 15:76 I. סוּפָה n.f. storm-wind (that makes an end?) -- storm-wind, as driving chaff (vb. גָּנַב ; in sim.), sim. of rushing chariots, of ruin; symbol. of י' 's judgments.

➤ See also wind motif in 4:19, p. 297.

*Sowing and reaping in the Bible:* Lev 25:11; 2 Ki 19:29; Job 4:8; Ps 126:5; Isa 37:30; Jer 12:13; Hos 8:7; Ho 10:12; Mt 6:26; Lk 12:24; Lk 19:21



Job 4:8 As I have observed, those who plow evil and those who sow trouble reap it.  
 Prov 11:18 The wicked man earns deceptive wages, but he who sows righteousness reaps a sure reward.  
 2 Cor 9:6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.



Israel had *forgotten* their Maker (אָת-עֹשֶׂהוּ). This was the worst indictment imaginable for a people who had been given exclusive rights to the law of God, the revelation of

God, the sanctuary presence, the covenant-promises, the land, the prophets of God. They had also a long record of commands and exhortations to *not forget*, but remember the Lord and what he had done in the history of redemption.

Preaching is for us the *bringing to remembrance* the great acts of God in redemptive history recorded for us in the Bible, and calling the people of God to remember their Lord, to love their Lord, and to serve him faithfully. As noted elsewhere, we stand in this same history, for it continues at present, not exemploristically, but as in reality we are daily called to the *same remembrances as Israel and for the same reasons*. “Remember” in the NIV OT/NT appears some 166x, זָכַר appears some 90x and various forms some 235x in the OT).

<sup>382</sup> Some claim that the word אֶדָמִי here refers to a place called ed-Damiyeh in Transjordan, south of the Jabbok River.

<sup>383</sup> Charnock, *Existence*, p. 90.

<sup>384</sup> Charnock, *Existence*, p. 89.

Deut 5:15 Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

Deut 9:7 Remember this and never forget how you provoked the LORD your God to anger in the desert. From the day you left Egypt until you arrived here, you have been rebellious against the LORD.

1 Sam 1:11 And she made a vow, saying, "O LORD Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head."

Isa 44:21 "Remember these things, O Jacob, for you are my servant, O Israel.

I have made you, you are my servant;

O Israel, I will not forget you.

### *The catalogue of sins continues:*

- Corruption of the priesthood was another serious disaster, for the way the leaders go, so go the people.
- The prophet of God, God's spokesman for God himself, was considered a *fool* and is hunted down by the people to whom he is sent as prophet! (9:7-8). The one who should be leading is in danger for his life, while corrupt priests are on the loose.
- The sanctuary and its presence will be lost, for they will be driven out God's house. This corresponds with the unfaithful wife theme, wherein the wife leaves and returns, but in time leaves again, and the patience of the husband is lost (9:15). (Cf. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.)
- Whatever fruit they might yield will be blighted, the children they bear will be slain (9:12, 16-17). This too corresponds with the marriage/faithlessness theme.
- The ultimate desecration of the idols is coming, they will be shown as powerless as they are, and nothing but "thorns and thistles will grow up and cover their altars" (10:8). The comparison with the Exodus plagues dethroning the gods of Egypt is worth noting, as well as incidents like Elijah's challenge to the Baal priests and their powerless Baals.
- Unwarranted litigations proliferate under the ethos of false oaths and false promises (10:4). Sound familiar?

Remarkably, in the midst of this catalogue of sins, there is an interlude wherein the Lord exhorts Israel to sow righteousness and to seek the Lord so as to reap unfailing love and showers of righteousness from the Lord (10:12), yet Hosea 10:13 tells us,

But you have planted wickedness,  
you have reaped evil,  
you have eaten the fruit of deception.  
Because you have depended on your own strength  
and on your many warriors,

Fruit of deception (פְּרִי־כְזָב, [פָּחַשׁ, lying]), has unmistakable correlations with Adam and Eve's breaking of the covenant through believing Satan's lie and eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

### **(3) God's love, Israel's deceit: Hos 11:1-12:14**

Once again Hosea invokes Exodus imagery, and this time very specifically calling to remembrance that Israel was God's chosen son, called out of Egypt.

Messianic aspects have been noted (see p. 288), and in the context are anomalous, for the Lord proceeds to continue cataloging their sins: sacrificed to the Baals, ignorant of God who healed them, ignorant of the One who delivered them from Egypt, guilty of foreign alliances with Egypt and Assyria (11:2-7, 12).

This section is a study in contrasts, *opposites*: the rebellion of Israel is countered by the loving faithfulness of YHWH. The hatred of Israel for what is right is counterpoised with the compassion and mercy of God (11:8-11). Further, the Messianic tone to this section is ironically placed alongside the horrible song of Israel's defection from their Messiah. Though he would bring judgment in exile, he would also preserve a remnant. Every time I read such prophecies, I marvel with post-exilic hindsight at this remarkable attestation to the supernatural power of God working in the prophets. They could never have "imagined" these things, nor created them as possibilities. No-one could have imagined that Israel's dispersion by Assyria and Babylon could or would involve their eventual restoration to the land.

This study in contrasts shows the complete unworthiness of God's people alongside the absolutely unwarranted grace and mercy of God. For after he compares his love to Israel's apostasy, he proceeds to replay the terrifying theme of Israel reaping *wind* (רִיחַ, see whirlwind, p. 303f.), clearly understood as their decimation by enemies armies. This judgment is not impersonal, for it is in the context of reiterating the covenant-promise "I am



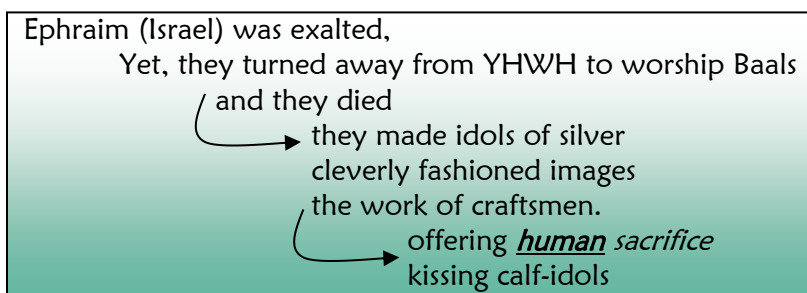
the Lord your God . . .” (12:9). This judgment is outlined in reference to their forefather Jacob, who was also deceitful, yet received mercy. The covenantal context is very evident, for the prophet pleads with Israel to return to “the Lord God Almighty. . .” while discussing Jacob. This shows the flow of redemptive history, and Israel’s ongoing place in it. They have no excuse for their apostasy, they cannot pretend to forget, for this was their own history.

All believers subsequent to these events stand in the same stream of redemptive history, for this is also their history. Thus, they too have no excuse, for they can not claim they did not know, or that they forgot. They have the biblical record and that is evidence enough.

#### (4) *God’s judgment or Israel’s repentance?: Hos 13:1-14:9*

The final section of Hosea carries on the comparisons and contrasts, while concluding with an unexpected final call to repentance (already discussed on Hos 14, p. 299).

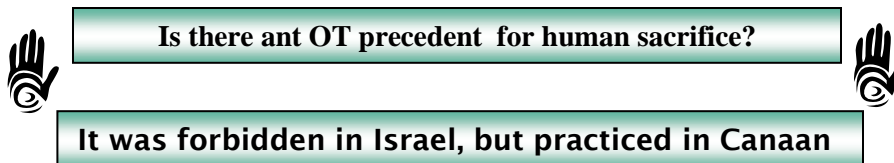
The ridiculous, but devastating extent of Baal worship is again outlined in explicit gravity in 13:1-2:



The spiraling spiritual descent of Israel brings them to the worst form of paganism known in ANE: human sacrifice (consider the poor arguments often deduced for Jephthah’s sacrifice of his daughter). The painfully bitter irony of this text is made plain with the stress on the human artifacts they worshipped, manufactured by human hands, powerless nothings, that led them even to destroy the humans who worshipped them. Only Satan’s lies could create such abomination, and only the deceitful human heart could acquiesce.

Critics have sometimes claimed that human sacrifice was an accepted practice in ancient Israel, yet the only way one could hold such a view is to leave out the many passages like this that condemn it in no uncertain terms.<sup>385</sup>

The following is adapted in part from my Judges-Esther syllabus:



Although there was punishment by burning for severe sins (prostitution of priest’s daughter, Lev 21:9), the usual punishment proscribed was stoning (Deut 22:23-24), and there was *never any* allowance for burning humans *as sacrifice*.<sup>386</sup>

Lev 18:21 Do not give any of your children to be sacrificed to Molech, for you must not profane the name of your God. I am the LORD.  
Lev 20:2-5 “Say to the Israelites: ‘Any Israelite or any alien living in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech must be put to death. The people of the community are to stone him.’ 3 I will set my face against that man and I will cut him off from his people; for by giving his children to Molech, he has defiled my sanctuary and profaned my holy name. 4 If the people of the community close their eyes when that man gives one of his children to Molech and they fail to put him to death, 5 I will set my face against that man and his family and will cut off from their people both him and all who follow him in prostituting themselves to Molech.

Deut 12:29-31 The LORD your God will cut off before you the nations you are about to invade and dispossess. But when you have driven them out and settled in their land, 30 and after they have been destroyed before you, be careful not to be ensnared by inquiring about their gods, saying, “How do these nations serve their gods? We will do the same.” 31 You must not worship the LORD your God in their way, because in worshipping their gods, they do all kinds of detestable things the LORD hates. They even burn their sons and daughters in the fire as sacrifices to their gods.

Deut 18:10 Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft,

<sup>385</sup> See Molech, p. .

<sup>386</sup> See Robin Wakely, “פְּרִי,” *NIDOTTE*, pp. 1276-1289. There was burning involved in the *ban*, when Israel was to offer to the Lord entire cities, but this is not to be construed as *sacrifice*.

The Deut 12 text sadly describes beforehand precisely what Israel did in direct disregard for the Lord's warning.

Another irony here is the earlier command of God to *burn all idols*, Israel was never to allow idols to remain unburned. Aaron and Moses had to burn the idol-calf and make the people drink it as proof that it was *nothing at all*.

Deut 7:5 This is what you are to do to them: Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones, cut down their Asherah poles and burn their idols in the fire.

Deut 7:25 The images of their gods you are to burn in the fire. Do not covet the silver and gold on them, and do not take it for yourselves, or you will be ensnared by it, for it is detestable to the LORD your God.

Deut 2:3 Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones and burn their Asherah poles in the fire; cut down the idols of their gods and wipe out their names from those places.

Josiah was one of the few kings who complied with this command in any serious way. The reasons for this are discussed in Judges-Esther, but it can be supposed that these idolatries were so deeply rooted in their culture that blanket removal was nearly impossible. The tone of the prophets confirms this, for despite the many offers of returning to the Lord, there is little optimism among the prophets that Israel will completely forsake the idols and return to YHWH.

The correlative motif of *burning/fire* is seen elsewhere in Hosea in reference to both Israel's sin and their judgment:

Hos 7:4 They are all adulterers,  
burning like an oven  
whose fire the baker need not stir  
from the kneading of the dough till it rises.

Hos 7:6 Their hearts are like an oven;  
they approach him with intrigue.  
Their passion smolders all night;  
in the morning it blazes like a flaming fire.

Hos 8:14 Israel has forgotten his Maker  
and built palaces;  
Judah has fortified many towns.  
But I will send fire upon their cities  
that will consume their fortresses.

---

Hosea 13:5 I cared for you in the desert,  
in the land of burning heat.

---

Because of such sins, the people will become but a *morning mist* and disappear (Hos 13:3), recalling the earlier prophecy condemning their false repentance in 6:1-4, and also echoing the threshing imagery discussed in Amos (see p. 275). Israel would become *nothing* for worshipping idols of *nothingness*.

Yet, even in the midst of this awful indictment against their idolatry and prediction of their demise, the Lord repeats the covenant promise that he is their God, within the context of delivering them from Egypt:

Hos 13:4 But I am the LORD your God,  
who brought you out of Egypt.  
You shall acknowledge no God but me,  
no Savior except me.

Yet, he also echoes Israel's false repentance again when he describes himself as a lion, leopard, and bear that will *tear them apart*, for they had previously claimed he had torn them to pieces (6:1), when in reality they had brought it all on themselves.

In conclusion, the prophet then brings into view one of the most profound of all messianic themes yet addressed: death itself will be conquered:

Hos 13:14 "I will ransom them from the power of the grave;  
I will redeem them from death.  
Where, O death, are your plagues?  
Where, O grave, is your destruction?"

Paul refers to this proclamation in his discussion of the resurrection:

1 Cor 15:55 "Where, O death, is your victory?  
Where, O death, is your sting?"

Did Hosea's contemporaries understand this application? Did they take from these words the hope of return from the death of exile, abandonment by God, the restoration to a life-affirming and life-giving relationship with YHWH? Do we assume a double meaning? Double application? Single meaning double, application? Single

meaning, single application? Partial revelation of fuller meaning only given in Christ? However we answer such questions, we can at least affirm that Israel's deliverance from the death of exile would be another "deposit" towards the "trust" of final salvation. Redemption history is a compilation of ever expanding themes that affirm one another by nature of their preliminary revelation, fulfillments, and correspondences with their final culmination in Christ. As God fulfills any historical detail predicted by the prophets, its theological import is preserved and also is advanced the fact that God will finish what he promised.

**The only meaning that the promise had for the Israelites of the prophet's day, was that the Lord possessed the power even to redeem from death, and raise Israel from destruction into newness of life; just as Ezekiel (ch. xxxvii.) depicts the restoration of Israel as the giving of life to the dry bones that lay scattered about the field. The full and deeper meaning of these words was but gradually unfolded to believers under the Old Testament, and only attained complete and absolute certainty for all believers through the actual resurrection of Christ.<sup>387</sup>**

Hosea 14 was already discussed (pp. 299ff) in comparing this final repentant prayer with the pretentious prayer of Hos 6., so that will not be repeated here.

The prophet ends his book on the note of wisdom. After having compared Israel to a child that is not wise enough to be born "when the time arrives" (13:13), he then concluded that the *wise* will discern these things

Hos 13:13 Pains as of a woman in childbirth come to him,  
but he is a child without wisdom;  
when the time arrives,  
he does not come to the opening of the womb.  
Hosea 14:9 Who is wise? He will realize these things.  
Who is discerning? He will understand them.  
The ways of the LORD are right;  
the righteous walk in them,  
but the rebellious stumble in them.

*Wisdom* in Hosea is extolled in the same fashion as in Proverbs, for in he has established that the way of folly is the way Israel has gone, and it is the way of death, destruction, darkness, and evil, but the way of life is the way of righteousness, life, peace, understanding, true repentance and reconciliation with God. This shows the premium placed upon spiritual understanding and walking in the understanding. There is no conclusion in Hosea's theology that suggests a blindly spiritual or mystical experience was what they needed, but rather the *embracing, living, loving* God's word revealed to them in the law and the prophets.

➤ See wisdom and prophets, pp.226 f.

James 3:13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

1 Cor 2:12-16 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. <sup>13</sup>This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. <sup>14</sup>The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. <sup>15</sup>The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment: <sup>16</sup>"For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

## 8. *History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling*

This brilliant prophetic book of Hosea was undoubtedly a firebrand of power to Hosea's contemporaries; it must have bristled at them with the thunderous crackling of lightning. In a sin-saturated age any word of God, that comes with the forcefulness of prophets like Hosea and his contemporary Isaiah, is certainly going to provoke rage or repentance in those who hear it. The visual picture of a prophet of God marrying a harlot was in itself an act that condemned Israel even if no word would have accompanied it. Of course it is easy to suppose that the degree of Israel's sin had even blinded them to the meaning of such symbolic acts, and therefore they needed words to attend his acts. In either case we can be thankful that the revelation was enscripturated for us of later like-minded generations to hear and take to heart. The parallels that can be drawn to our century indeed are many. Not only do we have widespread paganism and debauchery, we have in many quarters what is as much like Baalism as anything could be, so much so that it is unnecessary to explore the details to any contemporary reader. There is idolatry, exploitation, extreme sexual debauchery, paganism, hedonism, countless pagan religions and philosophies,

<sup>387</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Minor Prophets*, p. 161.

Satanism, apostasies and heresies, innumerable divorces, violence, corruption, pride, arrogance, and of course for those countries that once knew a significant blessing from the presence of the gospel influence, who now have turned away wholesale to unspeakable atrocities and abominations, they may now stand more under God's wrath than his mercy. Thus, in the same way that this burning prophetic word raged of God's holy love to Hosea's contemporaries, it does the same for us and our contemporaries, if we listen.

## a) *Revelation and redemption from YHWH*

### (1) *Who God is*

- ⊕ Patient and longsuffering: "God hath wrath to punish, as well as patience to bear. He hath a fury to revenge the outrages done to his meekness: when his messages of peace, sent to reclaim men, are slighted, his sword shall be whetted, and his instruments of war prepared (Hos v.3): 'Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah and the trumpet in Ramah.'"<sup>388</sup>
- ⊕ Personal and committed to his covenant. No-one can claim God is impersonal, uninvolved. He is presented in Hosea as the personal and infinite God. No Deism here. No blind chance here. No determinism here. God is revealed as the one who promises, delivers, loves, judges, forgives, destroys, rebuilds, reclaims, remakes, reveals, conceals, fulfills. . .
- ⊕ God's work flows directly from God's character, and God's word and Spirit are the vehicle that works redemption.
- ⊕ God is Spirit and the problem with humankind is spiritual.

Hosea gives us another glimpse *behind the veil* between the natural and supernatural, or seen and unseen realms. We are given the privilege of knowing God's heart and mind and plan.

- ⊕ God is to be feared, for God is holy.
- ⊕ Despite great long-suffering, God's patience is not endless.
- ⊕ God is to be loved, he seeks a people that freely love him.
- ⊕ God is compassion in a way far beyond the impersonal compassion of Islam. God's compassion is written on every blade of grass and the billions of sons he knows each by name.

Hosea shows us the "pained" side of God, that he has depth of *feeling* beyond which any of us have ever imagined or dreamed. God's feelings, however, never diminish his Almighty, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and perfect nature. Indeed, his perfections include an infinite compassion that is both holy and just, as well as merciful and forgiving. Infinite compassion does not require infinite patience, for the latter, in light of human sin, could not be righteous if there was no final justice.

There are difficult lessons in Hosea, the least of which is not that we actually, in some way, grieve God with sin.

Eph 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

- ⊕ *Immutability* – "The immutability of God is the unchangeableness of his essence, attributes, purposes, and consciousness."<sup>389</sup> "God's immutability is His perfect consistency in all relationships with His creation. His character never changes."<sup>390</sup> God's immutability is *not static (complete inactivity, timeless mental and spiritual immobility) but dynamic*. God's "repenting" or change of plan in any given instance is not a change in his attributes or character, only in the manner of treating the person in their particular situation.
- ⊕ *Impassibility* – "not capable of being acted upon or effected emotionally" is a doctrine with a long history of defense, yet is derived in my view from a short-sighted perspective, as well as the limits of human language. In the ongoing debates within the Evangelical Theological Society, there has been much wrangling over God's nature and knowledge. I personally believe that much of the arguments would lose force, if we only considered the God of the Bible more carefully, rather than frame the argument in largely philosophical conceptions. God is worthy of our debate, to say the least(!), that we understand and know him properly, but we too quickly slip into either/or categories, remove all mystery of God's ultimately incomprehensible nature, and frame things in strictly Greek philosophical terms.
- ⊕ God's knowledge of suffering is as perfect as all other knowledge, for all his attributes are perfection. Thus,

<sup>388</sup> Charnock, *Existence*, p. 511.

<sup>389</sup> Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, vol. I, p. 351.

<sup>390</sup> Buswell, *Systematic Theology*, part I, p. 53.

to say God knows pain, or grief, or sorrow, is to say that God is not apathetic, not that our experience of the same is univocal with God's. Nothing God experiences is tainted with our sin or our brokenness. The perfections of God are manifest in all that he knows and "experiences." Nothing reminds us more of the limits of human language and understanding than these truths about God. In Christ, we have *identification* in a new form, a man who physically suffers and emotionally suffers *as a man*. Thus, we can see how God knows more truly than anyone precisely what it means to suffer as both God and man.

Heb 2:10 In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.

Lam 3:22 Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.

- ⊕ God can be both *absolutely* transcendent and absolutely immanent, for he is God. Thus God can be absolutely personal, yet unchangeable in all his attributes. God can know all there is to know without erasing human significance in their action and life. Indeed, his knowledge is the source of meaning for all of the latter, and especially so when recognizing that his knowledge is absolutely *personal*. There is no *impersonal* fate or knowledge *even possible* within God's universe.

### *On the immutability of God from Charnock:*

**Prop. V.** God is not changed, when of loving to any creatures he becomes angry with them, or of angry he becomes appeased. The change in these cases is in the creature; according to the alteration in the creature, it stands in a various relation to God: an innocent creature is the object of his kindness, an offending creature is the object of his anger; there is a change in the dispensations of God, as there is a change in the creature making himself capable of such dispensations. God always acts according to the immutable nature of his holiness, and can no more change in his affections to good and evil, than he can in his essence. When the devils, now fallen, stood as glorious angels, they were the objects of God's love, because holy; when they fell, they were the objects of God's hatred, because impure; the same reason which made him love them while they were pure, made him hate them when they were criminal. The reason of his various dispensations to them was the same in both, as considered in God, his immutable holiness; but as respecting the creature, different; the nature of the creature was changed, but the Divine holy nature of God remained the same: "With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure, and with the froward, thou wilt show thyself froward" (Ps. xviii. 26): he is a refreshing light to those that obey him, and a consuming fire to those that resist him. Though the same angels were not always loved, yet the same reason that moved him to love them, moved him to sate them. It had argued a change in God if he had loved them alway, in whatsoever posture they were towards him; it could not be counted love, but a weakness and impotent fondness; the change is in the object, not in the affection of God; for the object loved before is not beloved now, because that which was the motive of love, is not now in it; so that the creature having a different state from what it had, falls under a different affection or dispensation. It had been a mutable affection in God to love that which was not worthy of love with the same love wherewith he loved that which had the greatest resemblance to himself; had God loved the fallen angels in that state and for that state, he had hated himself because he had loved that which was contrary to himself and the image of his own holiness, which made them appear before, good in his sight. The will of God is unchangeably set to love righteousness and hate iniquity, and from this hatred to punish it; and if a righteous creature contracts the wrath of God, or a sinful creature hath the communications of God's love, it must be by a change in themselves. Is the sun changed when it hardens one thing and softens another, according to the disposition of the several subjects? Or when the sun makes a flower more fragrant, and a dead carcass more noisome? There are divers effects, but the reason of that diversity is not in the sun, but in the subject; the sun is the same, and produceth those different effects by the same quality of heat; so if an unholy soul approach to God, God looks angrily upon him; if a holy soul come before him, the same immutable perfection in God draws out his kindness towards him: as some think, the sun would rather refresh than scorch us, if our bodies were of the same nature and substance with that luminary. As the will of God for creating the world was no new, but an eternal will, though it manifested itself in time, so the will of God for the punishment of sin, or the reconciliation of the sinner, was no new will: though his wrath in time break out in the effects of it upon sinners, and his love flows out in the effects of it upon penitents. Christ by his death reconciling God to man, did not alter the will of God, but did what was consonant to his eternal will; he came not to change his will, but to execute his will: "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Heb. x. 7). And the grace of God in Christ was not a new grace, but an old grace in a new appearance; "the grace of God bath appeared" (Tit. i. 11).<sup>391</sup>

## (2) *What God has done*

We know who God is through what he has done. He has created, delivered, judged, pardoned, covenanted, destroyed, rebuilt, recreated, renewed, and longsuffered patiently with Israel despite their idols. Hosea pictures God as active in the broadest range of works and acts one can imagine. As noted above, the Lord is personally involved

<sup>391</sup> Charnock, *Existence*, pp. 345-346.

in all the details, he is *omni-active* in the affairs of humanity and his creation. God has “entered” the realm of sin and alienation to seek his harlot-people. He has breathed his word of redemption, called his prophets to speak his Truth, and he has sent with them his Spirit to enliven, reclaim that which was unworthy, save that which lost. The gospel in Hosea is the grace of God revealed to an unlovely, unloving people. A forgetful, rebellious people deserving death, and yet they are offered life. God has done this and no other. The idols of the nations, of Israel and Judah, are silenced by Hosea’s witness and Hosea’s God. They are *nothing* but wind. God has silenced the idolaters, as well.

Hosea plays a very significant role in the history of redemption, for his prophecy adds a beauty of feeling and depth of expression that gives us a very special glimpse of the great compassion of the Lord. We see God more clearly from Hosea, and we sense something akin in the OT to what we feel when we read in Jn 11:32: “Jesus wept.”

Nu 23:23 There is no sorcery against Jacob,  
no divination against Israel.

It will now be said of Jacob  
and of Israel, ‘See what God has done!’

Jos 23:3 You yourselves have seen everything the LORD your God has done to all these nations for your sake; it was the LORD your God who fought for you.

Ps 66:5 Come and see what God has done,  
how awesome his works in man’s behalf!

Eccl 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time.

He has also set eternity in the hearts of men;  
yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Eccl 8:17 then I saw all that God has done.

No one can comprehend what goes on under the sun.

Despite all his efforts to search it out, man cannot discover its meaning.

Even if a wise man claims he knows, he cannot really comprehend it.

Jer 51:10 ‘The LORD has vindicated us;

come, let us tell in Zion

what the LORD our God has done.’

Lk 8:39 Return home and tell how much God has done for you.” So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him.

### (3) *What God has promised*

Hosea draws on the promise of life, land, people, place, relationship, and redemption as part of the grand scheme of redemption set forth in the beginning of redemption history. The promises to the patriarchs, the people of Israel under Moses, and to the judges and kings all point to the One Lord from who all blessings do flow. The promise of life eternal, of grace everlasting, of redemption from death, of deliverance from sin and its consequences, and even of supernatural power to have victory in the spiritual battle being played out in the material realm. They are offered deliverance from their enemies . . .if . . . There is hardly a stone unturned in Hosea’s calling to remembrance all the promises of God, either implicitly or explicitly. They are promised the free love of the Lord, and this is the heart of the covenant-promise of redemption: he has offered to be know and be known by his people. What a great God! To know the living God, to enter into his presence and favor, to live in his love, are all the goal of redemption. Hosea shows us God’s promises in the renewed light of his most profound love. He longs to receive his bride, and this is the *gospel* promise:

Hos 2:19 I will betroth you to me forever;

I will betroth you in  
righteousness and justice,  
in love and compassion.

#### b) *Humankind and redemption*

Holiness permeated the whole tenor and fiber of Israel’s life, whether it involved worship of the living God or their day to day employment. The whole of life involved a constant dedication and consecration of all its components as a holy people set themselves apart to live in communion with a holy God.<sup>392</sup>

#### (1) *Worship of redeemed*

The people of God who worship Baals’s are an *absolute contradiction* in terms, kind of like the expression (oxymoron) “carnal Christian” so often used. There is only one kind of believer, the one who *worships the Lord*

<sup>392</sup> Kaiser, *Ethics*, p. 151.

*exclusively*. There is no such thing as a “carnal Christian” any more than there is an idol worshipping Christian. In our pluralistic culture we are far too inclined to *practical polytheism* when we allow for supposed “weaker brethren” to hold both pagan and Christian theologies in syncretistic tension. I suggest this is far more common than we want to admit.

Mt 6:24 No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

The redeemed are a holy people, living in light of the “The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength” ( 6:4-5). Hosea continuously held before the Israelites the covenantal ideals, the revelation of God that he had loved them and chosen them to be his people. The Lord deserved no less than their love and worship, the very thing they were giving to the lifeless Baals. Syncretism in Israel diabolically assumed that YHWH could be worshipped alongside other gods. Polytheism was the religion of the ancient world, and this is what makes Israel’s compromise so egregious, for they were given indisputable revelation and evidence that shattered the foundations of polytheism forever.



## (2) *Work of redeemed*

In Hosea, there is little mention of positive, God-honoring work, but rather much mention of the corrupted works of rebellious Israel. Indeed, one gets the impression from Hosea that Israel was so busy serving Baal that they had no time for wholesome employment. He barely mentions the activities of shepherding, trading, law, warring, sowing, harvesting, and threshing, vintners, and these are in the context of describing Israel’s sins. My cursory reading suggests that every allusion to work in Hosea is in the context of illustrating either their sins or their judgment.

God-honoring and God-glorifying work seems to have lost its place in Israel and Judah, and this is no surprise when we consider the state of ethics in the nation at this time. There can be no such work without the foundation of God’s law.

## (3) *Ethics of redeemed*

➤ See Kaiser, “Holiness in the Family and society,” *Ethics*, pp. 152-163 and “Holiness in Marriage and Sex,” *Ethics*, pp. 181-208.

The ethics of the redeemed flow from the *knowledge* of God as One Lord which provides the only sure foundation for the *absolutes* necessary to sustain law, morality, and ethics. Israel was not just guilty of antinomianism, but *polynomianism*. Sound ethics are impossible under a polytheistic regime, for the gods are ever played against one another. Israel’s ethics had become so fragmented, and thus debauched, through their Baal worship that Israel had become virtually indistinguishable from their contemporaries. As seen in the numerous catalogues of Israel’s depravity given by Hosea, they had completely lost sight of the high standards of monotheistic YHWHism that Hosea was calling them back to:

Hos 4:6 my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.  
Because you have rejected knowledge,  
I also reject you as my priests;  
because you have ignored the law of your God,  
I also will ignore your children.

Hos 8:1 Put the trumpet to your lips!  
An eagle is over the house of the LORD  
because the people have broken my covenant  
and rebelled against my law.

Hos 8:12 I wrote for them the many things of my law,  
but they regarded them as something alien.

Deut 6:20-25 In the future, when your son asks you, “What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the LORD our God has commanded you?”<sup>21</sup> tell him: “We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.<sup>22</sup> Before our eyes the LORD sent miraculous signs and wonders—great and terrible—upon Egypt and Pharaoh and his whole household.<sup>23</sup> But he brought us out from there to bring us in and give us the land that he promised on oath to our forefathers.<sup>24</sup> The LORD commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the LORD our God, so that we might always prosper and be kept alive, as is the case today.<sup>25</sup> And if we are careful to obey all this law before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness.”

The ethics of the redeemed must be based solely on the truth that God is *holy*. There can be no sound moral foundation without the absolute of God’s holiness.

Ho 11:9 I will not carry out my fierce anger,  
nor will I turn and devastate Ephraim.  
For I am God, and not man—  
the Holy One among you.  
I will not come in wrath.

Ho 11:12 Ephraim has surrounded me with lies,  
the house of Israel with deceit.  
And Judah is unruly against God,  
even against the faithful Holy One.

God’s attribute of holiness conveys the perfect union of his absolute transcendence and his absolute immanence. He is unique, incomparable, yet he has manifested himself as present in their midst; he has revealed his law as the moral fiber of his universe to a people so blinded by sin that only supernatural revelation could enable them to see it. Thus God’s transcendence and immanence are perfectly expressed through his holiness. Hosea, in tune with the rest of the prophetic witness, calls Israel to be holy, to return to the high standards of *their* God and his law.

Lev 11:45 I am the LORD who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy.

(below) Hosea, Gomer, and children. Woodcut from *Zurich Bible*.<sup>393</sup>



<sup>393</sup> From Emory university at <http://www.pitts.emory.edu/dia/booklist5.cfm?ID=131>.



## F. *Isaiah* יִשְׁעִיָּהוּ (Judah ~ 740-685)



Isaiah by Michelangelo, Sistine Chapel

### 1. *Title, author, and dates*

➤ For more background to Isaiah, consult the Judges-Esther syllabus and supporting materials.

1. Isaiah was a prophet to Judah (born apx 760; ministry 740-685). Called the “Prince of Prophets.” Name derives from יִשְׁעִיָּהוּ - “to save, be freed” combined with the YHWH means “salvation is of the Lord.” Isaiah’s father Amoz is unknown elsewhere. Isaiah lived near or in Jerusalem (7:1; 37:2). (See primary texts: 2 Kings 15-21; 2 Chron 26-33). Tradition has it that Isaiah was hiding in a tree when Manasseh’s men sawed it in half (see Heb 11:37).

2. Contemporary prophets who devoted their ministries to trying to save the northern kingdom of Israel were Amos (760-750) and Hosea (750-715), and in the southern kingdom of Judah was Micah (735-690). See backgrounds, p. 286.

3. The period Assyrian expansion involved King Tiglath-Pileser III’s (Pul<sup>394</sup>) (745-727) push into Aram (Syria) and Canaan (see archaeological site at Hazor). Other kings in Assyria: Shalmaneser V (727-722), Sargon II (721-705), Sennacherib (704-681). The kings of

Aram and Israel pressured king Ahaz (Judah) to resist Assyria (734-3): the *Syro-Ephraimite War*: Ahaz turned to Tiglath-Pileser III for help (2 Ki 16:7ff). Isaiah strongly condemns Ahaz’s action (Isa 7). Damascus is captured by Assyria Tiglath-Pileser III in 732. Puppet Hoshea is put on throne in Samaria. (2 Ki 17; 15:30). Assyria under Shalmaneser V conquers Northern Kingdom (722), Sargon II finishing the job (South more vulnerable now) (2 Ki 17:3ff.). King Sennacherib of Assyria approached Jerusalem (701). King Hezekiah prayed, Isaiah prophesied Assyrian withdrawal (2 Ki 19:34). Judah was facing inevitable exile, especially after the reign of Manasseh, and Isaiah’s message becomes focused on the exilic context in chapter 40ff.

**Judean kings of Isaiah’s time:** cf. structure by VanGemenen, p. 325

1. Social criticism (740-734): Isa 2-5	Uzziah and Jotham
2. Syro-Ephraimite War (734-732): Isa 7-9	Ahaz
3. Anti-Assyrian rebellion/siege of Jerusalem (705-701): Isa 28-32; 36-39	Hezekiah

- a. Isaiah had his vision-commission beginning in the year King Uzziah died (739) (Isa 6).
- b. Isaiah probably lived into the time of Manasseh’s reign: Isaiah 37:38 indicates that he was still living in 681 when Sennacherib was killed by his sons and Esarhaddon took the throne of Assyria. This places Isaiah alive in the beginning of Manasseh’s reign.

<sup>394</sup> Babylonian name used in OT for Tiglath-Pileser.

# Assyrian Campaigns against Israel and Judah

The Assyrian invasions of the eighth century B.C. were the most traumatic political events in the entire history of Israel.

The brutal Assyrian style of warfare relied on massive armies, superbly equipped with the world's first great siege machines manipulated by an efficient corps of engineers.

Psychological terror, however, was Assyria's most effective weapon. It was ruthlessly applied, with corpses impaled on stakes, severed heads stacked in heaps, and captives skinned alive.

The shock of bloody military sieges on both Israel and Judah was profound. The prophets did not fail to scream out against their horror, while at the same time pleading with the people to see God's hand in history, to recognize spiritual causes in the present punishment.

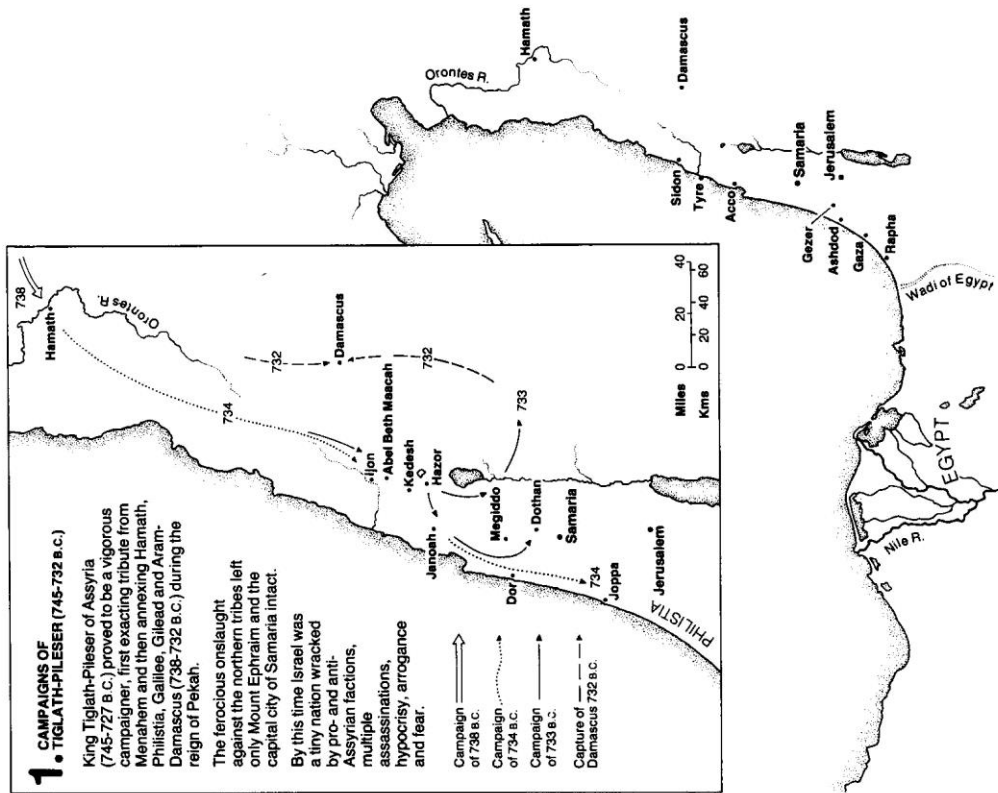
## 1. CAMPAIGNS OF KING TIGLATH-PILESER (745-732 B.C.)

King Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria (745-727 B.C.) proved to be a vigorous campaigner, first exacting tribute from Menahem and then annexing Hamath, Philistia, Galilee, Gilead and Aram-Damascus (738-732 B.C.) during the reign of Pekah.

The ferocious onslaught against the northern tribes left only Mount Ephraim and the capital city of Samaria intact.

By this time Israel was a tiny nation wracked by pro- and anti-Assyrian factions, multiple assassinations, hypocrisy, arrogance and fear.

- ↑ Campaign of 738 B.C.
- Campaign of 734 B.C.
- Campaign of 733 B.C.
- Capture of Damascus 732 B.C.

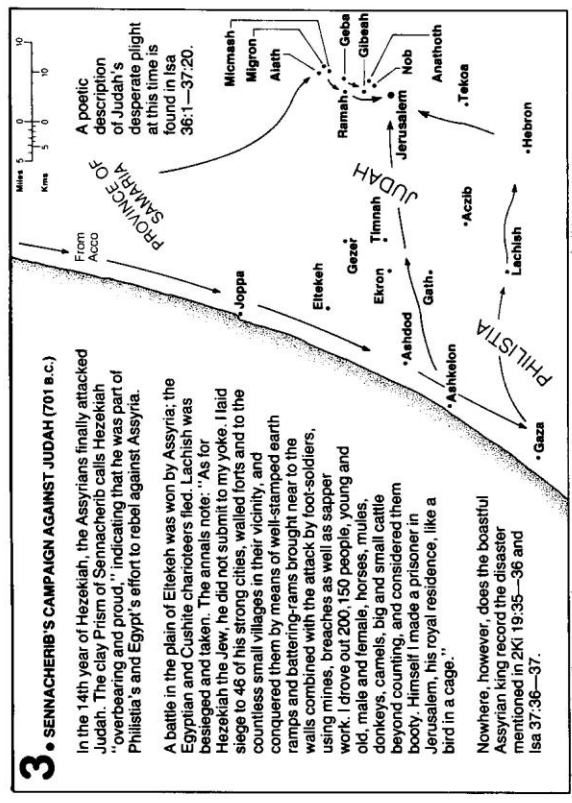


## 3. SENNACHERIB'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST JUDAH (701 B.C.)

In the 14th year of Hezekiah, the Assyrians finally attacked Judah. The clay Prism of Sennacherib calls Hezekiah "overbearing and proud," indicating that he was part of Philistia's and Egypt's effort to rebel against Assyria.

A battle in the plain of Eltekeh was won by Assyria; the Egyptian and Cushite charioters fled. Lachish was besieged and taken. The annals note: "As for Hezekiah the Jew, he did not submit to my yoke. I laid siege to 46 of his strong cities, walled forts and to the countless small villages in their vicinity, and conquered them by means of well-stamped earth ramps and battering-rams brought near to the walls combined with the attack by foot-soldiers, using mines, breachers as well as sapper work. I drove out 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, big and small cattle beyond counting, and considered them booty. Himself I made a prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage."

Nowhere, however, does the boastful Assyrian king record the disaster mentioned in 2Kl 19:35-36 and Isa 37:36-37.

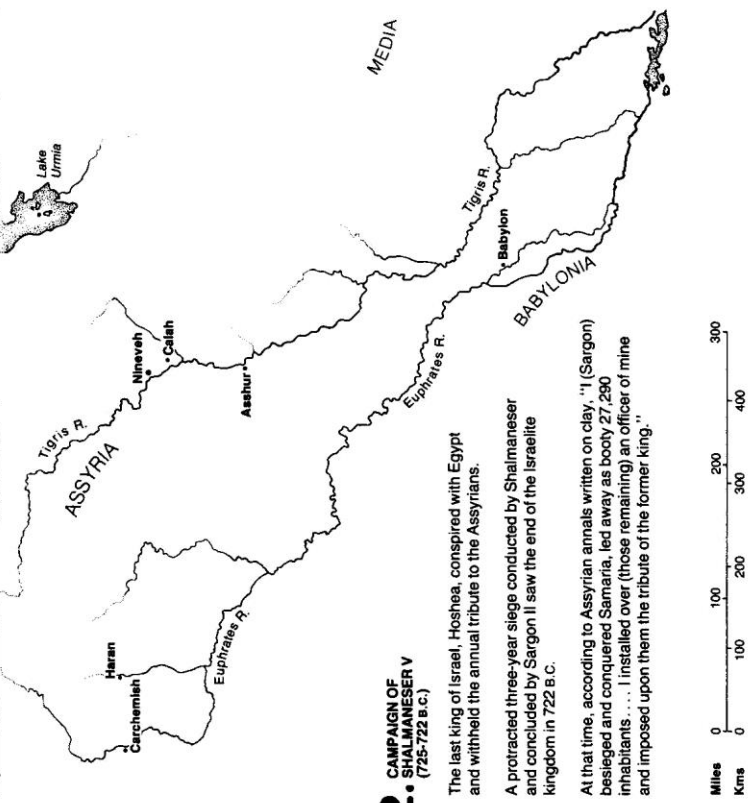


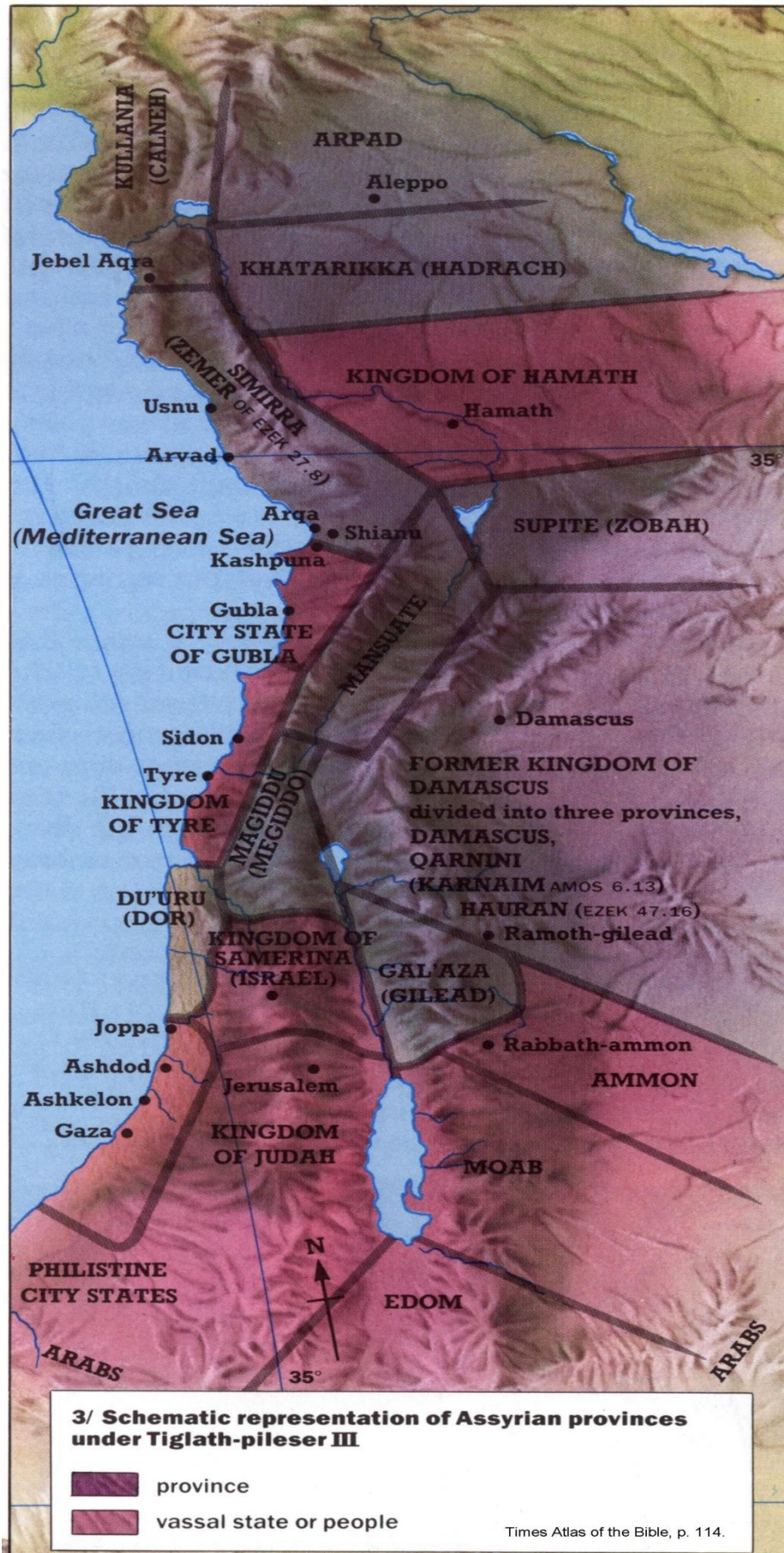
## 2. CAMPAIGN OF SHALMANESER V (725-722 B.C.)

The last king of Israel, Hoshea, conspired with Egypt and withheld the annual tribute to the Assyrians.

A protracted three-year siege conducted by Shalmaneser and concluded by Sargon II saw the end of the Israelite kingdom in 722 B.C.

At that time, according to Assyrian annals written on clay, "I (Sargon) besieged and conquered Samaria, led away as booty 27,290 inhabitants . . . I installed over (those remaining) an officer of mine and imposed upon them the tribute of the former king."





Assyrian Provinces.<sup>396</sup>

<sup>396</sup> Times Atlas of the Bible, p. 114.



Assyrian Empire.<sup>397</sup>

## 2. Critical matters

- See J.A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*.
- See O.T. Allis, *The Unity of the Book of Isaiah*.
- See John Whitcomb, "Cyrus in the Prophecies of Isaiah."

Multiple authorship has long been the centerpiece of critical scholarship on Isaiah. There have been many variations on this theme, from the most common view of two authors to proposals of six or more authors. A good example below of a critical "humdinger" on Isa 1-39 is from the *Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 5, keeping in mind that such critics do not even consider Isa 40-66 to have been from Isaiah's period at all.<sup>398</sup>

<sup>397</sup> S.L. Harris, *Understanding the Bible*, p. 168.

<sup>398</sup> For example, James Muilenburg writes "Attempts to show that chs. 40-66 are the projection of the prophet's vision into the distant future have led to the most tortuous kind of reasoning and are at variance with the whole nature of Hebrew prophecy where the oracles, however, predictive in character, are always related to the concerns and issues of the time in which the prophet lived" (*Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 5, p. 383). Muilenburg also proposes that Isa 55-66 is from a Third Isaiah, disciple(s) of "Second Isaiah" (*ibid.*, p. 414).

1. The first written collection of his prophecies, made by Isaiah for purposes of record immediately after Ahaz' refusal in 734 to heed his message:
  - a) The "Judah and Jerusalem" oracles (1:2-3; 1:4-9; 1:10-20; 1:21-26; 3:1-15; 3:16-17, 24-26; 4:1; 5:1-7; 5:8-13, 17-24a plus 10:1-2).
  - b) Two earlier oracle complexes inserted in a), with resulting disarrangement of the material in ch. 5, from which 10:1-2 was incorporated in the second oracle complex: (i) 2:6-22 with 5:14-16; (ii) 9:8 [Hebrew 9:7]-10:4 with 5:21b-29 (possibly 5:30; 8:19-20; 8:21-22 belong here).
  - c) The "memoirs" (6:1-13; 8:1-8a, 11-18, and probably 8:8b-10).
2. The second written collection of his prophecies, made by Isaiah for purposes of record after his denunciation of the intrigues with Egypt, about 701, had proved of no avail (28:1-4, 7-13; 28:14-22; 29:15-16; 30:1-7; 30:8-17; 31:1-3).
3. The expansion of each collection by the addition or insertion of other oracles relating to the Assyrian threat in 701:
  - a) In the first collection: 10:5-16; 10:24-27c; 14:24-27.
  - b) In the second collection: 29:1-8; 30:27-33 (in part); 31:1-9.
4. The further expansion of each collection soon after the death of Isaiah by the addition of other authentic material concerning him or his message:



(above) Historical-critical example.<sup>399</sup>

- a) In the first collection:
    - (1) The dynastic oracles (9:2-7 [Hebrew 9:1-6]; 11:1-9).
    - (2) The biographical narrative (7:1-7) and attached oracles (7:18-25; 20:1-6).
    - (3) Minor oracles and fragments (10:17-19; 10:20-21[?]; 10:22-23; 10:33-34; 17:12-14).
    - (4) Oracles on foreign peoples (10:27d-32; 14:28-32; 17:1-6; 18:1-7; 19:1-15[?]; 22:1-14; 22:15-25). Of these, the second, third, fifth, and sixth have the special title "doom oracle."
  - b) In the second collection: Isaianic oracles of uncertain date (28:23-29; 29:9-12; 29:13-14; 32:9-14).
5. The further expansion of each collection by the addition of similar but non-Isaianic material:
    - a) In the first collection:
      - (1) Oracles on foreign peoples (13:1-22; 14:1-23; 15:1-16:14; 21:1-10; 21:11-12; 21:13-17; 23:1-14). The title "doom oracle" is given to all but the second of these.
      - (2) Short oracles and fragments (1:27-31; 5:24b; 9:1 [Hebrew 8:23]; 17:7-8; 17:9-11).
    - b) In the second collection:
      - (1) A "wisdom" poem (32:1-8).
      - (2) A "prophetic liturgy" (33:1-24).

N.B. Some of the above material may have been inserted after the joining of the two collections (see 6, below).
  6. The joining of the two collections; the subsequent insertion of a series of eschatological prophecies and some psalms, reflecting the outlook of late exilic or postexilic Judaism: (2:2-5; 4:2-6; 11:10-16; 12:1-6; 19:16-25; 23:15-18; 24:1-27:13; 29:17-21; 29:22-24; 30:18-26; 32:15-20).
  7. The addition to chs. 1-33 of material from outside sources:
    - a) Chs. 34-35.
    - b) Chs. 36-39, an excerpt inserted after ch. 35 from 11 Kings 18:13-20:19 (modified), including selections from two prophetic biographies (36:2-37:4c with 37:22-29; and 37:4d-21, 30-38; 38:1-8, 21-22; 39:1-8).

*The authorship of Isaiah: a reflective summary*

**Cyrus the Great, King of Persia** (see Cyrus, p. 621) כּוֹרֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרְסִים (Ezr 1:1). is one of the primary players in the critical view, because he is named (Isa 44:28; 45:5) and unnamed (Isa 13:17; 41:2; 46:11). The presence of Cyrus' name has so vexed scholars that it is one of the main reasons many conclude that Isaiah did not write the second half of his book, or that the name was put in after the fact. Convenient theory, but the result of naturalism, an unbelieving attitude that it could not have been supernaturally revealed.

**Concepts** and ideas in Isa 40-66 are different than preceding section. But, differences do not in any way prove two authors. The author was addressing different times and issues. The principle of revelation progressing through relatively long time period is at work. Actually, one of the stronger arguments for *unity* is the similarity of thought between the sections. [note: critics do not generally use arguments for *contradiction* because the case would not stand]

**Language** use [word choice] and style differ. Yet, difference of language relates to the different subject and context. The linguistic similarities between the two sections are unquestionably greater than the differences. Also,

<sup>399</sup> R.B.Y. Scott, *Interpreter's Bible*, vol 5, p. 160.

the author ministered over a long time period, and naturally his use of words and expressions may have varied over time.

**Historical background of Isa 40-66** is different (not Isaiah's time), being set in the time of the exile. Assyria is hardly mentioned (An Assyrian context is addressed in the first part and a Babylonian in the second part.) This is undeniably true, and there can be no disagreement, but the critics deny that *prophetic perspective* is possible, and thus a different author had to have written it. Yet, this denies the very essence of inspiration: the prophet was able to address the exiles in Babylon, because he knew that is where God would take them! There is some specific historic prediction (Cyrus) but mostly general prophetic perspective that assumes the predictions of judgment and exile had already occurred and the godly in exile needed comfort.

*Different objectives* between the two sections:

*Isa 1-39*: to declare the coming judgment due to sin in Judah, yet they turned away from his words. The exile therefore became inevitable.

*Isa 40-66*: the prophet prophesies hope in before the exile (to encourage the godly among them) so that when in exile they would have the words of the prophet to remember how he had spoken even before the exile what would come to pass, giving them even greater reason to trust the Lord's word while in exile. It would also have been an encouragement to the godly before the exile, who were suffering under the terrible reign of Manasseh.

"Isaiah's rhetorical approach in chapters 40–66 may be compared to an aging grandfather who writes a letter to his baby granddaughter and seals it with the words, "To be opened on your wedding day." The grandfather knows he may not live to see his granddaughter's wedding, but he understands the challenges she will face as a wife and mother. He projects himself into the future and speaks to his granddaughter as if he were actually present on her wedding day. One can imagine the profound rhetorical impact such a letter would have on the granddaughter as she recognizes the foresight and wisdom contained within it and realizes just how much her grandfather cared for her. When God's exiled people, living more than 150 years after Isaiah's time, heard his message to them, they should have realized that God had foreseen their circumstances and that he cared enough about them to encourage them with a message of renewed hope."<sup>400</sup>

**Conclusion:** Internal evidence shows remarkable unity, and external evidence shows no shred of possible disunity of the text [e.g., DSS of Isaiah]. The NT also gives repeated witness to Isaianic authorship (quoted/alluded to some 120x<sup>401</sup>). (Also, Jer 18:4, 2 Ki.). Therefore, I remain unconvinced of any multiple authorship theories, regardless of the difficulties of linguistic/thematic differences in the second half of the book. It is most plainly read as Isaiah's own shift in focus from pre-exilic to exilic and post-exilic concerns, going respectively from 1-39 to 40-66, from warnings about coming judgment to comfort in the promise of a returning remnant for the future exiles who would read the latter with great encouragement from the Lord that He had given both even before their exile. NT references to Isaiah also come from the two sections often presumed to be by different authors (e.g., Mk 1:3). I would also object to the common notion that such NT references reflect mistaken *conventions* of NT times, for that simply is not consistent with inerrancy nor Jesus' inability to be mistaken!

### 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

#### a) *The "last day"*

The phrases surrounding this theme of the last day involve such a range of meaning that it is necessary to examine each verse in its own context to determine the precise meaning of the various phrases. There is agreement among critics that end-times terminology cannot be taken in a technical sense. The phrase "in the last days" in Isaiah 2:2 and Micah 4:1 may refer to the very last day, but even in these cases it is also most probably a reference to the general eschatological period (and/or the millennium). Thus it can be concluded that even where these phrases have an eschatological reference they are not exclusive references to a particular twenty four hour time period. As Laird

<sup>400</sup> Chisholm, *Handbook*, p. 14.

<sup>401</sup> See discussion in J.N. Oswalt, "Isaiah," *New International Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, pp. 222-223.

Harris says in *Theological Wordbook of the OT*, “it is possible to use this phrase (in the last days) both for the *eschaton* and for the general future.”

It may become clear from further research that these OT phrases do become focused by the NT to a more definite “day” in many cases, because we see various NT verses which speak of a Day which seems to be the “very last” day. We can confidently assert that though the time period of “last day” often means the “last days,” there will be a Final day after which there will be no more days of God’s patience with sinful humanity. The NT brings this into clarity with its emphasis that the “Lord is at hand” in the “last days,” but there is coming a final day after which everything will be subject to him and he will be all in all. This conclusion would follow from the principle of the progressive unfolding of God’s revelation, but it would not create the precedent for proceeding to force all the relevant OT verses into this narrowed range of meaning.

**Select OT Phrases for *last* or *latter* day:** (From the *NIV Exhaustive Concordance*, *KJV*, and Strong’s numbers)

NIV: 340 אַחֲרָיוֹן and 3427 יוֹם (Strong’s: 314 and 3117)

Last Day: future or past (“from the first day to the last,” Neh 8:18)

NIV: 344 אַחֲרֵית and 3427 יוֹם (Strong’s: 319 and 3117)

Latter days: Messianic or eschatological

NIV: 10022 אַחֲרָי (Aramaic) and 10317 יוֹם (Aramaic) (Strong’s: 320 and 3118 1x)

Latter + day: general future (Ezek 38:8)

NIV: 340 אַחֲרָיוֹן (Strong’s: 314 [later, afterwards])

Latter [day]: Messianic and/or eschatological (“in the end,” Job 19:25)

NIV: 3427 יוֹם and 151 אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה (יְהוָה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לְאֲדֹנָי יְהוִה) (Strong’s: 3117 and 136 [day and Adonai])

Day of the Lord/Almighty: future Egypt (Israel) (Jer 46:10)

NIV: 3427 יוֹם (Strong’s: 3117)

[That] day: future/eschatological

NIV: 3427 יוֹם and הוּא and בָּ (בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא) (Strong’s: 3117)

In that day: future/eschatological

NIV: 344 אַחֲרֵית and 3427 יוֹם (Strong’s: 319 and 3117)

In the latter/last days: Israel’s future, general future, Messianic or eschatological

NIV: 1524 גָּדוֹל and 3378 יְהוָה and 3427 יוֹם (יּוֹם-יְהוָה הַגָּדוֹל) (Strong’s: 1419, 3068, and 3117)

The great day (of YHWH): future Israel (Zeph 1:14)

**New Testament:**

NIV: εσχατος 2274 and ημερα 2465 (Strong’s: 2078 + 2250)

Last day: end-times/eschatological (2 Pet 3:3), very last day (Jn 6:39)

The great day (of God Almighty) (megavlh" hJmevra", Jude 6; Rev 6:17; 16:14)  
Eschatological, end time, very last day.

## b) *The splendor/glorious of his majesty*

Expressions in Isaiah that describe YHWH’s majesty, correspond to his *glory*, his glorious presence, and link with the covenant presence-promise. YHWH’s glory and presence are greatly extolled in Isaiah

Isa 2:10 Go into the rocks,  
hide in the ground  
from dread of the LORD  
and the splendor of his majesty! (glory of his majesty, יְהוָה וּמְהִרָּה גְּאֹנֵי)



Petra, January, 2011

Isa 2:19 Men will flee to caves in the rocks  
and to holes in the ground  
from dread of the LORD  
and the splendor of his majesty,  
when he rises to shake the earth.

Isa 2:21 They will flee to caverns in the rocks  
and to the overhanging crags  
from dread of the LORD  
and the splendor of his majesty,  
when he rises to shake the earth.

Is 3:8 Jerusalem staggers,  
Judah is falling;  
their words and deeds are against the LORD,  
defying his glorious presence.

Isa 24:14 They raise their voices, they shout for joy;  
from the west they acclaim the LORD's majesty.

Isa 26:10 Though grace is shown to the wicked,  
they do not learn righteousness;  
even in a land of uprightness they go on doing evil  
and regard not the majesty of the LORD.

Isa 53:2 He grew up before him like a tender shoot,  
and like a root out of dry ground.  
He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,  
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

Jude 24 To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—

### c) *The Branch of the Lord*

➤ See Zech 6:9-15; Jer 23:5; 33:15.

The Branch of the (צמח) Lord is a particularly eschatological expression, for it corresponds to the remnant seed of the promise that will produce the Messiah.

Isa 4:2 In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel.

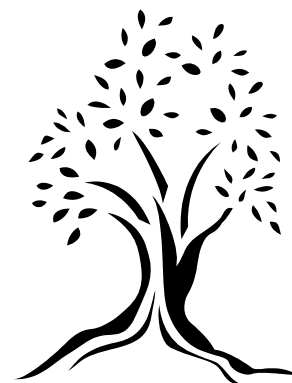
Isa 11:1 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;  
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

### d) *Mountain of the Lord*

➤ See Mic 4.

Is 2:3 Many peoples will come and say,  
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
to the house of the God of Jacob.  
He will teach us his ways,  
so that we may walk in his paths.”  
The law will go out from Zion,  
the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Is 30:29 And you will sing  
as on the night you celebrate a holy festival;  
your hearts will rejoice  
as when people go up with flutes  
to the mountain of the LORD,  
to the Rock of Israel.



Sinai, 2011



### e) *Valley of Vision*

Part of the visionary imagery of Isaiah that has eschatological implications and apocalyptic tones. It forebodes a dark judgment on the horizon of Judah's/Israel's history.

Isa 22:1 An oracle concerning the Valley of Vision:  
What troubles you now,  
that you have all gone up on the roofs,

Isa 22:5 The Lord, the LORD Almighty, has a day  
of tumult and trampling and terror  
in the Valley of Vision,  
a day of battering down walls  
and of crying out to the mountains.



### f) *Rahab*

Rahab (רַהַב) is an image of arrogance and an emblematic name of Egypt (often thought to represent a mythical sea monster).

Isa 30:7 to Egypt, whose help is utterly useless.  
Therefore I call her  
Rahab the Do-Nothing.

Isa 51:9 Awake, awake! Clothe yourself with strength,  
O arm of the LORD;  
awake, as in days gone by,  
as in generations of old.  
Was it not you who cut Rahab to pieces,  
who pierced that monster through?

### g) *Blind and deaf*

Blindness and deafness illustrates the ignorance and rebellion of Judah. In light of the revelation they had been given, it is *apropos*: Isa 6:9-10; 26:11; 29:9,18; 35:5; 42:7, 16, 18, 19;42; 43:8; 44:9; 56:10; 59:10. Those who have been given the light of life and received the word of God, are both blind and deaf, a complete reversal.

Lu 11:33 “No one lights a lamp and puts it in a place where it will be hidden, or under a bowl. Instead he puts it on its stand, so that those who come in may see the light. <sup>34</sup>Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are good, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are bad, your body also is full of darkness. <sup>35</sup>See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness. <sup>36</sup>Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be completely lighted, as when the light of a lamp shines on you.”

Some 56x the NT juxtaposes these themes of blindness and deafness:

Jn 9:41 Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.

### h) *His strange work, alien task*

Despite many warnings within the covenant-curse context that the Lord would bring an enemy nation against rebellious Israel, the whole concept is seen as “alien” or “foreign” to the redemptive purposes of God.

Isa 28:21 The LORD will rise up as he did at Mount Perazim,  
he will rouse himself as in the Valley of Gibeon—  
to do his work, his strange work,  
and perform his task, his alien task. (נְכַרְיָהּ עֲבֹדֹתָיו:)

### i) *Holy One*

The Holy One of Israel/Jacob is the Lord God himself, the personal covenanting Lord. This expression relates to the covenant promise to be their God, and conveys the seriousness of his holiness. Used some thirty times in Isaiah alone: Is 1:4; 5:19, 24; 10:17, 20; 12:6; 17:7; 29:19; 29:23; 30:11, 12; 30:15; 31:1; 37:23; 40:25; 41:14, 16, :20; 43:3, 14, 15; 45:11; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7; 54:5; 55:5; 60:9, 14.

Isa 54:5 For your Maker is your husband—  
the LORD Almighty is his name—

the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer;  
 he is called the God of all the earth.  
 Isa 6:3 And they were calling to one another:  
 “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty;  
 the whole earth is full of his glory.”

### *j) Your God*

References and allusions to the covenant-promise are so numerous it is not practical to try and list them all. “My people” is used over 30x in Isaiah.

Isa 7:11 Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the de  
 Isa 35:4 Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with  
 Isa 37:4 It may be that the LORD your God will hear the words of the  
 Isa 37:4 him for the words the LORD your God has heard. Therefore pray for  
 Isa 40:1 Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem  
 Isa 40:9 the towns of Judah, “Here is your God!” 10 See, the Sovereign LORD  
 Isa 41:10 do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and  
 Isa 41:13 For I am the LORD, your God, who takes hold of your right hand  
 Isa 43:3 For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, you  
 Isa 48:17 “I am the LORD your God, who teaches you what is best  
 Isa 51:15 For I am the LORD your God, who churns up the sea  
 Isa 51:20 the LORD and the rebuke of your God.  
 Isa 51:22 at your Sovereign LORD says, your God, who defends his people:  
 Isa 52:7 who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!” 8 Listen!  
 Isa 54:6 only to be rejected,” says your God. 7 “For a brief moment I  
 Isa 55:5 because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,  
 Isa 59:2 have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face  
 Isa 60:9 to the honor of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,  
 Isa 60:19 your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.  
 Isa 62:3 a royal diadem in the hand of your God. 4 No longer will they call  
 Isa 62:5 rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.  
 Isa 66:9 I bring to delivery?” says your God. 10 “Rejoice with Jerusalem

### *k) The first and the last*

The eternity, the uniqueness, and the exclusivity of God are conveyed with this expression. There are no other gods. It also serves as a link with the same NT claims of Jesus.

Isa 41:4 Who has done this and carried it through,  
 calling forth the generations from the beginning?  
 I, the LORD—with the first of them  
 and with the last—I am he.”

Isa 44:6 This is what the LORD says—  
 Israel’s King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty:  
 I am the first and I am the last;  
 apart from me there is no God.

Isa 48:12 Listen to me, O Jacob,  
 Israel, whom I have called:  
 I am he;  
 I am the first and I am the last.

Rev 1:17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: “Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last.

### *l) My servant*

➤ See pp. 365, 360.

## 4. Major themes

“There is no other book in either Testament which comprehends the whole of biblical theology so completely as does Isaiah. Here the terrifying holiness of God is depicted as clearly as it is anywhere in the OT, but also the unchanging grace of God is depicted as clearly as it is anywhere in the NT.”<sup>402</sup>

1. The law of the covenant was blessing for obedience and cursing for disobedience. Judah/Israel was entering into a long period of the darkness of God’s wrath against them.
2. Primary themes: God’s holiness and glory/world’s sin – **Judgment/redemption**. Judgment brings with it *hope* for the *purging* redemption provides. These themes comprise a tight tapestry from chapters 1-66. Escaping judgment would not bring redemption at this stage (Jer 4:4). Purging and cleansing involves the important *purification* of Judah/Israel. Cleansing imagery corresponds with judgment, while healing imagery corresponds with redemption and restoration. Isaiah himself is keenly aware of his own need for cleansing before he can speak God’s word (6:5-7).
3. God is the One who created the universe. The creation theme is more frequent in Isaiah than Genesis, and perhaps more than any other OT book (4:5; 43:1; 45:8; 48:7; 65:17). The word בָּרָא (*bāra*) appears some 21x in Isaiah. Creation and redemption are twin themes that feature prominently. A new creation is coming that will include redemption (see creation/redemption, p.55) (66:22-24).
4. God’s wrath on Judah coming at the time of the captivity (a foretaste of final judgment for the ungodly): God’s holiness and glory in judgment against the world’s sin. The uniqueness and exclusivity of God is presented as the only viable belief over against the gods of the nations which are nothing. The motifs of Exodus deliverance and wilderness wandering are also background to the judgment themes. A new exodus will follow the exile.
5. God’s mercy and compassion for his people. Fulfillment of the covenant promise.
6. The importance of God’s people trusting God is found throughout.
7. Prophecies of future return through Cyrus: one of three lines of redemption (the prophet, Cyrus, Messiah) reveals the sovereignty of God in redemption. Fulfillment of covenant promise.
8. The theme of Zion, the place of God’s sanctuary-presence and the city of the people of God, features prominently in Isaiah (some 47x). Zion is the earthly center of God’s reigning from heaven, the place of the Torah and the ark of the covenant, the center of the eschatological purposes of God, and Zion corresponds with Sinai where Israel first “meets” with YHWH.
9. The Servant-Messiah who dies: the ultimate line of redemption completes all the former, because He delivers through salvation from sin. The full revelation that salvation from sin can not be accomplished through human effort. The servant is also the king of righteousness. The Messiah is Immanuel, God present.
10. The extension of God’s mercy to the nations: the gospel message of salvation for the Gentile world. The old order was passing away and the new order was approaching. Fulfillment of the covenant promise.
11. God’s protection of his people: the covenant relation of Israel/Judah to God is central to what takes place in exilic judgment and return. Fulfillment of the covenant promise.
12. The future blessing of eternal kingdom: Isaiah progressively reveals the goal of redemption in the recreated earth and a people who will serve and praise him. Final Consummation of the covenant promise.



(right) The Peaceable Kingdom by E. Hicks

<sup>402</sup> Oswalt, “Isaiah,” *New International Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, p. 217.

**Remember**

Isa 38:3 “Remember, O LORD, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.  
 Isa 44:21 “Remember these things, O Jacob, for you are my servant, O Israel. I have made you, you are my servant; O Israel, I will not forget you.  
 Isa 46:8 Remember this, fix it in mind, take it to heart, you rebels.  
 Isa 46:9 Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me.  
 Is 54:4 Do not be afraid; you will not suffer shame. Do not fear disgrace; you will not be humiliated. You will forget the shame of your youth and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood.  
 Isa 64:5 You come to the help of those who gladly do right, who remember your ways.  
 But when we continued to sin against them, you were angry.  
 How then can we be saved?  
  
 Isa 64:9 Do not be angry beyond measure, O LORD; do not remember our sins forever.  
 Oh, look upon us, we pray, for we are all your people.

**5. Major prophecies**

➤ See Payne statistics, p. 174.

*Prophecies incorporated in II Kings from Isaiah:<sup>403</sup>*

<b>II Kings</b>	<b>From Isaiah</b>
18:22 (II Chron 32:12)	36:7
18:30 (II Chron 32:11); 19:10, 21, 29-32, 34; 20:6b	36:15
19:1, 14; 20:5b, 8b	37:1, 14; 38:20, 22b
19:7a, 28, 33	37:7a, 29, 34
19:7b	37:7b
20:5a, 6a, 8a	38:5, 7, 21-22a
20:9-10	38:8
20:17-18	39:6-7
20:19	39:9

*Prophecies with personal reference to Christ:<sup>404</sup>*

**Isaiah** (\* second coming)

2:4a Kings will arise before his exalted presence, and princes worship\*  
 7:13 Conceived by a virgin  
 7:14b He will be Immanuel, God with us, the “Mighty God”  
 7:15 He will experience moral growth, though in an oppressed land  
 8:9 Opposed by the counsels of raging nations, He will not open his mouth  
 8:17 He will wait for YHWH to convert Israel again to Himself\*  
 9:1 He will bring the light of His ministry to those in Galilee  
 9:4 He will proclaim the day of vengeance of our God\*  
 9:7 He will sit on the throne of David and be execute righteousness\*  
 11:1 He will be a branch from David, living in Nazareth  
 11:2 He will be anointed with God’s Spirit for preaching the gospel  
 11:4a He will decide with equity for the poor and the meek of the earth  
 11:4b He will slay the wicked, the Antichrist\*  
 12:1 He will furnish His people with joy and praise  
 24:16 He will be a light to the Gentiles, with worldwide salvation\*  
 26:21 The victorious Redeemer will come to Zion\*  
 40:3 John will be His forerunner  
 42:1a His ministry will be unpretentious  
 42:6a He will embody God’s redemptive testament  
 49:7a He will suffer, be rejected, slain, and buried with the wicked  
 52:15a He will carry our diseases, in a healing ministry  
 53:9b He will receive honorable burial in the tomb of a rich man  
 53:10b He will prolong His days, being resurrected from the dead

<sup>403</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia*, p. 676.

<sup>404</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia*, p. 666.

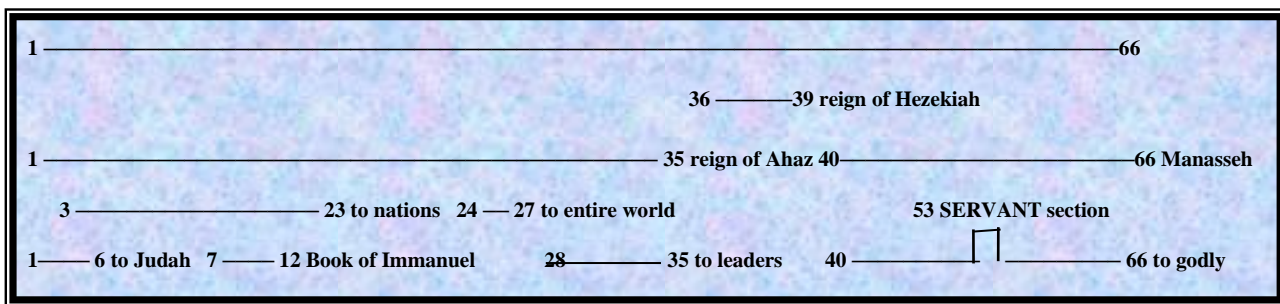


Prophecy of the Prophet Isaiah by Jan Brueghel and Hendrick van Balen, c. 1606, oil on copper, Alte Pinakothek.<sup>405</sup>

## 6. Outline, structure/composition

Literary aspects: poetry, prophecy, “symphonic structure.” One of the most beautifully written and structured books in all of literature. The complexities and breadth of Isaiah make structuring a singular challenge for the exegete. Dorsey does a fine job of outlining the structure of Isaiah, and proposes that Isaiah is a finely structured unity of seven larger units. The sections that have been traditionally difficult to place chronologically in the structure are then seen within their context in the larger units (e.g., Isa 6, 39).

**The geography of Isaiah** from “Studies in Isaiah” by A.A. MacRae:



As noted above, VanGemenen breaks Isaiah’s ministry into four periods which outline the book itself: cf. dating outline and contents under heading on p. 313:

- Social criticism (740-734): Isa 2-5 Uzziah and Jotham
- Syro-Ephraimite War (734-732): Isa 7-9 Ahaz

<sup>405</sup> From Norbert Schneider, *Still Life: Syll life Painting in the Early modern Period* (London: Taschen, 1999) p. 185.

- Anti-Assyrian rebellion/siege of Jerusalem (705-701): Isa 28-32; 36-39 Hezekiah

## 234 Literary Structure of the OT, D.Dorsey

Major Prophets

## 22.21 The Book of Isaiah

## a introductory messages of condemnation, pleading, and future restoration (1:1–12:6)

- begins: message calling for repentance (1:1–31)
- condemnation of empty religious practices (1:12–15), social injustice, wickedness
- Yahweh's eyes hidden; he won't hear their prayers: their hands are full of blood (1:15)
- themes: devouring beasts, Sabbath observance, briers and thorns, unacceptable sacrifices, drunkenness, punishment by burning, darkness transformed to light
- "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb . . . the cow and the bear shall feed together . . . and the lion shall eat straw like the ox . . . they shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain" (11:6–9)

## b oracles to nations: humiliation of proud king of Babylon (13:1–27:13)

- fall of proud Babylon (first, middle, and last units)
- lofty beginning of unit's key figure, king of Babylon: proud, boastful, respected and feared, wicked, smites (*nkh*), oppresses (*ngš*), slays peoples, exalts himself above stars, bright morning star (14:1–20)
- humbling of king of Babylon: humiliated, brought low; kings shocked to see him, rise up (*qûm*) and taunt him; he has no offspring

## c collection of woes: don't trust in earthly powers! (28:1–35:10)

- Egypt's help is empty; it will not profit; shame will be the result of trusting Egypt; they are people, not gods; trust Yahweh!
- folly of idols (30:22; 31:7) and of vessel advising potter (29:16)
- highway in desert; flowers, glory of Yahweh being seen; coming with reward; strengthening the weak (35:1–10)

## d CENTER: historical narratives showing Yahweh's supremacy over all earthly and divine powers (36:1–39:8)

## c' Yahweh's supremacy over idols: don't trust in idols! (40:1–48:22)

- idols are worthless and empty; Yahweh is Israel's true help; idols will not profit; shame from trusting idols; trust Yahweh!
- repudiation of idols; folly of vessel advising potter (45:9)
- highway in desert; flowers, glory of Yahweh being seen; coming with reward; strengthening the weak (40:1–31)

## b' servant messages: exaltation of the humble servant (49:1–54:17)

- restoration of humbled Jerusalem (first, middle, and last units)
- humble beginning of unit's key figure, Yahweh's servant: humble, quiet, not esteemed, righteous, smitten (*nkh*), oppressed (*ngš*), slain for his people, remains lowly, hidden in dark obscurity
- exaltation of servant: exalted, raised up; kings shocked to see him, shut mouths, rise up (*qûm*) and bow before him; his offspring

## a' concluding messages of condemnation, pleading, and future restoration (55:1–66:24)

- begins: message calling for repentance (55:1–56:1)
- condemnation of empty religious practices (58:1–14; 66:3), social injustice, wickedness
- Yahweh's face hidden; he won't hear their prayers: their hands are bloody (59:1–3)
- themes: devouring beasts, Sabbath observance, briers and thorns, unacceptable sacrifices, drunkenness, punishment by burning, darkness transformed to light
- "the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox . . . they shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain" (65:25)

Below, Kenneth Kitchen critiques the "bifid" approach to Isaiah:

two shorter scrolls, holding the first and second halves of the book respectively. But this is rendered unlikely by the twofold format of the book when looked at as two significant and neatly parallel halves, not just a mechanical division, a point long since made by Brownlee and Harrison.<sup>2</sup> The division also has chronological significance; 1–33 come under Uzziah to Ahaz, while 34–66 come under the time of Hezekiah (and perhaps later). Each half corresponds well to the other in order and subject of topics covered; each is in seven parts. See table 32.

Table 32. The “Bifid” Format of Isaiah

Part 1		Part 2	
1:1	Overall Title		
A. 1–5	Judgment and restoration	A. 34–35	Desolation and restoration
B. 6–8	Biographical/historical and oracles	B. 36–39	Historical/biographical accounts
C. 9–12	Words of blessing and judgment	C. 40–45	Words of blessing and judgment
D. 13–23	Oracles on foreign nations (and one on Jerusalem)	D. 46–48	Oracles on foreign nations (and on Babylon)
E. 24–27	Destruction, restoration, deliverance	E. 49–55	Restorations, destruction, deliverance
F. 28–31	Social and ethical justice	F. 56–59	Social and ethical justice
G. 32–33	Restoration of the nation	G. 60–66	Restoration of the nation

This is, of course, not the only possible analysis, and it depends on a very post-Isaianic Dead Sea Scroll. Other meaningful structural possibilities have been offered, such as that of Motyer, based on a lifetime’s close work on the book of Isaiah, in suggesting the book’s structure in three parts, 1–37, 38–55, and 56–66, with three portraits of a messianic king, varying in detail but based on a consistent model.<sup>3</sup>

The supposed three “books” of 1–39, 40–55, and 56–66 have often been alleged to show traces of different periods of composition. There can be little doubt of 1–39 belonging to the later eighth century, having numerous links with that epoch. But that 40–55 is based in Babylon is simply not true. As scholars of various stripes have been compelled to observe, those chapters betray no first-hand knowledge of the metropolis of Babylon (mentioned only four times in these chapters, and only once actually implying a Hebrew exile, 48:20 — contrasted with nine times in 1–39!), but belong in the milieu of the Levant, not least Palestine.<sup>4</sup> Briefly, Marduk-apil-iddina II (“Merodach-Baladan”) of Babylon seemed a good rival to Sennacherib in 704–703;<sup>5</sup> and it was apposite for Isa-

## ON THE RELIABILITY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

iah “of Jerusalem” to warn Hezekiah that trifling with Babylon would lead to his people and goods ending up there (Isa. 39). At that time nobody could know whether such a threat might come in 10, 20, or 200 years; no timescale was built into it. The actual span of about 150 years is a product of later history, not known to Isaiah or anybody else in his world in 703. In the case of 56–66, there is, again, nothing inconsistent with an origin in seventh/sixth-century preexilic Judah, and clear hints that fit that place and time.

So, why the fuss, to have multiple Isaiahs (two of them anonymous, in flagrant contradiction with unanimous usage in prophetic books!) by imaginary disciples miraculously able to write “Isaianic” poetry and prose? The one real sticking point for many is the introduction of Cyrus in 44:28 and 45:1; in the text he is not identified by any title at all, yet he has authority to rebuild Jerusalem and ability to defeat and plunder other powers. Deliverance did indeed eventually come by the agency of the well-known (to us!) Cyrus II, king of Persia and conqueror of Babylon.<sup>6</sup> But no such person was directly known to an eighth-century Isaiah — only that someone named Cyrus with high authority would do the deed of restoring the Hebrews and their own capital. It is worth remarking that the king we know so well was number II of his name; his grandfather, an earlier Cyrus I, reigned in Iran about the early sixth century. Earlier still, before the Achaemenid Persians, a still earlier “Cyrus” (Kurash) ruled in Parsua in 646, as contemporary of Assurbanipal of Assyria, little more than fifty years after Isaiah’s own time.<sup>7</sup> There were many local rulers in Iran before the sixth century, and other Cyruses (or Kurashes) may have reigned there before 646; in 672 Esarhaddon established treaties with seven Median rulers as part of a larger political move.<sup>8</sup> Assyria had been involved in Iran since the ninth century.<sup>9</sup> Thus there is nothing untoward in an Isaiah being moved to proclaim that a “Cyrus” (identity of his kingdom not stated) would reach power and free Hebrew captives in Babylon (whether of Merodach-Baladan’s time or indefinitely later). His prophecy was to be fulfilled, as we know now, but we in hindsight know more now than he personally ever did — simply because that hindsight has been gifted to us by our living in a much later day. So the prophecy is remarkable in having “come true,” if one is not gifted with faith, but it (and Isaiah!) should not be burdened with our hindsight of today. In short, a unitary view does not need to presuppose exclusively “conservative” views about the Hebrew Bible; those stuck with nineteenth-century mind-sets are free to experiment with such alternatives as they wish, but at the cost of inconsistencies and (as sec. 2 below may suggest) failure to meet the exigencies of prophetic composition, recording, and usage in the biblical world overall.

<sup>406</sup> Kitchen, *Reliability of the OT*, 379.



Dillard and Longman describe acceptingly a “bifid” approach which considers Isaiah a two-volume work in which chapters 1-33 parallel chapters 34-66. This is compelling, but is based on a *mixture* of genre and themes as their twofold criteria for identifying the sections. Thus, one must ask what boundaries does such a method provide, if any?<sup>407</sup>

### *Bifid Approach to Isaiah*

Volume 1	Volume 2
1. Ruin and restoration of Judah (1–5)	1. Paradise lost and regained (34–35)
2. Narrative (6–8)	2. Narrative (36–39)
3. Agents of blessing and judgment (9–12)	3. Agents of deliverance and judgment (40–45)
4. Oracles against foreign nations (13–23)	4. Oracles against Babylon (46–48)
5. Judgment and deliverance of God’s people (24–27)	5. Redemption through the Lord’s servant; glorification of Israel (49–55)
6. Ethical sermons (28–31)	6. Ethical sermons (56–59)
7. Restoration of Judah and Davidic kingdom (32–33)	7. Paradise regained (55–66)

## 7. *Exposition and the history of redemption themes*

Considering the length of this book, it is overwhelmingly impossible to do it much justice in such a survey. Thus, I can only highlight salient points and issues along the broad sweep of the following discussion. More is left out than is included, for this book, as the other “major prophets,” should be considered in separate courses to be fair to them.

### a) *Judgment introduced: Isa 1-23*

#### (1) *Isaiah’s call, commission, and vision: Isa 1-6*



The vision of Isaiah 1 most likely followed the events described in chapter 6, where Isaiah receives his initial commission to prophesy (proposals for why Isaiah structured his book this way are discussed on chapter 6).

As stressed, the *fact* that God “has spoken” through the prophets is a significant feature that we should always note, for this is central in the history of redemption: “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways . . .” (Heb 1:1).

(left) Isaiah, Unknown, Italian, Sicily, about 1300, [tempera](#) colors and gold on [parchment](#), Various, MS. 35<sup>408</sup>

His message begins with a strong rebuke to the nation of Judah for their failure to keep their promise to serve the Lord. It is posed in a *lawsuit* fashion in which the Lord calls on the heavens themselves to listen to the Lord’s testimony that Judah had broken their covenant. He describes the consequences of this failure in a vivid portrayal of the nation as a sick body and as a country whose cities are ransacked and burned by foreigners. They are also described as a people who are very religious but who are hypocritical and false in their “faith.” They practice *insincere* worship of the Lord *mixed up* with the religions and idols of the nations around them. They have compromised themselves. Thus, the Lord

<sup>407</sup> Dillard & Longman, *Intro to the OT*, p. 281.

<sup>408</sup> From <http://www.getty.edu/art/collections/images/m/00177601.jpg>.

cries out through Isaiah, “Stop bringing meaningless offerings!” (1:13). This negative declaration against Judah’s sin is followed by a powerfully worded plea to seek *true faith, true justice, and true righteousness*. The Lord further declares that he is reasonable, for even though they have sinned greatly, he will forgive and restore them. That is, if they “are willing and obedient” (1:19). On the other hand, if they are not willing, then God promises that further judgment will come. This latter possibility in chapter 1 sets the stage for the final sad history of the nations of Israel and Judah, for they are both captured by enemy forces (Assyrian and Babylonian) in the years following Isaiah’s prophecy.

Part of the beauty of the prophet’s vision is that it is in poetic form, and our English translation attempts to show this. There is a certain irony, or parody, in the fact that such beautiful poetry in Isaiah is often about the very serious indictment, or “law-suit,” from God against his people’s unbelief and sin. They had broken their covenant with God, so God speaks to them as a father through the prophet, appealing to them to return, and also warning them about what would happen if they did not return in obedient faith to him.

Isaiah’s vision begins with a powerful word from God to all the heavens to “Hear” what God has to say against his people. That is, he calls the heavens themselves to testify in his courtroom. As Moses wrote, long before Isaiah, in Deuteronomy 4:26, “I call heaven and earth as **witnesses** against you this day that you will quickly perish from the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess. You will not live there long but will certainly be destroyed.”

Although God had clearly taught his beloved people, his special treasure, they had become even less sensible than animals who at least remember their proper place and master. This is not a matter of intelligence (high IQ); it is a matter of the will and the heart of the people failing to live up to the conditions of God’s covenant. They had become religiously corrupt through idolatry and religious formalism.

*Children who forsake their father: Isa 1:2-3*

Isaiah continues the imagery of children in 1:2. In the midst of Bible passages about God’s displeasure with his people, it is important to always remember the underlying source of his displeasure is the fact that he is their God and they are his people. As a father loves his children and desires their good, he also must chastise them for rebellion. It is as “unnatural” for children to turn against their parents as it is for animals to forget their master (1:3). Yet, here the prophet drives home this very point by repeating seven times that Judah had forsaken their God: they were “sinful,” “guilty,” “evildoers,” “corrupt,” “forsaking,” “spurning,” “turning” their backs.

Consider the correlation of this parental imagery with that of the abandoned wife in Hosea, both being familial motifs which convey similar truths. The experience of parents abandoned by their own children can be no less severe than that of a spouse abandoned by their spouse.

*The body is sick: Isa 1:6*

The head, heart, and feet here represent the people of Judah. The Bible uses language familiar to all, and even when expounding profound ideas its imagery is usually very familiar and earthy. The image of a sick versus healthy body is found throughout the Bible, and generally when used *figuratively* it depicts God’s people, either Israel/Judah or the Christian community, in either negative or positive terms: a sick body means a rebellious people, and one facing possible judgment from God. Whereas, a healthy body depicts a faithful and vibrant people of God. In the case of Isaiah 1, the land of the promise was going to become “sick” with foreign invasions from Assyria and Babylonia as judgment from God.



“But I want to be a jester like father,” said Hester.

Below: Some examples of the body used figuratively in the Bible (see the spirit of the law, p. 72):

<i>Texts</i>	<i>Contents</i>	<i>Main theme</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Deut 28:33-35	The food their hand produced will be taken, what they see will drive them mad, their legs, feet, head will be afflicted	Disobedience to the Lord will result in serious affliction.	The imagery here can be taken both literally and figuratively: there would be physical and spiritual affliction.
Ps 38:3-16	Sick body, bones are unsound, wounds fester, back is in pain, heart is	King David laments the painful consequences of his sin, asking	The imagery can be taken both physically and spiritually, with the emphasis on the

	anguished, eyes grow dim, ears are deaf, mouth is mute, foot slips	for the Lord's forgiveness and help.	spiritual consequences of sin.
Prov 6:17-19	The seven "things the Lord hates": haughty eyes, lying tongue, murderous hands, wicked heart, evil feet, lying tongue.	The foolish person is one whose "whole" person does evil.	Throughout Proverbs body imagery is used to contrast the two ways: the way of God <i>versus</i> the way of evil.
Prov 4:20-5:3	wise words (mouth), sight (eyes), heart, whole body, heart, mouth, lips, eyes, path/feet, feet, wise words (mouth), lips (knowledge), lips (evil)	The wise person is one whose "whole" person seeks to obey God's law.	Proverbs teach that every person expresses in words and actions what is written on their heart, either to good or to evil.
Matt 5:3-12; Lu 6:20-23	humble spirit, mournful heart, hungry and thirsty, merciful heart, pure heart, peacemakers	The believer is one who has internally acknowledged his sin and externally sought to obey God.	Jesus uses physical imagery here to describe the condition of the true believer and the blessings of God.
Rom 12:5; 1 Cor 10:16-17; 12:12-27; Eph 1:23; 2:16; 4:4, 12, 16; 5:23, 30; Col 1:18, 24; 2:19; 3:15	The church is like a physical body.	The healthy church takes care of every member, and every member serves the others.	These texts describe the community of all believers figuratively as a whole (unified) body, although diverse.
Matt 6:22-23; Lu 11:34-36	The body is full of light if the "eyes" are good, but full of darkness if the eyes are bad.	The one who has spiritual sight, believes God and lives in the light of truth, but the one who does not lives in darkness.	This physical illustration is intended to describe spiritual matters, contrasting belief with unbelief.

### ***In the last days: Isa 2:1f.***

➤ See p. 318.

#### *Some viewpoints on this motif:*

1. E. Speiser: "In days to come, not the end of days but days to follow"
2. E.J. Young: the latter days which reveal the Messiah, in Isa 2:1 the term is technically describing the period between the first and second Advents. (amil)
3. S. Mowinckel: motif occurs late, influenced by Persians. No eschatology in early usage.
4. Vos: eschatological and collective aspect which is elastic, but not millennial in Isa 2:2, but is the age of the Christian church which began with the Advent of Christ. (amil)
5. Theo. Laetsch: Isa 3:2f. refers to the kingdom of grace established by the Word of God proceeding from Jerusalem. (amil)
6. J.B. Payne: Isa 2:2f. is a literal portrayal of miraculous geological changes in Jerusalem (premil).
7. J.R. Vannoy: Isa 2:2 is a future reference to the millennium. (premil)
8. J.A. Alexander: Isa 2:2 is about the exaltation of the church, thus is figurative (postmil)
9. Delitzsch: Isa 2:3f. was fulfilled at Pentecost when the gospel went to the nations, although v. 4f. remains unfulfilled (postmil)

As noted in the discussion on figurative language, there is no known rule to always determine when an expression is to be taken literally or figuratively. This text is a classic example of this difficulty. Most problematic is Isa 2:4f (cf. Mic 4:1-4) which describes a time when war will be no more. This is clearly not an absolute condition of the present time period from the amil point of view, for there is going to be war until the end, presumably. It also poses a problem for the postmil viewpoint, wherever they claim that this is an absolute condition preceding the post-mil era. Premils resolve it by simply pushing it to the millennium era, for they generally take it as literal in the absolute sense. Yet, one can read this kind of prophecy less narrowly and more descriptively of conditions that will prevail in general or will come to prevail progressively to the degree to which the people of God are living in accord with the Word of God. It can also be understood in the figurative sense that the *now* of the redemptive work of God will correspond with the future, eternal peace of heaven, despite the reality of ongoing war in this present world. The *telescoping* aspect of prophecy may be at work (see p. 204), in which a variety of prophecies are interwoven that describe different conditions and eras. In that case, we could suggest that aspects of the prophecy are being fulfilled progressively, and that those elements that describe conditions absolutely unknown figuratively or literally are those reserved for the eternal kingdom, whereas the others *vie* for either a post-exilic, pre-second Advent church era, millennial era, or postmillennial era, depending on your end-times eschatology.

In light of the exile and the promised remnant, one could also understand this historically as a figurative description of post-exilic conditions, although I would propose that this could not be affirmed in any absolute sense. In defense of such a view, it could be noted that the context is one of judgment and exile, and especially seen in the "day of the Lord" described in 2:6-5:30. Nevertheless, regardless of what may apply to post-exilic conditions in this prophecy, it is unjustifiable to limit it to post-exilic times.

### Mountain of the Lord

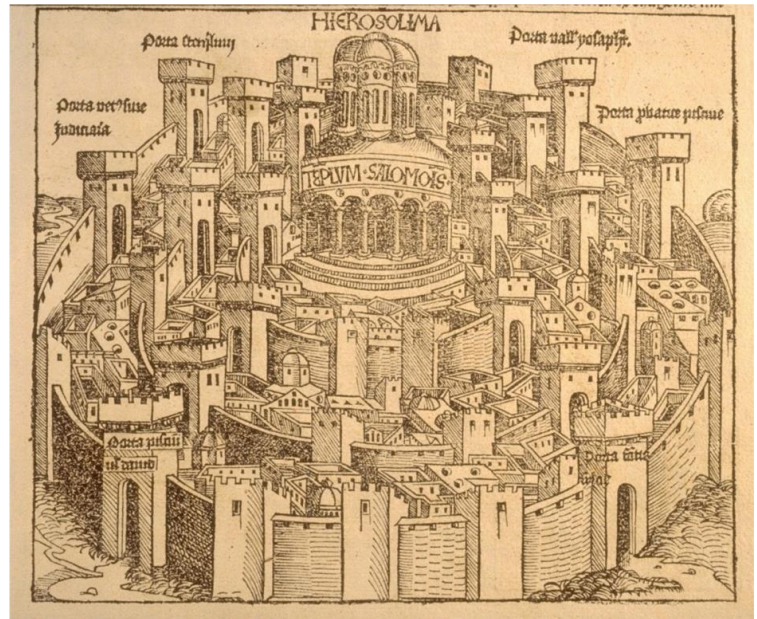
- See p. 320 and the discussion of Micah and the mountain of God, p. 386.  
Gen 22:14 So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

Num 10:33 So they set out from the mountain of the LORD and traveled for three days. The ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them during those three days to find them a place to rest.

Isa 2:3 Many peoples will come and say,  
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
to the house of the God of Jacob.  
He will teach us his ways,  
so that we may walk in his paths."  
The law will go out from Zion,  
the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Isa 30:29 And you will sing  
as on the night you celebrate a holy festival;  
your hearts will rejoice  
as when people go up with flutes  
to the mountain of the LORD,  
to the Rock of Israel.

Mic 4:2 Many nations will come and say,  
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
to the house of the God of Jacob.  
He will teach us his ways,  
so that we may walk in his paths."  
The law will go out from Zion,  
the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.



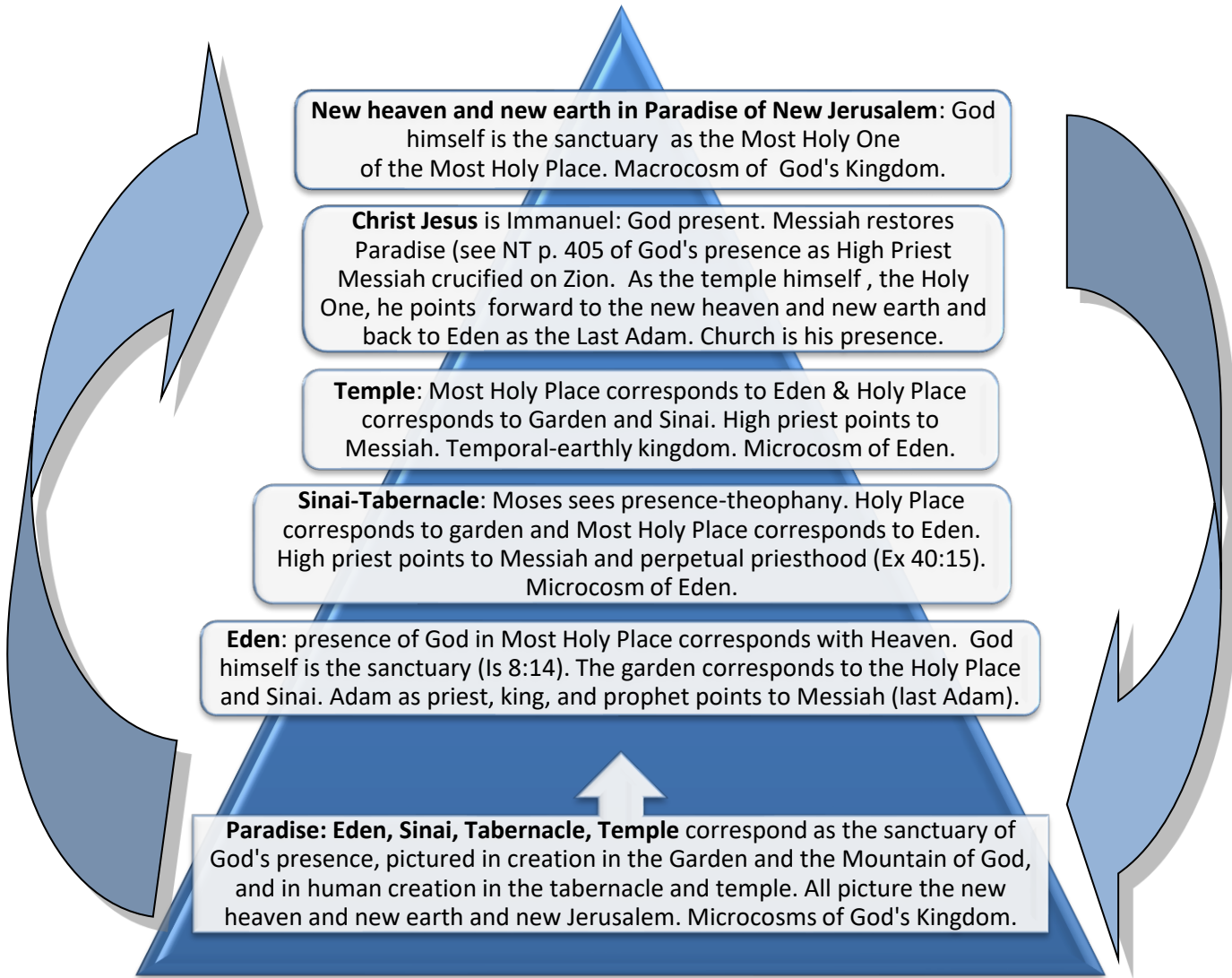
Zec 8:3 This is what the LORD says: "I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the LORD Almighty will be called the Holy Mountain."

The mountain of the Lord motif refers to **Zion**. It is essentially another name for the city of Zion (Jerusalem). (Zion occurs more than 100x in the writing prophets alone.) Mountain imagery features so prominently in the Bible that we can not overstate its importance (some 500 references to hills and mountains), although it does not all convey theological import. The motif of Zion, however, has particular significance as it corresponds with Sinai (Horeb) and the revelation of God's redemptive purposes. That is, it has clear *eschatological significance* in redemptive history. Central to that history, is the presence of YHWH manifested and dwelling, for in the redemptive purposes of God, restoration to the presence of God was the centerpiece. This motif highlights, in microcosmic form, the kingdom-presence of God in heaven, the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth, which will be the restoration of the Edenic paradise. The land promise to Israel was only a foreshadowing of this final restoration. This motif is greatly advanced in the new covenant which prepares for the New Jerusalem "coming down from God ... (Rev)

Heb 12:18 You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm;

---

Below: notes on the theology of mountains from the Biblical theology course syllabus notes:



Heaven (macrocosm) – Edenic paradise (earthly kingdom) (microcosm) – promised land (earthly kingdom) (microcosm) – Zion (foreshadows heavenly kingdom) – sanctuary/temple (foreshadows heavenly kingdom) (microcosm) – new temple (prophets) (foreshadows heavenly kingdom) – Christ (new temple) (macrocosm/microcosm) – new Eden – new heaven/earth in promised paradise (heavenly kingdom) (macrocosm)

**(2) The mountains of God as they represent (and correlate with) the presence of God in Paradise**

Deut 18:14-16 The nations you will dispossess listen to those who practice sorcery or divination. But as for you, the LORD your God has not permitted you to do so. <sup>15</sup> The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. <sup>16</sup> For this is what you asked of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, “Let us not hear the voice of the LORD our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.”

Psalm 18:7-15 (NIV)  
 The earth trembled and quaked,  
 and the foundations of the mountains shook;  
 they trembled because he was angry.  
 8 Smoke rose from his nostrils;  
 consuming fire came from his mouth,  
 burning coals blazed out of it.  
 9 He parted the heavens and came down;  
 dark clouds were under his feet.  
 10 He mounted the cherubim and flew;  
 he soared on the wings of the wind.  
 11 He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him—

the dark rain clouds of the sky.  
 12 Out of the brightness of his presence clouds advanced,  
 with hailstones and bolts of lightning.  
 13 The LORD thundered from heaven;  
 the voice of the Most High resounded.<sup>c</sup>  
 14 He shot his arrows and scattered the enemies,  
 great bolts of lightning and routed them.  
 15 The valleys of the sea were exposed  
 and the foundations of the earth laid bare  
 at your rebuke, O LORD,  
 at the blast of breath from your nostrils.

Heb 12:14-20 (NIV) Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. <sup>15</sup> See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. <sup>16</sup> See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. <sup>17</sup> Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. He could bring about no change of mind, though he sought the blessing with tears. <sup>8</sup> You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; <sup>19</sup> to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, <sup>20</sup> because they could not bear what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned."<sup>a</sup>



- See Beale, *The Temple*, pp. 146, 149 who suggests that Eden was associated with a mountain : “Adam was to extend the hospitable part of new creation in mount Eden into the inhospitable world (for the location of Eden on a mountain, see Ezek 28:13-16).” Interestingly, there does not seem to be any ANE parallel to a paradise on a mountain (*NIV Bible Background Commentary*).

Ezek 28:13-16 You were in Eden,  
 the garden of God;  
 every precious stone adorned you:  
 ruby, topaz and emerald,  
 chrysolite, onyx and jasper,  
 sapphire, turquoise and beryl.  
 Your settings and mountings were made of gold;  
 on the day you were created they were prepared.  
 14 You were anointed as a guardian cherub,  
 for so I ordained you.  
 You were on the holy mount of God;  
 you walked among the fiery stones.  
 15 You were blameless in your ways  
 from the day you were created  
 till wickedness was found in you.  
 16 Through your widespread trade

<sup>c</sup> Some Hebrew manuscripts and Septuagint (see also 2 Samuel 22:14); most Hebrew manuscripts *resounded*, / *amid hailstones and bolts of lightning*

<sup>a</sup> Exodus 19:12, 13

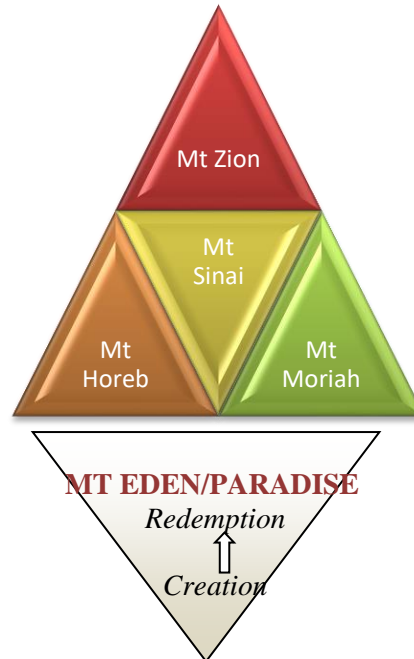
you were filled with violence,  
and you sinned.  
So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God,  
and I expelled you, O guardian cherub,  
from among the fiery stones.

**“Sacred Mountain” (see more mountain texts below, pp. ff.)**

Isa 14:13 You said in your heart,  
“I will ascend to heaven;  
I will raise my throne  
above the stars of God;  
I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly,  
on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain.”

Jer 31:23 This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: “When I bring them back from captivity, the people in the land of Judah and in its towns will once again use these words: ‘The LORD bless you, O righteous dwelling, O sacred mountain.’”

2 Pet 1:18 We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.



Some suggest that Satan had a place in Eden (based on Ezek 28), as a guardian cherub who had access to God on his holy mountain – Heaven – thus, after his fall he still had access to God. This is questionable, since Satan would then have fallen *after* Adam/Eve were created in the garden of Eden.

**(3) The correlations of these mountains.<sup>409</sup>**

G. K. Beale says there are strong links: “. . . a close link between mountain and temple is made throughout the Old Testament, so that Mount Zion is sometimes referred to as ‘mountain’, ‘hill’ or some other like image. These ways of speaking about Mount Zion either closely associate it or virtually equate it with the temple as a synecdoche of the whole for the part (the entire mountain is substituted for the top part where the temple is located).”<sup>410</sup>

**“ . . . every temple associated with God’s people in the Old Testament is on a ‘mountain’ . . . ”<sup>411</sup>**

<sup>409</sup> See J.T. Strong, “Zion: Theology of,” *NIDOTTE*, vol. 4, pp. 1314-1321 (and his bibliography); B.C. Ollenburger, *Zion, the City of the Great King*, JSOT, Supplement Series, 1987; M. Selman, “צִיּוֹן [2215],” *NIDOTTE*, vol 1, pp. 1051-1055; W. Osborne, “Mountains,” *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, pp. 673-674; J.K. Hoffmeier, “The Mountain of God,” *Israel in Sinai*, pp. 111-148.

<sup>410</sup> Beale, *The Temple*, p. 145.

<sup>411</sup> Beale, *The Temple*, p. 146.

There are also New Creation links with the idea of a growing holy mountain in Is 2:2-3; Micah 4:1-3: “The image of an emerging new creation may be perceived in the depiction of a growing holy mountain.”<sup>412</sup>

(a) **Geographic**

- See atlas: South to North. No apparent significance of geographical correlations between most important mountains.

(b) **Theological**

Mountains have diverse symbolism in the Bible: endurance, strength, security, desolation, fruitfulness, beauty, etc. Mountains that appear to represent strength and permanence, in juxtaposition to God’s omnipotence, also suggest the ephemeral nature of the created world. Indeed, Ezekiel uses the leveling of the mountains to illustrate the judgment of God (38:20; also Isa 40:4; 49:11). Mount Zion is pictured as the location of God’s final victory over his enemies (Ezek 38-39; Zech 14:3-4) and death (Is 24:23). Mountains naturally *picture* the place of contact between heaven and earth, and thus the presence/manifestation of God “on earth.” Mountains are the location of many events in the Bible: centers of idolatry (high places), strategic military features, and places of divine revelation (theophany and covenant). For our purposes, we will look at mountains with redemptive-historical significance.

**Eden** (Adam’s sin and sacrifice) leads out to

⇒ **Moriah** (Abraham’s sacrifice and the promise, Gn 22:1-2) which points to

⇒ **Sinai/Horeb** (Moses’ sacrifice and covenant, Ex. 24:15) which points to

⇒ **Zion** (David’s sacrifice and covenant, 2 Sm 24:18-24; 2 Chr 3:1 and the Death of the sacrificial death of Messiah).

Zion is seen as the source of the river of life flowing out of paradise (Ps 46:4[5]; Isa 33:21-23; Ezek 47:1-12; Joel 3:18[4:18]; Zech 14:8). This has apparent correlations to the Temple/sanctuary of God’s presence in Zion as it pictures in the microcosmic restoration of Eden corresponding to the macrocosmic temple of heaven, and as it points to the Messianic restoration/redemption which re-opens the way into Eden/Paradise. Horeb is understood as the same location as Mt Sinai. Horeb is Elijah’s point of escape from rebellious Israel, while seeking refuge in God’s presence. The prophet of the Lord’s law is again removed from Israel, indicating further judgment on Israel, while he is also given a glimpse of God’s glory there.

“Mountains and hills are a master image of the Bible, through which one can trace the whole course of biblical history and doctrine in microcosm.”<sup>413</sup>

The question remains, how do we understand future prophecies about Zion (the hermeneutical issues of *telescoping*, prediction, literal vs. figurative, typology, “multiple fulfillment,” progressive fulfillment, historical contingency, etc., as discussed at the beginning?)

### End of notes on the Biblical Theology of Mountains

*The Branch and the vineyard: Isa 4:2-5:7*

Ending the description of judgment in 2:1-4:1, we are introduced to the Branch (נִצְמָן) of the Lord. Combining post-exilic imagery with messianic imagery, Isaiah gives us another difficult text to unpack temporally. Isaiah is not all woe and judgment, and this is a beautiful example of the Lord giving hope in the midst of impending doom. The Branch may represent the Israelite remnant, which represents the redeemed of God as a whole, which also represents the people of God today. The Branch should particularly be understood to represent the Messiah, or in the least the messianic hope of redemption. He will purify and sanctify. “In that day” has been describing the terrible conditions of the exilic judgment (Isa 3-4), but in 4:2 it introduces the glorious future of the Branch of YHWH, using a variety of Exodus motifs (atonement, fire of judgment and fire of guidance, cloud of guidance, glory as a canopy).

In the evocative language of the Song of Solomon and Hosea, Isaiah next enlists the imagery of the vineyard of the Lord. In very parabolic form (some say allegorical) he describes the love of God for his people in

<sup>412</sup> Beale, *The Temple*, p. 147.

<sup>413</sup> *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, p. 163.



terms of the careful gardener who is going to destroy his garden and make it a wasteland. He leaves us in no doubt about whom he is speaking of, for he clearly explains that the vineyard is “the house of Israel and the men of Judah” (5:7).

*Jesus used the same motif to outline similar themes in his role in redemptive history:*

Mtt 21 42:44 Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. <sup>34</sup> When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit. <sup>35</sup> “The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. <sup>36</sup> Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. <sup>37</sup> Last of all, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said. <sup>38</sup> “But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him and take his inheritance.’ <sup>39</sup> So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. <sup>40</sup> “Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” <sup>41</sup> “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end,” they replied, “and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.” <sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: ”“The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes”? <sup>43</sup> “Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. <sup>44</sup> He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed.”

Isaiah follows this vineyard vignette proclaiming a series of woes which catalogue the exploitation of the land and property, drunkenness and party-mongering, self-indulgence, deceit, wickedness, sarcastic unbelief, calling evil good and good evil, arrogant pride of knowledge but no discernment or wisdom, bribery, injustice, rejection of the word of the Lord.<sup>414</sup> As Hosea presents such catalogues followed by the resultant judgment from afar, so does Isaiah. In graphic imagery Judah’s judgment is likened to the endless appetite of the grave, fire that burns up even the roots, and an enemy he calls with a whistle like a hunting dog to the chase, leaving the dead like refuse in the streets.

*Isaiah’s commission to the ministry: Isa 6*

It is generally believed that this section precedes Is 1-5, for he receives his commission in Isa 6 to proclaim his vision and prophecies. Various proposals have been made to explain this order, but it should pose no real problem, regardless of when we place Isa 6 chronologically. Context: Uzziah dies in 739 B.C.: a turning point and Pul campaigns in the west with Assyrian dominance coming. See the literary structure, p. 325.

Dorsey offers a compelling case for seeing the structuring of Isaiah as the reason for placing Isaiah’s call in ch. 6 where he does. That is, it occurs at “the highlighted center of the book’s symmetrically arranged opening unit.”<sup>415</sup>

Isaiah’s call to prophet-hood is linked with the fiat creation of man made in God’s image.

(right)|isaiah 6.<sup>416</sup>

Dorsey, Literary Structure, p. 219

#### 22.4 Isaiah’s call (Isaiah 6)

##### a Yahweh’s heavenly splendor and glory (6:1–4)

- begins: the image of Yahweh sits (*yšb*) enthroned in his heavenly abode
- theme: fullness—Yahweh’s heavenly abode is filled (with his majesty); the earth (*ʔeres*) is full of his glory

##### b Isaiah’s distressed reaction (6:5a)

- begins: and I said (*wāʔōmar*)

##### c Isaiah’s lips are unclean; but they are purified (6:5b–7)

- his sins are forgiven
- his eyes have seen (*rʔh*)
- he lives among a sinful people (*ʕam*)

##### d CLIMAX: Isaiah’s call and acceptance (6:8)

##### c’ the people’s eyes, hearts, ears are sinful (6:9–10)

- they will not be forgiven
- their eyes will not see (*rʔh*)
- the people (*ʕam*) are sinful

##### b’ Isaiah’s distressed reaction (6:11a)

- begins: and I said (*wāʔōmar*)

##### a’ Judah’s future devastation and humiliation (6:11b–13)

- begins: the image of no one sitting/dwelling (*yšb*) in the land
- theme: emptiness—the land/earth (*ʔeres*) will be empty and desolate

#### (4) *Book of Immanuel, Ahaz’s crisis with Syria: Isa 7-12*

<sup>414</sup> On bribing judges and the warring of justice in A.N.E. law codes, see *IVBBC*, p. 590f.

<sup>415</sup> Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, p. 233 and see his outline 22.7, p. 220.

<sup>416</sup> Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, p. 219.

This section is textually complex and beautifully textured. It contains some of the most exalted messianic prophecy alongside starkly grim warnings of coming judgment. The life and reign of Ahaz in Judah and his alliances are interwoven with the major redemptive historical theme of the Messiah Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:2 indicates that Judah is afraid of Israel's alliance with Syria, and they sought to remove king Ahaz from the throne (2 Ki 16:1-20; 2 Chron 28:1-27). Ahaz reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years ([743]736-732) (2 Ki 15:38; 16:1-20; 2 Chron 28:1-27). He did great evil, following the idolatrous practices of the kings of Israel, even after their exile for those same sins (2 Ki 16:3). He even sacrificed his own son in the fire.

*The Syro-Ephraimite War:* between Aram (Syria), Israel, and Judah. Rezin, King of Aram, of Damascus (in the south/east), and Pekah king of Israel (in the north) attacked Judah and Jerusalem in 735 (2 Ki 15:37; Is 7:1-8:22) in order to enforce his anti-Assyrian policies. Rezin managed to recover Elath (at innermost point on the Gulf of Aqaba on the Red Sea) and drove out the Judahites. As noted under Pekah, the prophet Obed warned Israel that they had gone too far in their assault on Judah (2 Chron 28:9-15). Thus eventually, Rezin and Pekah were unsuccessful in their campaign against the pro-Assyrian Ahaz in Judah in 735/734 (2 Ki 16:36; 2 Chron 28:16, 20-21; Is 7:1-8:22). The Edomites and Philistines were also raiding towns in Judah, as well (2 Chron 28:17-18).

- See *Times Atlas*, "Israel's relations with Aram," pp. 104-105.
- See modern history of Lebanon and Syria against Israel.

While Ahaz was losing the war against Pekah and Rezin, he offered sacrifices to the gods of Aram in Damascus: 2 Chron 28:23 He offered sacrifices to the gods of Damascus, who had defeated him; for he thought, "Since the gods of the kings of Aram have helped them, I will sacrifice to them so they will help me." But they were his downfall and the downfall of all Israel.

With the threat of annihilation of the entire line of Judah (see 1 Chron 3:10-16), Ahaz appealed to Tiglath Pilezar, king of Assyria, for help. Isaiah's prophetic word to Judah is to not fear their enemies in Israel and Syria. Without faith in the Lord, however, they will fall:

Isa 7:2-9 Now the house of David was told, "Aram has allied itself with Ephraim"; so the hearts of Ahaz and his people were shaken, as the trees of the forest are shaken by the wind. 3 Then the LORD said to Isaiah, "Go out, you and your son Shear-Jashub, to meet Ahaz at the end of the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the road to the Washerman's Field. 4 Say to him, 'Be careful, keep calm and don't be afraid. Do not lose heart because of these two smoldering stubs of firewood—because of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and of the son of Remaliah. 5 Aram, Ephraim and Remaliah's son have plotted your ruin, saying, 6 "Let us invade Judah; let us tear it apart and divide it among ourselves, and make the son of Tabeel king over it." 7 Yet this is what the Sovereign LORD says: "It will not take place, it will not happen, 8 for the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is only Rezin. Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be too shattered to be a people. 9 The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is only Remaliah's son. If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.'"

---

Isa 8:6-8 "Because this people has rejected the gently flowing waters of Shiloah and rejoices over Rezin and the son of Remaliah, 7 therefore the Lord is about to bring against them the mighty floodwaters of the River—the king of Assyria with all his pomp. It will overflow all its channels, run over all its banks 8 and sweep on into Judah, swirling over it, passing through it and reaching up to the neck. Its outspread wings will cover the breadth of your land, O Immanuel!"

---



**Ahaz's turning to Assyria** was perhaps the most decisive turning point, from the prophetic point of view, in the history of the nation: the end was clearly in sight after this. Ahaz turned to heathen idolaters to protect him (using a complicit Uriah the priest to accomplish it). Ahaz went to Damascus just to meet Tiglath Pilezar, and learned how to imitate his idolatrous worship: "In deference to the king of Assyria" (1 Ki 6:18). Ahaz completely profaned the sanctuary of the Lord by reorganizing the worship of the sanctuary in a complete *syncretism* of Assyrian

divination/worship and Yahwism. The debauchery that had been much more prevalent in Israel during the divided monarchy had now firmly become part of Judah's world.

Remarkably, Isaiah's prophetic word gives hope to Ahaz (or Judah) in the midst of this terminal-message of the end of the kingdom of Israel and Judah. After telling Ahaz to ask for a sign, Isaiah prophesied the sign of Emmanuel ("God with us," עִמָּנוּ אֱלֹהִים), the Messiah, and the specifics of his coming as a child to the land of darkness. Ahaz piously, but falsely, claims he does not want to "put the Lord to the test" (7:12). He would rather trust in his Assyrian friends than trust the Lord. This is evident from Isaiah's rebuke of the king which follows.

Isa 7:14

לָכֵן יִתֵּן אֲדֹנָי הוּא לָכֶם אֹת הַגֵּיהַ הַעֲלָמָה הָרְהָ וְיִלְדֶת בֵּן וְקָרְאת שְׁמוֹ עִמָּנוּ אֱלֹהִים

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

A text that can be understood to clarify and expand on the Immanuel son of 7:14:

Isa 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

#### *Interpretations of the promised child of Isa 7:14-16*

- *A child born into the immediate historical context:* that before the child can discern right from wrong then the enemy kings they feared would be gone. This view does no justice to the context of rebuke.
- *A messianic child born in the distant future:* in rebuke to Ahaz, this child would replace the unworthy king on David's throne. That is, all three verses apply to the Messiah. This view may not fully account for the historical referents in the verse. And, some object that it makes the sign to Ahaz too remote.
- *A literal child is born in Ahaz's historical context,* but this child foreshadows the birth of the Messiah. This multiple fulfillment view (double sense) (see p. 200, 204) raises the question of the character of the first mother to fulfill this prophecy: was she a virgin? Ahaz's son Hezekiah was not born to a virgin. and, Hezekiah may have already been born at this point, for Ahaz reigned sixteen years and was succeeded by a twenty-five year old Hezekiah (2 Ki 16:2; 18:2). Isaiah's son (Isa 8:1-3) was not born of a virgin either. The view that two different children are being referred to in vv. 14-16 has induced a variety of proposals as to whom they are, one being Messianic and one being born in Ahaz's day.
- *A hypothetical child:* "if this child were to be born within a year, these two enemies you fear would be gone." That is, within Isaiah's message of rebuke, he says "The One who is coming (even if he comes within a year) would find these two kings out of the picture."

See Alexander's expression of this latter view:

This end Vitranga has attempted to secure, by supposing the language to be hypothetical, or that the Prophet, while he views the birth of Christ as a remote event, makes it the measure of the events at hand -- *q.d.* before the Messiah, *if he were born now*, could know how to distinguish good from evil, &c. The only objection to this ingenious explanation is, that the conditional expression on which all depends, *if he were born now*, is precisely that which is omitted, and of which the text contains no intimation. And that the Prophet, without such intimation, would make this use of an event which he distinctly saw to be remote, though not incredible, ought surely not to be assumed without necessity.<sup>417</sup>

As compelling as this proposal is, it does not resolve all the difficulties:

Where is the conditional element found in the Hebrew? Alexander acknowledges that the conditional element is omitted.

- It seems to be a rather novel way of reading prophecy, and relies heavily on supposition.
- It forces the temporal element to the forefront when the prophetic language itself is temporally indeterminate.
- Nevertheless, it does have in its favor the value of retaining the messianic meaning of the entire section.

Matthew leaves us in no doubt as to whom Isa 7:14 refers to:

Matt 1:22-23 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: <sup>23</sup>"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel!"—which means, "God with us."

Isa 7:15-16

<sup>417</sup> Alexander, *Isaiah*, pp. 171.

חֲמָאָה וּדְבַשׁ יֹאכַל לְדַעְתּוֹ מֵאִס בָּרַע וּבַחֲוֹר בְּטוֹב:

כִּי בְטוֹרִם יָדַע הַגֶּעֶר מֵאִס בָּרַע וּבַחֲוֹר בְּטוֹב תִּעֲזֹב הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה לְזֶמְנִי שְׁנֵי מְלָכֶיהָ:

15 He will eat curds and honey when he *knows* enough to reject the wrong and choose the right. 16 But before the boy *knows* enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

The question remains whether Isa 7:15-16 refers to the Messiah. The main difficulty is with the phrases “But before” (כִּי בְטוֹרִם)<sup>418</sup> and “before/when (לְדַעְתּוֹ)”<sup>419</sup> the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and chose the right,” in so far as we assume this child Immanuel in 7:14 will be born in Ahaz’s time. In fact, 7:14 does not state when the child would be born, though many interpretations depend on this assumption. I propose on this point that the temporal determinations are not foregrounded, indeed there appears to be a telescoping of the prophetic perspective. Taking the text as straightforward as possible, we can affirm dogmatically that the sign (אֵימָנוּת) to Ahaz would be the birth of the Son Immanuel. Thus, those who object that this could be no sign to Ahaz, for he would be long dead, are proved wrong by Mtt 1:22-23, for there is no compelling reason to insist that he must be alive for the sign to be meaningful. Secondly, the two kings that Judah feared would be long gone before the Son Immanuel would grow to maturity. This latter is especially so if it can be proposed that the expression that he will “know enough to reject the wrong and chose the right” is simply *idiomatic* for human maturity and is not a temporal marker as to *when* the child would be born, which is generally assumed. “Know” is used in the sense of *discern*.

The sense of discernment:

2 Sam 19:35 I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king?

Heb 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

This contrasts with the Israelites of Ahaz’s day:

Isa 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good  
and good evil,  
who put darkness for light  
and light for darkness,  
who put bitter for sweet  
and sweet for bitter.



(left) The Fool.

The other difficulty rests in the expression “curds and honey” (חֲמָאָה וּדְבַשׁ) which must be taken as a motif of poverty due to the Assyrian invasion, if we assume that this child *must* be born in Ahaz’s day. That is, “the child will subsist on curds and honey *until* he knows . . .” during the temporary desolation of Judah by Rezin and Pekah (which is the meaning in 7:22). On the other hand, one could argue that honey and curds are symbols of the covenant-promise of “a land flowing with milk and honey.” (See also 7:22 in which the image seems to positive, despite the difficult circumstance being described.) Unless we insist that 7:14 and 7:15 are describing different children, then we can assume that this refers in some fashion

to the child called Immanuel, and thus is a positive image of the child’s humanity. Further, this expression may convey more the *eventuality* of this child’s birth and growth to maturity, not their timing. The emphasis thus falls on the *certainty* of the child growing to spiritual and physical maturity, and the ability to *discern* good from evil. This contrasts the Immanuel child with Ahaz’s and the nation’s inability to discern the difference between good and evil. Having said all this, admittedly the meaning of this expression is not easy to determine.

<sup>418</sup> Note: this expression can convey “before that *future time*.”

<sup>419</sup> The infinitive ל here is being taken as a temporal marker in the NIV and RSV as “when” and the NRSV as “by the time.” Presumably this is supported by the following temporal expression in 7:16, “But before” (כִּי בְטוֹרִם), preceding “know” (יָדַע). This is identified as a temporal clause by Waltke and O’Connor, *Hebrew Syntax*, p. 608. Note that the infinitive construct has an infinitive absolute as its object (לְדַעְתּוֹ מֵאִס). KJV renders it “that he may know.” Alexander, disagreeing, notes that also Luther, Junius, and Clericus refer it, not to time, but to the design or effect of eating curds and honey *so that he may know* (Isaiah, p. 173).

## Alexander affirms the essentials well:

Either the prophet, while he foretells the birth of Christ, foretells that of another child, during whose infancy the promised deliverance shall be experienced; or else he makes the, infancy of Christ himself, whether foreseen as still remote or not, the sign and measure of that same deliverance. While some diversity of judgment ought to be expected and allowed, in relation to this secondary question, there is no ground, grammatical, historical, or logical, for doubt as to the main point, that the Church in all ages has been right in regarding this passage as a signal and explicit prediction of the miraculous conception and nativity of Jesus Christ.<sup>420</sup>



## The virgin shall conceive:

The word הַעֲלָמָה (7x) is sometimes taken to mean simply a “young woman” (RSV, NEB). The typical term for *virgin* is בְּתוּלָה. Yet, this word can also designate a virgin who is betrothed (Joel 1:8). Thus, if Isaiah had chosen to use this word (בְּתוּלָה), her marital status would have been ambiguous. Whereas, הַעֲלָמָה is never used of a married woman (e.g., Gen 24:16, 43 describes a woman who is an unmarried virgin). Some argue, therefore, that הַעֲלָמָה is a young, marriageable virgin. הַעֲלָמָה is the only word that clearly conveys the notion of an unmarried virgin, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, is the only one in history to have fit this category. In Hebrew thinking no *good* woman could bear a son being unmarried, and thus this birth is unique on two accounts: she is both a good woman (a virgin) who bears Immanuel, and she is also *unmarried*.<sup>421</sup>

## Judgment on Judah: Isa 7:17-10:4

Isaiah then continues to prophesy the judgment against Judah in 7:17-10:4, which includes a peak messianic text of the *son* to be born (9:1-7). This son is a further revelation of the Immanuel of 7:14.

In terms of prediction, it is worth noting the clarity of Isaiah’s prediction and its specificity: the enemies Rezin and Pekah would prove to be nothing, Assyria would attack anyway, the captives would be shaved, people remaining in the land would nevertheless have curds and honey to sustain them and they would also be hunters for the land will be “covered with briars and thorns.”

The identical location that Isaiah warned Ahab was the place the later Assyrian commander’s messengers stood to warn Jerusalem of Sennacherib’s wrath:

Isa 7:3 Then the LORD said to Isaiah, “Go out, you and your son Shear-Jashub, to meet Ahaz at the end of the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the road to the Washerman’s Field.

Isa 36:1-2 In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah’s reign, Sennacherib king of Assyria attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. 2 Then the king of Assyria sent his field commander with a large army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. When the commander stopped at the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the road to the Washerman’s Field.

## Isaiah is given two sons with prophetic meaning: Isa 8:1-22

Shear-Jashub – “A Remnant will Return” - וְשֵׁאֵר יָשׁוּב

Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz – “Quick to the Plunder” - “Swift to the Spoil” - לְמַהֵר שָׁלַל חָשׁ בָּז

Isaiah’s first son symbolized the remnant, whereas the second son symbolized the judgment from Assyria (“signs and symbols” 8:18). Further, there must be some prophetically significant correlation between the Immanuel child to be born and Isaiah’s child both in Ahaz’s day. The Immanuel child provides a long-range prophecy that is confirmed by all the other prophecies fulfilled preceding it. Isaiah’s child confirms his prophetic word, both in the Lord *giving* the child, but also in the Lord *naming* the child. The children of Isaiah serve as graphically immediate symbolism to picture two of the most prominent themes of his ministry: the exilic judgment and the remnant. These are as certain as the Immanuel to be born, and they are represented as a promised *pledge* and *proof* by the two sons of the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah leaves no doubt before Ahaz and Judah that the reason his son is named “Quick to the Plunder” is that they have rejected the Lord (8:6-8). Remarkably, in this context, the Immanuel (כִּי עִמָּנוּ אֵל) son is invoked as the promise against which Israel’s enemies will eventually fail to defeat God’s people (8:8b-10). The time context is unstated again, but we can assume from the context that it conveys the same sense as previously: the *eventuality* and *certainty* of this happening. The enemies of Israel and Judah have no reason for optimism against God’s people, even though they are the instrument of YHWH’s “strange work,” for *God is with them*. אֵל כִּי עִמָּנוּ אֵל (8:8b, 10b) (Immanuel) in accord with his covenant-presence-promise. (The NIV translates 8:8 as an exclamatory “O Immanuel!,” whereas 8:10b is “for God is with us,” though the expression is identical.)

Also, considering the further unfolding in Isa 9:1-7, the pinnacle of the messianic prophecy of Immanuel, there is a correlation in all of these texts with the One who is to come as “God with us.” Therefore, it is reasonable

<sup>420</sup> Alexander, *Isaiah*, p 172.

<sup>421</sup> LXX renders הַעֲלָמָה with παρθενος, (a maid, maiden, virgin, girl).

to suppose that all three of these texts of Immanuel are a triptych gradually unveiling the supreme messianic prophecy that this Son will establish an eternal kingdom of peace, justice, and righteousness (9:6-7).

*Immanuel is the Mighty God and the Prince of Peace: Isa 9:6-7*

Handel’s “Unto Us a Son is Born” is profound in its rendition of this text of Isaiah, indeed it is the greatest piece of music to accompany this great theme of Immanuel.

The *prophetic perfect* in 9:5[6], “For to us a child is born” (כִּי-יֵלֵד יֶלֶד-לָנוּ) describes the birth of the son as having already taken place, in the sense that it is that certain. It is as certain “as if” it had already happened.

As E.J. Young states it:

he has been born ..... he will be born  
 he has been given ..... he will be given  
 and has been ..... and will be  
 and has been called ..... and will call<sup>422</sup>

Matt 4:12-16 When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he returned to Galilee. <sup>13</sup> Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali— <sup>14</sup> to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah:   
 15 “Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,  
 the way to the sea, along the Jordan,  
 Galilee of the Gentiles—  
 16 the people living in darkness  
 have seen a great light;  
 on those living in the land of the shadow of death  
 a light has dawned.”



*Immanuel’s titles:*

- ⊕ Wonderful Counselor: פְּלֵא יוֹעֵץ
- ⊕ Mighty God: אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹר
- ⊕ Everlasting Father: אָבִיעֵד
- ⊕ Prince of Peace: שֶׁר-שָׁלוֹם

Theses messianic titles provide a developing progression of revelation about the coming Messiah. They correspond and cumulatively build upon the other:

⇒ פְּלֵא describes an extraordinary wonder, something that is not easily comprehended, often used in reference to God’s deeds of judgment and redemption. In this case, God is the Wonder. (See discussion of the incomprehensibility of God, p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**) This is seen in the description of the Angel of the Lord in Judges:

Jud 13:18 He replied, “Why do you ask my name? It is beyond understanding.” He is also the Counselor (יוֹעֵץ) which means the Messiah will be wise, the only one with complete and perfect knowledge of God, able to teach the perfect knowledge of God.

⇒ אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹר describes the valiant and mighty quality of God. This traditional name for God is here attributed to the Son Immanuel. This should not be construed as “hero” (as some do), for אֱלֹהֵי corresponds with the same in Immanuel (אֱלֹהֵי עִמָּנוּ) of Isa 8:8, 10. This Messiah would have the very strength of God, which makes him God’s equal, thus providing the only sure foundation for God’s people to glory in him and trust in him for their redemption. See the following:

Deut 10:17 For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes.

Isa 10:21 A remnant will return, a remnant of Jacob will return to the Mighty God.

Lk 22:69 But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God.

Jer 32:18 You show love to thousands but bring the punishment for the fathers’ sins into the laps of their children after them. O great and powerful God, whose name is the LORD Almighty,

Neh 9:32 Now therefore, O our God, the great, mighty and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love, do not let all this hardship seem trifling in your eyes—the hardship that has come upon us, upon our kings and leaders, upon our priests and prophets, upon our fathers and all your people, from the days of the kings of Assyria until today.

“Who else should lead Israel to victory over the hostile world, than God the mighty? The Messiah is the corporeal presence of this mighty God; for He is with Him, He is in Him, and in Him He is with Israel. The expression did

<sup>422</sup> Young, *Isaiah*, vol. 1, p. 328.

not preclude the fact that the Messiah would be God and man in one person; but it did not penetrate to this depth, so far as the Old Testament consciousness was concerned.”<sup>423</sup>

⇒ אָבִי עָד describes the Father who is everlasting (some translate as “divider of spoil”). This is the logical correlative to the names preceding, for the one who is Wonder itself and the Mighty God, is indeed the Father eternal. This underscores the promise of life eternal, the hope of redemption, for only he who is eternal could make such a promise. אָב in reference to God occurs 15x. It is relatively rare to find this idea of fatherhood, perhaps dues to disassociation with fertility cults(?), yet is frequent enough to provide adequate background to the covenantal Father/Son relation of Israel the YHWH and for Jesus’ claims of Sonship. The Father is one with the Son? Trinity here? Some translate: “father of spoil”; “perpetual father”; father of numerous offspring”; “a father of eternity” or “the One who is ternally a father towards his people.”<sup>424</sup>

(See Exod 4:22; Deut 1:31; 8:5; Ps 103:13; Prov 3:12; Jer 31:9; Hos 11:1; consider also Jer 3:4, 19; Isa 63:16; 64:8; Jer 3:4; 31:9).

⇒ שָׁר־שָׁלוֹם describes God as the Prince who brings true peace. Only the One confirmed as God and Father of his people could provide the kind of peace required. This corresponds with the Davidic promise (Isa 9:7) of an eternal throne of rest from their enemies (2 Sam 7:8-16), which also has clear messianic overtures regarding the goal of redemption: God’s people would know peace in Immanuel. This contrasts vividly with the futile Assyrian hopes to rule the ANE world. See also:

Zech 9:10 I will take away the chariots from Ephraim  
and the war-horses from Jerusalem,  
and the battle bow will be broken.



He will proclaim peace to the nations.  
His rule will extend from sea to sea  
and from the River to the ends of  
the earth.

Mic 5:4 He will stand and shepherd his flock  
in the strength of the LORD,  
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.  
And they will live securely, for then his greatness  
will reach to the ends of the earth.

*Historical-critical notions:*

These titles have been reduced from their divine import in many ways by critical interpreters, but there is little support for the many digressions from the plain Hebrew text that these moves involve:

- “Government” becomes “burden of authority” (“a rosette embroidered on the royal robe”)
- “His name will be called” becomes “his name is proclaimed”
- Wonderful Counselor becomes “wonderful in purpose”
- “Mighty God” becomes “divine in might”
- “Everlasting Father” becomes “a father forever”
- “Prince of Peace” becomes “prince beneficent”
- “Of the increase of his government” becomes “great shall be his dominion”

Although the *Interpreter’s Bible* gives these alternatives to traditional translations, they seem unable to agree whether this person described is human or divine.<sup>425</sup> In the exegetical notes, Scott writes:

Is “9:1-6 appears to be a dynastic oracle uttered on the occasion of the anointing of a new king, or at the anniversary celebration of this event. . . . The language passes the bounds of ordinary human qualities in its description, because the monarch is no longer, in the thought of the poet, an ordinary man but is chosen and anointed son of Yahweh.” “It is not possible to say definitely whether the king in question was Ahaz or Hezekiah.”<sup>426</sup>

Whereas, in the exposition, Kilpatrick writes: “Inescapably to a Christian, this whole great passage is bound up with faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God; phrase by phrase, line by line, all that Isaiah proclaimed about the

<sup>423</sup> Kel and Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, p. 253.

<sup>424</sup> According to Young, this is not an expression about the ontological Trinity (Young, *Isaiah*, vol. 1, pp. 338-339; see also Keil and Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, p. 253; J. Alexander, *Isaiah*, p. 204). See Heb 1:3; Jn 14:9 – “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.”

<sup>425</sup> Scott and Kilpatrick, *Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 5, pp. 232-234.

<sup>426</sup> Scott and Kilpatrick, *Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 5, pp. 231-232.

coming Messiah has been fulfilled in the person and mission of our Lord, and for two thousand years the Christian church has taken up and sung: Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, Jesus, the Prince of Peace . . .<sup>427</sup>

#### SPECIAL NOTE ON THE TITLES OF THE CHILD<sup>428</sup>

The titles themselves, it has been argued, need not bear the higher interpretation. Some say that two of the names are capable of being used of an earthly monarch: *Wonderful Counselor* and *Prince of Peace*, which are within the range of human virtue, in evident contrast to Ahaz, at once foolish in the conception of his policy and warlike in its results. With respect to the title *Everlasting Father* it is said to be similar to oriental titles. The best refutation of this kind of argumentation of course is a study of the titles themselves.

It has also been claimed that Isaiah stressed the unity of God. In opposition to the polytheism of the people and its ruler, he asserted that only the LORD IS God. Says George Adam Smith: "It would have nullified the force of his message, and confused the generation to which he brought it, if either he or they had conceived of the Messiah with the conceiving of Christian theology, as a separate Divine personality." In answer to this, however, it is sufficient to point out that a proper exegesis of this passage does present a Messiah, who, although a legitimate heir to the Davidic throne, is, nevertheless, a separate Divine personality." As Davis well remarks: "It is enough to know that in the days of the prophets the conception of identity with, yet distinguishableness from, Jehovah was present in Hebrew thought and was consistent with the pure monotheism which was taught in Israel."

It has further been declared that the Messianic King was to perform only the ordinary duties of the kingdom. His work was simply that of an earthly king, and that was all Isaiah expected of him. In the New Testament, however, the work of salvation is spiritual. If therefore our understanding of Jesus' work is truly spiritual, we shall be less inclined to appeal to the prophecies of Isaiah as proof of His deity. This thought, however, is simply wishful thinking representing a liberalism which wished to remove as much as possible of the supernatural from the Bible. Certainly v. 6 makes it clear that the work of the Messiah is spiritual in nature.

When, it is further claimed, the actual reigning king was worthy, Isaiah felt no need for another king, but simply laid his stress upon the inviolability of Jerusalem. If, on the other hand, the actual king was an unworthy one, then Isaiah felt compelled to predict an ideal king. Hence, the expected king was not a supernatural being, but a human person. But Ahaz was the only evil king and Hezekiah the only good one. Furthermore, the Messianic prophecies uttered during the reign of Ahaz were basic for the understanding of those uttered under Hezekiah. The objection which we are considering presupposes that there was a whole list of good and bad kings. Such was not the case. This objection cannot be demonstrated to be valid.

Later in the prophecies Isaiah is silent about a divine Messiah, and so, it is claimed, he is also silent here. The other prophets also at a later time were silent about a divine Messiah. But whatever later prophets may have done, and we cannot entirely agree with the statement of this objection, the fact remains that in this particular prophecy the deity of the Messiah is clearly taught.

Mention has been made of the view that the passage simply represents the flattery of a poet. In times of distress, however, such flattery would not likely be heard. Furthermore, there is an earnestness and seriousness about this passage which does not well comport with the view that this is merely the flattery of a court poet. It is easily understandable that such an interpretation has not gained wide ground. The same is true of the view that this is mere popular hyperbole. In such hyperbole, it would have been most unlikely that the king would have been identified with God. That might have been the case in Egypt, but not in a monotheistic land such as Judah. Furthermore, when human beings are compared with God, the term employed is not *el* but *elohim*.

Upon the basis of a study of the accents Norman H. Snaith ("The Interpretation of EL Gibbor in Isaiah 95 [EVV 6]" in *The Expository Times*, 52, No. 1, Oct. 1940, pp. 36, 37) derives the following rendering: "And the Mighty God hath called his name Wonderful Counselor, The Everlasting Father (hath called his name) Prince of Peace." Cf. also G. R. Berry: "Messianic Predictions" in *JBL*, 1926-1927 and Alt ("Befreiungsnacht und Kronungstag," *Kleine Schriften*, pp. 206-25) who proposes a reconstruction of the text of 8:23. He holds that at the moment Galilee is freed from Assyria a new David ascends the throne

<sup>427</sup> Scott and Kilpatrick, *Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 5, p. 234.

<sup>428</sup> Young, *Isaiah*, vol. 1, pp. 340-345.



and has the announcement of his ascension proclaimed even in Galilee. An excellent defense of the Messianic interpretation of these verses will be found in the article of John D. Davis, "The Child Whose Name Is Wonderful," in *Biblical and Theological Studies* (Princeton Centenary Volume), New York, 1912, pp. 93-108.

*Poems of judgment: Isa 9:7-10:4*

There are four stanzas of poetry in this unit (9:12b, 17c, 21c; 10:4c), each ending with the expression, "his hand is still upraised/outstretched" (יָדוֹ נִטְוּיָהּ; יָדוֹ נִטְוּיָהּ). God's people are standing under judgment for their sins.

*Assyria is going to be punished: Isa 10:5-19*

The phrase in 10:6, "to seize loot and snatch plunder" (לְשַׁלֵּל וְלִבְזֹז בָּז), echoes the name of Isaiah's son, Maher-Shalal-Hash Baz (Isa 8:2).

Despite the fact that God raised up Assyria to punish his own people, he is going to hold the Assyrians accountable for their actions against Israel, but in part because of their sinful attitude of prideful imperialism (10:7-15). After the Lord finishes his work against his people, he will turn to finish Assyria for the "willful pride of his heart" (10:12). What Assyria boasts stands in stark contrast to the reality of God's sovereignty over the nations, history, gods, idols, and nature.<sup>429</sup> The Assyrians seem to place YHWH on the same level as the idols of the nations (10:10-11)! Assyria had seriously transgressed the law of humility, very much as did Israel and Judah:

Isa 10:13 For he says: "By the strength of my hand I have done this, and by my wisdom, because I have understanding. I removed the boundaries of nations, I plundered their treasures; like a mighty one I subdued their kings."

Deut 8:17-18 You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." <sup>18</sup> But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

*God's rhetorical question and response: Isa 10:15-19*

The answer to this question about the ax, saw, rod, and club is obvious: Assyria as the instrument in God's hand could not possibly exalt itself above the living God of Israel, Judah, and the nations. The Lord who is the Light of Israel, the Holy Flame, will torch Assyria's pride by destroying Assyria's power and splendor.

*God's proclamation of hope for the remnant of his people: Isa 10:20-33*

Israel and Judah had foolishly looked to Assyria, fearing and admiring Assyria, instead of to God. This is in large part what eventually brought them into exile. Thus, the promise to preserve a remnant is no small matter. They are to anticipate a return from exile even before going into exile.

שָׂאֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל יָשׁוּב יְעֻקֵּב אֶל-אֱלֹהֵי גְבוּרָה:

The remnant:  
will return:  
to the Mighty God.

Note: the "Mighty God" is the same expression as that in Isa 9:6 where it was applied to the Messiah Immanuel.

Also, the promise to reduce Israel to a remnant is given in the context of allusion to the Abrahamic promise to make Israel as numerous as the sand and stars:

Gen 13:16 I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted.

Gen 22:17 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies,

Isa 10:22 Though your people, O Israel, be like the sand by the sea, only a remnant will return.

Destruction has been decreed, overwhelming and righteous.



*God's proclamation of hope in the Branch: Isa 11:1-12*

➤ See branch above in Isa 4:2-5:7.

The Book of Immanuel ends on the high note of the messianic Branch. Parts of this passage provoke heated debate as to its end-times eschatology, particularly as to whether 11:6-10, and vv. 11-16 refer to the millennium, the kingdom age, or the church age.

<sup>429</sup> Note: the references to Calno, Hamath, and Samaria represent the prophetic perspective on impending events that are as certain as though they had already happened.

Chapter 11 contrasts the Assyrian army in Isa 10, that is predicted will never rise from the ash-heap of history again, and the Davidic kingdom that will rise again despite being chopped off. The Branch will grow from the remnant-stump that is preserved despite the Babylonian and Assyrian exile. That Branch will grow from the Davidic line, preserving the Davidic covenant and promises. What follows is one of the most beautiful descriptions of Jesus in the OT:

- ⇒ He will bear fruit (11:1).
- ⇒ The Spirit of YHWH will rest on him (v. 2):
- ⇒ The Spirit of wisdom and understanding
- ⇒ The Spirit of counsel, and power
- ⇒ The Spirit of knowledge
- ⇒ The fear of YHWH.
- ⇒ He will delight in the fear of YHWH (v. 3)

These categories correspond with his titles in 9:6-7 which show the Messiah's divine attributes. The Messiah Immanuel is thus shown to have God's Spirit which is one of wisdom, counsel, power, and knowledge. Particularly important is that the Messiah would know reverent and delightful relations with God himself. Consider the importance of the Wisdom theme here, for it is central to the nature of the Messiah (see wisdom, p. 72, 226). In contrast to all that preceded in his description of Israel and Judah's *ignorance*, the Messiah brings true wisdom and understanding.

#### Isa 11:2-5 – describe the actions of the Messiah

- ⇒ Judges a righteous and true judgment.
- ⇒ Gives justice for the needy and poor.
- ⇒ Strikes the earth with the rod of his mouth.
- ⇒ Slays the wicked with the breath of his lips

#### Isa 11:6-10 – describe the character of the Messiah's kingdom.

- ⇒ Peace in the animal kingdom.
- ⇒ Safety and peace in the human kingdom.
- ⇒ Knowledge of YHWH like the waters cover the sea.

#### The developing theology of the Messiah in Isaiah at this stage:

Isa 4 – The Branch is a figure for Messiah  
 Isa 7:14 – Messiah is Immanuel, God with us.  
 Isa 9:6 – Messiah is divine, God himself, eternal.  
 Isa 11:1-6 – Messiah is the Branch that will be filled with the Holy Spirit of God.  
 Isa 11:4 – seems to describe the second advent.  
 Isa 11:4b He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

See 2 Thess 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.

See Rev 19:11-15, 21 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. *12* His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. *13* He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. *14* The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. *15* Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. *21* The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

#### *The end of times or the millennium? Isa 11:6-10*

This section is less clear as to its referents. Needless to say, we can affirm in broad eschatological terms that

- ⇒ The Messiah will restore harmonious relations in the created world (as in Eden).
- ⇒ The Messiah will restore a world of peace and safety for God's people (as in Eden).
- ⇒ The Messiah will bring knowledge to all the earth (as in Eden).
- ⇒ The Messiah restores Paradise (as in Eden, but far greater).
- ⇒ The Messiah will save those from all nations.
- ⇒ The Messiah's resting place will be glorious (מְנוּחָתוֹ בְּבוֹד).

This is another text that fits the classic question of whether it is figurative or literal.

- ⊕ Premils: this occurs after Christ returns, during the millennium.

- ⊕ Postmils: this is the new heaven and the new earth.
- ⊕ Amils: this is the church age of God's peace in the hearts of believers that is ultimately fulfilled in the new heaven and new earth.

### Consider:

Eph 1:10 to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

Col 1:20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

### (1) *Song of Praise: Isa 12:1-6*

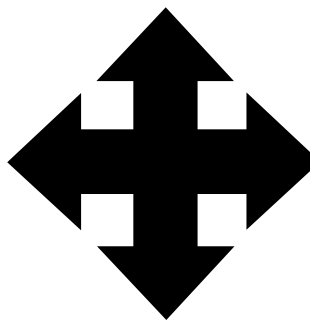
Isaiah concluded this remarkable eschatological prophecy with a beautiful song of praise in 12:1-6, summarized here:

Thanks and praise that:  
 God's anger is turned away  
 God is our salvation  
 Give thanks  
 Call on his name  
 Proclaim his name  
 Sing to YHWH  
 Let this be known to all the world  
 Shout aloud  
 God is the Holy One *among us*

This concluding affirmation reiterates the covenant promise that God would be with his people, restoration to the holy presence of God being the final goal of redemption history. And here, in Isaiah, the extension of God's kingdom grows exponentially to include all nations of the world. Ironically, this is followed by a very long prophecy of judgment against the nations of the world in Isa 13-23.

### (2) *Oracles against the nations: Isa 13-23*

- ⊕ Babylon: Isa 13:1-14:23 ~ East
- ⊕ Assyria: Isa 14:24-32 ~ East
- ⊕ Moab: Isa 15:a-16:14 ~ (S)East
- ⊕ Damascus: Isa 17:1-14 ~ (N)East
- ⊕ Cush/Egypt: Isa 18:1-20:6 ~ South
- ⊕ Babylon: Isa 21:1-10 ~ East
- ⊕ Edom: Isa 21:11-12 ~ East
- ⊕ Arabia: Isa 21: 13-17 ~ East
- ⊕ Jerusalem: Isa 22:1-25
- ⊕ Tyre: Isa 23:1-18 ~ (N)West



Notes: see Servant and King comparison in Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, pp. 231-234.

Compare Ezek 28:1-19; Lu 10:18; Rev 20:2-3: difficult text of “day star” brought down in Is 14:12-21 – King of Babylon? Satan? or both?

Note: on Assyria and Babylon

Isa 13:1-22 Called by God to be a mighty warrior. The army mustered for battle to destroy Babylon (the city), during the Assyrian empire, not the Neo-Babylonian period.

Isa 14:1-23 Babylon destroyed, Israel restored. Falls like a star.

Isa 14:24-32 Assyria is destroyed.

Isa 15:1-16:14 Moab's excessive pride will be destroyed (by Assyria, Sargon in 715/713 B.C.).

Isa 17:1-14 Damascus of Aram (Syria) will no longer threaten Israel (Assyria will capture, Tiglath-Pileser III captured in 732 BC).

Isa 18:1-20:6 Cush (Egypt) will be destroyed but gifts will be brought to Israel (2 Chron 32:23).

Sennacherib's death was followed by gifts brought to Hezekiah).

Isa 21:1-10 Babylon falls in 689 B.C., and in 539 B.C. (see Rev 14:8; 18:2). Judah would be carried into Babylon (cf. 39:5-7).

Isa 21:11-12 Edom falls (Assyrian oppression and Babylonian conquest). Cf. Jer 49:7-22; Ezek 25:12; Am 1:11-12.

Isa 21:13-17 Arabia is attacked by Assyria (732 B.C.) and then later by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar (see Jer 49:28-29).

Isa 22:1-25 Jerusalem is destroyed in the Babylonian siege (588-586 B.C.), possibly the 701 seige by Sennacherib.

Isa 23:1-8 Tyre, the main sea port on the Phoenician coast, would be destroyed for seventy years (Nebuchadnezzar, 597 B.C. and Alexander the Great, 332 B.C., eventually fulfilled the prophecy).

**b) Judgment concluded: Isa 24-39**

**(1) The Apocalypse of Isaiah: Isa 24-27**

This is the most quoted section from Isaiah in the NT, coming as no surprise when we consider its theology.

Motyer argues that this section is wrongly named the “Apocalypse of Isaiah” (*Isaiah*, p. ). It can be argued that apocalyptic as defined by many critics as having later Persian (some claim Canaanite) origins cannot be applied to Isaiah. Also, dating this literature on the basis of such genre identification is impossible, for one cannot determine the original source of the genre itself. For example, Isaiah may have actually influenced later “apocalyptic” literature, rather than *vice versa*.

Keil and Delitzsch call this section “thoroughly eschatological and apocryphal” in character and say that it has no other parallel in the OT except perhaps Zech 9-14.<sup>430</sup> This has led some critics to assume that this section is not from the hand of Isaiah. Nevertheless, we must be careful not to isolate this unit such that we fail to see its intrinsic relation to its broader Isaianic context. Indeed, this section is very eschatological, yet it is unclear what K. and D. mean by “apocryphal.” Perhaps we can propose that it is “apocalyptic eschatology” that adds breadth, depth, and clarification to its broader prophetic context.

Young gives several examples of links between this section and its context:<sup>431</sup>

- 24:13 and 17:5, 6
- 24:16 and 21:2
- 27:9 and 17:8
- 25:3 and 1:8; 23:18

The texts that show these links:

Isaiah 24:13 (NAS) For thus it will be in the midst of the earth among the peoples,  
As the shaking of an olive tree,  
As the gleanings when the grape harvest is over.

with

Isaiah 17:5 It will be even like the reaper gathering the standing grain,  
As his arm harvests the ears,  
Or it will be like one gleaning ears of grain  
In the valley of Rephaim.

and

Isaiah 17:6 Yet gleanings will be left in it like the shaking of an olive tree,  
Two *or* three olives on the topmost bough,  
Four *or* five on the branches of a fruitful tree,  
Declares the Lord, the God of Israel.

Isaiah 24:16 From the ends of the earth we hear songs, “Glory to the Righteous One,”  
But I say, “Woe to me! Woe to me! Alas for me!  
The treacherous deal treacherously,  
And the treacherous deal very treacherously.”

with

Isaiah 21:2 A harsh vision has been shown to me;  
The treacherous one *still* deals treacherously, and the destroyer *still* destroys.  
Go up, Elam, lay siege, Media;  
I have made an end of all the groaning she has caused.

<sup>430</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, p. 421.

<sup>431</sup> Young, *Isaiah*, vol. 2, p. 146.

Isaiah 27:9 Therefore through this Jacob's iniquity will be forgiven;  
 And this will be the full price of the pardoning of his sin:  
 When he makes all the altar stones like pulverized chalk stones;  
 When Asherim and incense altars will not stand.

with

Isaiah 17:8 He will not have regard for the altars, the work of his hands,  
 Nor will he look to that which his fingers have made,  
 Even the Asherim and incense stands.

[This one is unclear to me]

Isaiah 25:3 Therefore a strong people will glorify You;  
 Cities of ruthless nations will revere You.

with

Isaiah 1:8 The daughter of Zion is left like a shelter in a vineyard,  
 Like a watchman's hut in a cucumber field, like a besieged city.

and

Isaiah 23:18 Her gain and her harlot's wages will be set apart to the Lord; it will not be stored up or hoarded, but her gain will become sufficient food and choice attire for those who dwell in the presence of the Lord.

In response to the question about why Isaiah did not more clearly identify his themes here, Young adds "that he is now uniting into one, as it were, all those enemies of God's people which he had previously (chapters 13-23) discussed individually. Consequently, when he now predicts judgment it is not local but universal, one which will cover the entire covenant-breaking earth; and in this judgment the theocratic nation Judah will be included (24:1-13, 15, 16, 18-23)."<sup>432</sup>

It is widely thought that this section serves as a conclusion to oracles against the nations in Isa 13-23 (see Keil and Delitzsch).

"The eschatological capstone of the oracles against the nations" (Bullock<sup>433</sup>).

Isa 24 ~ world destruction by God the judge and the kingdom established

Isa 25 ~ celebration song of salvation by the redeemed

Isa 26 ~ celebration song of salvation for Israel

Isa 27 ~ vineyard song, judgment of God upon Israel's enemies, Israel's exile and return purified

*The theology of this "apocalyptic" eschatology:*

- ⇒ God the creator is the only one able to be the destroyer. God will destroy the earth (Isa 24:1-4; 23).
- ⇒ All people will be judged the same, pride reduced to nothing (Isa 24:2-3; 25:10-12; 26:5-6, 9-11).
- ⇒ Judgment results from breaking the everlasting covenant (Isa 24:5-9).
- ⇒ People from all the nations will praise the Lord (Isa 24:14-16).
- ⇒ The truth of God will be rejected (Isa 24:16b).
- ⇒ YHWH himself will punish all rebellion in spiritual and material realms (Isa 24:17-22).
- ⇒ YHWH Almighty will reign on the earth (Isa 24:23).
- ⇒ God is perfect in faithfulness (Isa 25:1).
- ⇒ God is a refuge (Isa 25:4-5).
- ⇒ God fulfills his covenant-promise (Isa 25:9). "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us."
- ⇒ God will destroy death *forever* and there will be a bodily resurrection (Isa 25:6-8; 27:19).
- ⇒ God is the deliverer (Isa 26:1-27:12).
- ⇒ God loves his people like a vintner his vineyard, like a king his people (Isa 27:1-12)

The only text in the OT that can possibly be used to defend a literal, earthly millennium is Isa 24:22-23.<sup>434</sup> (cf. Rev. 20:2, 7-10 "after many days")

Isa 24:22-23 They will be herded together  
 like prisoners bound in a dungeon;  
 they will be shut up in prison  
 and be punished after many days.



<sup>432</sup> Young, *Isaiah*, vol. 2, pp. 146-147.

<sup>433</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p.141.

<sup>434</sup> See Payne, *Prophecy*, p. 306.

23 The moon will be abashed, the sun ashamed;  
for the LORD Almighty will reign  
on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,  
and before its elders, gloriously.

This text does have divergent interpretations, of course, although it seems to describe conditions only applicable to end-times eschatology and the renewal of creation after Christ returns:

Cf. Jn 12:31 Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.

It also corresponds with the general reality of the spiritual battle and the final judgment, that the punishment described in Isa 24:21 extends far beyond the earth to the spiritual, unseen realms.

Eph 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

The parallel history of the unseen realm is often revealed in scripture in glimpses, but the correlation between the seen/unseen, natural/supernatural realms is a steady theme. The veil is often pulled back, but we never get a full view of the heavenly realms and realities. In Isaiah, as in the other prophets, there are numerous moments of the veil being pulled back, and this in light of the impending judgment. God's grace abounds even when his judgment is certain.

The spiritual forces in rebellion against God will be brought into a "prison" dungeon. This is expressed also in 2 Pet 2:4

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment;

Jude 6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.

Isaiah indicates that the "many days" lasts until the judgment. Thus, it is reasonable to propose that whenever and however this imprisonment occurred or will occur, it is also described in 2 Pet 2:4 and Jude 6. Also see Rev 20:1-6 and

Matt 8:29 "What do you want with us, Son of God?" they shouted. "Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?"

The last image of Isa 24:23 describes something most unusual in the OT: the sun and moon will be "abashed" and "ashamed" (בוש, חפר) in the context of the *glorious* (פְּבוֹרָה) reigning of YHWH Almighty on Zion. Such a text could be argued as millennial, but it also seems to correlate with the depictions of the eternal kingdom in Rev 21:

Rev 21:23 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

In this view, one would take the images of Zion as figurative of God's eternal reigning in heaven which is fully manifested when all the powers of evil are eternally subdued. This is supported by the motif of *elders* before the Lord's throne in heaven in Isa 24:23 and the correlative text in John's Revelation:

Rev 4:4 Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.

Following this marvelous picture of the kingdom of heaven in Isa 24, we are introduced to the eschatology of the Wedding Feast of the Last Day and the resurrection in Isa 25: 6-8. The relationship should be obvious to us NT believers. He again refers to a mountain, but without naming it again, saying that the Lord will prepare a great banquet feast for all the nations. This imagery corresponds with that in John's Revelation:

Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and be glad  
and give him glory!

For the wedding of the Lamb has come,  
and his bride has made herself ready.

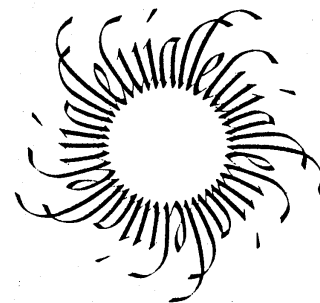
Re 19:9 Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."

Contrary to suggestions that Isa 25:6-8 describe a millennium, I suggest it refers to the time when all darkness, death, and tears are removed. This will follow the return of Christ and the judgment. The veil of suffering and death will be removed forever. Death will be "swallowed up forever" and "every tear will be wiped away" (25:8):

1 Cor 15:54 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

Rev 7:17 For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd;  
he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

See also Isaiah 26:19 But your dead will live;  
their bodies will rise.



You who dwell in the dust,  
wake up and shout for joy.  
Your dew is like the dew of the morning;  
the earth will give birth to her dead.

Isaiah is proclaiming the essence of the gospel, silencing any suggestion that OT believers did not comprehend the resurrection and the promise of victory over death. Though this victory was *realized* in Christ’s death and resurrection, it will only be fully consummated in his return.

Isaiah confirms the divine inspiration of his prophecy by concluding with the phrase he uses elsewhere, **יְהוָה דִּבֶּר**, “the Lord has spoken.” (Isa 7:10; 8:5; 22:25; 24:3; 25:8; 40:5; 45:19; 58:14). This is followed by a reiteration of the covenant-promise so important in the history of redemption, that the Lord is their God and he saves them (25:9).

*Israel praises the Lord for redemption: Isa 26-27*

The history of redemption is replete with beautiful songs, but this one takes its high place as a positively glorious affirmation of faith in YHWH and his redemption, as well as the certainty of the coming judgment. The books will ultimately be balanced. The eternal Lord is coming from his dwelling. He will both judge and establish peace. The dead will be raised.

His love for Israel is that of a faithful gardener (vineyard for wine), upon whom the garden utterly depends for survival. This is the love of God expressed in a beautiful metaphor. Isaiah had already used this motif to describe the love of God for his people (Isa 5:1-7). Jesus takes up this analogy to describe his relationship as a vine to the Gardener Father and his disciples’ relationship as branches to him.

All of these profound prophecies are given in the context of the hope of return from exile, thus we see the prophet addressing eschatological promises in relation to the immediate crisis of impending exile and return (Isa 27:12-13). The eschatological and future predictions give warrant for Israel to trust YHWH for their immediate context. Whether they would read this before, during, or after the exile, they could take comfort that the Lord was with them, and was going to accomplish his purposes. Similarly to many other prophecies (e.g., the Ahaz story), the principle of interpreting them in relation to their immediate situation is affirmed: the immediate situation is ever in the background as the context for the future predictions. That is, the immediate prophecies and predictions work correspondingly with the long-range prophecies and predictions, not in a “double fulfillment” sense, but in so far as they each confirm the other as the supernatural work of God’s redemption. The vision of the prophet switches from what is near to what is far off, even though we can not always be dogmatic about when there is a transition. The important point is that we should not presume that the immediate context is subsumed into meaninglessness through its broader context that concerns distant predictions or prophecies.

“Prophecies have a relation to the immediate situation as well as a revelation of something for the future. They do not just drop out of nowhere.”<sup>435</sup>

**(2) Five woes: Isa 28-33**

Many commentators consider Isa 28-35 to be just a collection of promises and threats, yet considered carefully they present a historical situation that is much akin to Isa 7-12. Though the message in 28-35 is more focused on the nobles of the nations than the king (as in 7-12), the message similarly exhorts them to give up looking to alliances for protection. They were to trust in God alone. If we can suggest a banquetting context in which the prophet Isaiah is addressing the nobles and leaders of the land who seem to have been gathered to seek or celebrate Assyria’s help, then he begins his prophecy by speaking of the drunkards of Ephraim, even though he is addressing Judah. Isaiah does denounce the northern kingdom and describes its fall, but may have been addressing Judahite revelers as suggested by such phrases as:

“And these also stagger” (**וַיִּגְמְ-אֱלֹהִים**) (28:7) ~ possibly descriptive of those he was directly pointing to at the banquet.  
 “Who is he trying to teach” (**אֶת-מִי יוֹרֶה**) (28:9) ~ possibly describes their immediate mocking of the prophet  
 “Do and do, do and do . . .” **פֵּי צֹר לְצֹר צֹר לְצֹר קוֹ לְקוֹ קוֹ לְקוֹ זַעֲרִיר זַעֲרִיר זַעֲרִיר**: 28.10 ~ possibly a continuation of their immediate mocking of Isaiah with either a meaningless jingle or a mocking like jingle in the sounds of baby-babble, but conveying the sense of those mocking a preacher:



MacRae, unpublished “Lecture on the Prophet Isaiah,” p. 9.

NIV For it is: Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule; a little here, a little there.  
 KJV For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little:  
 NASB For *He says*, “Order on order, order on order, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there.”  
 RSV For it is precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little.  
 The *NBC* says it is like our “Blah, blah, blah . . .”  
 Perhaps like our colloquial sarcasm: “Boss, boss, boss . . .”  
 Or the Police, “Da do do do, da da da . . .”

- ⊕ Note: צַו is a dubious word that may relate to צָוָה (charge, command order). It does take the same form pf צָוָה in the imperative (“command,” Lev 6:2; 24:2).
- ⊕ Note: קו I. 1. cord 2. measuring line II. suppleness, expansiveness III. syllable imitating prophetic speech or meaning “rule.” See קָוָה (to wait or hope for). Used 16x in Isa 18:2, 7; 28:10, 13, 17; 34:11, 17; 44:13. A.R.P. Diamond says קו III is not to be confused with קו I and II (*NIDOTTE*, vol. 5, p. 892), but it is unclear why he proposes this when the correlation seems so strong. Isaiah uses this term and motifs again in the same chapter v. 17:  
 I will make justice the measuring line (לְקוֹ)  
 and righteousness the plumb line;

- ⊕ Note: וְעֵיר refers to a small quantity (space, substance, or time).  
 “Therefore hear the word of the Lord, you scoffers . . .” (לְכֹן שְׁמַעוּ דְבַר-יְהוָה אַנְשֵׁי לְצִוּוֹן).
- ⊕ Note: לְצִוּוֹן (scoffers) concludes this phrase of *direct address* to the banqueters. See BDB 12:150 [לִיזַן ] vb. scorn -- Qal scorn, c. acc.; c. לְ , הוֹאֵל-יְלִיזַן , scorers he (God) scorneth; הַלִּיזַן the scorner is proud and haughty.

“Now stop your mocking” (וְעַתָּה אַל-תִּתְלוּצְצוּ) (28:22) ~ he rebukes them *directly* after their mocking his prophecy  
 “Listen and hear my voice” (הִאֲזִינוּ וּשְׁמַעוּ קוֹלִי) (28:23) ~ he summarizes his conclusion with a *direct address* declaring that God’s plan is that of a perfect workman. Figurative language beautifully describes the fact that Israel will be judged, although there will be a remnant.  
 “Be stunned and amazed (הִתְמַהֲמְהוּ וְהִתְמַהֲוּ) . . . be drunk, but not from wine” (29:9-10) ~ direct address to drunken nobles who are unable to read or understand the Word of God.

“The people try to throw off the yoke of Assyria;  
 not with confidence in Jehovah,  
 however, but in reliance upon the help of Egypt.”<sup>436</sup>

**Woes in Isaiah 28-33**

Isaiah 28:1 (NIV)

*Woe to Ephraim*

**28** Woe to that wreath, the pride of Ephraim’s drunkards,  
 to the fading flower, his glorious beauty,  
 set on the head of a fertile valley—  
 to that city, the pride of those laid low by wine!

Isaiah 29:1

*Woe to David’s City*

**29** Woe to you, Ariel, Ariel,  
 the city where David settled!  
 Add year to year  
 and let your cycle of festivals go on.

Isaiah 29:15

<sup>15</sup> Woe to those who go to great depths  
 to hide their plans from the LORD,  
 who do their work in darkness and think,

<sup>436</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, vol. 7, vol. 2, pp. 1, 2.



“Who sees us? Who will know?”

Isaiah 30:1

*Woe to the Obstinate Nation*

**30** “Woe to the obstinate children,”  
declares the LORD,  
“to those who carry out plans that are not mine,  
forming an alliance, but not by my Spirit,  
heaping sin upon sin;

Isaiah 31:1

*Woe to Those Who Rely on Egypt*

**31** Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help,  
who rely on horses,  
who trust in the multitude of their chariots  
and in the great strength of their horsemen,  
but do not look to the Holy One of Israel,  
or seek help from the LORD.

Isaiah 33:1

*Distress and Help*

**33** Woe to you, O destroyer,  
you who have not been destroyed!  
Woe to you, O traitor,  
you who have not been betrayed!  
When you stop destroying,  
you will be destroyed;  
when you stop betraying,  
you will be betrayed.

**Woes to**

⊕ **Woe 1 to Ephraim:** *Isa 28* ~ Israel is a fading flower: addressed to the nobles (not the king) during the celebration banquet for Assyrian (or Egyptian?) help. Isaiah begins his address to the north not the south (foreigners first) and moved gradually to Judah itself. The promised Cornerstone is the Messiah, and those who trust in him will *never be dismayed/impatient/disappointed(?)* (אֲשֵׁר, LXX – “ashamed”) (28:16). Isaiah contrasts the plumb line of the rulers mocking (above) him with God’s plumb line of judgment (v. 17). YHWH’s *strange work* and *alien task* (using enemies of God and his people to punish God’s people). The worst indictment here for the covenant people of God is their “covenant with death” (בְּרִיתְכֶם אֶת-מָוֶת, v. 18).

⊕ **Woe 2 to Ariel:** *Isa 29* ~ Jerusalem is an ‘alter hearth of El’ (בְּאֵרֵי אֵל), and will be destroyed like a sacrifice, nobles are denounced for their drunkenness and spiritual blindness (to God’s Word), as well as religious hypocrisy; Sennacherib of Assyria is coming as the Lord himself [“strange work”]. More positively he contrasts this judgment eschatologically with the Lord’s promise to “astound these people with *wonder upon wonder*” (29:14), “wisdom of the wise will perish” (29:14; cf. 1 Cor 1:19), the promise of a remnant and blessing for the Gentiles; a reversal is coming: the deaf will hear. Isaiah describes a gradual weakening of the powers of evil. The barrenness of Lebanon will become a fertile field (29:17; cf. 32:15), depicting a redemptive hope.

⊕ **Woes 3-4 to Allies with Egypt:** *Isa 30-31* ~ The land is Rahab the Do-Nothing (רַהַב הָהֵם שֹׁבְתִים, v. 7) (“Rahab they are resting”<sup>437</sup> –arrogant obstinacy?); stubborn rebellion and Egyptian alliances precede judgment that will be swift; nevertheless, mercy will follow. Hezekiah turned to Egypt for help, sending envoys to Zoan through the Negev (2 Ki 18:21); See 2 Ki 19:9-10 which describes this incident at the time of Sennacherib’s invasion and the possible alliance of Tirhakah with Israel(?); the gospel of redemption is described “in repentance and rest” (Isa 30:15); Isa 31 ~ reiteration of ch 30.

<sup>437</sup> Young says Rahab (Egypt) is the powerful “monster” that could be destructive and powerful, but in reality does nothing at all, thus their help is worthless (*Isaiah*, vol. 2, p. 342).

**Interlude: Righteous Messianic kingdom promised: Isa 32 ~** God will give ears that hear and eyes that see the truth (gospel separates good from evil and creates NOBLE people). Isa 32:2 has provoked debate as to the meaning of the first two words, “Each man” or “A man” (אִישׁ-אֶחָד)

- NIV Each man will be like a shelter from the wind
- KJV And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind
- NASB And each will be like a refuge from the wind
- RSV Each will be like a hiding place from the wind

Alexander disagrees with the standard interpretation which renders the “man” (אִישׁ) as a distributive pronoun: “the word is seldom if ever so used except when connected with a plural verb, as in chaps. 9:19-20; 13:8,14; 14:18; 19:2; 31:7). The meaning rather is, that there shall be a man upon the throne, or at the head of the government, who instead of oppressing, will protect the helpless. This may either be indefinitely understood, or applied, in an individual and emphatic sense, to the Messiah.”<sup>438</sup>

Note: עַד-עוֹלָם - forever. The concept *forever* is found in 32:14 in reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, but this does not always mean *eternity*. Indeed, it has quite a range of meaning from “distant time,” “ancient,” “Ancient of Days,” “from ancient times,” future period or conditions, “perpetually,” “unceasing,” “forever” (the most distant future), “eternal,” all time in “from everlasting to everlasting.” See also עַד-עוֹלָם in Isa 9:6; 30:8; 32:17; 34:17; 45:17; 59:21.<sup>439</sup>

Following this expression about the destruction of Jerusalem, is a future oriented eschatological expression “until the Spirit is poured on us from on high” (עַד-יִצְעָרָה [pour] עַל־יְנִי רוּחַ מִמְּרוֹם) in 32:15. This is followed by the eschatological description of the desert becoming *fertile* again, and in v. 16 justice and righteousness will dwell there. The first part of v. 15 seems to describe Pentecost, whereas the following seems to describe the restoration of the remnant and the gradual spread of the gospel of grace to Gentiles. These latter themes were expressed previously:

- Isa 29:17 In a very short time, will not Lebanon be turned into a fertile field and the fertile field seem like a forest?
- Isa 29:24 Those who are wayward in spirit will gain understanding; those who complain will accept instruction.
- Is Paul describing the same in Rom 11:26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.”

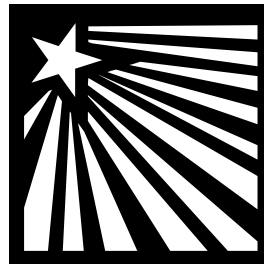
✦ **Woe 5 about Assyria: Isa 33 ~** immediate situation is the impending approach of Sennacherib, yet a future remnant is promised. In the midst of judgment predictions, Isaiah prophesies a beautifully eschatological word that the exalted Lord who dwells on high (יְהוָה כִּי שָׁכַן מְרוֹם) will fill Zion with righteousness. Although this relates to the immediate context of Hezekiah’s need to trust YHWH in light of Sennacherib’s invasion, it has reference to the ultimate reign of righteousness Isaiah just mentioned in 32:16-17. The fruit of redemption is true righteousness restored. Nevertheless, in the meantime, judgment is coming, and the rhetorical question “Who can dwell with everlasting burning?” (מוֹקְדֵי עוֹלָם) is raised. See עוֹלָם above.

### (3) The eschatological capstone of chapters 28-33: Isa 34-35

These chapters respectively describe the two different destinies: judgment for opposition, blessing for obedient.

**Eschatological judgment of the world: Is 34 ~** Edom becomes prominent (may be a type for the nations who oppose Israel); A remarkable end-times eschatology is given in Isa 34:4

- All the stars of the heavens will be dissolved
- and the sky rolled up like a scroll;
- all the starry host will fall
- like withered leaves from the vine,
- like shriveled figs from the fig tree.



NT correlation with this cosmological theme is worth noting:

- Mt 24:29 will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky,
- Mk 13:25 not give its light; 25 the stars will fall from the sky,
- Lk 21:25 be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be
- Ac 27:20 When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and

<sup>438</sup> Alexander, *Isaiah*, vol. 2, p. 2.

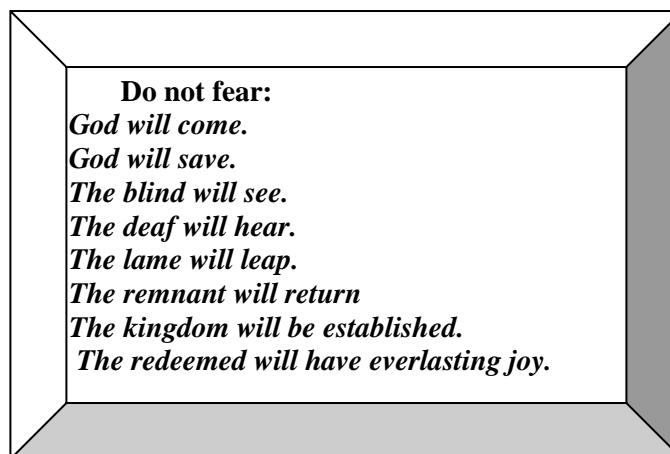
<sup>439</sup> “The basic meaning of the nom. is farthest time, distant time (Jenni, 25). It does not seem to mean eternity in the philosophical sense of the word (i.e., neither unbounded time nor eternal timelessness), although there are a few vv. where the meaning of the nom. is very much like the idea of eternity. In most cases, however, like other Heb. terms for time, the meaning of *ôlām* is closely linked to the occurrence of events. Thus, *ôlām* is usually used to describe events extended into the distant past or future. Such distant time is clearly relative: it can be in one’s own life (Ps77:5[6]), a life span (Exod 21:6), or the furthest conceivable time (15:18)” (A. Tomasino, “עוֹלָם,” *NIDOTTE*, vol. 3, p. 346; see also A.A. MacRae, “עוֹלָם,” *TWOT*, vol. 2, pp. 672-673).

Re 6:13 and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as  
 Re 8:12 the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them turned  
 Re 12:4 His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them

Such astral imagery invokes the ANE context of astrological deities and the great power attributed to the gods of the sky. God is above all such, and the power he has over the stars proves that such astral god's of the nations are powerless. Further, the three main deities of the ANE were *sky-gods* (Anu, Enlil, Ea), thus God's rolling up the sky like a scroll displays his absolute power over all such deities. Cf. Rev 6:14, "The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place."

Echoing the motif of the measuring line already discussed (Isa 28:10), the judgment of God is described like a measuring line in 34:11. And, echoing Gen 1:2 (תֵהוֹ וְרָבְהוּ), the prophet stresses *chaos* (קִוְ-תֵהוֹ) and *desolation* (וְאַבְדָּן־בְּהוֹ), with a possible contrast-play on the use of this motif elsewhere where Israel's deeds and idols are measured as worthless and *nothing* (see תֵהוֹ [tōhâ] in Isa 24:10; 29:21; 40:17, 23; 41:29; 44:9; 45:18, 19; 49:4; 59:4; cf. Mic 2:4). That is, YHWH's judgment will *not* be nothing.<sup>440</sup> Noteworthy is the juxtaposition of creation imagery with judgment (destruction) motifs which has the ironic linguistic correlation with empty idols which will be destroyed.

*The remnant returns, proof the Messiah will come: Isa 35 ~* (some say millennium); comfort to the godly in exile in the promise of the glory of God. Eschatological hope of redemption is promised again: the desert will blossom (as in 32:15). And, further it is revealed that the *glory and splendor of YHWH* will be seen! (וְיֵאָזְרוּ כְבוֹד־יְהוָה הַדָּר אֱלֹהֵינוּ) (v.2). This passage provides some of the most powerful rays of hope given thus far, for in the context of promising the deliverance from exile, Isaiah describes the marvelous work of the Messiah and the progression of redemption to completion in the eternal kingdom in vv. 4-10:



Matt 11:5 The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.

The kingdom of God will come, bringing complete redemption. It is likened by Isaiah to the exodus from Egypt where God brought water from the rock: "water will gush forth in the wilderness." As the miraculous deliverance from Egypt was sustained by the miraculous water in the wilderness, and as the exiled remnant would be miraculously sustained until their return, so too the final redemption of God's people would be preceded by his miraculous sustenance. In this sense, we can propose that each of the various unfoldings of the redemptive plan of God act as a kind of "trust" or insurance that the Final work of redemption will not fail, for it is the same God who will accomplish it. The "streams in the desert" radically confound the world and human wisdom, for they contradict all natural cause and reason, and this is the essence of divine redemption. God does and will do that which is beyond human imagination or comprehension. God will destroy his creation in rebellion, but God will also create his new Paradise in redemption.

#### (4) *The historical appendix (transition): Isa 36-39*

The following three events in Judah's history are recorded in prose, typical of historical narrative, in contrast to the poetic sections. Chapter 39 ends the so-called first book of Isaiah, or as critics call it, *Deutero Isaiah*. The latter half is said to be so distinctively different from what precedes that it must be from a much later hand. This was

<sup>440</sup> See A.H. Konkel, "בְהוֹ," *NIDOTTE*, pp. 606-609 where he discusses both תֵהוֹ and בְהוֹ.

discussed and disputed above, pp. 316ff. The conclusion of this first section of Isaiah nicely bridges the gap between the Assyrian and Babylonian periods in relation to Israel and Judah's history. Isaiah turns his attention from the pre-exilic judgment coming to the exilic judgment *realized*, there is hope on both sides of the gap, but perhaps more hope of deliverance and redemption expressed in the second half the prophet's book.

*Relations between Hezekiah (Judah) and Isaiah and Assyria: Isa 36-39 ~ Sennacherib's frustrated attack on Jerusalem (701); Hezekiah's sickness and recovery (704); envoys from Merodach-Baladan (Babylon).*

The background to Sennacherib's attack is covered in the Judges-Esther syllabus from whence these notes are drawn: *Hezekiah*, son of Ahaz, king of Judah, and Abijah, daughter of Zechariah (possibly king of Israel, 753), reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-nine years (715-686) (2 Ki 18:1-8; 2 Chron 29:1-2; 31:1, 20-21). Hezekiah represents a most remarkable interlude in the gory and faithless history of the divided monarchy. He is one of two kings (Josiah, 2 Ki 23:25) that received unqualified divine approval:

2 Ki 18:5-6 Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before him or after him. 6 He held fast to the LORD and did not cease to follow him; he kept the commands the LORD had given Moses.

Hezekiah earnestly sought independence from Assyria. His thirteen years as coregent with his father Ahaz undoubtedly had an impact on how Hezekiah proceeded: in virtual antithesis to his father. His reforms were unprecedented, removing the sacred stones and Asherahs, and even the Yahwistic high places (2 Ki 18:3-4; 22), reopened and purified the temple his father had closed, and reinstated proper worship/sacrifice with priests and musicians, and the Passover (2 Chron 29-31). Hoshea, king of Israel, Shalmaneser V, king of Assyria (727-722) had captured Samaria in Hoshea's ninth year, which was Hezekiah's sixth year (722) (2 Ki 17:3-6; 18:9-23). Sargon II (721-705) did the final "mopping up" after Shalmaneser V (2 Ki 17:6; 18:10-11). The loss of the north placed the south in great peril, although Hezekiah demonstrated a deep faith and the obtained the blessing of the Lord during his entire reign.

*Isaiah prophesies deliverance of Jerusalem: Isa 37:1-13 (2 Ki 19:1-13) and Sennacherib's fall (2 Ki 19:20-34; 2 Chron 32:20-21; Is 37:21-38).* Isaiah the prophet is appealed to, and he and Hezekiah petition the Lord, and the Lord sends his angel to fight the Assyrians (2 Ki 19:1-2 Chron 32:20-2; Is 37:1-13). What follows this boastful proposal from Sennacherib is a most incredible sequence of divine deliverance (2 Ki 19:1-37; 2 Chron 32:20-21; Isa 37:21-38). While Sennacherib was busy besieging Lachish and threatening Jerusalem, the Egyptian Pharaoh Tirhakah came out to fight Sennacherib. *Tirhakah* was the pharaoh Egypt's 25th ('Ethiopian') Dynasty and reigned 26 years (c. 690-664) (1 Ki 19:8; Isa 37:9). Tirhakah may have been the army-commander at this time, or else Isaiah and Kings, being written after Tirhakah became Pharaoh eleven years later, were reflecting that later status.

The conclusion of the incredible drama is that an angel of YHWH went out and killed 185,000 of the Assyrian army, forcing Sennacherib to retire to Nineveh where we are informed that he is killed by his own sons while worshipping in the temple of his god, Nisroch. *Nisroch* was proposed by A.H. Layard to be a winged eagle-headed figure found in the palace of the Assyrian king Assurnasirpal II (883-859), but that identification has come into question. Possibly a corruption of the ancient god Ninurta, some suggest.

See the Sennacherib prism (above right), one of the most well known archeological discoveries relevant to the OT. It is a six sided clay prism of cuneiform (Akkadian) text from the 9<sup>th</sup> c. B.C. dealing with eight of Sennacherib's military campaigns against people refusing to submit to Assyria which includes the campaign against king Hezekiah of Judah (715-689) in 701 B.C. He claims victory in all campaigns except one. Sennacherib, determined to conquer Hezekiah, laid siege to forty six cities/towns, exiling 200,150 people. But he did not take Hezekiah in Jerusalem:

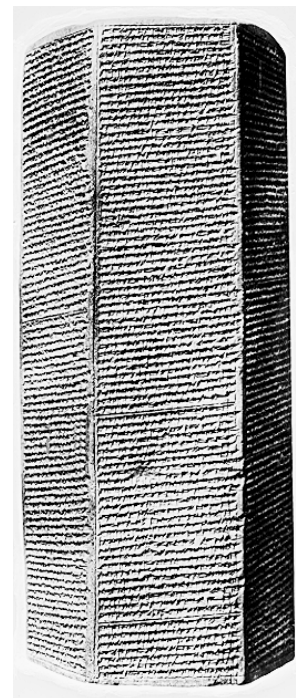
**"Himself I made a prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence,  
like a bird in a cage" (2 Ki 18; 2 Chron 32; Is 36).**

Sennacherib Prism (see entire text online)

#### Last part of colum 2

77 had given him over to Hezekiah, the Judahite <he kept him in confinement like an enemy> 78their heart became afraid, 79and they called upon the Egyptian kings, the bowmen, chariots and horses 80of the king of Meluhha

<sup>441</sup>The Sennacherib prism.



[Ethiopia], a countless host, and 81these came to their aid. 82In the neighborhood of Eltekeh, 83their ranks being drawn up before me,

### Column Three

1they offered battle. With the aid of Assur, 2my lord, I fought with them and 3brought about their defeat. The Egyptian charioteers and princes, 4together with the Ethiopian king's charioteers, 5my hands captured alive in the midst of the battle. 6Eltekeh and Timnah 7I besieged, I captured, and I took away their spoil. 8I approached Ekron and slew the governors and nobles 9who had rebelled, and 10hung their bodies on stakes around the city. The inhabitants 11who rebelled and treated (Assyria) lightly I counted as spoil. 12The rest of them, who were not guilty of rebellion 13and contempt, for whom there was no punishment, 14I declared their pardon. Padi, their king, 15I brought out to Jerusalem, 16set him on the royal throne over them, and 17imposed upon him my royal tribute. **18As for Hezekiah the Judahite**, 19who did not submit to my yoke: forty-six of his strong, walled cities, as well as 20the small towns in their area, 21which were without number, by levelling with battering-rams 22and by bringing up siege-engines, and by attacking and storming on foot, 23by mines, tunnels, and breeches, I besieged and took them. 24200,150 people, great and small, male and female, 25horses, mules, asses, camels, 26cattle and sheep without number, I brought away from them 27and counted as spoil. (Hezekiah) himself, like a caged bird 28I shut up in Jerusalem, his royal city. 29I threw up earthworks against him 30the one coming out of the city-gate, I turned back to his misery. 31His cities, which I had despoiled, I cut off from his land, and 32to Mitinti, king of Ashdod, 33Padi, king of Ekron, and Silli-bêl, 34king of Gaza, I gave (them). And thus I diminished his land. 35I added to the former tribute, 36and I laid upon him the surrender of their land and imposts 37gifts for my majesty. 37As for Hezekiah, 38the terrifying splendor of my majesty overcame him, and 39the Arabs and his mercenary troops which he had brought in to strengthen 40Jerusalem, his royal city, 41deserted him. In addition to the thirty talents of gold and 42eight hundred talents of silver, gems, antimony, 43jewels, large carnelians, ivory-inlaid couches, 44ivory-inlaid chairs, elephant hides, elephant tusks, 45ebony, boxwood, all kinds of valuable treasures, 46as well as his daughters, his harem, his male and female 47musicians, which he had brought after me 48to Nineveh, my royal city. To pay tribute 49and to accept servitude, he dispatched his messengers. 50In my fourth campaign, Assur, my lord, gave me courage . . .

*God heals Hezekiah: Is 38:1-8 (2 Ki 20:1-11; 2 Chron 32:24-26) ~ envoys from Babylon forebode captivity (2 Ki 20:12-19; Is 39:1-8; 2 Chron 32:31).* We are not told explicitly why the fairly young Hezekiah got mortally ill, only that the prophet Isaiah is sent to tell Hezekiah that he would die (when he was apx. 37-38 years old). Perhaps the reason was his succumbing to Sargon II with an alliance-tribute, or his own pride at success (2 Chron 33:22-26) and showing off his fortune to the **Babylonian** visitors sent by Merodach-Baladan (721-700?) in 701(?). If in 701 B.C., he may have already been in exile (2 Ki 20:12-19; Isa 39:1-8; 2 Chron 32:31). Certainly the latter act opened him up to prophetic censure and the prediction of the worst event to ever happen to Judah: the exile of the nation to Babylon (which occurred in **586**). This was given prophetically at a time when Babylon was not even a major player when Assyria dominated.

*A theological tour de force:* The theology of this section (Isa 36-39) is important in the larger scheme of Isaiah, for it demonstrates through historical narrative several of the key themes of the book [add verse references]:

- ⇒ God alone is Lord over all the earth.
- ⇒ Foreign kings are subject to YHWH, contrary to their assumptions.
- ⇒ History is subject to YHWH, contrary to appearances.
- ⇒ Rebellion and blasphemy are punished, there is justice in God's scheme of things.
- ⇒ Confidence in YHWH is the only true and sure confidence, all others are vanity.
- ⇒ Trusting the Lord is central to believing faith, and living it.
- ⇒ Deliverance comes only from YHWH.
- ⇒ No human or spiritual forces will successfully prevail against God's purposes.
- ⇒ Those who worship idols, devils, or false gods will die.
- ⇒ The Lord hears the prayers of the faithful, can heal the sick, forgives the repentant.
- ⇒ Pride of possession, power, and position will be punished.
- ⇒ The Lord speaks specific, predictive words through his prophet.

Despite God's mercy on Hezekiah, and his miraculous healing, Hezekiah seems to have fallen back into what VanGemeren calls *Realpolitik*, hoping to enhance his prestige and power through showing off the kingdom's treasures to Babylon. Thus, in a dramatic reversal, Babylon is mentioned for the first time as the one to destroy

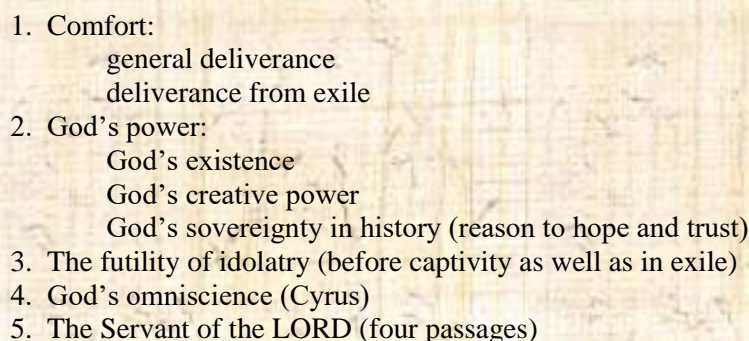
Judah (Isa 39:6). Hezekiah may have been a reformer, he was not guilty of religious syncretism, divination or magic, but he was not free of power-politics. Isaiah challenged Judah to repent of its power-politics and religious syncretism, and this historical narrative serves the important bridge between the pre-exilic focus of *predicted* judgment and hope with the exilic situation of *realized* judgment and *predicted* hope. Such a narrative also illustrates the intrinsic relationship between the seen/unseen realms, the natural/supernatural, in which the veil is slightly pulled back for us to glimpse a piece of cosmic drama in the history of redemption.

### c) **Comfort introduced Isa 40-56:8**

**Major themes in the “symphonic structure” of chapters 40-66**

➤ See critical matters, p. 316.

A.A. MacRae claims there is a symphonic structure to the second part of Book of Isaiah. A theme is introduced and discussed briefly, then a second theme is introduced and discussed, and then a third, and so on: “Thus certain basic ideas are presented, repeated, and stressed, not merely to state the ideas they contain, important as this is, but to make a profound effect upon the hearts and minds of people who are already in their minds suffering the horrors of the Babylonian Exile, which Isaiah predicted (in Isa 39:5-7) just before the beginning section of this book.”<sup>442</sup>

- 
1. Comfort:
    - general deliverance
    - deliverance from exile
  2. God's power:
    - God's existence
    - God's creative power
    - God's sovereignty in history (reason to hope and trust)
  3. The futility of idolatry (before captivity as well as in exile)
  4. God's omniscience (Cyrus)
  5. The Servant of the LORD (four passages)

The perspective throughout is Israel's exile in Babylon; the prophet addresses the godly who would find hope in God who fulfills both his word of judgment and of deliverance. Fulfillment is achieved in three primary ways: through Israel's return from captivity under Cyrus (Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah), through deliverance from sin (NT Messiah), and through the ultimate establishment of God's universal kingdom.<sup>443</sup>

#### (1) **Comfort for the exiles: Isa 40-48**

In Isa 40-48, the *lawsuit* theme is invoked in which Israel is accused of not knowing God, and proposes that the only remedy is the cleansing power of God.

➤ See “Legal imagery” in the *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*.

*Isa 40* ~ Isaiah prophesies *general* comfort for the godly in exile; a voice crying in the wilderness (John the Baptist, stated in all four Gospels) promises revelation of the glory of God (1 Pet 4:13). Prophecies of temporal deliverance/restoration from Babylonian captivity. The perspective of the prophet is from the captivity by means of prophetic foresight. He speaks from the present as though it has already occurred, preaching comfort in salvation for the godly but judgment for the rebellious. Although this section is addressed to Judah *as though already in exile*, it would have been given as much to encourage them *in exile*, for when they would hear his words they would marvel that God had given them words of hope and encouragement even before they were exiled. Thus, the judgment-word of the prophet that came to pass would signal the veracity of the prophet's word of hope that would also come to pass. Israel could take courage that the same prophet sent to prepare them for exile, was also sent to prepare them to return from exile. In the most beautiful words of “comfort ye, comfort ye” (נְחֵמוּ נְחֵמוּ), in the double imperative, the Lord speaks emphatically through the prophet that they be comforted.

“A voice crying in the wilderness” (Isa 40:3) illustrates the ANE herald or town “crier” who would bring important news to the towns and cities. This voice is messianic, of John the Baptist preparing for Jesus, as we know from the gospel of Matthew:

<sup>442</sup> A.A. MacRae, *Gospel of Isaiah*, p. 31-33.

<sup>443</sup> See Schultz, *OT Speaks*, p. 315.

Matt 3:3 This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:  
 “A voice of one calling in the desert,  
 ‘Prepare the way for the Lord,  
 make straight paths for him.’”

Isaiah weaves several prophetic strands in the first half of ch. 40: the Lord is coming and the glory of the Lord will be revealed as assuredly as the exiles will be returned (40:3-5). As certainly as man is but a passing flower, so certainly is God’s word endures everlastingly. “. . . the word of our God stands forever” (וְדִבְרֵי-אֱלֹהֵינוּ יָקוּם לְעוֹלָם) (40: 8) (see forever, 354). That word is a word of hope that *good tidings will come* to Zion: the covenant promise is proclaimed in “Here is your God!” (הִנֵּה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:). The Almighty Lord who brought judgment in exile could and would bring his lambs back like a loving shepherd (40:11). Holiness and love have met in this promise. As he had judged, so also would he love his people. This is proved by his word which created and sustains the cosmos and its history.

*Isaiah 40:12-18, 21-26 ~ YHWH is Sovereign over the nations and creation cosmology:* ~ In contrast to the idols, God is the one who created the cosmos, orders it, and governs history within it. Isaiah sets up an impossible contrast between the Lord to whom “all the nations are a drop in a bucket” (40:15) and the idols being crafted by human hands. In contrast to Marduk, YHWH is supreme for he created the entire cosmos (40:12). God actually created and names each of the billions upon billions of stars (40:26), in contrast to Marduk who assigned deities to the stars. YHWH, in contrast to the Babylonian gods who were known to have human-like frailty in need of rest, food, water, and protection did not grow weary: he *knows* the way of his people (covenant promise), he is the Creator, he has fathomless understanding (40:13-14; 27-28). Where the gods themselves need human intervention and care, God is the only God able to sustain the weary. Compare these motifs with Job 40-42 and Ps 147:

Ps 147:4-6 He determines the number of the stars  
 and calls them each by name.  
 5 Great is our Lord and mighty in power;  
 his understanding has no limit.  
 6 The LORD sustains the humble  
 but casts the wicked to the ground.

Rom 11:34 Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?

1 Cor 2:16 For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

40.19. **manufacture of idols.** Images in the ancient Near East were either cast or carved. Wooden idols were manufactured by a sculptor who stretched a line over the wood to measure the length and width of the image. He then drew an outline of the idol with his stylus, chiseled out the rough spots and put all of the body parts in the right proportion. Here, however, the reference is clearly to cast images. These would have been anywhere from four to ten inches high. The mold would be created by coating wax figurines with clay, then melting out the wax and baking the clay. The bronze would then be poured into the mold through a spout on the bottom of the feet, which would later serve as a peg to attach the idol to a wooden base. The cast would then be overlaid with gold or silver foil using a small hammer to affix it to the edges provided for that purpose. Grooves were also designed on the cast so that gold or silver wires (NIV: “chains”) could be squeezed into them. Then a solid wood was chosen for a base. Recent suggestions have identified the wood as sissou, a wood similar to teak, native to India. Literally thousands of idols throughout the Near East have been uncovered by archaeologists.<sup>444</sup>

*Isa 41* ~ God will raise up king Cyrus of Persia as His instrument; contrasts with impotent idols, Isaiah addresses the heathen nations. In light of the claim to be able to raise up Cyrus the Great, the Lord claims the divine supremacy of being the “first and the last” (רִאשׁוֹן וְאַחֲרֵי-כֵן אֲנִי-הוּא:), 41:5). See also p. 361 and Is 44:6; 48:12.

Rev 22:13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Servant theme introduced in 41:8. The motif reaches its peak in Isa 52-53. The motif progressively gains clarity, going from fairly obscure to very clearly messianic. Initially Israel is broadly called God’s servant, and is so in so far as they carry out God’s redemptive purposes which are ultimately messianic.

The *servant* is a central theme in Isaiah, but we must consider all of the texts together to see how they progress, and also to understand the correlation between Israel the servant and Messiah the Servant (see p. 365-366f.):

[Is 37:35 and for the sake of David my servant!]  
 Is 41:8 But you, O Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen,  
 Is 41:9 led you. I said, ‘You are my servant’; I have chosen you and have  
 Is 42:1 Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight  
 Is 42:19 Who is blind but my servant, and deaf like the messenger

<sup>444</sup> Walton, Mathews, Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary*, p. 626.

Is 42:19 Who is blind like the one committed to me, blind like the servant of the LORD?  
 Is 43:10 and my servant whom I have chosen,  
 Is 44:1 But now listen, O Jacob, my servant, Israel, whom I have chosen.  
 Is 44:2 Do not be afraid, O Jacob, my servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chose  
 Is 44:21 O Jacob, for you are my servant, O Israel. I have made you,  
 Is 44:21 I have made you, you are my servant; O Israel, I will not forget  
 Is 45:4 For the sake of Jacob my servant, of Israel my chosen,  
 Is 48:20 The LORD has redeemed his servant Jacob.  
 Is 49:3 He said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will display my splendor  
 Is 49:5 he who formed me in the womb to be his servant to bring Jacob back to him  
 Is 49:6 to small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob  
 Is 49:7 abhorred by the nation, to the servant of rulers: "Kings will see you . . ."  
 Is 50:10 and obeys the word of his servant? Let him who walks in the darkness  
 Is 52:13 See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted  
 Is 53:11 knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will

***The four major Servant predictions (songs) of the Messiah: the gradual individualization of the Servant:***

- See VanGemeren chart on the servant theology of Isaiah, *Interpreting*, p. 277.
- See summary of Servant motif, p. 373 and Suffering Servant, pp. 365f.

**1) Isa 42:1-9 ~ Introduction and identification of the Servant as distinct from the servant Israel (vss. 18ff.)**

**Character:** Spirit, humility, strength, chosen one

**Work:** covenant and light for the Gentiles (Kingdom of God)

**2) Isa 49:1-13 ~ the Servant speaks - (accomplishments and opposition)**

**Character:** speaks God's Word, apparent weakness, real strength, chosen

**Work:** chosen to bring redemption to Israel AND Gentiles, humiliated, successful, exalted. The one who will do the work is both of Israel and represents Israel

**3) Isa 50:4-11 ~ The Servant's soliloquy (first person)- the undeserved suffering of the Servant (compared to Israel's deserved suffering). Explanation of HOW the Servant will accomplish his work: his suffering will procure JUSTIFICATION. Final differentiation, individualization of the Servant who undergoes suffering for the servant Israel.**

**Character:** speaks God's Word, obedient unto humiliation, determined and successful

**Work:** challenges his accuser, accomplishes his mission

**4) Isa 52:13-53:12 ~ Climax of Servant predictions - The Servant's crucifixion, glorious resurrection and ascension**

**Character:** voluntary, silent submission unto death though innocent, as a guilt offering for sin.

**Work:** JUSTIFICATION OF MANY - far reaching consequence of his accomplished work

**Servant Songs expounded**

**Song 1**

*Isa 42* ~ The Messianic Servant introduced: the first Servant song (42:1-9); the Servant is clearly distinguished from Israel the "servant," an individual not a "personified collective." A messianic prophecy depicting his humble character and his accomplished work.

Immediately after the prophet claims the deeds of the nations and their idols "amount to nothing" (וְהָיוּ כִּשְׁפָה), he turns in contrast to the Servant who has the Spirit of God upon him. Describing the Servant in terms that we know with NT hindsight depict Jesus:

- ❖ Chosen by God.
- ❖ Delights God
- ❖ Brings justice
- ❖ Gentle
- ❖ Faithful
- ❖ Will not falter, but will accomplish God's work.
- ❖ Works miracles in the redemption of his people.

Isa 42:6-7 I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness;  
 I will take hold of your hand.  
 I will keep you and will make you  
 to be a covenant for the people  
 and a light for the Gentiles,  
 7 to open eyes that are blind,



to free captives from prison  
and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.

Lu 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
because he has anointed me  
to preach good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners  
and recovery of sight for the blind,  
to release the oppressed,

In contrast to the Servant, is the people Israel, who are deaf and blind (42:18). The prophet highlights the fact that servant Israel could not save itself, indeed they had brought themselves under God’s extreme judgment. The bitter irony is that Israel is still called the servant of the Lord (v. 19b), but Israel was no longer serving YHWH, rather the detestable Baals. Such a study in contrasts punctuates the work of the perfect Servant which would bring deliverance even from sin, which is elaborated on in ch. 43. Exile was not Israel’s real problem, but rather the problem of sin.

Isa 43 ~ Nothing will stand in their way of return (spiritual deliverance His priority); the basis of his assertion rests upon the nature of God who himself had created Israel out of nothing. Their deliverance from exile is woven together with their more important deliverance from sin. There is also another strong reaffirmation of the covenant-love of God for his people, and the essence of the covenant-promise and presence: “I am the Lord your God” (43:2-3). The covenant promise of land and people is also interlinked with the broader promise of deliverance from sin. They would be returned to the land, but even more, they would *know* and *believe* and *understand* (וְתִבְיֵנוּ כִּי-אֲנִי וְתִדְעוּ וְתִאֱמָיִנוּ לִי 43:10) that the Lord alone is God and savior (43:11). That “I, even I, am YHWH” (אֲנֹכִי אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה) recalls the proclamation of the name to Moses, their prototypical deliverer. “From [ancient] days I am he” (אֲנִי הוּא):

Isa 43:13(NIV) Yes, and from ancient days I am he.  
No one can deliver out of my hand.  
When I act, who can reverse it?”  
Isa 43:13(NASB) Even from eternity I am He;  
And there is none who can deliver out of My hand;  
I act and who can reverse it?”

It would have been a great comfort to the believing exiles that the Lord here promised an end to the exile (43:14-21), but even more he promised to *blot out their transgressions* (43:25-28). The only way for God to make a people for himself (43:21), which was the goal of redemption, was to forgive their sins (43:25-26). A messianic prediction is implicit in any such promises of final forgiveness of sin. As the exodus was a type and foreshadowing of the return from exile, so also both serve to foreshadow and prefigure the remnant’s return to God’s kingdom-presence through his redeeming work in the Messiah. This latter theme is particularly developed in Isa 49-55, as the Servant and his work come into focus. The central underlying point is that servant Israel could not save itself, only the Servant from God could save them. This was their only true comfort in exile.

Isa 44 ~ Promise to his servant (Israel in this section) is certain because of the Promiser; he shows again the contrast to idols which are no gods at all; idolatry is not only sinful rebellion, it is absurd, because Israel who had been formed and created by God turns to fashioning idols in the image of man and creatures and worships them). God’s promises are linked with the fact that he is the Creator, but also the one who created Israel to be his people (44:2):

God’s promises rest on his character in contrast to the idols (44:6-20):

- ⇒ Water on thirsty ground will be poured out.
- ⇒ The Spirit will be poured out.
- ⇒ Redemption will be far reaching.
- ⇒ He is the first and the last (וְאֲנִי אֶתְחִיל וְאֲנִי אֶחְדָּל). See Isa 41:4; 48:12.
- ⇒ One of the most bitter attacks on the futility of idols in all the Bible follows (9-20):

Idols are:

- ⊕ worthless
- ⊕ blind their subjects
- ⊕ made by human hands
- ⊕ profit nothing
- ⊕ shame their makers
- ⊕ bring infamy upon their makers



- ⊕ blacksmiths get tired forging idols
- ⊕ carpenters shape them in man's own image
  - grow trees, burn trees to bake bread, make idols from trees
  - place them in shrines made by human hands
  - bow down and worship them, though idols know nothing at all
  - because he knows nothing at all to ask how he can bow down to dead wood

The weight of his argument is that the makers of idols are even more stupid than the idols they make! Thus, the idolater's *moral stupidity* makes him the greatest of fools (see Poets/Wisdom notes on fools). Humankind, made in the glorious image of God, has the intelligence, ability, means, supplies, and enough folly to actually forge, carve, and mold dead idols from trees they grow. Then, as if that is not enough, they burn the rest of the wood to cook dinner before bowing down to the remainder of the wood now fashioned into a detestable image.

The heart is deceitfully wicked:

Jer 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things  
and beyond cure.  
Who can understand it?

The worst of their folly is described through Isaiah's concluding comment that Israel is God's servant, and that God will not forget them (44:21). Even more, the Lord will forgive and redeem them! Isaiah speaks as if this latter had already happened, and he thus sings a doxology of praise to God in which, contrary to the assumptions of the idol makers (*iconoplasts*), even *the mountains, the trees, and the forests will worship YHWH*. The One who created the universe is the Redeemer (see creation and redemption, p.55), and he will restore the exiles to their land (44:24-27) through **Cyrus** (v. 28). This "re-creation" in restoration to the land foreshadows and guarantees the goal of final redemption. God creates, restores, redeems.

Note: The specificity of the prediction of rebuilding Jerusalem is particularly noteworthy (44:28). The miraculous nature of a naming-prediction some hundreds of years before the fact attests to the divine inspiration of the scripture, contrary to those who use this as *redactional* proof of the contrary. If the latter was true, we would have to say the scripture redactor here deceived us, for the text and context clearly assumes that this prediction is given *before the fact*, even if one placed the writing in the exile.

*Isa 45* ~ Cyrus will be Israel's liberator (named 210 years before the fact), but his victory will be from the LORD for his servant's sake; idolaters will be disgraced, because only YHWH is LORD (45:1-3). The particularization of the Cyrus prediction unfolds in this section, for the predictive and descriptive details make it clear that Cyrus would be militarily instrumental in Israel's return from exile. God would use a pagan who did "not acknowledge" him (45:4b) to restore his people. In the history of redemption, God often uses foreigners or unexpected people to fulfill his purposes, accentuating the miraculous and supernatural reality of every work of redemption. Isaiah states explicitly that Cyrus would rebuild Jerusalem and "set my exiles free" (45:13; Ezra 1:1-4). The covenant promise is the background and foundation here for which the Lord would raise up Cyrus and deliver Israel from exilic bondage:

- ⇒ "So that you may know that I am the Lord . . ." (45:3).
- ⇒ "I summon you by name" (45:4).
- ⇒ I am the Lord, and there is no other . . ." (45:5).
- ⇒ so that "men may know there is none besides me" (45:6a).
- ⇒ "I am the Lord, and there is no other" (45:6b).
- ⇒ "I am the Lord and there is no other" (45:18b).
- ⇒ "I am God, and there is no other" (45:22).

That there is *no other* God eliminates all arguments in favor of idols or images of gods (see Isa 46:9 below).

Alongside these repeated covenantal expressions, is the theme of *creation*: of God as Maker, Isaiah writes:

- ⇒ "I form the light and create darkness" (45:7a).
- ⇒ "I bring prosperity and create disaster" (45:7b).
- ⇒ "I the Lord have created it [the heavens]" (45:8).
- ⇒ The Lord is the Maker (potter) of Israel (45:9-11).
- ⇒ "It is I who made the earth and created mankind upon it" (45:12).
- ⇒ "he who created the heavens, he is God" (45:18).
- ⇒ "he who fashioned and made the earth" (45:18).

Another remarkable prophecy about the eschatological relation of all people to the appearance of the Lord:

Isa 45:23 By myself I have sworn,  
my mouth has uttered in all integrity  
a word that will not be revoked:  
Before me every knee will bow;  
by me every tongue will swear.

Rom 14:11 It is written: "'As surely as I live,' says the Lord,  
'every knee will bow before me;  
every tongue will confess to God.'"  
Phil 2:10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

Another interesting theme in ch. 45 to note is that God *hides himself*. This is the flip-side of the covenant-presence promise that YHWH would be with his people, teaching them, guiding them, restoring them to his presence through redemption. To be told that God is absent reflects the covenant-curse and the removal of the word of God from Israel during Elijah's ministry when he was taken and hidden from Israel during the drought on the land. Indeed, though God be *hidden*, it does not mean God is *inactive*!



Pascal, *Pensees* on "*Truly you are a God who hides himself*"

585. That God has willed to hide Himself. If there were only one religion, God would indeed be manifest. The same would be the case if there were no martyrs but in our religion. God being thus hidden, every religion which does not affirm that God is hidden is not true; and every religion which does not give the reason of it is not instructive. Our religion does all this:

*Vere tu es Deus absconditus. (Truly you are a God who hides himself) Isa 45:15.*

586. If there were no obscurity, man would not be sensible of his corruption; if there were no light, man would not hope for a remedy. Thus, it is not only fair, but advantageous to us, that God be partly hidden and partly revealed; since it is equally dangerous to man to know God without knowing his own wretchedness, and to know his own wretchedness without knowing God.

557 It is, then, true that everything teaches man his condition, but he must understand this well. For it is not true that all reveals God, and it is not true that all conceals God. But it is at the same time true that He hides Himself from those who tempt Him, and that He reveals Himself to those who seek Him, because men are both unworthy and capable of God; unworthy by their corruption, capable by their original nature.

*Isa 46-47* ~ The gods of Babylon and YHWH, and Babylon's demise at the hands of Cyrus, God's judgment calls on Babylon and its gods. Babylon was God's instrument of judgment upon Israel, but Babylon did not acknowledge the LORD and oppressed God's people Israel. The gods of the nations are nothing before YHWH (recalls his claims against the idols in Isa 44:9-20). See "Pantheon of Assyria and Babylon, pp. 651f. The ultimate claim is found in 46:9

Isa 46:9 Remember the former things, those of long ago;  
I am God, and there is no other;  
I am God, and there is none like me.

אֲנֹכִי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹד אֵלֶיְהִים וְאֵפְסָם כְּמִוְנֵי:

The absolute exclusivity of the Lord is expressed (see also Is 45:5, 6, 8, 14, 18, 21, 22; 46:9; 47:8; but cf. 47:10), and corresponds to Babylon's claim of this exclusivity which seems to suggest the belief that Babylon itself is a god in Isa 47:8b.

Further, the Lord works what no gods or idols can do:

- ⇒ "I make known the end from the beginning" (46:10a)
- ⇒ "My purpose will stand" (46:10b)
- ⇒ "I will do all that I please" (46:10c)
- ⇒ "I summon a bird of prey[Cyrus]" (46:11a)
- ⇒ "What I have said, I will bring about" (46:11b)
- ⇒ "What I have planned, that will I do" (46:11c)
- ⇒ "I am bringing my righteousness near" (46:13)

The conclusion of this section consists of a lengthy development of the theme of Isa 46:1-2, in which Babylon is taken as the representative of those who will be brought low, in contrast to Israel which has a Redeemer (47:4). As noted, the boast of Babylon either mocks or is followed by the Lord's claim that "there is no other God" (46:9):

Isa 47:8 "Now then, listen, you wanton creature,  
lounging in your security  
and saying to yourself,

'I am, and there is none besides me. אֲנִי וְאֵפְסִי עוֹד'

I will never be a widow  
or suffer the loss of children.'

Consider Nebuchadnezzar's words in Dan 4:30 where he said, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?" Assurnasirpal listed eleven such "I am" titles for himself.<sup>445</sup> All such pride-filled boasts contradict the absolute supremacy of YHWH expressed in the famous and key text of Exodus 3:14 (see Isa 48:12)~

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM (אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה). This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM (אֶהְיֶה) has sent me to you.'"

*Isa 48* ~ A reminder against idols addressed to exiles and prophecy of deliverance from Babylon ("An obedient nation is a hearing nation, and a disobedient nation one that does not hear."<sup>446</sup> "Listen to this" (שְׁמַעוּ-נָא) or "Hear" is used some thirty times in Isaiah, highlighting the beautiful fact that God is *revealing* his word over against the *Vox populi*. His word is supreme over creation, nations, and all individuals, and silences all human praise of idols which are but false gods.

"The first and the last" (48:12): (see p. 361 and Is 41:4, 6) the "extremity" of this expression leaves no room for any other claims to unqualified supremacy: God's absolute omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence are conveyed with this expression. Also, the *covenant name* YHWH (אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה) is at the heart of this motif: "I am he" (אֲנִי-הוּא); I am the first and the last . . ." Expressed in the context of creation-theology, God's supremacy is defined by outlining the basic power of God: his own hand "laid the foundations of the earth" and "spread out the heavens," thus he has the power to "summon them" at will (48:13). Creation and redemption are completed by the free hand of God.

Further contrasting YHWH with the gods of the nations, Isaiah stresses the Lord's power:

- ⇒ Almighty (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת, 48:2b)
- ⇒ Foretells the former things (48:3)
- ⇒ Makes them known (48:3)
- ⇒ Before they happened (48:5)
- ⇒ Will tell of new things (48:6b)
- ⇒ Delays his wrath for the sake of his name (48:9)
- ⇒ Refines and tests his people for his name and glory (48:10-11)
- ⇒ Summons his ally [Cyrus<sup>447</sup>] (48:14-15)
- ⇒ Has spoken openly (48:16a)
- ⇒ Sends his Servant and Spirit (48:16b)
- ⇒ Teaches his people and directs them (48:17b)

### *The deity of the Servant in 48:16*

Isa 48:16 "Come near me and listen to this:  
"From the first announcement I have not spoken in secret;  
at the time it happens, I am there."  
And now the Sovereign LORD has sent me,  
with his Spirit.

Although Isaiah does not call this one the servant in the verse, he describes God speaking through the One sent who has the Spirit of God. That is, though it is God speaking, it is through a One sent, thus showing the deity of the One sent.

<sup>445</sup> Walton, Matthews, Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary*, p. 631.

<sup>446</sup> Young, *Isaiah*, vol. 3, p. 245.

<sup>447</sup> Herodotus records that **Cyrus II** the Great redirected the Euphrates River so as to bring his forces into Babylon through the dry riverbed. The city fell to his forces and capitulated on Oct 12, 539, and he entered the city on Oct 30. Balthshazzar was slain, although Nabonidus his father, was allowed to live. Darius the Mede was appointed Cyrus' governor in Babylon.

Note the comparison of the exodus imagery and the exilic return (48:20-22). As they left Egypt in deliverance, so they are commanded to leave Babylon (49:20). Return from exile is likened to the miraculous return from Egypt:



Isa 48:21 They did not thirst when he led them through the deserts;  
he made water flow for them from the rock;  
he split the rock  
and water gushed out.



**Servant Song 2**

**(2) The Suffering Servant Messiah: Isa 49-55**

- See summary of Servant motif, p. 373 and Servant, p. 360.
- See Dorsey chart below comparing the king of Babylon and Messiah, *Literary Structure*, pp. 231-234. Dorsey’s suggestion is compelling that the kind of Babylon contrasts chiasmically with the Servant.

Isaiah      Dorsey, Literary Structure of the OT      231

King of Babylon	Suffering Servant
<b>contrasting lives</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "smote (<i>nkh</i>) peoples with unceasing blows (<i>nkh</i>)" (14:6)</li> <li>• "slew" and "oppressed" (<i>ngš</i>) peoples (14:2, 4, 20)</li> <li>• "shook the earth" (14:16) and boasted: "I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high!" (14:13-14)</li> <li>• is "wicked" (14:5), filled with pomp, splendor (14:11), and feared by all nations (14:16)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is himself "smitten" (<i>nkh</i>), stricken, wounded, bruised, beaten (53:4-5, 10)</li> <li>• is himself "oppressed" (<i>ngš</i>) and slain to secure forgiveness for his people (53:7-8)</li> <li>• is humble and quiet: "like a lamb . . . he opened not his mouth" (53:7)</li> <li>• is "righteous" (53:11), has "no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him" (53:2); deemed unimportant; and "despised" and "not esteemed" (53:3)</li> </ul>
<b>contrasting reversals of fortunes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exalts himself, boasting that he is the "Day Star," "son of Dawn," and plots to set his throne on high, "above the stars of God" (14:12-14); will be brought down to (dark) Sheol (14:15)</li> <li>• began with such greatness and aspired to such heights ("I will ascend to heaven; I will set my throne on high. . . . I will ascend above the heights of the clouds"; 14:13-14); in the end is "laid low," "cut down," "brought down to Sheol," and reduced to complete humiliation (14:8, 10-12, 15)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has humbly remained hidden in Yahweh's (dark) quiver; will be exalted, honored, and made "the light to the nations" (49:2-6)</li> <li>• beginning is humble ("like a root out of dry ground," 53:2); in the end "shall be highly exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high" (52:13)</li> </ul>
<b>contrasting deaths</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dies and his life is over (14:18-20)</li> <li>• offspring and "seed" (<i>zera'</i>) will be "cut off" (<i>krš</i>) and will "nevermore be named" (14:20-22)</li> <li>• not buried in his own "tomb" (<i>qibrēkā</i>) or in dignity with the other kings; is "cast out . . . like a dead body trodden under foot" (14:18-20)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dies, but "he shall prolong his days" and a life of great reward will follow his death (53:10-12)</li> <li>• though "cut off" (<i>gzt</i>) from the land of the living, will "see his seed (<i>zera'</i>)" (53:8-10)</li> <li>• not buried in his own tomb, but is given a "tomb" (<i>qibrō</i>) with the wicked; buried "with the rich(?)" (a burial of dignity after all?) (53:9)</li> </ul>
<b>contrasting responses from kings</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the kings of the earth, in Sheol, are startled when they "see" (<i>rā'ā</i>) the pompous king of Babylon arrive in humiliation (14:9-11, 16)</li> <li>• when the deceased kings of earth see the king of Babylon arriving in Sheol, they "arise" (<i>qūm</i>) (instead of bowing!), speak out, and contemptuously taunt him (14:9-20)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• when the kings "see" (<i>rā'ā</i>) the servant, they are likewise startled—but for the opposite reason: this humbled person has been highly exalted! (52:14-15)</li> <li>• when the kings of the earth see the servant, they "shut their mouths because of him" (52:15), "arise" (<i>qūm</i>), and prostrate themselves" before him (49:7)</li> </ul>

Prophecies of eternal deliverance/restoration; final three Servant songs ending in the death of the Servant (word "servant" 22x). The identification of the servant: Israel, or the Messiah Servant. The Servant is contrasted with the servant: the Servant will accomplish God’s redemption purposes, the servant had failed utterly.

*Isa 49* ~ Second Servant Song (vv. 1-13), the Servant speaks: his opposition and accomplishments (he is chosen to bring salvation to Israel AND the Gentiles. A far greater deliverance than Cyrus can bring). The Servant merges in some sense here with the servant Israel (identification and differentiation), but only in so far as Isaiah does not

make hard and fast distinctions, being prophetic language through and through. This Servant is personal, distinct from Israel, an individual that derives from Israel, yet is far greater than Israel for he will restore and redeem Israel.

### *The Messianic Servant:*

- ⇒ Was called before he was born (49:1a) ~ *eternal*.
- ⇒ His name is known by God (49:1;b) ~ *equal* with God.
- ⇒ His mouth is like a sharpened sword (49:2) ~ with the *word* of God.
- ⇒ His work is protected like an arrow in a quiver (40:2:b) *eternal/everlasting*.
- ⇒ He displays God's splendor (49:3) ~ *glory of God*.
- ⇒ Appears to labor to no purpose, but weakness is not real (49:4a) ~ death?
- ⇒ Work of God will be accomplished with/by God (49:4b) ~ *God himself*.
- ⇒ Will be born of a human woman (49:5) ~ *fully human*.
- ⇒ Will be a Light to the Gentiles (49:6a) ~ See Acts 13:47.
- ⇒ Will bring salvation to the ends of the earth (49:6b) ~ *Redeemer*.
- ⇒ Will be despised and abhorred (49:7a) ~ *suffers*.
- ⇒ Kings will bow down to him (49:7b) ~ *divine*.
- ⇒ Will be brought in God's timing (49:8a) ~ *obedient*.
- ⇒ Will be a covenant for the people (49:8b) ~ *faithful*.

The work of redemption of the Servant correlates with the work of God in delivering the exiles from Babylon (49:9-26). These eschatological works of redemption confirm one another, in that God is working out his purposes and as he *proves* his word through one cosmic redemption he *illustrates* it through a material deliverance from bondage in exile. thus, the motifs of a spiritual final deliverance are interwoven at places with that of the return from exile. Unweaving the threads is entirely unnecessary, try as we may, because it stands as the *astounding* poetry of redemption that need not be unraveled for us to see the wonder of God's work in history and the cosmos. In both the seen and unseen realms God is restoring the ruins and desolations, he is receiving the *desolate* back into his loving presence.

Isa 49:13 Shout for joy, O heavens;  
rejoice, O earth;  
burst into song, O mountains!  
For the LORD comforts his people  
and will have compassion on his afflicted ones.



The goal of redemption given in the covenant promise is further illustrated in 49:22-26

- ⇒ The Gentiles will be redeemed (49:22). ~ Promise to Abraham and patriarchs of children is fulfilled.
- ⇒ They will bow down to the Servant (49:23a) ~ He is sovereign Lord God.
- ⇒ "They will know that I am the Lord . . ." (49:23b) ~ He is the covenanting Lord God.
- ⇒ "Then all mankind will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob." (49:26b).

*The mission of God:* Covenant-promise goes to the Gentiles! Fulfilled

### *Servant Song 3*

*Isa 50* ~ Third Servant song (vv. 4-11): the undeserved suffering of the Servant compared to Israel's deserved suffering. The differentiation of the Servant's work and its clarification progresses dramatically, and particularly *how* the Servant will accomplish his work/ Although Isaiah does not use the word servant here, he describes someone who is not rebellious and willingly suffers (50:4). Neither characteristic applies to Israel/Judah. The Servant here has the wisdom of an instructed tongue, will not be disgraced, will be vindicated, will not be put to shame (50:4-8). None of these qualities can be applied to Israel/Judah who has been described as rebelliously *blind, deaf, guilty* (Isa 42:18-25). Those who follow the Servant will have *light* and trust in the name of the Lord (50:10-11).

*Human Servant and divine relation (Trinity?):* There is a close relationship between the Servant and his Father. His tongue speaks the Words of the Sovereign Lord. He is sustained daily by God:

Isa 50:4 The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue,  
to know the word that sustains the weary.  
He wakens me morning by morning,  
wakens my ear to listen like one being taught.

Jn 7:46 "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared.

Mtt 11:28 Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

*Human Servant teaches what he hears: He hears what God teaches him:*

Isa 50:5a-6 The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears

Jn 5:30 By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.

Jn 8:28 So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.

*Human Servant suffers: He submits to humiliation and suffering out of obedience to the Sovereign Lord:*

Isa 50:5b and I have not been rebellious;

I have not drawn back.

6 I offered my back to those who beat me,  
my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard;

I did not hide my face  
from mocking and spitting.

Mtt 27:26 Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

Mtt 27:30 They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again.

*Human Servant is determined to accomplish God's work: He is helped by God, thus his work will be done.*

Isa 50:7 Because the Sovereign LORD helps me,

I will not be disgraced.

Therefore have I set my face like flint,

and I know I will not be put to shame.

Lk 9:51, 53 (NIV) As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.

53 but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem.

Lk 9:51, 53 (NASB) And it came about, when the days were approaching for His ascension, that He resolutely set His face to go to Jerusalem; 53 And they did not receive Him, because He was journeying with His face toward Jerusalem.

*Human Servant is innocent: He is vindicated by God, he has no sustainable charges brought against him in this legal-suit context. Similar to the language of Job in requesting to face his accuser, yet this One, though subject to spitting humiliations, is innocent of all transgressions (sinless). Justification before God is what the Servant represents, and perhaps can be understood as the position of those who believe in the Servant.*

Isa 50:8 He who vindicates me is near.

Who then will bring charges against me?

Let us face each other!

Who is my accuser?

Let him confront me!

1 Tim 3:16 Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great:

He appeared in a body,

was vindicated by the Spirit,

was seen by angels,

was preached among the nations,

was believed on in the world,

was taken up in glory.

*Human Servant deserves obedience of followers: The concluding thoughts of this section (before the final Servant Song) identify two classes of people: those who fear YHWH and those who trust in themselves. Those who trust in the Servant trust in God and will be given *light* (Exodus imagery). Those who reject the Servant must light their own fires for light and they will *lie down in torment* (50:11b). Those who walk in the light of their own sparks (50:11) are idolators who lead/follow processions to shrines at night(?). See light/darkness motif in Isa 58, p. (and Is 58:9-10).*

Isa 50:10 Who among you fears the LORD

and obeys the word of his servant?

Let him who walks in the dark,

who has no light,

trust in the name of the LORD

and rely on his God.

Jn 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Jn 12:35 Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going.

1 Jn 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

Rev 21:24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.

*Isa 51* ~ The LORD addresses the godly with promise of eternal deliverance/salvation (Savior). Calls on the Lord to "Awake, awake" to accomplish his redemption (51:9-16). Calls on Jerusalem to "Awake, awake" to prepare for return from exile of judgment (51:17-23 and carried forward in Isa 52:1-12). Isaiah 51 expands on the themes of 50:10-11, in which the righteous path is described, as well as their reward of the righteous. The righteous:

- ⇒ Seek the Lord (51:1a).
- ⇒ Are cut from the rock (Abraham, the righteous one) (51:1b-2).
- ⇒ Are comforted by the Lord (51:3, 12).
- ⇒ Have the light of God, righteousness of God, and salvation of God (51:4-5).
- ⇒ Will have these forever, though the earth vanishes (51:6).
- ⇒ Have the law of God written on their heart (internalization of the law, see the spirit of the law, pp. 72 53f.) (51:7).
- ⇒ Will return from exile with singing and joy (51:11).
- ⇒ Know God as his people: the covenant-promise realized (51:15-16).
- ⇒ Have God's revelation Word (51:16a).

### Servant Song 4

*Isa 52* ~ Fourth Servant song (52:13-53:12): Zion is admonished to "Awake, Awake" for the promise of temporal deliverance/restoration (return) which serves to point to the greater deliverance coming in the Servant (introduces Suffering Servant). (This *awaking* is carried on from Isa 51.) Yet, the preparation for deliverance from exile in Babylon is only a precursor to the most important theme of deliverance from sin and the work of the Messiah Servant (52:13-53:12). All ambiguity about the Servant is finally removed in this peak text, unveiling the true nature of the Servant and his work of redemption. The answer for the exile is not just return to the land (material deliverance), but rather the Messiah (52:1-10)! The themes of exilic return and eschatological redemption are interwoven again: the complimentary relationship of these themes depicts their mutually confirming witness to the glory of God's power in redemption. Their prediction and fulfillment each illustrate conversely the same certainty that the promise of God to accomplish redemption will be fulfilled.

The One, and ones, who bring this gospel are thus truly beautiful:

Isa 52:7 How beautiful on the mountains  
are the feet of those who bring good news,  
who proclaim peace,  
who bring good tidings,  
who proclaim salvation,  
who say to Zion,  
"Your God reigns!"

Rom 10:15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Eph 6:15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.



*Human-Divine Servant works redemption by his life, death, and resurrection (peak of servant texts): 52:13-53:12*

Israel, the servant of YHWH, had failed to remain faithful and thus was removed to exile. Israel was called to be a light, but has fallen into sin. Thus, God presents the Servant-Messiah as the only one able and willing to work redemption.

This Servant will *represent* Israel by taking up their sin (52:4) and *justifying many* (52:11b). This provides the ANSWER to the problem of sin. Perhaps the most explicit OT text describing the Messiah, who

- ⇒ Wise, and acts wisely (52:13a) ~ life & ministry of wisdom.
- ⇒ Raised up (52:13b) ~ crucified and exalted (resurrection).
- ⇒ Disfigured appearance appalls many (52:14) ~ Servant's death (crucifixion).
- ⇒ Cleanses the nations (52:15a) ~ Servant consecrates/atones (see *sprinkle*, p. 369).
- ⇒ Kings will even be silenced when they see him (52:15b) ~ Servant's humiliation and exaltation.
- ⇒ From the shoot (line) of David (53:2a; see 4:2; 11:1) ~ humble human origins (Trinity?).
- ⇒ Human appearance not extraordinary or peculiarly noticeable (53:2b) ~ humble origins, human (incarnation).
- ⇒ Despised and rejected (53:3) ~ Servant's human suffering, rejected by his own people.
- ⇒ Carried our infirmities and sorrows (53:4a) ~ human ministry of Servant, sinless
- ⇒ Death misunderstood (53:4b) ~ Servant is stricken by God or man?





BHS critical agenda reads, lending no support for either the RSV or KXX rendering:

<i>prp</i> (proposed)	יָזַה 3ms Qal impf of יָזַה	(to spurt, sputter, sprinkle)
<i>vel</i> (or)	יָזַה 3mpl Qal impf of יָזַה	(to spurt, sputter, sprinkle)
<i>al</i> (others)	יָרַזוּ 3mpl Qal impf of יָרַזוּ	(to be agitated, quake)
	יָזַהוּ 3mpl Qal impf, 3ms sfx of יָזַה	(to despise)

See the same form of יָזַה used in Isaiah in relation to blood being splattered by the Messianic figure who treads the winepress alone:

Isa 63:3 I have trodden the winepress alone;  
from the nations no one was with me.  
I trampled them in my anger  
and trod them down in my wrath;  
their blood spattered (יָזַה) my garments,<sup>450</sup>  
and I stained all my clothing.

Heb 12:24 to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Heb 9:21 In the same way, he sprinkled with the blood both the tabernacle and everything used in its ceremonies.

Heb 10:22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

1 Pet 1:2 who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

Rev 19:13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.

*Reflections on the peculiar translation controversy engendered by the RSV:*

From a cursory examination of the two more common Hebrew words of “sprinkling” זָרַק (*zāraq*) and נָזַח (*nāzah*) it can be concluded that the range of meaning for the two words overlaps, making it difficult to narrow either word to any specific distinguishing emphasis. Nevertheless, the *TWOT* claims that נָזַח “is distinguished from זָרַק, a heavier sprinkling” (vol. 2, p. 566). There is little evidence given for this assertion, apart from the manner of application with the fingers or hand. Under the *TWOT* entry on זָרַק (vol. 1, p. 254) it is stated that both Hebrew words are translated “sprinkle” or “scatter.” This seems to contradict their other statement that זָרַק is a “heavier sprinkling.” I suggest that there is no way to distinguish one act of sprinkling or scattering as “heavier” than another merely from the Hebrew usage or the English translations.

Both Hebrew words relate predominantly in usage to expiation, purification, and cleansing. Yet, it is not evident that any of these ranges of meaning are exclusively definitive. These concepts seem to interrelate very closely, although in individual cases it is generally possible to determine the particular emphasis. It is thus tentatively concluded that there is a significant interrelationship of these two words. Considering the controversy over the interpretation of Isaiah 52:15, it may be worth noting the fact that both of these Hebrew words have a *predominantly religious (theological) import* in all cases except maybe one or two.<sup>451</sup> As for the notion that either word could have any non-religious import (as does the RSV), there is virtually no scriptural support.

In light of this, I am surprised that the second definition for נָזַח is often given as “to startle.” The RSV translates it this way, and yet includes a footnote: “the meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain”[!]. Also, whereas the RSV uniquely translates נָזַח in Is 52:15 as “startle,” it translates the word in twenty two other contexts as “sprinkle” and one time as “spattered” (2 Ki 9:33). Not only is the meaning of the Hebrew word quite certain, basing their translation on an Arabic cognate “to leap” offers weak extra-biblical attestation. Even if the Arabic word is cognate, there is ample biblical evidence to show that the RSV translation relies on semantic obsolescence and unfounded cognate correlations, as there are no biblical examples of the word meaning or suggesting “to startle.” Further, cognates have been shown to sometimes offer suggestive possibilities, but can not generally prove any correspondence.<sup>452</sup>

Alternative translations like the RSV appeal to unknown meanings to construe the meaning of this messianic passage, and thus remove its spiritual significance. Lagenscheidt’s *Pocket Hebrew Dictionary* also gives “startle” as its second definition, as does *BDB* (p. 633) in its second definition, though calling it “dubious,” defining it as “spring, or leap,” and noting Isa 52:15 as their only example. Keil and Delitzsch state that “sprinkling has the language in its favor, but it is never construed with the accusative of the person sprinkled.” It is unclear to me exactly what this proves, except that this would go against the translation “to startle.” *TWOT* also gives “to spring,

<sup>450</sup> Compare LXX of Isa 63:3 ~ κατήγαγον (to bring down).

<sup>451</sup> See 2 Kings 9:33. Also, two uses of זָרַק seem to be unique to that verb, and should be mentioned: in four cases the word is used in a context of judgment, and in one case in a context of covenant. Perhaps nothing can be concluded at this point besides the possibility of some significance related to the verb in its etymology or ancient use that is probably lost to us.

<sup>452</sup> See Barr, *passim*, *Comparative Philology*.

leap” as its second definition in Isa 52:15 after clearly stating that  $\text{הִטָּל}$  in the context means “sprinkling” and “has reference to cleansing from sin to obtain ritual purity” (vol. 2, p. 566). J. Muilenberg favors the “obvious meaning of the verb *nāzah*” as “sprinkling” (*The Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 5, pp. 617-618).

In each of the NT references to this idea of *sprinkling* ( $\rho\alpha\nu\tau\iota\zeta\omega$ )<sup>453</sup> there is spiritual portent in contexts of expiation, purification, and cleansing. The *Greek-English Lexicon* places the word under the domain of “Religious Activity” (#47), and the *NIDNTT* places the word under its subheading on the word  $\alpha\iota\mu\alpha$  (blood) due to its theological associations (vol. 1, pp. 220-226). The NT use of this word in each case follows the primary OT spiritual meaning of  $\text{הִטָּל}$  and  $\text{קָטַף}$ : two are direct references to the tabernacle ministries of expiation and cleansing, and one is a clear figurative allusion to those same ministries (Heb 9:19; 9:21; 10:22).

The Messianic prediction in Isaiah 52 need not be diminished by such a sloppy translation of the Hebrew as demonstrated by the RSV, when we look at the consistent unity of the scripture surrounding the theme of expiation and the expressed goal of the Messiah to be that expiation. In Isaiah’s context of the Suffering Servant, it is proper to rejoice in this prophetic portrait of the Messiah’s redemption for the nations, while we are also “startled” by those who have not seen what they have been so clearly shown in the text, and for those who have not understood what has been plainly proclaimed of the Messiah’s redemptive work of atonement.

*Isa 54* ~ Isaiah addresses the believing remnant in this section about the results of the Servant’s death: salvation to all nations, and final deliverance for Israel(?).<sup>454</sup> Barrenness of the nations is going to end in overwhelming fruitfulness when Israel is restored to the land and also when the Gentiles are included in the covenant promises. Motifs of barrenness (54:1) are reminiscent of the covenant-curse (expressed in the Flood, 54:9) and, while motifs of fruitfulness relate to the covenant-promise of a people and land (54:2-3). In this exilic context, the hope of a remnant returned to the land is given in lieu of the greater promise of spiritual blessings. This also echoes the exodus deliverance (54:4-17). The great compassion YHWH has for his people is likened again to the relationship between a husband and wife (54:4-8). Thus, the blessings are both material and spiritual, including the remnant returned and the knowledge of God and a righteousness not their own (54:13-14), as the prophecy operates on both levels simultaneously. This is reflected in Paul’s quoting of Isa 54:1 in Galatians to describe the heavenly kingdom inherited by all who are saved by grace (Jews and Gentiles):

Gal 4:26-27 But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. 27 For it is written: “Be glad, O barren woman, who bears no children; break forth and cry aloud, you who have no labor pains; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband.”



The knowledge of God promised in Isa 54:13 is reflected in the Gospel of John:

Jn 6:45 It is written in the Prophets: ‘They will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.

Jn 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

The motif of the tent in Isa 54:2, or enlarging the territory, is found also in Isa 9:3; 26:15; 33:20. Jerusalem is a tent that will be enlarged, and as this fulfills the temporal-conditional aspects of the covenant, it also corresponds to the spiritual aspects of the promises (see tent in Amos 9:11; Isa 33:20; 2 Co 5:1; 2 Co 5:4; 2 Pe 1:13; Re 7:15).

Isa 33:20 Look upon Zion, the city of our festivals; your eyes will see Jerusalem, a peaceful abode, a tent that will not be moved; its stakes will never be pulled up, nor any of its ropes broken.

Isa 38:12 Like a shepherd’s tent my house has been pulled down and taken from me. Like a weaver I have rolled up my life, and he has cut me off from the loom; day and night you made an end of me.

Is 40:22 He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers.

He stretches out the heavens like a canopy,



<sup>453</sup> See also on *cleansing*  $\kappa\alpha\theta\alpha\rho\iota\zeta\omega$ ,  $\kappa\alpha\theta\alpha\rho\omicron\varsigma$ ,  $\alpha\gamma\iota\zeta\omega$ ,  $\alpha\gamma\iota\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$ .

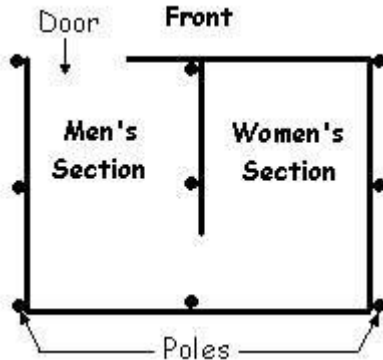
<sup>454</sup> Millennial eschatology enters into one’s interpretation here, for the chapter seems to address different periods in the history of redemption, such as the OT exilic/return period, the NT gospel-preaching period, as well as the eternal kingdom, church age, or millennial period, depending on one’s eschatology.


and spreads them out like a tent to live in.

Acts 15:16 After this I will return  
and rebuild David's fallen tent.  
Its ruins I will rebuild,  
and I will restore it,

Modern Bedouin tents<sup>455</sup>

Ancient tents (below) were divided into two sections, one for women and one for men with a wall between the two.



The father of the tent is the only one allowed into the women's section. There is an ideogrammatic similarity with the Heb. letter **v** - .

The covenant promises were never intended to



be taken as strictly material, but primarily as spiritual (see material/spiritual aspects, p. 25). (Cf. Wilkinson's book, *The Prayer of Jabez*.) Indeed, the material and temporal blessings only serve to confirm the spiritual hope of God's people. What God has done materially for the nation, he will surpass spiritually for the nations. In the bigger picture of redemptive history, Paul outlines the remnant of Israel theme in relation to the engrafting of the Gentiles in Romans 11 ~

Rom 11:11-12 Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. <sup>12</sup> But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring!

Rom 11:25-32 I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. <sup>26</sup> And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. <sup>27</sup> And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins." <sup>28</sup> As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies on your account; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, <sup>29</sup> for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable. <sup>30</sup> Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, <sup>31</sup> so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God's mercy to you. <sup>32</sup> For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.

*Isa 55-56:8* ~ Further results of the Servant's work include an urgent invitation to those results at the banquet: for all who become servants of the Servant salvation from sin is offered. The promise of the new heavens and new earth is realized. The wall of partition is torn down (Rom 11:1-2), concluding chapter 55 with emphasis on sanctification and the universal salvation-gospel to all the nations. The prophet calls Israel to obedience to the law of God, but not just formalism, and condemns the lazy shepherds of Israel. Indeed, he introduces the **Sabbath** theme here for the first time (see heremetics above on "creational eschatology," p. ).

**Sabbath in the prophets:**

- Isa 56:2 holds it fast, who keeps the Sabbath without desecrating it, and
- Isa 56:6 worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and
- Isa 58:13 keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please
- Isa 58:13 my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the LORD's holy
- Isa 66:23 Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will
- Jer 17:21 not to carry a load on the Sabbath day or bring it through the
- Jer 17:22 houses or do any work on the Sabbath, but keep the Sabbath day holy
- Jer 17:22 on the Sabbath, but keep the Sabbath day holy, as I commanded your
- Jer 17:24 the gates of this city on the Sabbath, but keep the Sabbath day holy
- Jer 17:24 on the Sabbath, but keep the Sabbath day holy by not doing any work
- Jer 17:27 do not obey me to keep the Sabbath day holy by not carrying any
- Jer 17:27 the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle
- Eze 46:1 six working days, but on the Sabbath day and on the day of the New
- Eze 46:4 brings to the LORD on the Sabbath day is to be six male lambs
- Eze 46:12 offerings as he does on the Sabbath day. Then he shall go out,

<sup>455</sup> From www

Hos 2:11 festivals, her New Moons, her Sabbath days—all her appointed feasts  
Am 8:5 we may sell grain, and the Sabbath be ended that we may market

Although this text is addressed to the exiles longing for restoration in the language of exodus desert motifs, it has a spiritual invitation of salvation to all people in all times. This is confirmed with NT attestation:

Jn 4:13-14 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

Jn 7:37 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.

The NT gospel of life and blessing is proclaimed to those who are empty, poor in spirit, thirsty, needy (55:1), yet we have the same gospel call right here in Isaiah 55-56.

*The gospel of Isaiah promises:*

⊕ Free redemption (55:1-2) ~ satisfying and good spiritual life

⊕ Life itself (55:3a) ~ true life from God is everlasting

Acts 13:34 The fact that God raised him from the dead, never to decay, is stated in these words: "I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David."

⊕ Everlasting covenant (55:3b) ~ love of God

⊕ A Witness and Leader (55:4) ~ Messiah's declaration of the gospel

⊕ Nations will be summoned (55:5) ~ the great commission of the gospel to Gentiles

⊕ Endowed with splendor through Messiah (55:5) ~ the redeemed share Messiah's glory

Jn 17:5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

⊕ Will find God and know God's mercy (55:6-7) ~ all people are invited

⊕ Restoration of creation through redemption (55:10-13) ~ new heaven and new earth in Paradise of eternal kingdom

Rom 8:19-23 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

⊕ Blessed with salvation and righteousness (56:1-2) ~ justification and sanctification revealed

⊕ Everlasting name to all of the redeemed (56:3-6) ~ covenant fulfilled

Rev 2:17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.

Rev 3:12 Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name.



**Summary of the eight stage revelation about the Servant of God:**

1. Identification moves from Israel as a whole to One individual (Isa 49:3)
2. This One is identified as a humanly born prophet (Isa 50:4; 49:2) with God's Spirit, and humble ministry (Isa 42:2,3 Mt 12:18-21) with vicarious suffering
3. The Sufferer meets disbelief (Isa 53:1) and reproach (Isa 50:6; 53:3-8)
4. He is condemned as a criminal to suffer punishments for the sins of others (Isa 53:8,9; Heb 10:22)
5. The Servant accomplishes God's pleasure (Isa 53:10) and is buried with the rich (Mt 27:57-60) and is later revived.
6. His sacrifice justifies many, and he become a light to the Gentiles
7. The Servant accomplishes the universalistic goal of Israel (Isa 42:4; 52:15; Rom 15:21)
8. He thus constitutes in himself the testament (covenant)<sup>456</sup>

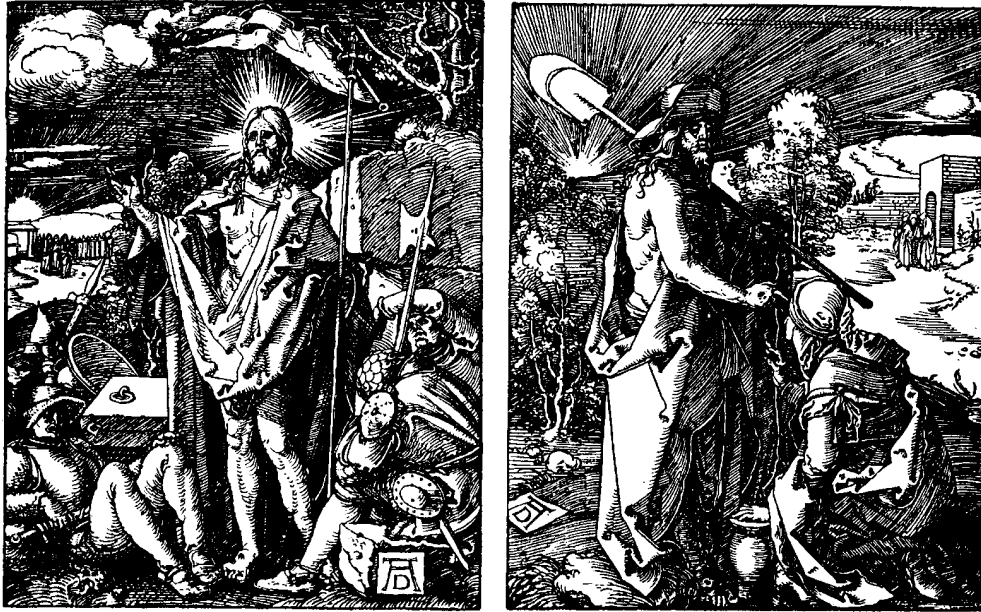
**Summary of servant theme in the prophets: (especially in Isaiah)<sup>457</sup>**

- unveiled glory of God
- sure mercies of David
- prophet, priest atones for sin

<sup>456</sup> From Payne, *A Theology of the Older Testament*, 255-256.

<sup>457</sup> See Delitzsch, *OT History*, pp. 142ff.

- king of kings bears guilt of people
- ascends death and grave to glory
- connects prophet-priest-king of future
- called Israel
- provides redemption from sin



Resurrection by A. Dürer

**Other important Servant passages:**

Is 20:3 Then the LORD said, "Just as my servant Isaiah has gone stripped and

Is 22:20 In that day I will summon my servant, Eliakim son of Hilkiah. 21

Is 37:35 sake and for the sake of David my servant!

Is 1:8 But you, O Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen,

Is 41:9 called you. I said, 'You are my servant'; I have chosen you and have

Is 42:1 Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one

Is 42:19 19 Who is blind but my servant, and deaf like the messenger

Is 43:10 declares the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen,

Is 44:1 But now listen, O Jacob, my servant, Israel, whom I have chosen.

Is 44:2 Do not be afraid, O Jacob, my servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chose

Is 44:21 O Jacob, for you are my servant, O Israel. I have made you,

Is 44:21 I have made you, you are my servant; O Israel, I will not forget

Is 45:4 For the sake of Jacob my servant, of Israel my chosen,

Is 49:3 He said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will

Is 49:6 small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob

Is 52:13 See, my servant will act wisely; he will

The servant of the Lord theme also links Moses with Jesus, in that Jesus was the True Servant, whereas Moses exemplified the servant of God. Jesus was the true Prophet, Priest, King, but also the Servant of God.

All that constitutes the prophetic *imago Dei* and had prototypical expression in the paradigm servant-prophet, Moses, is present in antitypical fullness in Jesus Christ.<sup>458</sup>

#### d) **Comfort concluded: Isa 56:9-66:24**

The conclusion of comfort for the godly of Israel: God's universal kingdom is established, and in light of that Isaiah gives further warnings to God's people to do justice and obey God's law. Throughout this section the prophet contrasts true faith and justice with the false-faith of idolatry and hypocrisy. The messenger of the LORD is coming with good news of the Messiah for the godly, but warnings of judgment for the ungodly. Zion will be restored, evil will be removed from Israel and extend beyond to the nations, emphasis is on the return from Exile.

<sup>458</sup> Kline, *Images of the Spirit*, p. 82.

Isa 56:9-57:21 ~ Condemnation of the lazy shepherds who do not care for His sheep but rather practice adulterous-idolatry. Judgment will justly come upon the ungodly, but the godly will be given His holy mountain. The comfort for God’s people is extended to the righteous remnant but withheld from the idolaters (56:8-57:21). This section interweaves these two themes as contrasts, thus addressing respectively the godless idolaters alongside the God-fearing remnant. The futility of idols is rehearsed again (57:3-13), yet the hope of the righteous in God is described in beautiful terms of reviving the lowly and contrite, healing, restoration, and peace with God (57:15-20).

Isa 57:13 When you cry out for help,  
let your collection of idols save you!  
The wind will carry all of them off,  
a mere breath will blow them away.  
But the man who makes me his refuge  
will inherit the land and possess my holy mountain.

Light  
but all  
darkness  
we look  
in darkness  
light but  
darkness  
darkness  
we hope  
for light  
but darkness  
darkness  
we grope  
in darkness  
light but  
all deep  
shadows  
at midday  
darkness

Isa 58 ~ (58-66 are called the Book of darkness and light). A rebuke of formalism contrasted with praise of true faith which acts according to God’s law, and is blessed according to God’s covenant promise. The spirit of the law written on the heart and true fasting (righteous deeds) are the fruits of those who are redeemed (58:6-9). Living according to the spirit of the law, their light, healing, and righteousness will appear. In Exodus imagery, Isaiah also says that the *glory* of the Lord will be their rear guard as they return to him through the desert and rebuild the ancient ruins (58:7-14). The Lord’s presence would also be with them when they call: he will say “Here am I” (יְהוָה). They know God’s redemption, but they also act it out in life and worship.

Isa 58:6 “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:  
to loose the chains of injustice  
and untie the cords of the yoke,  
to set the oppressed free  
and break every yoke?”

Matt 25:35-36 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

Isa 59 ~ Another *severe* rebuke for sin is concluded with a promise of deliverance for those who truly repent, because God’s covenant promise would be fulfilled. If Israel was in any doubt why they were in exile the prophet repeatedly reminds them that it was because of their sin. Honest acknowledgment of sin and the fact that they walk in darkness is perhaps a true confession and prayer of repentance (or the prophet’s acknowledgment) (59:9-15). They look for light, but all is darkness. Their only *sure hope* is that God is working redemption

through his sovereign intervention, and the Redeemer who was coming to Zion (59:20):

Isa 59:16 He saw that there was no one,  
he was appalled that there was no one to intervene;  
so his own arm worked salvation for him,  
and his own righteousness sustained him.  
Isa 59:20 The Redeemer will come to Zion,  
to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,”  
declares the LORD.  
Rom 11:26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:  
“The deliverer will come from Zion;  
he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.

rw{a  
lkw  
lvj  
hwqn  
lvjB  
rw{a  
Evj  
hvvgn  
EvjB  
rw{a  
lkw  
tw{lpa  
myrhxb  
Evj

Isa 60 ~ The promise of light for God’s people (continued from chap 59); salvation is the light and glory of the LORD. The return from exile will be a foretaste of the final deliverance of the nations from darkness and bondage to sin. A very hopeful section to “arise and shine” for their light had come (messianic). The *eschatos* will bring the light of God’s glory such that they would not need the sun or moon (at least in a figurative sense, whether or not there is a physical sun or moon):

Isa 60:19 The sun will no more be your light by day,  
nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you,  
for the LORD will be your everlasting light,  
and your God will be your glory.  
Rev 21:23 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

Isa 61 ~ The Servant declares his message of good news (cf. 58:6; Lk 4:18-19) which seems to reveal two different appearances (61:1 - His first coming, 61:2 - His second). The Servant reaffirms the certainty of his success. The exiles could read these promises with certainty that the One who had carried them into exile would also fulfill these

promises of hope. Jesus read the words of Isaiah 61:1-2 in the synagogue, and then he claimed he had fulfilled them:

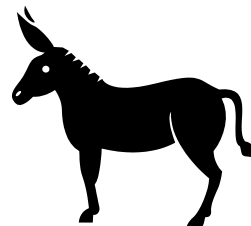
Lu 4:18-19 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
because he has anointed me  
to preach good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners  
and recovery of sight for the blind,  
to release the oppressed,  
19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

<sup>20</sup> Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him,

<sup>21</sup> and he began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

*Isa 62* ~ The LORD addresses the godly through his prophet Isaiah in promises similar to chap 61. The establishment of Zion in righteousness is proof that He will send the Savior to all the nations who is God Himself (cf. 40:9-10). The Savior is the Servant who is coming:

Isa 62:11 The LORD has made proclamation  
to the ends of the earth:  
“Say to the Daughter of Zion,  
‘See, your Savior comes!  
See, his reward is with him,  
and his recompense accompanies him.’”  
Mtt 21:5 “Say to the Daughter of Zion,  
‘See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”



*Isa 63* ~ There is only One LORD who can judge sin and save from sin. This LORD became Israel’s Savior, but Israel rebelled against Him. This LORD destroyed Israel’s enemies. The One coming from Edom is the Savior who would destroy all who act like the Edomites towards the LORD and His people. This Savior would bring redemption himself, and no one could help him (63:3-6). His garments will be dipped in blood:

Isa 63:1 Who is this coming from Edom,  
from Bozrah, with his garments stained crimson?  
Who is this, robed in splendor,  
striding forward in the greatness of his strength?

Rev 19:13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.

*Isa 64* ~ No break with Isa 63. The address to the LORD continues from chap 63:11 (Is it pharisaical or repentant?). Isaiah rehearses the remarkable and unique revelation of YHWH to Israel, that their faith was exclusive and that there is no other God:

Isa 64:4 Since ancient times no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him.  
1 Cor 2:9 However, as it is written:  
“No eye has seen,  
no ear has heard,  
no mind has conceived  
what God has prepared for those who love him”—

Confession of sin conveys the most fundamental truth of the gospel: all have sinned, works avail nothing to save:

Isa 64:6 All of us have become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags;  
we all shrivel up like a leaf,  
and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

*Isa 65* ~ (65-66 is the conclusion to Isaiah). The LORD addresses the Gentiles who have received his salvation of grace contrasted with unfaithful Israel (Mt 21:43; Deut 32:5; Rom 10:20f). Promise to the godly that God will indeed redeem them; He can be trusted to complete his work in the *eschatos* and the eternal kingdom. God promises a new people in a new creation. God answers all insincere prayers of religiosity among his people (e.g., a prayer possibly in Isa 64) with the proclamation that he has revealed himself to people who did not ask for nor seek him (cf. Rom 11):

Isa 65:1 “I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me;  
I was found by those who did not seek me.  
To a nation that did not call on my name,  
I said, ‘Here am I, here am I.’ (הִנְנִי הִנְנִי) ”



Rom 10:20 And Isaiah boldly says,  
 “I was found by those who did not seek me;  
 I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me.”

A most striking feature of this section is the explicit prophecy that there will be a new heaven and a new earth. This is the hope of Paradise at the heart of the history of redemption and the covenant promises:

Isa 65:17 “Behold, I will create  
 new heavens and a new earth.  
 The former things will not be remembered,  
 nor will they come to mind.

2 Pet 3:13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

Isa 66 ~ Continued from 65 (cf. Acts 7:49-50). Isaiah contrasts true humility and formalism (a central theme), and promises relief through merciful redemption upon Israel and God’s people. A *crescendo* of themes concludes the book: God’s omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence are revealed against the idolaters who will be destroyed, the glory of the LORD will be revealed to all the nations, the promises rest upon the nature of the Promiser, and He will establish His people forever and create a new heaven and new earth. True religion, of the internalized spirit of the law written on the heart, is again contrasted with hypocritical and that of the idolaters (66:2-4):

Isa 66:2b This is the one I esteem:  
 he who is humble and contrite in spirit,  
 and trembles at my word.

Judgment is coming on all who persecute God’s people (66:5-6), and those who rebel against God (66:15-18; 24) the remnant of grace will be preserved (66:5), the Lord will be merciful and will bring rebirth to Israel, the nations will see and proclaim the glory of God (66:18-21), the new heavens and new earth will be a sign that God’s people

will endure forever (66:22-24). Isaiah ends, however, on a message of great terror for the rebellious following his promise of great hope for the redeemed in Paradise:

Isa 66:24 “And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.”

Mark 9:48 where ‘their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.’

No longer will there be impurity in Zion. Cleansing will never again be necessary. Once for all, the Holy One of Israel will have removed all that is wicked from the midst of Zion. For those redeemed witnesses who will stand on the walls of the new Zion and look out, the gruesome scene outside the walls will give hope that only light remains in God’s dwelling place; darkness and wickedness will be forever beyond Zion’s borders.<sup>459</sup>



(left) MT Zion.<sup>460</sup>

## 8. History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling

### a) Revelation and redemption from YHWH

#### (1) Who God is



Revelation of YHWH in Isaiah reaches a pinnacle involving a complex and deeply profound book or prophecy. Isaiah tirelessly stresses the *uniqueness* of God over against the futility and nothingness of

book of,” Dictionary of Biblical Imagery, p. 429.  
<http://www.centuryone.org/images/zionmap.jpg>

idols. God is absolute and supreme, he is not part of the endless cycle of time and nature (as the Babylonian gods), for he created the universe. God transcends time and space, while being immanently involved in them. In contrast, the gods of the Babylonians did not truly know the future, and were trapped to a great degree in the processes of nature. Thus, God challenges the gods in legal language of a court suit against them (Isa 43:8-13; 44:6-23f.), proving decisively that he alone is God.

Isa 44:7 Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it.  
Let him declare and lay out before me  
what has happened since I established my ancient people,  
and what is yet to come—  
yes, let him foretell what will come.

God Almighty is so much at the heart of Isaiah's every breath and word that he never communicates the uncertainties or discouragement of some other OT writers reflecting on the judgment or exile, or the vicissitudes of life. Isaiah conveys some of the bleakest prophecies alongside some of the most beautifully hopeful without ever succumbing to "questions" in his tone about the justice of God or his ways. Unlike Jeremiah, Isaiah does not *lament* here, he points us to the compassions of God. He presents us with the exalted glory of the living God who offers redemption from sin. He reassures us all that we can not save ourselves, and that is precisely why God was sending his Servant Messiah.

Isa 30:18 Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you;  
he rises to show you compassion.  
For the LORD is a God of justice.  
Blessed are all who wait for him!

God is holy and God is gracious. The gospel is proclaimed in Isaiah: God himself is holy, thus there is need for atonement, yet God himself provides that atonement out of his grace and compassion. This foreshadows and predicts the coming Messiah whom we know with hindsight fulfilled these expectations, for in Christ both the wrath of holiness and the grace of his love are perfectly manifested. In Christ, we can face our sin through his love. In Christ we can face judgment with hope. Throughout Isaiah the themes of God's holy judgment and gracious compassion are intertwined, thus we can say they are the central threads of the entire prophecy. Some even propose that Isa 1-39 are about holy judgment and Isa 40-66 are about hope of God's forgiveness, but this is over simplified. The theme of hope corresponds throughout with that of judgment, in the sense that God's judgment and his compassion are both necessary in the progress of redemption.

Knowing God without knowing our own wretchedness makes for pride.  
Knowing our own wretchedness without knowing God makes for despair.  
Knowing Jesus Christ strikes the balance because he shows us both God and our own wretchedness. Pascal, *Pensées*, 192



Jesus is a God whom we can approach without pride and before whom we can humble ourselves without despair. Pascal, *Pensées*, 212

## (2) *What God has done*

God sends affliction, yet also mercy (Isa 30:20). Judgment is given in the hope of redemption. The judgment was a pre-requisite to purging Israel of its idolatrous dross. The act of raising up the prophets in itself was an act of mercy, even though the message was inescapable judgment. It could be supposed that even Isaiah's direst predictions of judgment also offer an escape through repentance. But, overall, the impression is rather that the people of God had descended too low to turn back. They were helpless, and thus depended on God to display his power and mercy through delivering them again. Even where he offers hope of repentance, the choices of Israel and Judah appear to bring a foregone conclusion.

God's redemptive intentions to purify his people were accomplished in part through the exile. Cleansing and healing were the fruits of both repentance and judgment, but more often cleansing required judgment. Isaiah correlates judgment with purification (purged of idols and idolaters) and healing (new exodus of a righteous remnant) with deliverance and salvation (Isa 1:5-6, 24-26, 27; 6:10-13; 19:22; 53:5).

"While judgment and blessing/salvation are interspersed throughout the text, the general thematic focus moves from the necessity of purifying judgment to the inevitability of judgment to judgment proper and finally beyond judgment to healing."<sup>461</sup>

<sup>461</sup> "Isaiah, Book of," Dictionary of Biblical Imagery, p. 428.

### (3) *What God has promised*

YHWH brings the prophet to Israel, the revelation of the very word of God to his chosen people. This is God's gift to God's people for all time. Each prophet is a gift. Isaiah outlines the work of God in creating a people for himself. He reflects all the failure of Israel/Judah that began in the early Judges period and continued into the monarchy and divided kingdom, and that God had been long-suffering and patient with them for a *long* time. With the long view of the prophet, he never loses hope, nor communicates despair. He knows that despite all their failings God was going to accomplish redemption for them.

The Zion theme is prominent and reflects the Abrahamic promises of land and seed at Mt. Moriah (temple mount), and the Mosaic promises at Sinai of a sanctuary and God's presence. God is working out redemption for his people and Isaiah develops this theme in sync with the Zion imagery of the mountain of God. Mountains feature prominently in the promises and work of God: Is 2:2,3; 11:9; 14:13; 18:6; 25:6, 7, 10; 27:13; 30:25, 29; 33:16; 40:4, 9; 56:7; 57:13; 65:11, 25; 66:20. Although mountains can symbolize judgment and the need for refuge, the promises of God center on the *restoration of his presence* at Mt. Sinai/Zion (the place of God's people). This pictures the essence of the covenant-promises to God's people. In order for the presence of God to be restored, the people must be purified and cleansed, and the judgment of the exile would be part of that sanctifying process (discussed above). A new people would be brought back to the land and rebuild the temple and life of true faith, and this people would foreshadow those who worship God in a new heaven and a new earth.

#### b) *Humankind and redemption*

##### (1) *Worship of redeemed*

Israel is portrayed as Zion in Isaiah as abundantly as God is portrayed as the Holy One of Israel. Israel is the place of the mountain of God, the center of true worship of YHWH. Zion corresponds with Sinai, and the revelation of God to his chosen people, the vehicle of his redemptive purposes.

Other images of God's people reflect their relation to YHWH: bride and wife, harlot, barren woman, garden, vineyard, wayward child.<sup>462</sup> All of these vivid analogies seek to convey the intimate relation of God to his people. God wants his presence to be manifest to his people, but the road to redemption is rocky. Purification of God's people is required for them to be consecrated and sanctified before him. Thus the hope of the redeemed becomes very clear in Isaiah: only God's Servant-Messiah could work the redemption they need. They must worship the Lord in holiness and truth, but they are incapable of such without the Lord personally working redemption for them. Fundamentally lacking in Israel was real *trust* in YHWH. Even in our times, defining this pivotal theological pre-requisite of trust is not easy. Central to this motif in Isaiah is that they *do not entrust* themselves to other nations. That is, to turn to foreign nations instead of the YHWH was akin to turning to idols for their help, for only the Lord was to be their help (2 Isa 7:1-7; 2 Ki 16:7-9). Correlative with trust is *not fearing*: to trust the Lord is to fear him alone, and not fear foreigners. On the other hand, human trust of YHWH is based on the divine *trustworthiness of YHWH* (Isa 26:3-6).

Further, the prophet condemns all trust in idols and corrupt priests and religion (Isa 1:10-17; cf. Amos 4:4-13; Hos 8:11-13; Jer 7:21-26; Ezek 16:15-21; 20:25-31). Although many rejected YHWH outright, syncretism was also a serious threat to the covenant with YHWH. One can not serve two masters. Trust in YHWH means having *confidence* in YHWH alone, and rejecting all other confidences as false and thus worthless. Israel had manifold reasons to continue trusting in the Lord, as Isaiah persistently reminds them of God's marvelous deeds of redemption in their history. Bringing false religion (works of religion or righteousness) would not suffice, particularly if they were also *entrusting* themselves to idols made with their own hands or to foreigners.

Isa 31: 3 But the Egyptians are men and not God;  
their horses are flesh and not spirit.

Isa 41:24 But you[idols] are less than nothing  
and your works are utterly worthless;  
he who chooses you is detestable.

##### (2) *Work of redeemed*

Isaiah describes the works of folly involved in oppressing the poor, looting, exploitation, murder, greed, bribes, idol making, prostitution, foreign alliances, false prophesying. In describing the works of sin, we are hard-pressed to find any redeeming value to the works of those Isaiah addresses. Nevertheless, condemning the many works of sin found among God's people, Isaiah in principle condones their opposites. That is, God brings judgment largely because their works and deeds are rebellious against him and his covenant-law. Because paradise was lost, the high

<sup>462</sup> See "Isaiah, Book of," *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, p. 427.

standards of the *law* are ever in the background of Isaiah's prophecy. The ideals of Paradise-promised are ever in the foreground. Further, on this higher level, the Lord wants Israel to labor for that which satisfies. Spiritual ideals are prior to material objectives. Isaiah stresses that the important thing is to do all labors justly and righteously.

Isaiah 56:1 This is what the LORD says:

"Maintain justice  
and do what is right,  
for my salvation is close at hand  
and my righteousness will soon be revealed."

### (3) *Ethics of redeemed*

Injustice among the people of Israel displays the ignorance of God's people. They failed to have a proper knowledge of God (Is 1:3, 16-17). The ethics of idolaters are conditioned upon the demands of the gods they represent. Babylonian and Canaanite gods were not "good" or "kind" gods, so it is no surprise that they led Israel into the horrendous abuses and wickedness repeatedly described by Isaiah. Indeed, there are NO good "gods" but the Lord, and the sin of Israel, lay largely in their adaptation and accommodation to the principles of the nations they sought alliances with out of fear of man and distrust in their Lord. The catalogues of ethical and moral sins Isaiah provides need not be rehearsed again here, but we should take note that the guiding principles of the biblical ethic are those of love and compassion, justice and righteousness.

Isa 65:16 Whoever invokes a blessing in the land  
will do so by the God of truth;  
he who takes an oath in the land  
will swear by the God of truth.  
For the past troubles will be forgotten  
and hidden from my eyes.



Isaiah's vision of God's throne  
Woodcut from the *Zurich Bible*.<sup>463</sup>

### G. *Micah* מִיכָה (Judah ~ 735-690)



Micah by Jan van Eyck on the Ghent Altarpiece in the St Bavo Cathedral, Ghent<sup>464</sup>

Micah 6:8

He has showed you, O man, what is good.  
And what does the LORD require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy  
and to walk humbly with your God.

<sup>463</sup>From Emory university at <http://www.pitts.emory.edu/dia/booklist5.cfm?ID=131>.

<sup>464</sup>From *The Bible Through the Ages*, p.76.

## 1. *Title, author, and dates*

1. Micah, “who is like YAHWH?” Micah was born in S. Judah in Moresheth (1:1) (poss. Moresheth Gath [1:14], location uncertain<sup>465</sup>). Micah is the author of his book.
2. A contemporary of Isaiah and Hosea (see backgrounds, pp. 286, 313). Micah’s center of ministry was in Jerusalem. He lived through the reigns in Judah of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah and the reigns in Israel of Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea.
3. Micah’s message does not seem to reflect knowledge of Hezekiah’s reforms, thus placing him prior to them and perhaps greatly influencing them. Also, Micah predicted the fall of Samaria (1:5-7), capital of Israel [to Assyria 722-721], and Judah (1:9-16), placing the former prediction (1:6) prior to 722. Thus, he preached beyond the fall of the northern kingdom.
4. In reference to Hezekiah: Jeremiah wrote in later years about some elders of Judah who came forward to defend Jeremiah from imminent death for prophesying the fall of Judah. They quote from Micah, of whom they say Hezekiah and the people were afraid to hurt because he was the prophet of the Lord:

Jer 26:18 “Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah. He told all the people of Judah, ‘This is what the LORD Almighty says:’” “Zion will be plowed like a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble, the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets.’”

Jer 26:19 “Did Hezekiah king of Judah or anyone else in Judah put him to death? Did not Hezekiah fear the LORD and seek his favor? And did not the LORD relent, so that he did not bring the disaster he pronounced against them? We are about to bring a terrible disaster on ourselves!”

## 2. *Critical matters*

- For more, see Bullock, *Intro to the OT Prophets*, p. 108-117.

Micah has posed challenges to the critics because of its difficult internal structure, as well as its messianic prophecies and predictions of a restoration from exile. Critical viewpoints deny authenticity of all but the first three chapters of Micah’s prophecy, particularly due to the predictive aspects of the remaining sections. That is, initially Micah 6-7 came to be understood as from a later (exilic or post-exilic) setting than Micah 1-5, but a consensus grew among critical interpreters that only chps. 1-3 were from Micah. As on most OT books, redactional critics also believe that the book had a long redactional history that came to final formulation in the post-exilic era. No surprises here.

## 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

### a) *Mountain of the Lord*

- See Isa 2:1-4, and the mountain of the Lord, pp. 320, 386.

Mic 4:1 In the last days  
the mountain of the LORD’s temple will be established  
as chief among the mountains;  
it will be raised above the hills,  
and peoples will stream to it.

Mic 4:2 Many nations will come and say,  
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
to the house of the God of Jacob.  
He will teach us his ways,  
so that we may walk in his paths.”  
The law will go out from Zion,  
the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Mic 7:12 In that day people will come to you  
from Assyria and the cities of Egypt,  
even from Egypt to the Euphrates  
and from sea to sea  
and from mountain to mountain.



### b) *Origins from of old*

Mic 5:2 “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
though you are small among the clans of  
Judah, out of you will come for me  
one who will be ruler over Israel,  
whose origins are from of old,

<sup>465</sup> Some identify this town with Tell el-Judeideh which is twenty miles SE of Jerusalem, a suburb of the city of Gath (Tell es-Safi).

from ancient times.”

### c) *In the last days*

- See “Last days,” p. 318.

## 4. *Major themes*

1. Background is similar to Isaiah. Style is also similar to Isaiah (very figurative language, creative word plays, poetic, and a great sensitivity to those he prophesied against).
2. Social evils of Judah: Micah preached the judgment of the rich and religious; the permanent sale of land was forbidden, but the *greedy* rich were successfully forcing the poor from their land (2:2, 9; 3:1-3), using bribes against the poor (3:9-11; 7:2-3). Cheating in trade is also condemned (6:10-12), which was especially affecting the poor. In contrast to Isaiah, Micah focused more on the individual poor (peasantry) than on the corrupt political structures, although he does address the heads (elders) of the houses of Judah and Israel.
3. Unclean people cannot stand before God. Micah had a deep sense of this reality, and prophesied to God’s people in light of the wrath of God they were due. He weeps and wails on behalf of God’s people (1:8-16). The theme of prophetic weeping is found also in Isa 15:2; 16:9; 22:4, 12; 30:19; 33:7; Jer 9:1, 10; 13:17; 22:10; 25:34; 48:32; Lam 1:16; Ezek 24:16, 23; 27:31; Joel 1:5; 2:17; Am 5:16; Mic 1:8, 1:10; Mal 2:13.
4. False leaders (3:1-4), prophets (3:5-7, 11), and priests 3:11-12): these will be condemned, yet God’s purposes will not be foiled, for he will save his people through a Shepherd born in Bethlehem (5:2-5), who would be ruler and conqueror, as well as one who would forgive (Prophet-Priest-King theme).
5. Sacrifice is inadequate without righteous living (6:6-8). False religion is no better than idolatry. He condemned idols alongside false religion, injustice and evil. Canaanite religion in Israel and Judah (1:7; 5:13-14), as well as witchcraft (noun כַּשְׁפִּי from כָּשַׁף, 1:11[12]; see also 2 Ki 9:22; Isa 47:9, 12; Nah 3:4).
6. Judgment was coming, and along with Isaiah, Amos, and Hosea he prophesied that a foreign nation would be the vehicle to punish Israel.
7. He prophesied both hope and doom (as Zephaniah later), judgment and deliverance (much like Isaiah). The remnant would return (4:6-10) to Jerusalem. There was eschatological hope of peace and prosperity (4:3-5), whether it is figurative of the church age, the millennium, or the eternal kingdom is disputed.
8. In light of the rhetorical question of his name, “who is like YHWH,” Micah answers, “Only YHWH.” He exalts the Lord as the only true God.

## 5. *Major prophecies*

- ⊕ The collapse of Samaria (Israel) and Judah.
- ⊕ The birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem.
- ⊕ The Messiah will have universal rule.
- ⊕ Babylon will fall.
- ⊕ The remnant will be regathered.
- ⊕ Judah will be restored and Jerusalem will be rebuilt
- ⊕ God’s people will become strong again.
- ⊕ Yet, desolation (judgment) will come.
- ⊕ Yet, salvation/redemption is certain.

## 6. *Outline, structure/composition*

(right) Angel before Micah

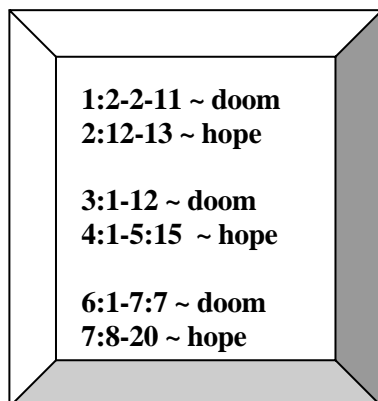


Unknown Franco-Flemish, probably Lille, about 1270, Tempera colors and gold leaf on parchment, MS. LUDWIG I 8, V2, FOL. 183, The Marquette Bible In this Bible from the 1200s, an initial *V* introduces the Old Testament book of Micah. The scene inside the letter illustrates the following text: “The word of the Lord that came to Micah the Morasthite. . . .” The illuminator added details not mentioned in the text to his representation of the scene, showing the prophet Micah in bed while an angel, its hand raised in a gesture of speech, delivers the “word of the

Lord” represented by a scroll. Although he appears in bed, it is clear that Micah is not dreaming: his eyes are open and he glances toward the angel at the side of the bed.<sup>466</sup>

It is often held that Micah is arranged according to the three cycles of doom (judgment) and hope (salvation), each section beginning with “Listen” or “Hear”:

See Zephaniah, same patten of hope and doom, pp.



However we divide the structure, it is *hope* that Micah stresses, for he ends on the high note of the covenant promises being fulfilled. Overall, this is a similar pattern to other prophets (Amos, Hosea, Haggai, Zechariah, Isaiah), where woe is often followed by weal. Dorsey notes that the overall structure is built around the polar messages of destruction and punishment and rebuilding and forgiveness. He stresses the theme of *corruption* and *condemnation* in structuring the book, while placing the glorious future restoration at the center. I will follow the outline above which breaks it down respectively into sections of *judgment-doom* and *comfort-hope*, the center of which is the promised Ruler from Bethlehem (Mic 5:8). This is similar to VanGemeren’s outline (*Interpreting*, p. 151). Dillard and Longman also emphasize (*Intro to the OT*, p. 400) similar themes in their breakdown, and Bullock parallels *promise* and *threat*.

This stylized alternation between doom and hope has distinct artistic as well as spiritual merit, and while it may be too much to suppose that the prophetic oracles themselves were uttered in precisely this order, there can be no doubt that the extant form of the prophecy adds to the attractiveness of the work considerably, and reinforces the general impression of prophetic vitality and sensitivity.<sup>467</sup>

## 7. *Exposition and the history of redemption themes*

### a) *Judgment on Israel, Judah & false prophets: Micah 1:2-2-11 ~ doom*

Micah announces his imperative call to listen in the *legal* language of a trial in which the Lord is going to present evidence against all the people of the earth. This indicates that the proclamation that follows is universal. Micah begins by announcing a cosmic vision of the Great King appearing that has apocalyptic tones of His descent to the earth which melts and splits it apart. Such imagery is also reminiscent of the exodus from Egypt which involved the cataclysmic and miraculous events unleashed by God’s redeeming power before the nations.

The personal nature of the charges against “Jacob” and “Judah” should be understood in their covenantal context, and thus the seriousness of the charge that Samaria and Judah (their respective capitals) were nothing more than “high places” (1:5) like the Canaanites’ Baal centers! Micah catalogues names of some dozen places that can expect God’s judgment, all of them located in the hill country Shephelah (1:9-16). Most importantly, he mentions Lachish as the “beginning” (תְּחִלָּתָא) of sin to Zion (1:13). Sennacherib boasts at length in large wall reliefs he made in memory of his capture of Lachish. (See the Lachish reliefs and discussion in the Judges-Esther syllabus.) Lachish was the largest fortress in the region. In less than a century, the number of sites occupied in the region declined from apx. three hundred to no more than fifty, reducing the population to less than fifteen percent of its size.<sup>468</sup>

<sup>466</sup> From [www.getty.edu/art/collections/images/m/00350001.jpg](http://www.getty.edu/art/collections/images/m/00350001.jpg)

<sup>467</sup> Harrison, *Intro to the OT*, p. 922.

<sup>468</sup> Walton, Matthews, Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary*, p. 782.

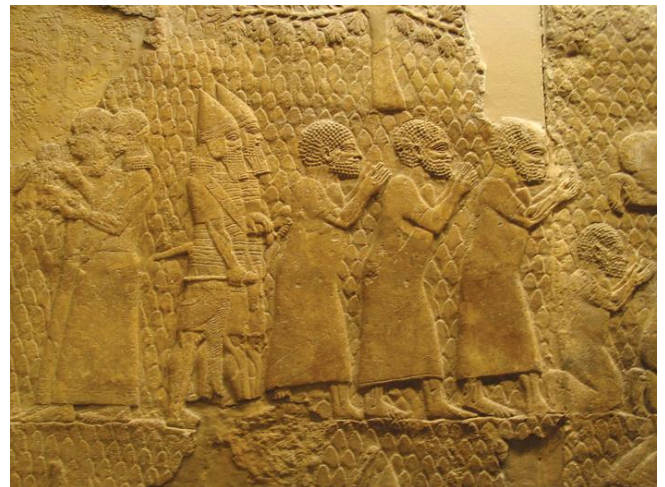
Word plays on the city/town site names: 1:10-15

“tell it in”	Gath (גַּת)	“tell” (תִּגִּידוּ)
“roll in dust” in	Beth Oprah (בֵּית לְעֹפְרָה)	“dust” (עָפָר)
“shame” for those in	Shaphir (שָׁפִיר, “pleasant”)	[שׁוֹפָר, “horn”]
“protection withdrawn” from	Beth Ezel (בֵּית הָאֵצֶל, “standing place”)	“withdraw” (אַצַּל)
“those will not come out” in	Zaanan (צִיאָן)	“she comes out” (יִצְאָה)
“writhe in pain” and disaster (רָע) in	Maroth (מְרוֹת)	“bitter” (מָר)
“team and chariot” in	Lachish (לַחִישׁ)	“team” (לְרֶכֶשׁ)
“deceptive” in	Aczib (אַכְזִיב)	“deception” (לְאִכְזִיב)
“conqueror against those” in	Mareshah (מַרְשָׁה)	“conquer,” “possess” (הִירָשׁ)

(right)Lachish pottery<sup>469</sup>



(right)Lachish reliefs by Sennacherib found in Nineveh

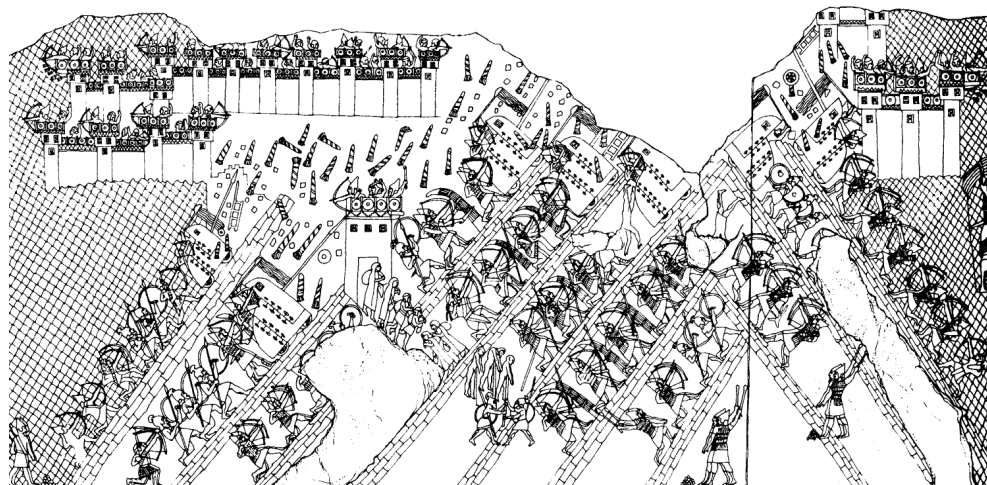


Micah catalogues their sins: Mic 2:1-11

- ⇒ Plan iniquity (2:1a).
- ⇒ Plot evil (2:1b).
- ⇒ Carry out evil (2:1c).
- ⇒ Covet lands and take them (2:2a).
- ⇒ Defraud properties (2:2b).
- ⇒ Defraud inheritances (2:2c).
- ⇒ False prophets lie about the Lord’s prophet (2:6-7;cf. 3:5).
- ⇒ Highway robbers abound (2:8).
- ⇒ Women are driven from homes (2:9a).
- ⇒ Disbelieve the prophet of the Lord (2:7).
- ⇒ Make children homeless (2:9b).
- ⇒ Believe false prophets of prosperity (2:11).

<sup>469</sup> From <http://historicconnections.webs.com/historyofwriting.htm>





**b) Comfort for remnant: Micah 2:12-13 ~ hope**

In contrast to the false prophets mentioned preceding, this prophet speaks the very words of God. The remnant is promised a return to the land from exile, presumably alluding predictively to Cyrus who will “break open the way” before them (2:13). Under Cyrus, Zerubbabel led the captives back to the land, and this is described by Micah in language echoing the exodus from Egypt. In looking forward, he looks backward in order to help them make sense of their present exile. It can also be seen in principle to point even further ahead in messianic deliverance, although he does not state this explicitly here. As it has been argued, this deliverance theme is essentially messianic, for the deliverance the prophets were preparing them for was *not* strictly material but spiritual (see material or spiritual, p. ). There was only One who could truly save Israel, and that One was coming in the future.

(right) Beware of false prophets.<sup>470</sup>

**c) Judgment on leaders & prophets: Micah 3:1-12 ~ doom**

The leaders and rulers:

- ⇒ Do not know what justice is (3:1).
- ⇒ Hate good and love evil (3:2).
- ⇒ Destroy the people of God (disturbingly described in the figurative language of flaying as the Assyrians were known to do (see flaying, p. 396), or perhaps of cannibalism (3:3).
- ⇒ Presume in prayer that God will hear them (false religion and hypocrisy) (3:4, 11c).
- ⇒ False prophets proclaim peace (3:5; cf 2:6-7)
- ⇒ Despise justice (3:9:b).
- ⇒ Distort all that is right (3:9:b).
- ⇒ Build Zion with bloodshed and wickedness (3:10).
- ⇒ Judge for bribes and poor suffer (3:11a).
- ⇒ Priests teach for a price (3:11b).



**False prophets:** ANE prophets (see pagan prophets, p. 149f.) were the backdrop for all the false prophesying that took place in Israel/Judah. Micah had already told us that the false prophets were very practically saying that the Lord’s prophet(s) were wrong in prophesying about judgment (2:6-7), and that for this the Lord was very angry. In Micah 3:5-12 the prophet condemns the prophets who prophesy for personal gain (food) (3:5). As they were preaching peace, their message was in direct contradiction to the word of the Lord to his prophets. Commercialization of the word of God is never a good idea. Any prophets coerced or lured into preaching the opinion of the king or crowd were prophets for the *vox populi* and *Realpolitik*. They spoke not for God, but for man. The gospel of prosperity and peace is always a popular one, as F. Schaeffer described our modern times

<sup>470</sup> From [www.faculty.fairfield.edu/jmac/nadal/025falseprf.gif](http://www.faculty.fairfield.edu/jmac/nadal/025falseprf.gif)

succinctly as a quest for *personal peace* and *affluence*. Any message that the *status quo* of the regime and their idolatrous subjects was in danger would be a threat to “the peace.” This threat was only perceived, for ironically the real threat would come in the loss of peace through foreign invasion.



When Jesus warned of false prophets, no one asked him what he meant!

*Concerning false prophets: radical corruption*

- Night will come over them (3:6a) ~ God’s light was far from them
- They would have no visions from God (3:6b) ~ for God had not sent them
- They would have no divination to help them (3:6c) ~ for God did not reveal to them
- They will be ashamed and disgraced (3:7a) ~ for God was not with them
- They will hide their faces (3:7b) ~ for *there is no answer from God*
- They tell fortunes for money (3:11a) ~ commercialization of prophecy is divination

*Concerning the prophet of the Lord: radical obedience*

- Speaks the word of the Lord (3:1) ~ “Listen” . . .the revelation of God.
- Preaches honestly (of judgment in this case). ~ true doctrine
- Filled with the power of the Spirit of God (3:8a). ~ true power
- Filled with justice and might (3:8b). ~ true justice
- Declares the sins of God’s people (3:8c). ~ true prophecy

**d) Comfort for Gentiles & remnant: Micah 4:1-5:15 ~ hope**

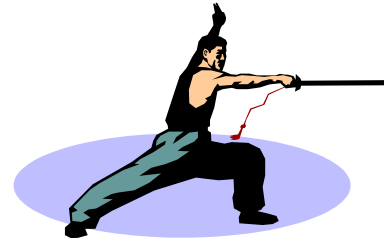
Note: The remnant should not be strongly distinguished from the Gentiles, for it seems that they are mutually inclusive of the other in the broad sweep of redemptive history. This is true also of Mic 7 which expresses a *universal* hope in light of remnant Israel’s deliverance. Needless to say, the Messianic hope is never exclusive to Israel/Judah.

➤ See Isaiah on the last days, p. 318, and on the mountain of God, p. 332.

*Eschatological hope on the mountain of God:*



Micah 4:1-5 In the last days  
 the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established  
 as chief among the mountains;  
 it will be raised above the hills,  
 and peoples will stream to it.  
 2 Many nations will come and say,  
 "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
 to the house of the God of Jacob.  
 He will teach us his ways,  
 so that we may walk in his paths."  
 The law will go out from Zion,  
 the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.  
 3 He will judge between many peoples  
 and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide.  
 They will beat their swords into plowshares  
 and their spears into pruning hooks.  
 Nation will not take up sword against nation,  
 nor will they train for war anymore.  
 4 Every man will sit under his own vine  
 and under his own fig tree,  
 and no one will make them afraid,  
 for the LORD Almighty has spoken.  
 5 All the nations may walk  
 in the name of their gods;  
 we will walk in the name of the LORD  
 our God for ever and ever.



Micah prophesies the promise of a future time in which there will be universal faith (4:1-2). The law and word of God will go forth from Zion (4:2c). There will be true justice and true peace established by the Lord (4:3). There will be perfect prosperity (4:4).

This period Micah prophetically describes naturally creates dispute as to its time reference. If it is literal, it can not refer to the post ascension church age nor to a thousand year millennium (unless it is stretched considerably to accept that there is no unrest or "problems" among the peoples of earth during the millennium). If it is literal, it also requires a geographical rearrangement of the mountain itself ("raised above the hills," 4:1c). Yet, this is not warranted, for the reason people come to Zion is for the world of the Lord, not for its literal height above the other mountains around it! If Micah's prophecy here is strictly figurative, it also can not refer uniformly to the church age nor the millennium, that is, if we want to take the descriptions seriously. Because of the perfected nature of the spiritual promises described figuratively, it most likely refers to the eternal kingdom of God consummated.

Whether Micah figuratively (and literally in terms of the spiritual realities themselves) describes aspects of the eternal kingdom of God *as they flow out* of the history of redemption, or whether he describes aspects of the church age (or millennium) in very figurative language (even hyperbole) is not as important as the fact that he describes the ultimate results of the redemptive plan of God: the great Messianic King is coming, his word and ways will be established ("on earth as in heaven"), he will establish true and lasting peace, he will include the Gentile alongside the Jews, and he will be proved to be the only true God.

Universal peace and prosperity were the false promises of the false prophets, yet here, in contrast, the Lord's prophet pushes hopes of material and temporal peace and prosperity into the realms of the eschatological-redemptive. The captives desire to return from exile, but the Lord was going to do far and exceedingly more for them through spiritual deliverance. Predictions of the return from exile are juxtaposed with predictions of a time when the Lord would "rule over them from Mount Zion" (4:7). This prophecy naturally prepares for the peak promise in Micah of the messianic Ruler to be born in Bethlehem (5:2-5).

*The center of Micah rests on the messianic promise of a Ruler-King-Shepherd: the Ruler from Bethlehem promised: Mic 5:1-5*

Similarities of Micah with other OT prophesies of the Messiah<sup>471</sup>:

- He will not rule with his own strength, but that of the Lord: the Messiah knows God directly (4:4a):  
 1 Sam 2:10 those who oppose the LORD will be shattered.  
 He will thunder against them from heaven;  
 the LORD will judge the ends of the earth.  
 "He will give strength to his king  
 and exalt the horn of his anointed."
- He will provide security for his people: the land promise to the patriarchs (5:4b):

<sup>471</sup> Some texts examples provided by I. Hart, "Micah," *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. p. 250.

2 Sam 7:10 And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning

- He will be as a shepherd to his people: the King becomes a shepherd (5:4a) (also Mic 7:14; Mtt 2:6; Jn 10:1-18; 1 Pet 2:25; 5:4; Rev 7:17):

Ezek 34:23 I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd.

- His reign and redemption will be universal: redemption goes to the ends of the earth, Gentiles included! (5:4c):

Psa 2:8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.

- He will bring universal peace: both spiritual and material peace (5:4c) (Eph 2:14):

Isa 9:6 For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty  
God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

- He originates from ancient (eternity?) times: forever and forever, “Before Abraham, I was . . .”) (5:2c):

Dan 7:9 As I looked,  
thrones were set in place,  
and the Ancient of Days took his seat.  
His clothing was as white as snow;  
the hair of his head was white like wool.  
His throne was flaming with fire,  
and its wheels were all ablaze.

- He represents the majesty of God: the glory and splendor of God are with the Messiah (5:4b):

Isa 63:1 Who is this coming from Edom,  
from Bozrah, with his garments stained crimson?  
Who is this, robed in splendor,  
striding forward in the greatness of his strength?  
“It is I, speaking in righteousness,  
mighty to save.”

- He will be from the line of David (here Bethlehem): the line of the promise is preserved and fulfilled (5:2a):

Isa 11:1 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;  
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.  
Jn 7:42 Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from David’s family and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?”  
Mtt 2:6 “But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for out of you will come a ruler  
who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.”

Jerusalem is described as a place oppressed by foreign powers (Mic 5:1) as indeed it was by Babylon, Assyria, and the Romans in NT times. Jerusalem, however, is displaced in the messianic plan, for Bethlehem takes precedence in the coming of the Messiah. This held profound significance in the context, for the sinful city was not going to be honored as the Messiah’s birthplace. The remnant people of God will be a blessing (a “dew,” Mic 5:7) to the nations who are obedient and a curse (“a lion,” 5:8b) to those who are rebellious.

Concluding the hopeful promise of the Messianic King (5:1-5a), Micah reminds them that judgment is certain (Mic 5:5b-15). Nevertheless, through that judgment would come deliverance. Thus, their hope depended on their purification through the fires of judgment. Interweaving these themes of judgment and deliverance, judgment *as deliverance*, he prepares for another “case” or “disputation” against Israel and Judah in Mic 6:1-7:6.

### *e) Judgment on Israel and Judah: Micah 6:1-7:6 ~ doom*



A covenant context of legal disputation reinforces the utmost certainty that judgment would come. This interweaving of doom and hope, doom and hope undoubtedly had its psychological effects. As noted, this tight tapestry of judgment-purification and deliverance-redemption portrays the absolute necessity, at this stage, for judgment in order for there to be hope. As in Micah 1:2, creation is called upon to witness the Lord's testimony against his people (6:1-2).

YHWH's case rests on *creation and redemption theology*: as he can testify before his creation for he is God, so also he can testify before the accused that he was their Deliverer from bondage in Egypt (6:3-5). The motif of *creation* is the background, and the motif of the *Exodus-deliverance* is the grounds upon which God brings his charges. The redeemed of the Lord stand accused, for becoming the rebellious of the Lord. God who made the universe, and who made his people *out of nothing*, is calls them to trial for their many transgressions. In contrast to the covenantal ideal "to act justly and to love mercy" (7:8) they have stolen (7:10), extorted (7:11), been violent (5:12a), lied deceitfully (6:12b), committed idolatry and extreme corruption (like Omri and Ahab, 6:16), lie in wait to murder (7:2b), done evil (7:3a), bribed (7:3b), tyrannized (7:3c), and dishonored parents (7:6). For each of the ten commandments, Micah catalogues their sins in light of all the covenant-curses coming upon them: the loss of the *land* (7:13f.), *famine* (7:14a), and the *sword* (7:14b).

(above) Micah by [Constantine Youssis](#) (From Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church, Mount Lebanon, Pennsylvania) Inscription reads "Michaias."<sup>472</sup>

### f) **Comfort for remnant: Micah 7:7-20 ~ hope**

Micah concludes with a comprehensive *hope* in the promise of God's mercy through deliverance:

- ⇒ God will be their Savior (7:7).
- ⇒ God will raise them up again (7:8a).
- ⇒ God will give them his light (7:8b).
- ⇒ God will establish their cause (7:9b).
- ⇒ God will show them his righteousness (7:9c).
- ⇒ God will shame their enemies through their own downfall (7:10).
- ⇒ The walls and boundaries (of Jerusalem?) will be rebuilt (7:11).
- ⇒ Nations (Gentiles) will come from all places to Jerusalem (?) (7:12).
- ⇒ God will shepherd his people (7:14)
- ⇒ God will show them his wonders (Exodus motifs) (7:15-17).
- ⇒ God will pardon and forgive their sins (7:18a).
- ⇒ God will have compassion on them again (7:19).
- ⇒ God would keep his promise to the patriarchs (7:20).

The covenant-curses would be reversed through renewed covenant-blessings. The "re-creation" of the nation and their restoration (remnant) brings with it a renewal of the covenant promises.

## 8. **History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling**

Although Micah is a short book, it does not lack in theological depth.

### a) **Revelation and redemption from YHWH**

#### (1) **Who God is**

- **God is absolutely transcendent and absolutely immanent:**  
God dwells in heaven in his holy temple (1:2).  
God is coming to dwell on earth (1:3).

<sup>472</sup> From [www.comeandseeicons.com/yhp08.jpg](http://www.comeandseeicons.com/yhp08.jpg)

- *God is absolutely holy and absolutely compassionate and gracious:*  
God always judge sin (1:15-7).  
God always offers mercy (4:1-5).

## (2) *What God has done*

- God creates (6:1-2)
- God remembers his covenant (6:3-5).
- God does not forget his people's unrepented sins (6:10).
- God destroys (1:3-5; 5:10-15; 6:13).
- God recreates (renews and restores) (3:10; 5:4).

Mic 7:18 **Who is a God like you,**  
*who pardons sin and forgives the transgression*  
of the remnant of his inheritance?  
You do not stay angry forever  
but delight to show mercy.

## (3) *What God has promised*

- God promises to balance the books. Justice will be done in his timing.
- God promises to deliver his remnant of believers. They will be redeemed.
- God will send his Messiah. He will redeem.
- The line of David will produce the Messiah.

## b) *Humankind and redemption*

### (1) *Worship of redeemed*

As in the other pre-exilic prophets, idolatry is at the root of Israel's apostasy in Micah's prophecy. Israel had forsaken its God and Beloved by bowing down to "the work of their own hands" (5:13). What the Lord deserved was unrestrained love and obedience from his people as their worship. Instead, they served the Asherahs.

### (2) *Work of redeemed*

Implicit in Micah's condemnations of fraud and exploitation, is the inverse standards of the Torah of God for their labors. Instead of working honorably to the glory of God, they have dishonored the name of God through their corruptions and greed. If only they would work justly, protecting the poor and innocent and oppressed. If only their labors were for *honest gain*.

### (3) *Ethics of redeemed*

"To act justly, and to love mercy . . ." (Mic 6:8b)

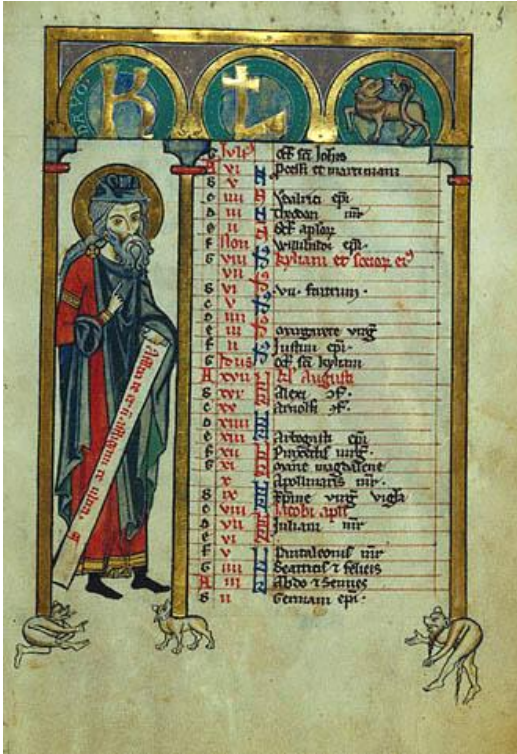
---

Look! The LORD is coming from his dwelling place;  
he comes down and treads the high places of the earth.  
Micah 1:3

---



## 612)



Nahum, Unknown, German, Würzburg, about 1240 – 1250. Tempera colors, gold leaf, and ink on parchment, 8 <sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 6 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in., MS. LUDWIG VIII 2, FOL. 4<sup>473</sup>

### 1. Title, author, and dates

Time: seventh century B.C.

1. Nahum was an Elkoshite (uncertain location). His name means *comforted* (by YHWH), similarly to Nehemiah (YHWH comforts). Sixteenth c. A.D. tradition places his birthplace and tomb at Al-Qush, fifty miles north of Mosul on the Tigris river near the mound of Nineveh. Other birthplace suggestions: Hilkesi in Galilee; near Beth Jibrin in Judah, close to Moresheth Gath; in Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee.

2. In Assyria, Ashurbanipal (668-633) (son of Esarhaddon, 680-669), reigned over the climax of the empire (he captured Thebes, capital of Egypt, 664), as well over the empire weakening (652, civil-war-revolt led by his brother, Šamaš-šum-ukin). Their father had divided the kingdom at his death between them: Ashurbanipal over Assyria and Šamaš-šum-ukin over Babylon). Ashurbanipal won, but the empire was weakened into a spiral of decline. The following years brought ongoing revolt from Babylon (Chaldeans) under Nabopolassar (626-605) which ended in 612 with the destruction of Nineveh (actually by the Medes?, though falling into their ally's hands, the Babylonians).

3. Micah's (735-690) predictions of the destruction of Samaria (Mic 1:6) had already occurred in 722, and thus Nahum lived between the fall of Samaria and the fall of Jerusalem. Nahum's ministry was during the reigns of Manasseh (697-642), Amon (642-640), and Josiah in Judah (640-609), and Ashurbanipal in Assyria (668-627). Thus he witnessed the dark days of Manasseh, as well as great Assyrian oppression. VanGemeren says Nahum was before Ashurbanipal's death (ca. 630), and he encouraged reforms of Josiah (ca. 630). Thus, Nahum's ministry was shortly before the fall of Nineveh (612), during the reforms of Josiah, explaining his comforting words to Judah. Dillard & Longman say that Nahum wrote before Assyria was significantly weakened (began around 630 B.C.). See 1:12 for this description (date: between 652-626, the year Babylon began to throw off Assyria's hegemony).
4. Nahum was given the illustrious call to prophesy the fall of the great Assyrian oppressors. Nahum also witnessed the vindication of God's word on Nineveh (612). Assyria was defeated by 605, and Babylon became the new giant.
5. Nahum's mention of the destruction of Thebes in 663-4 B.C. (3:8) places his prophecy subsequent to it.
6. Nahum was a contemporary of Zephaniah and Jeremiah. Speaking at the latter end of 150 years of Assyrian domination he prophesied their end on the Day of the Lord.
7. Remember Jonah in reading Nahum!
8. Also, Isaiah predicted Assyria's demise (10:5-19; 33) and Zephaniah 2:13 (Nineveh)

#### Comparison with contemporaries:

- **Nahum** (663-612): Creator-Redeemer King battles the wicked kingdoms, the divine Warrior judges and delivers.
- **Zephaniah** (630/640-622): Yahweh's universal claim on all creation, and that he will transform all creation at the judgment (the Day of the Lord) The Lord will be present with his people.
- **Habakkuk** (609-605): complements Nahum. Yahweh is *just* though he uses the nations to accomplish his purposes. The Lord is active in establishing his kingdom. The faithful must wait on him to accomplish it. The fall of Babylon allowed the return of the exiles.
- **Jeremiah** (627-586): the end of Judah is very near. Jeremiah witnessed the fulfillment of Nahum's prediction that Nineveh and Assyria would fall to Babylon. He braced himself and the nation for what was going to come from Babylon.

- Nahum and Obadiah spoke God’s word of judgment exclusively (unique to them) against foreign nations (esp. Assyria and Edom).
- Zephaniah and Habakkuk spoke of the Day of the Lord for Judah and for all the nations.<sup>474</sup>
- Jonah may also be seen in this category, as well, but it is not the same genre of *oracle* as Nahum and Obadiah.

Both[Jonah & Nahum] were concerned with the city of Nineveh. Both believed very strongly in the sovereignty of God over nature and nations. Jonah knew YHWH as a “gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness” (Jon 4:2). Nahum knew Him as that kind of God. But “slow to anger” implies that the process, undiverted by repentance, would advance to incandescence. Jonah’s message elicited repentance. He had not designed it that way, but God had. Nahum’s message brought no repentance, nor did God intend it. Nineveh’s time had run out. Her fortifications would fall like ripened figs when the tree is shaken (3:12).<sup>475</sup>

## 2. *Critical matters*

1. Many critics deny any genuine Nahum material in ch. 1 due to the uncertainties regarding the acrostic nature of the poem.
2. E.W. Heaton ~ The book “has very little spiritual significance.”<sup>476</sup> Contains fragments of an acrostic poem, a terrible ode on the collapse of Nineveh. “This book is far removed from the prophetic tradition” written in a cultic, liturgical context.
3. Van der Woude ~ suggests Nahum was exiled to Assyria like Manasseh, and thus was a letter written from exile to anti-Assyrian leaders in Judah.<sup>477</sup>
4. P. Humbert, E. Sellin, G. Fohrer ~ their *liturgical hypothesis* posits that Nahum was written as a New Years liturgy for the year 612. this relies on the cult-associations hypothesis, as well as the assumption that the fall of Nineveh was past.<sup>478</sup>
5. A. Haldar, A. Johnson, G. Widengren ~ *cultic-mythological hypothesis* posits that cultic Nahum wrote nationalistic propaganda against Assyria in decline, and that there are Mesopotamian and Ugaritic myths alluded to by Nahum, particularly the dying and resurrected god. This is linked with the *enthronement* ideas prevalent among critical scholars (see my critique of the enthronement idea in the Judges-Esther syllabus and the Poets/Wisdom syllabus).<sup>479</sup>

## 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

a) **“City of blood” (3:1)**

b) **“Your troops are all women” (3:13)**

## 4. *Major themes*

1. The fall of Nineveh.
2. YHWH is presented as the sovereign Lord of all history, all nations, all creation.
3. God is holy and true. He will avenge, and yet he is gracious and compassionate. The prophet establishes that YHWH’s vengeance on Assyria is not arbitrary, but has solid grounds in the very nature and being of God. This completely distinguishes Israel’s God from the vindictive and unpredictable gods of Assyria. Also, it completely distinguishes God from Assyria’s nature gods who were bound to the forces of nature.
4. Vengeance belongs to the Lord alone. Nahum is not a political propaganda tract written by a “national prophet.” It is a word from God proclaiming that God is the Judge and Avenger, and apart from him there is no justice nor deliverance.
5. The judgment of Assyria begins the fulfillment of God’s promise to restore Israel and punish Israel’s enemies. It was also a warning to Judah of its inevitable captivity in Babylon.

<sup>474</sup> VanGemeren, *Prophetic Word*, p. 161.

<sup>475</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 225.

<sup>476</sup> Heaton, *OT Prophets*, p. 22.

<sup>477</sup> [ ]

<sup>478</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 220.

<sup>479</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 221.



## 5. Major prophecies

1. The fall of Nineveh.
2. The return from captivity prefigured the messianic hope of peace and deliverance. As the remnant's return represented God's deliverance, it also pointed forward to the ultimate deliverance from sin through the Messiah.

## 6. Outline, structure/composition

Nahum is a great poetic work, parallel with Isaiah. The poetic "beauty contrasts with the harshness of its message."<sup>480</sup> He uses repetition, alliteration, and assonance, and possibly acrostics (ch. 1).

Nahum's brevity seems to enhance its urgency, as well as the certainty of the prophet's words. He can be concise, for it is the revealed truth of God (also, time is running out), but it is no less profound than Isaiah's much lengthier prophecy. They both come from the revelatory word of God. God gave a diversity of messages through a diversity of prophetic personalities. He did not leave his people without his word. These prophetic words, however, made them doubly culpable, for with each one their excuses further vanished.

*Imagery and parallelism*: very extensive.

*Nahum prophesies against Nineveh*: it is difficult to determine precisely what he distinguishes with these terms, but we should assume they mean something. Nahum calls what he writes an *oracle*, and his *book* is about his *vision* concerning Nineveh:

- ⊕ **Oracle** (אָפֶשֶׁת): (cf. Isaiah's oracles against the nations [Isa 13ff.]), generally oracles are against foreign nations ("war oracle"). This nominative has generally been thought to relate to the verb אָפֶשֶׁת (to lift up"), and thus the traditional suggesting of a "burden." It is generally used to refer to physical or metaphorical lifting of burdens, yet the prophetic usage suggests a kind of negative message (in the prophetic contexts it has a threatening sense). Thus, many have understood this as a kind of spiritual "burden" to proclaim. This latter sense is widely disputed in favor of the straightforward rendering of "oracle." My hunch is that we do not know exactly what אָפֶשֶׁת meant in its various connotations, and that our modern English understanding of the word "burden" clouds our semantics here. We can affirm that a אָפֶשֶׁת is a negative prophecy usually against foreign nations that *will be burdensome* to the recipients (if not also to the prophet himself)!
- ⊕ **Book** (סֵפֶר): literary devices of a *written* book. Emphasizes his writing activity (over against extemporaneous public proclamations?).
- ⊕ **Vision** (רֵאיוֹן): (2:3-10; 3:2-3) Something "seen" or perceived with spiritual or supernatural insight or sight (theophany). His vision is at times very graphic. "Emphasis in the revelatory vision was on the revelation of the divine word, which endowed the prophet with special knowledge of divine things, which he had yet to proclaim."<sup>481</sup>

Dillard & Longman structure the book according to nine main themes with a concluding "dirge. Those themes encompass the Divine Warrior praised, Divine warrior judges and saves, Nineveh falls, Nineveh is like a doomed lion, Nineveh is doomed, Nineveh is a harlot, Nineveh is compared to Thebes, Nineveh is insulted, Nineveh is destroyed by fire that is like a locust plague.<sup>482</sup> Bullock also structures Nahum according to broad theological themes in the history of Nineveh's downfall: the character of God as avenger and savior, as manifested in vengeance on Nineveh, and as manifested in the fall of Nineveh.<sup>483</sup>

## 7. Exposition and the history of redemption themes

Nahum uses what is often called the *prophetic perfect*, in that he describes the fall of Nineveh *as if it has happened or is happening* (Bullock calls this the *prophetic present*<sup>484</sup>).

Trying to keep the outline as simple as possible, I have structured this in two parts, both of which address similar themes with different emphases. Both sections are about the judgment of Nineveh, the first outlining the

<sup>480</sup> Dillard and Longman, *Introduction to the OT*, p. 406.

<sup>481</sup> Jackie A. Naudé, "חזרה," *NIDOTTE*, vol. 2, p. 58.

<sup>482</sup> Dillard and Longman, *An Introduction the the OT*, pp. 406-407.

<sup>483</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, pp. 221-222.

<sup>484</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, p. 216.

nature of Nineveh's Judge, the second outlining the results of Nineveh's judgment. Both sections convey doom to Assyria and comfort to God's people.

### a) *Nineveh's Judge, Israel's Savior*<sup>485</sup>: *Nah 1:1-15*

Nahum 1 is often said to be an acrostic poem, yet many dispute this due to its inconsistencies (See the diagram of this in Bullock, *Intro to the OT Prophetic Books*, p. 219).

Interestingly "Nineveh" is not mentioned until 2:8. Wherever (NIV) it is put in English translations before that point, they are interpolations from the context (esp. from the superscription). (The RSV and NASB do not include mention of Nineveh in the translation of Nahum 1). It is worth noting that Nahum does not "name directly" the object of the oracle until he has clearly established the nature of YHWH:

- ⇒ God is "jealous" and avenging (1:2a) ~ covenantal love.
- ⇒ God brings wrath against enemies (1:2b) ~ covenantal holiness.
- ⇒ God is slow to anger (1:3a) ~ longsuffering and compassionate.
- ⇒ God is great in power (1:3a) ~ omnipotent.
- ⇒ God does not excuse sin (1:3b) ~ holy
- ⇒ God is omnipresent (as wind and clouds) (1:3c) ~ transcendent and immanent.
- ⇒ God is omnipotent (over creation) (1:4-6) ~ Creator.
- ⇒ God is good and a refuge (1:7a) ~ sinless perfection and compassion.
- ⇒ God cares for those who trust in him (1:7b) ~ covenantal love.
- ⇒ God will punish those who rebel against him and bring peace to those who trust him (1:8-15) ~ covenantal faithfulness.

The prophet poses a rhetorical question in 1:6 ~ "Who can withstand his indignation?" He proceeds with the negative assumption that no one can, and thus the Lord will be victorious in his judging-redeeming works. Once he has made it clear that he serves just such a God, he then proceeds to "let them have it" in describing their doom. The biblical theology of Israel's God is the ground, background, and foreground of all that Nahum claims regarding Nineveh. He has a sound basis upon which to bring his oracle of doom. Unlike Jonah who seems to have a very short and simple message, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned" (Jonah 2:4), Nahum adds considerably more breadth and detail to the prophecy against Nineveh. Nahum came nearly a hundred and twenty years after Jonah, so we can ask whether Assyria remembered Jonah at all. The Assyrians may have recollected the coming of Jonah in the name of YHWH, although it is pure speculation. If they did remember him, they may have presumed that God was long-suffering and forgave them, and that he would do so again. Nevertheless, Nahum does not offer any hope of repentance for Nineveh (nor did Jonah).

### b) *Nineveh's judgment and destruction, Israel's deliverance and restoration: Nah 2:1-3:19*

Despite the fact that Assyria was the world power, and that they had captured Israel, Nahum is confident that the capital of Assyria will be destroyed. On the face of it, this is a very remarkable confidence, but to the unbelieving Assyrian it would have been laughable folly (2:1). Immediately following his prediction that an enemy would advance against Assyria, he prophesies that the Lord would restore Judah's splendor (2:2). Nahum is next given a visually graphic vision of the attack on Assyria. In this he describes the details of the fall of Nineveh (2:3-3:19).

Assyria's collapse, and the destruction of Nineveh is well documented. *The Babylonian Chronicle* records the downfall of Assyria (as well as attacks on Judah, see Judges-Esther syllabus). D.J. Wiseman's summary for these years is reproduced here:<sup>486</sup>

**Table 1: Nabopolassar years 10-15 (616-611 B.C.) [3]**

Julian Year B.C.	Babylonian Date	Events recorded by B.M.21901
616	Nabopolassar 9/10	Suhu and Hindanu submit to Nabopolassar. Assyrian army reported in Qablinu. Assyrians withdraw and are beaten by Babylonians. Mannaean auxiliaries and Assyrian nobles captured. Babylonian expedition against Mane, Sahiru and Bahihu. Return to Babylon. Hindanu plundered on way.

<sup>485</sup> I have roughly followed the *NIV Study Bible* outline (p. 1381).

<sup>486</sup> From [http://www.kent.net/DisplacedDynasties/The\\_Babylonian\\_Chronicle.html](http://www.kent.net/DisplacedDynasties/The_Babylonian_Chronicle.html).

		Assyrian and Egyptian armies pursue as far as Qablinu and then withdraw.
615	Nabopolassar 10/11	Babylonians begin siege of Assur. Unsuccessful attack on the city which is relieved by Assyrian mobilization. Babylonians retreat down Tigris to Takrit. Assyrian unsuccessful siege of Takrit for 10 days. Assyrians withdraw after retreat. Nabopolassar returns home. Medes raid Arraphu.
614	Nabopolassar 11/12	Medes march against Nineveh. Capture (?) Of Tarbisu. March down Tigris to besiege Assur. Assur captured and plundered by Medes. Nabopolassar meets Kyaxares and makes alliance. Both forces return home.
613	Nabopolassar 12/13	Revolt of Suhu. Nabopolassar captures Rahilu, unsuccessful Babylonian siege of 'Ana. Approach of Assyrian army forces Babylonians to withdraw.
612	Nabopolassar 13/14	Babylonians march north. Join with Umman-manda against Nineveh. Siege of Nineveh. <b>Fall of Nineveh.</b> Death of Sin-sar-iskun. City and temples plundered and destroyed. Some defenders escape. Departure of Kyaxares and Medes. Nabopolassar marches as far as Nisibin. Receives booty from Rusapu at Nineveh. Assur-uballit assumes rule of Assyria in Harran.
611	Nabopolassar 14/15	Nabopolassar in Nineveh then returns home(?) Babylonian expedition to Upper Euphrates (Assyria). Two areas subdued. Capture of Rugguliti

#### The Fall of Nineveh (Babylonian Chronicle [21901]<sup>487</sup>)

**The tenth year of Nabopolassar [616-615 BCE]:** In the month Aiiâru he mustered the army of Babylonia and marched along the bank of the Euphrates. The Suheans and Hindaneans [*people living south of Harran*] did not do battle against him but placed their tribute before him.

In the month Abu the army of Assyria prepared for battle in Gablini and Nabopolassar went up against them. On the twelfth of the month Abu [*July 24, 616*] he did battle against the army of Assyria and the army of Assyria retreated before him. He inflicted a major defeat upon Assyria and plundered them extensively. He captured the Manneans, who had come to the Assyrians' aid, and the Assyrian officers. On the same day he captured Gablini.

In the month Abu the king of Babylonia and his army went upstream to Mane, Sahiri and Bali-hu. He plundered them, sacked them extensively and abducted their gods.

In the month Ulûlu the king of Babylonia and his army returned and on his way he took the people of Hindanu and its gods to Babylon.

In the month Tašritu the army of Egypt and the army of Assyria went after the king of Babylonia as far as Gablini but they did not overtake the king of Babylonia. So they withdrew.

In the month Addâru the army of Assyria and the army of Babylonia did battle against one another at Madanu, a suburb of Arraphu [*modern Kirkuk*], and the army of Assyria retreated before the army of Babylonia. The army of Babylonia inflicted a major defeat upon the Assyrian army and drove them back to the Zab river. They captured their chariots and horses and plundered them extensively. They took many [*lacuna*] with them across the Tigris and brought them into Babylon.

**The eleventh year [615-614]:** The king of Babylonia mustered his army, marched along the bank of the Tigris, and in the month Aiiâru he encamped against Aššur. On the [*lacuna*] day of the month Sîmannu he did battle against the city but he did not capture it. The king of Assyria mustered his army, pushed the king of Babylonia back from Aššur and marched after him as far as Takrit, a city on the bank of the Tigris. The king of Babylonia stationed his army in the fortress of Takrit. The king of Assyria and his army encamped against the army of the king of Babylonia, which was stationed in Takrit, and did battle against them for ten days. But the king of Assyria did not capture the city. Instead, the army of the king of Babylonia, which had been stationed in the fortress, inflicted a major defeat upon Assyria. The king of Assyria and his army turned and went home.

In the month Arahsamnu the Medes went down to Arraphu [*modern Kirkuk*] and [*lacuna*].

**The twelfth year [614-613]:** In the month Abu [*July/August*] the Medes, after they had matched against Nineveh [*lacuna*], hastened and they captured Tarbisu, a city in the district of Nineveh. They went along the Tigris and encamped against Aššur. They did battle against the city and destroyed it. They inflicted a terrible defeat upon a great people, plundered and sacked them. The king of Babylonia and his army, who had gone to help the Medes, did not reach the battle in time. The city [*lacuna*] The king of Babylonia and [Cyaxares](#) the king of the Medes met one another by the city and together they made an entente cordiale. [*lacuna*] Cyaxares and his army went home. The king of Babylonia and his army went home.

**The thirteenth year [613-612]:** In the month Aiiâru the Subeans rebelled against the king of Babylonia and became belligerent. The king of Babylonia mustered his army and marched to Suhu. On the fourth day of the month Sîmannu [*May 11, 613*] he did battle against Rahilu, a city which is on an island in the middle of the Euphrates and at that time he captured the city. He built his [*lacuna*] The men who live on the bank of the Euphrates came down to him. [*lacuna*] he encamped against Anat and the siege engines he brought over from the western side [*lacuna*] he brought the siege engine up to the wall. He did

<sup>487</sup> From <http://www.livius.org> pages on Nineveh. The translated text (by A.K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* [1975]) of the Babylonian Chronicle describing Assyria's collapse.

battle against the city and captured it. [lacuna] the king of Assyria and his army came down and [lacuna] the king of Babylonia and his army. The king of Babylonia went home.

**The fourteenth year [612-611]:** The king of Babylonia mustered his army and marched to [lacuna]. The king of the Medes marched towards the king of Babylonia. [lacuna] they met one another. The king of Babylonia [lacuna] Cyaxares [lacuna] brought across and they marched along the bank of the Tigris. [lacuna] they encamped against Nineveh.

From the month Sîmannu [June] until the month Abu [August] -for three months- they subjected the city to a heavy siege. On the [lacuna] day of the month Abu they inflicted a major defeat upon a great people. At that time Sin-šar-iškun (621-612), king of Assyria, died. [lacuna] They carried off the vast booty of the city and the temple and turned the city into a ruin heap [lacuna] of Assyria escaped from the enemy and [lacuna] the king of Babylonia [lacuna].

On the twentieth day of the month Ulûlu [August 15, 612] Cyaxares and his army went home. After he had gone, the king of Babylonia dispatched his army and they marched to Nasibin. Plunder and exiles [lacuna] and they brought the people of Rusapu [modern Kirkuk] to the king of Babylonia at Nineveh. On the [lacuna] of the month [lacuna] Aššur-uballit ascended to the throne in Harran to rule Assyria. Up until the [lacuna] day of the month [lacuna] the king of [lacuna] set out and in [lacuna]

**The fifteenth year [611-610]:** In the month Du'uzu [June/July] the king of Babylonia mustered his army and [lacuna] marched to Assyria victoriously. He marched about of [lacuna] and he captured Shu[lacuna], plundered it and carried of its vast booty.

In the month Arahsamnu [November/December] the king of Babylonia took the lead of his army personally and marched against Ruggulitu. He did battle against the city and on the twenty-eighth day of the month Arahsamnu [December 8, 611] he captured it. [lacuna] He did not leave a single man alive. [lacuna] He went home.

**The sixteenth year [610-609]:** In the month Aiiâru [May] the king of Babylonia mustered his army and marched to Assyria. From the month [lacuna] until the month Arahsamnu [November] he marched about victoriously in Assyria. In the month Arahsamnu the Medes, who had come to the help of the king of Babylonia, put their armies together and marched to Harran against Aššur-uballit, who had ascended to the throne in Assyria. Fear of the enemy overcame Aššur-uballit and the army of Egypt which had come to help him, and they abandoned the city. [lacuna] they crossed. The king of Babylonia reached Harran and [lacuna] he captured the city. He carried off the vast booty of the city and the temple. In the month Addâru the king of Babylonia left their [lacuna]. He went home. The Medes, who had come to help the king of Babylonia, withdrew.

**The seventeenth year [609-608]:** In the month Du'uzu [July] Aššur-uballit, king of Assyria, with a large army from Egypt crossed the river Euphrates and marched against Harran to conquer it. [lacuna] They captured [a town on the road to Harran]. They defeated the garrison which the king of Babylonia had stationed inside. When they had defeated it they encamped against Harran. Until the month Ulûlu [September] they did battle against the city but achieved nothing. However, they did not withdraw. The king of Babylonia went to help his army and [lacuna] he went up to Izalla and the numerous cities in the mountains [lacuna] he set fire to their [lacuna]

At that time the army of [lacuna] march as far as the district of Urartu. In the land [lacuna] they plundered their [lacuna] The garrison which the king of [lacuna] had stationed in it set out. They went up to [lacuna]. The king of Babylonia went home.

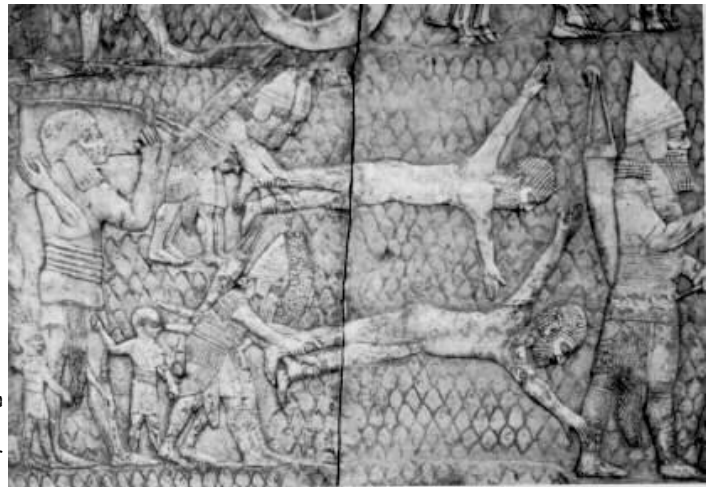
**In the eighteenth year [608-607]:** In the month Ulûlu [August/September] the king of Babylonia mustered his army. [lacuna].

Let the one who loves [the gods] Nabû and Marduk keep this tablet and not let it stray into other hands.

Nahum catalogues the sins of cruel Nineveh in the course of describing its downfall:

- ⇒ A warring people (2:3-5).
- ⇒ An exceedingly wealthy people from its foreign plunders (2:9-12).
- ⇒ A murderous people (3:1a).
- ⇒ A lying people (3:1b).
- ⇒ A plundering people (3:ac).
- ⇒ An idolatrous people (3:4). (Ishtar?)
- ⇒ A sorcerous people (3:4).

(right) Assyrian soldiers flaying captives, (From Sennacherib's palace at Nineveh).



Nahum 3:19 ~ A rhetorical question ends the book, as did Jonah's book. Both Jonah and Nahum knew the fear of Assyria's cruelty. No doubt, all of Israel was aware of Assyria's ruthless practices. Whereas Jonah was upbraided for not wanting Nineveh to be spared, Nahum is called to prophesy Nineveh's doom. Assyria's cruelty is well documented<sup>488</sup>. Imagine a world so twisted that people flay one another . . .

<sup>488</sup> For discussion of the historical sources compared to Nahum, see Maier, *Book of Nahum*, pp. 114-139.

Oriental Institute  
archaeological sites in Iraq.<sup>489</sup>



8. *History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling*  
a) *Revelation and redemption from YHWH*

(1) *Who God is*

- God is a God of covenantal love towards his people.
- God is a God of covenantal holiness towards his people.
- God is longsuffering and compassionate.
- God is omnipotent King.
- God is holy Judge.
- God is omnipresent, both transcendent and immanent.
- God is omnipotent Creator and Redeemer.
- God is good and a refuge of sinless perfection and compassion.
- God is thus radically different than the gods of the nations.

(2) *What God has done*

- God was slow to anger for he is a forgiving, compassionate God.
- God was “jealous” and avenging because he has made a covenant of love with his people.
- God does not excuse sin anywhere in anyone.
- God sometimes afflicted his people for judgment.
- God sometimes brought wrath against his enemies, and ultimately will destroy all his enemies.
- God cared for those who trusted in him and relents from afflicting his people.

(3) *What God has promised*

- God will keep his remnant people from complete annihilation ~ Restorer-Redeemer.
- God will certainly do this, for he is the One who was able to bring the Assyrians in the first place.
- God will *balance the books*, and his enemies will be destroyed “no one knows where” (3:17b) (Nineveh was lost for many centuries).

<sup>489</sup> From [http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/INFO/MAP/SITE/Iraq\\_Site\\_300dpi.gif](http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/INFO/MAP/SITE/Iraq_Site_300dpi.gif).

- God will bring the good news of peace to his people (through his Messiah).

## **b) Humankind and redemption**

### **(1) Worship of redeemed**

In Nahum, true worship of YHWH must be singular, without syncretism and idolatry. Trust in YHWH was a prerequisite to blessing in the covenant-relationship, even(especially) in the face of impending judgments. Indeed, Nahum promises the preservation of God's people despite the terrible odds against them.

The extended proclamation to a pagan nation indicates further the heart of God's mission for the nations. God does not just care for the lost nations, he speaks to them. He also created Israel as a vehicle of redemption to the nations. Thus, Israel's worship of YHWH was vital support/backing to the word of the Lord to the Assyrians through the prophet(s). It is evident at the outset that God even extends his mercy to the pagan Assyrians, that he is "slow to anger" and "good" since "He cares for those who trust in him" (1:2, 7). If Assyria would trust in him (worship), then they might know his mercies along with Israel.

(right) Babylon destroyed, Woodcut from the *Zurich Bible*

### **(2) Work of redeemed**

There is much more in Nahum about the work of the unredeemed than the redeemed. We must therefore take this as instructive of the flip-side of all the negatives: Israel's witness was to be in stark contrast to the pagan practices of

- Pagan allies (in war against God's people).
- Idols governing work-views and motivations.
- Slavery (temple prostitution?).
- Stored up great treasures of wealth and chariots (plunder).
- Murderous culture.
- Live by and deal in lies.
- Witchcraft.
- Ecological mistreatment of the earth: merchants without number multiply and "strip the land".
- "Endless cruelty".



### **(3) Ethics of redeemed**

The ethics of the redeemed must counter by demonstration all of the pagan practices noted in #2. We must infer the ethical opposites (taught also positively in the OT law, prophets, and wisdom) of all these condemned practices of the Assyrians:

- No allies, no idols, no exploitive long-term slavery or prostitution, no hoarding of great treasures, no murder, honesty and trust must guide them, no witchcraft, proper use of the God-loaned land, kindness.

The LORD will restore the splendor of Jacob  
like the splendor of Israel,  
though destroyers have laid them waste  
and have ruined their vines. Nah 2:2

## I. Zephaniah צְפַנְיָהּ (Judah ~ 630/640-ca.622)

(left) Zephaniah.<sup>490</sup>

### 1. Title, author, dates

1. Zephaniah (“he whom Yahweh shelters”) was the great-great grandson of King Hezekiah (715-686); title contains lineage. Born during Manasseh’s oppression, thus his ministry may have been in response to the spiritual decline engendered by Manasseh’s reign (2 Ki 21; son of Hezekiah).

2. Prophesied (esp. to civil/religious leaders) in Judah (630-40) during (early) the reign of Josiah (639-606), before Ashurbanipal’s death in 627 (little threat to Judah). Contemporary with Nabopolassar (chart, p. 395) of Babylon (625-605). He prophesied before the fall of Nineveh (612), indeed prophesying like Nahum of Nineveh’s demise (2:13).

3. Compare previous reigns of Manasseh and Amon (*subservience* to Assyria); he may have been largely responsible for the reform under Josiah (at the beginning of Zephaniah’s ministry the royal princes still practiced

abuses). Josiah was sixteen when he tried to begin the reforms (eight at beginning of reign). Dillard/Longman suggest that the sins decried in the book cannot be used confidently to determine if Zephaniah was before or after Josiah’s reforms.<sup>491</sup> Harrison says it was before the reform.<sup>492</sup> Many claim Zephaniah was before (or at the beginning of) Josiah’s reforms (626) because he does not seem to be aware of those reforms. Two periods of Josiah’s reign: divided at 622 when the scroll of the law was found. Keil believes that Zephaniah was written after the completion of the temple repairs under Josiah (620) in 2 Chron 34:8, because Zephaniah presupposes the maintenance of temple worship and the obliteration of syncretism with Baalism in the temple of YHWH.<sup>493</sup>

4. Contemporary prophets: Nahum (650-612), Jeremiah (605-538), Habakkuk (609-605). Zephaniah has close affinities with Isaiah and Jeremiah, though more with Jeremiah (e.g., with regard to the immediate historical situation of the Babylonian threat).



### 2. Critical matters

- Standard critics [yawn] attempt to separate original Nehemiah texts from secondary glosses (oracles - later), because of the post-exilic perspective in the proposed glosses (1:13b; 2:7-9a, 10-11, 15; 3:4-20). Much debate continues over what is spurious and what is not, between those given to such wrangling. Some, however, recognize the logical continuity of the book and challenge the standard views of redacted discontinuity.
- On the other hand, some point out that Zephaniah derives much material from earlier biblical authors, and is thus not very “original.” See similarities of the “flood” language between Zeph 1:2, 3 and Gen 6:7; and the “sacrifice” language between Zeph 1:7 and Isa 13:3 and 34:6; the *dark* “day of the Lord” in Zeph 1:14-18 and Joel 2:1,2 and Amos 5:18-20. In response, it can be noted that Zephaniah serves in part as a *late* pre-exilic *summation* of some major themes of the pre-exilic prophets. Although Habakkuk comes later, Zephaniah is placed before him in the BH, perhaps suggesting that he was perceived as a prophetic summation.
- Some also note literary similarity with other prophets (Isa, Ezek, LXX of Jer and Zeph): structure of oracles.
- Some critics complain that Zephaniah was not a great poet and had little imagination, yet this is simply unwarranted even if it can be said that he “borrowed” from other pre-exilic writers. See 1:14-18 for a

<sup>490</sup> From <http://kcm.co.kr/glp/ce/7/7-109.gif>.

<sup>491</sup> Dillard and Longman, *Intro to the OT*, p. 416.

<sup>492</sup> Harrison, *Intro to the OT*, p. 940

<sup>493</sup> Keil & Delitzsch, *Minor Prophets*, vol. 10, pp. 120-121.

powerfully poetic portrayal of the coming judgment on Jerusalem. Zephaniah may be a short prophet, but he is no less poetic than the great poets among the inspired prophets.

### 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

#### a) *“Remnant of Baal” ~ שְׂאֵר הַבַּעַל (1:4)*

Zeph 1:4 “I will stretch out my hand against Judah and against all who live in Jerusalem.

I will cut off from this place every remnant of Baal, the names of the pagan and the idolatrous priests—

#### b) *“Remnant of Judah” ~ לְשִׂאֲרֵי בֵּית יְהוּדָה (2:7), “Remnant of Israel” ~ שְׂאֲרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (3:13)*

➤ See remnant, p. 255.

Zeph 2:7 It will belong to the remnant of the house of Judah; there they will find pasture.

In the evening they will lie down in the houses of Ashkelon.

The LORD their God will care for them; he will restore their fortunes.

Zeph 2:9 Therefore, as surely as I live,” declares the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, “surely Moab will become like Sodom, the Ammonites like Gomorrah— a place of weeds and salt pits, a wasteland forever.

The remnant of my people will plunder them; the survivors of my nation will inherit their land.”

Zeph 3:13 The remnant of Israel will do no wrong; they will speak no lies, nor will deceit be found in their mouths. They will eat and lie down and no one will make them afraid.



#### c) *“Great day of the Lord”*

➤ See day of YHWH, p. 231.

Zeph 1:7 the Sovereign LORD, for the day of the LORD is near.

Zeph 1:8 he has invited. 8 On the day of the LORD’s sacrifice

Zeph 1:9 foreign clothes. 9 On that day I will punish all who avoid

Zeph 1:10 “On that day,” declares the LORD, “a cry

Zeph 1:14 of the Lord 14 “The great day of the LORD is near—

Zeph 1:14 Listen! The cry on the day of the LORD will be bitter,

Zeph 1:15 That day will be a day of wrath,

a day of distress and anguish,

a day of trouble and ruin,

a day of darkness and gloom,

a day of clouds and blackness,

Zeph 1:16 clouds and blackness, 16 a day of trumpet and battle cry

Zeph 1:18 be able to save them on the day of the LORD’s wrath.

Zeph 2:2 appointed time arrives and that day sweeps on like chaff, before

Zeph 2:2 comes upon you, before the day of the LORD’s wrath comes upon

Zeph 2:3 you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD’s anger.

[Zeph 3:5 his justice, and every new day he does not fail, yet the]

Zeph 3:8 declares the LORD, “for the day I will stand up to testify.

Zeph 3:11 On that day you will not be put to shame

Zeph 3:16 fear any harm. 16 On that day they will say to Jerusalem,



See also “at that time” which is synonymous with the “day of the Lord” motif:



Zeph 1:12 silver will be ruined. 12 At that time I will search Jerusalem with  
 Zeph 3:19 a reproach to you. 19 At that time I will deal with all who oppose  
 Zeph 3:20 they were put to shame. 20 At that time I will gather you; at that time  
 Zeph 3:20 that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home.

#### 4. Major themes

1. *Judgment*: idolatry (2 K 21:3, 5). Assyrian gods and heavenly bodies (Zeph complains, 1:5), and Canaanite Baals were worshipped. See Ex 20:3. “No other gods . . .” A syncretism of Yahweh worship and pagan worship. Judgment would be *universal* (all nations) and particular (Judah). Judgment was coming from afar through foreigners (presumably Babylon), but the real Judge-Foe was God himself (1:2-4, 8-9, 12, 17; 2:5, 11, 13; 3:6, 8).
2. *Injustice* (3:3-4) is contrasted with the justice of God (3:5).
3. Abuse of authority (Zeph 1:8, 9). Rich oppress poor.
4. Immoral leadership (Zeph 3:3, 4). Prophets/Priests were arrogant, profaning the sanctuary.
5. A *remnant* remained (Zeph 2:3). (See remnant, p. 255.)
6. Coming of the *Day of the Lord* (7x): judgment on God’s people and their enemies; promises of return to the land, and future blessing to the nations. See also Is 2:7; Amos 5:18; Rom 2:16; 1 Cor 1:8; Phil 1:6, 10; 2:16; 2 Tim 4:8. “Warrior God” (Judge and King) (Rev 19:11-16). The Day of the Lord brings a distinction between the wicked and the righteous: those who will have the kingdom and those who will not. A final glorification and redemption of the righteous.
7. *Grace*: universality of the new community. Jews and Gentiles will worship YHWH (Zeph 2:11).
8. Truths about the nature of God and his providential relationship to the world, and the responsibilities of his people.

#### 5. Major prophecies

1. Expectation of foreign invasion, destroying Jerusalem: Assyria (he does not name them as did Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Habakkuk). Yet, during Ashurbanipal’s reign (699-627) Assyria lapsed into decline. The Scythians? (nomads from Russia raided Philistine and Egypt. 633, 610). Harrison says there may have been a real, immediate threat from them, yet the real foe was still Assyria.<sup>494</sup> More likely is Babylon, the best solution, beyond any Scythian raid, and pointing towards a Babylonian exile.
2. Fulfillment of their destruction at the hands of the Babylonians who had previously defeated the Assyrians.
3. Conversion of the Gentiles (2:11; 3:9) brought about by the day of the Lord.
4. NT: Mt 13:41 (Zeph 1:3); Rev 6:17 (1:14); 14:5 (3:13); 16:1 (3:8).

Zephaniah contributed to the broad picture of God who intervenes in history to establish his kingdom, and he established a pattern for the events that will characterize the end of history. Similar motifs: immanent historical threat and divine judgment.

#### 6. Outline, structure/composition

- Zephaniah begins in sorrow, but ends in singing.
- The day of the Lord is central to the structure.
- Extensive poetic devices and form.

Keil suggests that “Zephaniah does not contain two or three prophetic addresses, but the quintessence of the oral proclamations of the prophet condensed into one lengthened prophecy, commencing with the threat of judgment (ch. i), proceeding to an exhortation to repentance (ch. ii.-iii. 8), and concluding with a promise of the salvation which would flourish for the remnant of Israel after the termination of the judgment (iii. 9-20.”<sup>495</sup>

I have structured Zephaniah according to the polar themes of judgment and hope, as found repeatedly in the pre-exilic prophets (see Micah, p. ). These themes are the word of the Lord to the nations, but particularly to give Israel and Judah hope of the remnant and return. That is, the hope of Israel/Judah rested partly in Assyria’s (and other enemy nations’) destruction, so the warnings of judgment against the nations implicitly assume and convey this hope for Israel. Dorsey’s structure highlights the *judgment* aspects of the book. In his broad outline, he only notes the restoration of the remnant in the last section. Yet, if we considered all the prophecies against the nations

<sup>494</sup> Harrison, *Intro to the OT.*, p. 941.

<sup>495</sup> Keil & Delitzsch, *Minor Prophets*, vol. 10, pp. 120-121.

we could consider all the sections against foreign nations as positive hope for Israel. The condemnation of Jerusalem's princes and wealthy is balanced by the judgment against the nations.

Considering that Zephaniah uses the expression "the day of the Lord" more than any other prophets, suggest it may be important in the structure of the book.

## 7. *Exposition and the history of redemption themes*

### a) *The Word of YHWH: judgment & hope*

#### (1) *Judgment against Judah (Jerusalem): Zeph 1:2-2:2*

The personal judgment against Judah and the nations is introduced by a universal declaration of judgment: this is the context of the personal judgment. This is proof that these prophecies are not from some "tribal deity" to other tribes and their deities. This is the word of the universal Judge. He proclaims this universal judgment in language echoing the Flood (Gen 6:7), but it also points forward to a time of unimaginable destruction on earth:

- Humans (1:3a)
- Animals (1:3a)
- Birds (1:3b)
- Fish (1:3c)

*Judgment will bring about certain results in Judah:*

- Baalism and idolatry will cease (1:4b).
- Idolatrous priests will be destroyed (1:4c).
- Idolaters will be destroyed (1:5).
- Rebellious and complacent (indifferent) will be destroyed (1:6).

Note: "Starry hosts," "heavens," (הַשָּׁמַיִם) – possibly refers to Babylonian worship of Shamash, Sin, and Ishtar. These "heavenly" gods were thought to control the seasons, time, and weather. So-called "astral deities," they were the chief and most powerful of the pantheon.

*Judgment will come upon various groups of people:*

- The Lord himself prepares a *sacrifice*: Judah and Jerusalem. He has chosen (set apart) those whom he has invited (Babylon) to the sacrificial meal (1:7).
- Princes and king's sons are brought under the judgment of God (1:8). It is important that Zephaniah censures the royal men of Judah, for he himself was one of them as the great-great grandson of Hezekiah. These princes wore *foreign* clothing, contrary to the stipulations regarding clothing in the law of God (Num 15:37-40; Deut 22:12).

Numbers 15:37-40 The LORD said to Moses, <sup>38</sup> "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'Throughout the generations to come you are to make tassels on the corners of your garments, with a blue cord on each tassel. <sup>39</sup> You will have these tassels to look at and so you will remember all the commands of the LORD, that you may obey them and not prostitute yourselves by going after the lusts of your own hearts and eyes. <sup>40</sup> Then you will remember to obey all my commands and will be consecrated to your God.'

They were also guilty of violent accumulation of personal wealth (1:9c). Josiah was a righteous king and thus would not have been included in this judgment proclamation, nor did he see the judgment himself (2 Chron 34:27,-28).

- Traders and usurers (1:11) were merchants compared to the "people of Canaan" presumably because they were acting like Canaanites and Phoenicians in their corrupt business practices. The market place ("Mortar") was undoubtedly the home of "loan-sharks" and unscrupulous merchants. Any analogies today?
- Religiously complacent and indifferent (1:12-13) who *will* be found (with search light) by the Lord himself, the very One they claim is unconcerned and indifferent. They wrongly accuse God of the indifference they are guilty: "The Lord will do nothing, either good or bad." (לֹא יַיְטִיב הַיְהוָה וְלֹא יַרְעִיב). They may be called ancient Deists who did not altogether deny God's existence, but only that he does not act in any significant way in this world nor in executing judgment on sin. Thus, they reduce God to the level of the idols/gods they worship as having even greater concern and power than God himself! Yet, the judgment on them is tailor-made to prove that he is not morally indifferent to them, for all they build and plant will be taken from them (1:13).
- Rich people who can not save themselves with their silver and gold on the day of the Lord's wrath (1:18a)

*Judgment will involve particular details:*

- Crying will go up at the Fish Gate in the northern wall of the city, provided the entrance way for the Babylonians (1:10a).
- Howling will occur in the New Quarter and the sound of loud destructions from the hills (of Jerusalem) (1:10a-c).
- Wailing will come from the market where the businessmen, traders, and usurers met (1:11).
- Shouting/crying will come from the warriors on the battle field (both those attacking and those presuming they will perish?) (1:14).
- Anguish and distress will come from the cities and fortifications (1:15).
- Darkness and gloom will come over the people and Jerusalem where war trumpets and battle cries will be heard when Jerusalem is devastated (1:15c-16).
- Distress will come upon the people who will despair of escape like blind men (1:17).
- Death will be as common as the dust, or the enemy will consider the lives of people as worthless as dust.

*Judgment comes primarily because of:*

- Human sin (idolatry (1:17b).
- God's *jealous* wrath (holiness) (1:18:b-c).

### (2) *Hope for those who seek the Lord: Zeph 2:1-3*

This section overlaps with the previous, for the warning of judgment contains a call to repentance. This means that Judah still had the opportunity to repent at this stage, though Zephaniah does not give us any reason to hope that Judah will repent. Dorsey structures the Book of Zephaniah with this call to repentance at the center (*Literary Structure*, p. 313).

Within this prophecy of hope the question arises as to whom he is addressing, for he begins by speaking to the "shameful nation" (2:1), but then concludes this hopeful interlude by addressing the "humble of the land" (2:3). The latter may be the remnant remaining, or all true believers remaining in the nation in exile and/or those remaining in the land in the time of Nebuzaradan (2 Ki 25:12). Thus, he apparently was addressing both groups, those who needed to repent in Judah and those who had repented. The former are called to repent before God in the hope of finding personal (or national?) redemption, the latter to more zealously seek righteousness and humility in the hope of protection ("hide," "shelter," *רָחַץ*, perhaps reflecting the meaning of Zephaniah's name) on the day of wrath. The emphasis for both groups is the seriousness of the coming "day" (mentioned four times). (Whether the prophet is encouraging the repentant remnant to seek personal godliness through righteous living or the gospel "righteousness of God" is not specified, although I am inclined to think it is righteous living.) Whereas seeking the Lord by the remnant may have procured protection, the repentance of the first group (the "shameful nation") might even at this stage have meant the averting of God's wrath. Compare:

Amos 5:6 Seek the LORD and live,  
or he will sweep through the house of Joseph like a fire;  
it will devour,  
and Bethel will have no one to quench it.  
Amos 5:15 Hate evil, love good;  
maintain justice in the courts.  
Perhaps the LORD God Almighty will have mercy  
on the remnant of Joseph.



A remnant remains: some people were indeed left alive in the land:

2 Ki 24:14 He carried into exile all Jerusalem: all the officers and fighting men, and all the craftsmen and artisans—a total of ten thousand. Only the poorest people of the land were left.

"The day of repentance is a glorious opportunity, but it passes away as rapidly as the chaff is suddenly blow away by a strong gust of wind. They must avail themselves of it immediately. After it comes the day of the Lord's fierce anger. Thrice over comes the call to seek the Lord, righteousness, and meekness."<sup>496</sup>

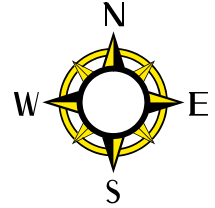
### (3) *Judgment against Philistia, Moab, Ammon, and Cush: Zeph 2:4-12*

- See Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, and Assyrians in ANE backgrounds section.

<sup>496</sup> Feinberg, *The Minor Prophets*, p. 226.

As elsewhere in the pre-exilic prophets (Isaiah, p. , Jeremiah p. , and Ezekiel, p. ) the nations are addressed in a way that is representative of the entire world of unrepentant rebellion against God. Yet, it is not merely symbolic that the nations addressed represent the totality of unrepentant nations, it also spoke to them directly of their impending judgment. The list below shows the universal *circumference of God's* judgment (Assyria will be treated below, p. 405):

- ☞ Philistia -- west
- ☞ Moab and Ammon -- east
- ☞ Ethiopia (Cush) – south
- ☞ Assyria -- north



“Nations from the four points of the globe are included to indicate again the universality of the judgment.”<sup>497</sup>

*Day of the Lord Oracles Against Nations:*<sup>498</sup>

**2:4. Philistine cities in late seventh century.** After Sargon II's and Sennacherib's campaigns of the late eighth century and the capture and destruction of many of the Philistine cities, these sites were then rebuilt by the Assyrians, and several of them (particularly Timnah and Ekron) prospered as centers for olive oil production [see filed materials on Ekron]. Archaeological evidence has identified industrial districts where olive oil was processed and cloth was woven (based on large numbers of loom weights in these levels). There are indications of Egyptian presence in Philistia after the Assyrian empire collapsed (see comment on Ezek 25:15). These cities were then destroyed in 600 B.C. in the campaigns of the Babylonian ruler Nebuchadnezzar.

**2:8-9. Moab and Ammon in late seventh century.** Like all the small kingdoms in Syro-Palestine, Moab and Ammon were vassals of the Assyrians during the eighth and seventh centuries. Evidence of this is found in the mention of four Moabite kings in the Assyrian Annals (ranging from the time of Tiglath-Pileser III to Ashurbanipal). It can be expected that they gained some measure of independence toward the end of the seventh century as chaos reigned in Assyria (see the comment on Ezek 25:8). However, Josephus records that they were subjugated by the Babylonians shortly after the fall of Jerusalem (see the comment on Ezek 25:2).

**2:12. Cushites in late seventh century.** It is unclear what prompted this oracle against Ethiopia. The Cushites had not ruled Egypt since the supplanting of their dynasty in 664 by the Saite dynast Psammetichus I. While this native Egyptian pharaoh did ally himself with the Assyrians after 616, no specific event or campaign in Palestine is referenced in his or his successors' inscriptions prior to the 609 campaign of Necho II. There has been some suggestion that this reference to Cush should be understood in relation to Mesopotamia (as is possible in Gen 10:8), since it precedes the oracle on Assyria.

**2:13. Assyria in late seventh century.** After the death of Ashurbanipal in 627, the disputes among his heirs and potential successors so weakened the Assyrian empire that it swiftly fell apart. This collapse was hastened by two factors. First were the harsh administrative policies. The hatred generated against the Assyrians was further compounded by their use of extreme terror tactics in warfare (see the sidebar on the siege of Lachish in 2 Chron 32:9). The emergence of a Babylonian-Median coalition provided a match for Assyria's army, and by 612 the Assyrian capital at Nineveh had been captured and destroyed (see the comment on Is 13:1). The final step in completely eliminating all vestiges of Assyrian power came at the Battle of Carchemish in 605. Its empire fell to the Egyptians and Neo-Babylonians to divide (see the comment on Is 31:8).

(a) **WEST ~ Philistia: Zeph 2:4-5**

Philistia will be depopulated and their land will be turned into pasture which the Israelites will enjoy (2:6-7) (began in 536 when they returned from exile). Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ekron: four of five Philistine capitals were named as representative of the whole territory (Gath is unmentioned here).

Compare:

Obad 19 People from the Negev will occupy  
the mountains of Esau,  
and people from the foothills will possess  
the land of the Philistines.  
They will occupy the fields of Ephraim and Samaria,  
and Benjamin will possess Gilead.

Isa 14:29 Do not rejoice, all you Philistines,  
that the rod that struck you is broken;  
from the root of that snake will spring up a viper,  
its fruit will be a darting, venomous serpent.



<sup>497</sup> Feinberg, *The Minor Prophets*, p. 227.

<sup>498</sup> Walton, Matthews, & Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary*, pp. 793-794.

**(b) EAST ~ Moab and Ammon: Zeph 2:8-11**

Moab and Ammon will be utterly exterminated (2:9) like Sodom and Gomorrah. Recall that Lot left Sodom and later conceived Moab with his oldest daughter. Then Lot's youngest daughter bore him Benammi (Ammonites) (Gen 19:30-38). Nettles will grow there in the wasteland (2:9:c). Israel will possess their land. Moabite and Ammonite gods will be destroyed (2:11). *Pride* was their downfall (2:10a), but they also *insulted and mocked* God's people (2:10b).

Compare:

Isa 16:6 We have heard of Moab's pride—  
her overweening pride and conceit,  
her pride and her insolence—  
but her boasts are empty.

Jer 48:26-27 Make her drunk,  
for she has defied the LORD.  
Let Moab wallow in her vomit;  
let her be an object of ridicule.  
27 Was not Israel the object of your ridicule?  
Was she caught among thieves,  
that you shake your head in scorn  
whenever you speak of her?

Amos 1:13 This is what the LORD says:  
For three sins of Ammon,  
even for four, I will not turn back my wrath.  
Because he ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead  
in order to extend his borders,



*The hope of universal redemption:*

This prediction against Moab and Ammon concludes with a very positive prophecy:

Zeph 2:11b The nations on every shore will worship him,  
every one in its own land.

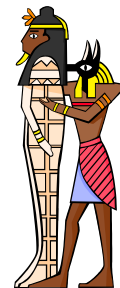
Here is the essential fruit of the gospel of redemption: people from all the nations will worship the Lord! A verse that should be shouted from the rooftops.

**(c) SOUTH ~ Cush (ancient Ethiopia): Zeph 2:12**

Cush will be destroyed by the sword. We know of no conflict between Ethiopia and Cush in Zephaniah's time, thus it is probably included as representative of one aspect of the entire heathen world coming under judgment (Ethiopia had ruled Egypt just prior to Zephaniah's time). Cushites were descendants of Cush, a son of Ham, a son of Noah (Gen 10:1). See Gen 2:13.

Compare:

Isa 20:5 Those who trusted in Cush and boasted in Egypt will be afraid and put to shame.  
Ezek 30:4 A sword will come against Egypt,  
and anguish will come upon Cush.  
When the slain fall in Egypt,  
her wealth will be carried away  
and her foundations torn down.

**(4) Hope for Judah's remnant: Zeph 2:6-7**

Outlining Zephaniah is problematic here, for the hope theme consists of two verses. Thus, we could consider this a sub theme under the heading of judgment against the foreign nations which would then include Assyria below. Nevertheless, in stressing the fluctuating themes of judgment and hope, I do not want to underplay the importance of hope for the remnant in this section simply because it consists of only two verses. As part of the prophecy against Philistia, the prophet predicts that the coastal lands of Philistia will pass into the hands of the remnant of Judah who will use them for pasture. The remnant will also occupy the houses of Ashkelon (2:7b). Most importantly, the covenant of YHWH with them is reaffirmed:

Zeph 2:7c The LORD their God will care for them;  
he will restore their fortunes.

The themes expounded on in these verses are expanded on in Zeph 3:9-20.

**(a) NORTH ~ Judgment against Assyria and hope for Judah's**

**deliverance: Zeph 2:13-15**

Note: Assyria is actually NE of Judah, but its armies always came from the north.

This theme was already mentioned above (p. 403) in regard to the circumference of God's universal judgment (N,E,S,W).

**Assyria** will be destroyed, and Nineveh will be utterly desolate (2:13). Even though Assyria had been very strong until this time, they would against all appearances decline quickly. Judgment is coming due to their *pride* (7:15). Indeed, Nineveh boasted in language that sounds blasphemous from the side of the redeemed (see also Isa 47:10):

Zeph 2:15a This is the carefree city  
that lived in safety.

She said to herself,

"I am, and there is none besides me."

Isa 45:5-6 **I am the LORD, and there is no other;**

apart from me there is no God.

I will strengthen you,

though you have not acknowledged me,

6 so that from the rising of the sun

to the place of its setting

men may know there is none besides me.

I am the LORD, and there is no other.



We have seen the prophets speak against Assyria and Nineveh extensively (Isa 10:5-19), so there is no need to repeat background material here (see pp. 252, 252). Zephaniah gives explicit detail to the destruction of Nineveh:

- ⇒ It will be a dry desert (2:13b).
- ⇒ Cattle will graze there (2:14a).
- ⇒ Owls will roost in and call through the ruins (2:14b).
- ⇒ Its buildings will be rubble (2:14c).
- ⇒ It will be a lair for wild beasts (2:15c).
- ⇒ Those who pass by will only scoff (1:15d).

Ezek 32:22 Assyria is there with her whole army; she is surrounded by the graves of all her slain, all who have fallen by the sword.

**(5) Judgment against Judah (Jerusalem): Zeph 3:1-8**

*Jerusalem will be destroyed for:*

- ⇒ Being rebellious (proud) (3:1b).
- ⇒ Being defiled (unholy) (3:1b).
- ⇒ Being lawless (antinomian) (3:2a).
- ⇒ Refusing correction (arrogant) (3:2b).
- ⇒ Distrusting the Lord (foolishly self-confident) (3:2c).
- ⇒ Refusing to draw near to the Lord (self-satisfied) (3:2c).
- ⇒ Corrupted officials (misled) (3:3).
- ⇒ Arrogant prophets who lie (deceived) (3:5a).
- ⇒ Profane priests who disregard the law (unholy) (4:b).

All of these aspects of Judah's sins are in essence *contradictions in terms*, for they are the antithesis of all that God's people were supposed to be. They had degenerated to the love of corruption and power and the voice of unreason, rather than love of the Torah God had given to guide them into righteousness.

In the midst of this catalogue, Zephaniah contrasts these sins with the glorious standards of YHWH very character, the only proper basis of their law and life:

- ⇒ YHWH is righteous (3:5a) ~ perfect.
- ⇒ YHWH does no wrong (3:5b) ~ sinless.
- ⇒ YHWH dispenses justice daily (3:5c) ~ just.
- ⇒ YHWH never fails (3:5d) ~ faithful.
  - Yet the unrighteous know no shame (3:5e).

Judgment will come now, and it does not seem anything can stop it (cf. hope of repenting in 2:1-3). Jerusalem will be demolished and its streets deserted. Once Jerusalem is described as given over to rebellion with no sign of repentance, it becomes clear that their only real hope is through judgment (exile), in accord with the promised

covenant curses. The offer of repentance was rejected (3:7), thus the *day* was going to come (3:8b), while the prophet also extends the judgment to all the nations (3:8c). God reigns over the kingdoms of the earth, and has every right to extend his justice to all. See texts on God's reign over all the earth. See Jesus' prayer, "Thy Kingdom come on earth . . ." Israel was to be God's kingdom community on the earth to represent YHWH to the watching nations.

The final word of judgment against Judah flows into the final word of hope for Judah, and actually overlaps with it: Zephaniah writes, "Therefore wait for me" (3:8), and describes the judgment as the means of purification (3:9), the means of hope for God's people.

### (6) *Hope for Israel's remnant: Zeph 3:9-20*

Judgment is hope for God's people, whereas it is doom for God's enemies.

The catalogue of promises is truly incredible in light of all the catalogues of their sin that have preceded in Zephaniah and the pre-exilic prophets. The remnant is promised:

- ⇒ Purification of speech ~ godly praise and communication (3:9a).
- ⇒ They will call on the Lord ~ reliance on God (3:9b).
- ⇒ They will serve him together ~ faithful community (3:9c).
- ⇒ Return from exile to worship YHWH ~ true worship (3:10).
- ⇒ No more shame, despite sins ~ redeemed people (3:11a).
- ⇒ Proud and haughty will be removed from Jerusalem ~ purged people (3:11b).
- ⇒ Meek and humble will be in Jerusalem ~ trusting people (3:12).
- ⇒ Honest remnant that is truthful and trusting ~ believe and trust YHWH (3:13).
- ⇒ Singing remnant will be glad in Jerusalem ~ true worship (3:14).
- ⇒ Their punishment (enemy) is removed ~ delivered people (3:15a).
- ⇒ Covenant-promise of YHWH's Presence will be restored ~ covenant people (3:15b and 3:17).
- ⇒ Fearless remnant in Jerusalem ~ trusting people (3:16).
- ⇒ God himself will delight, love, and rejoice over his people ~ covenanting God (3:17).
- ⇒ Burdensome legalism will be removed ~ Gospel of grace (3:18).
- ⇒ God will deliver his people ~ faithful Deliverer (3:19).
  - from enemies (3:19a).
  - from lameness (3:19b).
  - from dispersion (3:19c).
  - from shame (3:19d).
- ⇒ God will bring his people back from exile ~ "SAYS THE LORD" (3:20) .

The blessings outlined here are an interesting web of temporal, spatial, material, and spiritual, soteriological promises. At times we can not be certain where the lines are between the *material* and *spiritual*, but we should remember that the ultimate goals of the covenant promise are always spiritual. The Lord of Life had covenanted with this people to bring them into his kingdom of glory. All of the temporal (temporary) blessings were but confirmation of the promises of *eternal* redemption. The covenant was spiritual, yet the people of God consistently failed to remember that in the monarchy-prophetic period. The return from exile was *but one* stage in the history of redemption, the completion of the Davidic promise that the Messiah would one day sit on the throne of David and that under his reign all suffering and sorrow would cease, as would all sin.

As a jet roared over the house we stayed in in Gadera, Israel, I was struck by the rejection of God and the Messiah in the land today by the majority who have regained much control of the land even though modern Judiasm is not Jewish.

## 8. *History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling*

### a) *Revelation and redemption from YHWH*

#### (1) *Who God is*

- Jealous for his people ~ holy presence.
- Active in the midst of his people ~ covenant presence.
- Present ~ God is "absent" in judgment, present in grace.
- Promiser ~ God keeps his covenant faithfully.
- Righteous ~ God *always* does what is right!
- Perfect ~ all God's ways and attributes are flawless in contrast to Israel's ways and character.
- Sinless ~ God executes judgment out of the sinless perfections of his attributes.

- Just ~ all questions of God's rightful judgment are laid to rest.
- Faithful ~ God had covenanted with his people and would keep his side of the covenant. This "latter-day" pre-exilic prophet reminded rebellious Israel that YHWH would not forget his covenant. As often in the prophets, the gospel of God's *grace* is implicitly conveyed: that no one can even begin to save one's self which is by nature inclined to unholiness and faithlessness.
- Delight of God ~ God's "experience" includes that of delight over his people.
  - Isa 5:7 The men of Judah are the garden of his delight.
  - Isa 42:1 my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him
  - Isa 62:4 for the LORD will take delight in you, and your land will be
  - Isa 65:18 will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy.
  - Isa 65:19 rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people;
  - Jer 9:24 for in these I delight," declares the LORD.
  - Jer 31:20 son, the child in whom I delight?
  - Jer 49:25 abandoned, the town in which I delight?

Micah 7:18 Who is a God like you,  
 who pardons sin and forgives the transgression  
 of the remnant of his inheritance?  
 You do not stay angry forever  
 but delight to show mercy.

## (2) *What God has done*

- Despite the dire prophecies of impending judgment, the Lord remarkably offers Judah an opportunity to repent. Despite the apparent certainty of the coming judgment, the opportunity to repent must be the offer of protection from the wrath of God on an individual level: "perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the Lord's anger" (2:3c).
- Despite the great sin of his people, God revealed himself again in general revelation and special revelation to all. God has particularly revealed his gospel of *grace*, that legalism cannot save a person, and that the law must be written on the heart.
- God has again revealed the nature of his redeemed people: trusting, courageous, faithful, honest, righteous, humble, meek, trustworthy, obedient.

## (3) *What God has promised*

- God has promised that he will preserve the remnant of Israel which is a guarantee of the promise of universal redemption for his people. That is, the return from exile prefigures the coming Messiah who would bring spiritual deliverance. The history of redemption would be complete in the Davidic promise of the king to dwell on his throne forever. Though the latter promise is not explicit in Zephaniah, it is in the background to his message: "The Lord, the king of Israel, is with you" (3:15).
- God promised that the "remnant of Baal" would be "cut off" (1:4). That is, the situation after the purge of the exile would be the removal of Baalism among God's people. This is a remarkable prophecy, considering how deeply ingrained Baalism was in Judah's culture of syncretism. This expression "remnant of Baal" is to be understood as a synecdoche (part refers to the whole), thus it is a sweeping promise that such idolatries will be removed in the exile. Such a promise of sanctification/purification represents the broader hope of redemption that would create a redeemed people of holy disposition, those who "worship the Father in spirit and truth."

## b) *Humankind and redemption*

### (1) *Worship of redeemed*

As in the other pre-exilic prophets, proper worship of YHW sadly required the removal of idolatry from among the people of God. Typically, the idolatry of Judah/Israel was not exclusive Baalism or Ishtarism, but rather syncretism of YHWH worship. Those who worship YHWH have every good reason to hope in redemption, even in spite or their present conditions of impending exile. True worship of YHWH will be inclusive of Jews and Gentiles

The death-knell to proper worship of YHWH was pride. Pride separates us from God. Zephaniah especially showed that this was the root-problem for both Judah and their enemies. Judah vainly sought the help of foreign nations, while foreign nations vainly sought to overcome Judah. Both proud efforts would come to nothing.

### (2) *Work of redeemed*



The significance of honesty, fairness, and just work can not be overstated when we look to the pre-exilic prophets for insight. Contrary to common Christian opinion, the American business model may not be entirely sanctified. Work must be done to the glory of God, must not involve exploitation of the poor (consider stock investments, etc., as a *moral* choice), must not model “Canaanite” standards, and must not self-confidently reject reliance on God at any level.

### (3) *Ethics of redeemed*

*Vox Populi* and *Realpolitik* ruled the day of Zephaniah’s contemporaries. Prophets, priests, judges (courts), and people were all more interested in the voice of rebellion and corrupt power than the voice of God. Thus, the call of the prophetic word in Zephaniah is that the nobles as well as the commoners must serve God in all of their personal dealings. Accumulation of personal wealth, corruption in business practices (usury) were out of accord with the Torah and would bring judgment.

Contemporary questions include: what for us is the limit in the “accumulation of wealth” in a time that perceives the highest good as greater and greater wealth and prosperity?

## III. NEO-BABYLONIAN PERIOD PROPHETS: EXILIC (605-538 B.C.)

### A. *Jeremiah* יְרֵמְיָהוּ and *Lamentations* (648-585/62)

“I spoke to them, but they did not listen; I called to them, but they did not answer.” Jer 35:17b

“Kings, princes, priests, and people are constantly arrayed against him, but strong in God, he bids defiance to all their attacks.”<sup>499</sup>

Jeremiah by Michelangelo, Sistine Chapel



#### 1. *Title, author, and dates*

1. Jeremiah (“YHWH appoints, establishes”) the prophet-priest was probably born ca. 647 BC, during the reign of Manasseh (696-642), and was possibly twenty years of age at his call, possibly in 627(?) during the thirteenth year of Josiah’s reign. The book of the law was found (621) in the temple shortly after Jeremiah’s call to prophesy. Jeremiah’s ministry lasted about forty years, during the reigns of the Judean kings Josiah (640-609), Jehoahaz (609), Jehoiakim (609-598), Jehoiachin (598-597), and Zedekiah (597-586). In the eleventh year of Zedekiah’s reign, Jerusalem was destroyed by Babylonians (586) (Jer 39; 52). Nebuchadnezzar allowed Jeremiah to remain in Judah under Gedaliah’s puppet reign. After Ishmael murders Gedaliah, the fearful remnant of Judeans fled to Egypt carrying Jeremiah with them against the word of the Lord (Jer 42-44).

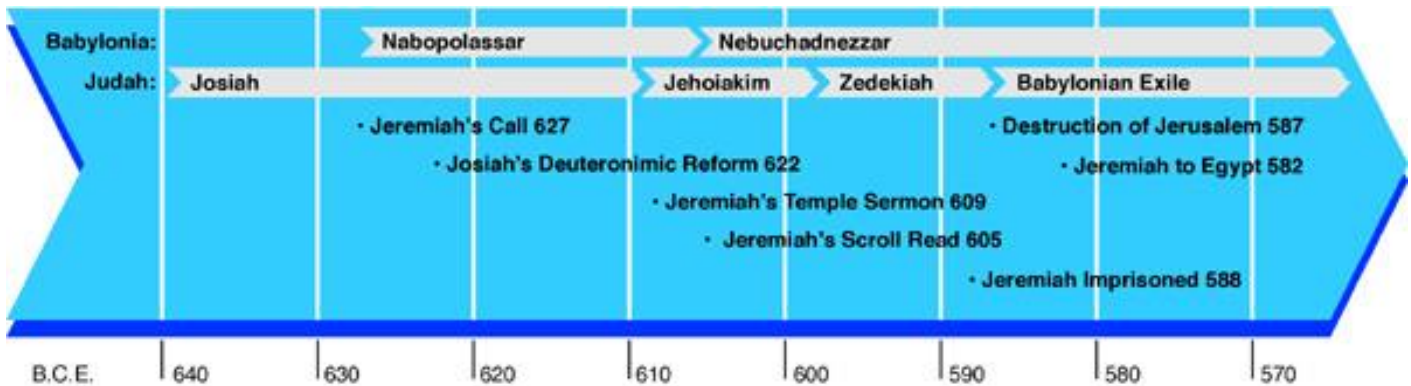
2. *To recap the historical background* to Jeremiah’s period: Jeremiah lived one hundred years after Isaiah, before and during the time Judah was carried into Babylonian captivity (586). When Jeremiah was born, the northern kingdom had already been carried into Assyrian captivity in 722. There was a worldwide struggle for dominance between Assyria, Egypt, and Babylon during this period. Babylon had earlier been a great empire, being the cultural, mystical, intellectual center of the East for 1300

years. After some three hundred years of Assyrian dominance, Babylon began to regain power. One year after Jeremiah’s call to prophesy, the Babylonian ruler Nabopolassar rebelled against Assyria (626), establishing the Neo-Babylonian empire (as Nahum and Zephaniah predicted). Within fifteen years, Nineveh fell (612) to an alliance of Medes, Babylonians, and Scythians. Within seven years of Nineveh’s fall, Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562) defeated Egypt (Pharaoh Neco) at the Battle of Carchemish. Under

<sup>499</sup> Delitzsch, *History of Redemption*, p. 129.

Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon became a great military power again for some seventy years, the entire period of Judah's exile in Babylon. Jeremiah lived during this resurgence of Babylon, the latter being a fulfillment of the word of the prophet Isaiah (who prophesied during the Assyrian period). Jeremiah's call (627?) came when he was a young man to a task that was very difficult, for he was set against his entire culture in a period of decadence and decline. More historical details will be introduced in the exposition section that correlates with the same material in the historical books. See Judges-Esther syllabus and VanGemerer, *Interpreting*, pp. 306-309.

- The locations of Jeremiah's prophecies: the Jerusalem temple, the city gates, the Valley of Ben Hinnom, near the Potsherd Gate, the court of the Temple, the towns of Judah, Topheth, the courtyard of the guard, the palace, the streets of Jerusalem, the "stocks" at the Upper Gate of Benjamin (at the temple), a side room of the temple (of the sons of Hanan, son of Igdaliah) the third entrance to the temple, Tahpanhes (Egypt).



(above) Time line by Bandstra (www)

VanGemerer considers Jeremiah's ministry to have taken place in four periods that correspond to major blocks of text (see more in outline and structure section, p. 413):

- Josiah's early years (627-622)
- Jehoiakim's early years (608—605)
- Zedekiah's fourth year to the fall of Jerusalem (593-586)
- From the fall of Jerusalem to Jeremiah's exile to Egypt (586-585)<sup>500</sup>

Jeremiah had a full, though very difficult, life! (right) *Eerdman's Concise Bible Handbook*, p. 208.



**MAJOR EVENTS OF JEREMIAH'S LIFETIME**

- 627** Jeremiah called to be God's prophet. Death of Ashurbanipal, last great king of Assyria.
- 621** Discovery of the book of the law. King Josiah's great reformation begins.
- 612** Nineveh, capital of Assyria, falls to Babylon.
- 609** The Egyptian army marches north to bolster collapsing Assyria. Josiah intercepts it at Megiddo and is killed. On his return from Assyria, Pharaoh Necho deposes the new king, Jehoahaz, placing Jehoiakim on the throne.
- 605** Egyptian forces routed at Carchemish by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.
- 604** Nebuchadnezzar subdues Syria, Judah and Philistine cities.
- 598** Alliance with Egypt brings the Babylonian forces down on Judah again.
- 597** King Jehoiakim dies. Jerusalem falls to Babylon after a two-month siege. The new king, Jehoiachin, is deported with others to Babylon. His uncle, Zedekiah, is put on the throne.
- 588** Under pressure from the pro-Egypt party, Zedekiah breaks faith with Babylon. Jerusalem under siege for 18 months.
- 587** The Babylonian army breaks into Jerusalem. The people are deported; the city plundered and burned. Three months later, governor Gedaliah is murdered. Jeremiah is taken to Egypt.

<sup>500</sup> See also VanGemerer's chart, *Prophetic Word*, p. 292.

# Nebuchadnezzar's Campaign against Judah

605-586 B.C.

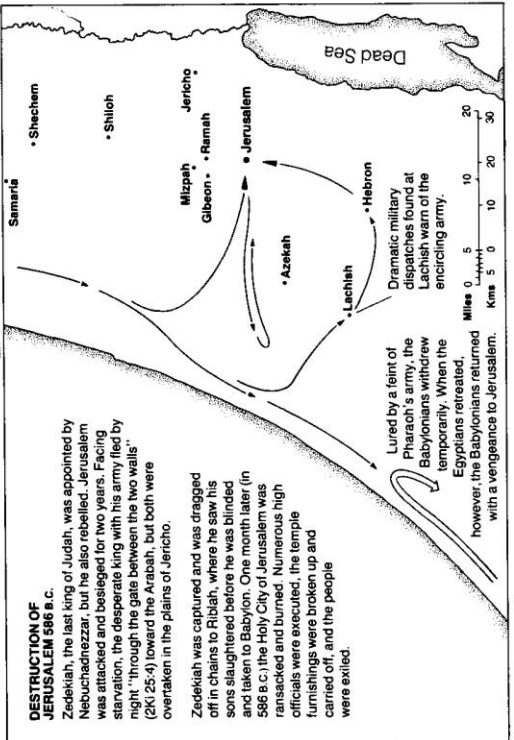
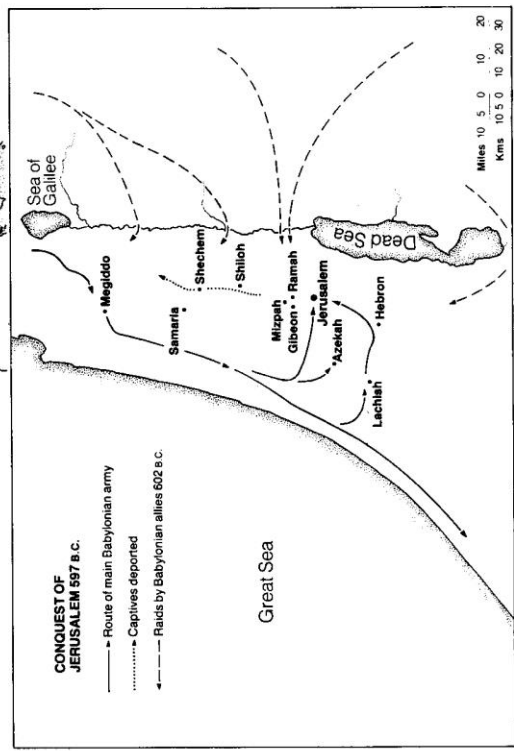
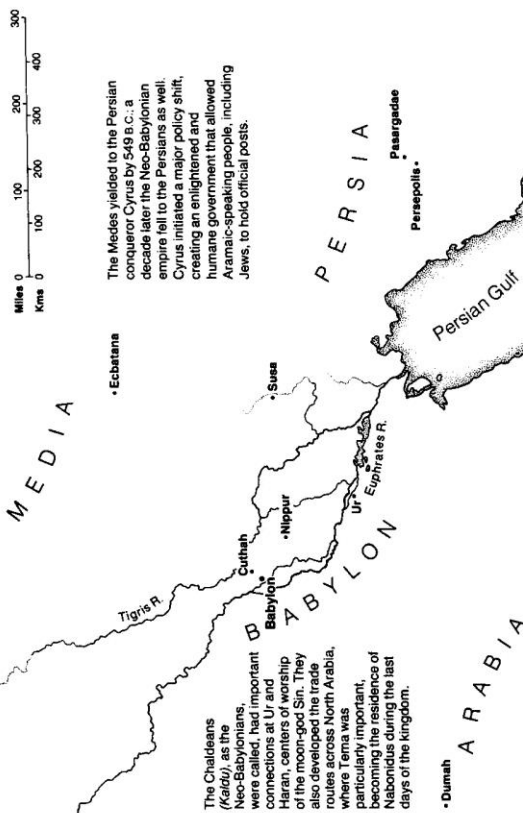
Events in Judah moved swiftly following the death of Josiah. Pharaoh Neco pressed his advantage by deporting the new ruler and appointing a second son of Josiah, Jehoiakim, as king.

The Persian conquest of Lydia in 546 B.C. brought the Greeks into conflict with Persia, a series of events chronicled in great detail by Herodotus.

The prophet Jeremiah was taken to Egypt by Judahite refugees fleeing from Babylonian-controlled territory. They brought him to Tahpanhes, where he continued his prophecies.

Soon a stronger power appeared in the north in the person of Nebuchadnezzar, king of the Chaldeans (Neo-Babylonians), who determined to follow the fierce policies of his Assyrian predecessors. The tribute of Jehoiakim was paid at a distance when he heard of Nebuchadnezzar's approach. After three years as a Babylonian vassal, he rebelled, bringing a rapid response in the form of small-scale raids from Babylonians, Arameans, Moabites and Ammonites

(c. 602 B.C.). Finally, Nebuchadnezzar's forces controlled all of the coastal territory north of the Wadi of Egypt. When 18-year old Jehoiachin had ruled just three months (597 B.C.), the main Babylonian army struck, capturing Jerusalem and exiling the king as a captive in Babylon. Ten thousand persons were deported.



## 2. *Critical matters*

As in all the OT books, some critics claim that Jeremiah is not entirely from Jeremiah the prophet himself (esp. 10:1-16; 17:19-27; 30-33; 50-52). Differences between BH and LXX (1/8<sup>th</sup> shorter). LXX places the prophecies of Jer 46-51 (against the nations) after 25:13. We do not know why the LXX often modified the BH text, but it does not provide any grounds for critical theories of redactions of divergent recensions.

Lamentations is anonymous, but tradition says that Jeremiah wrote it. The content supports his authorship.

## 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

a) *“The portion of Jacob” (10:16; 51:19)*

b) *“They dress the wound . . .” (8:11)*

c) *“The Branch” (23:5; 33:15)*

d) *“Balm in Gilead” (8:22)*

## 4. *Major themes of Jeremiah and Lamentations*

1. Jeremiah denounced corrupt temple institutions, priests, kings, and people. He called for a “radical transformation” of all of them. Jeremiah proclaimed judgment against all unrighteousness.
2. Jeremiah is placed internationally and historically in the external history of Egypt and within the context of the rise of neo-Babylonia, as well as within the internal history of the Jews. What we see in the ebb and flow of this historic context is the breakdown of a monotheistic civilization and culture. In Lamentations we read “How does the city become solitary . . .” Disintegration is what Jeremiah witnessed and thus he speaks extensively about *disintegration*. Nevertheless, Jeremiah offered a hopeful witness, as well. The “new” thing coming would involve the law written the heart . . . The internalization of the law of God would be the motivating heart-force of God’s people in a new way.
3. Jeremiah proclaimed the *new* era of God’s restoration (see “New themes under the prophetic sun” in hermeneutics of prophecy section, p. ). This is the hope offered in Jeremiah, alongside the judgment. Purification would transpire: like silver through the fire the exile would remove the dross. Jeremiah proclaims the *new covenant* through the renewal of the old covenant promise. The covenant-promise to know the Lord would be realized.\
4. Jeremiah proclaimed that the *remnant* of God’s people would return to the land of Canaan, contrary to all appearances.
5. Jeremiah presented the relationship of Judah and YHWH as one of betrothal (2:1-8), and like Hosea compares their present relations to that of a husband grieving over his unfaithful spouse. The “spiritual adultery” theme (see F.A.Schaeffer, *Death in the City*).
6. Jeremiah proclaims the absolute *sovereignty* of God over his creation and human history. The kings of the nations (Assyria/Babylon) will not succeed against the plans and people of God.
7. Jeremiah presents a *realistic*, sweeping, and comprehensive picture of the history of redemption, the cosmic battle for the soul of humanity. He presents a religious perspective that is inseparable from “verifiable” history, and one that is rooted in verifiable history (as do the other OT prophets). That is, as the Bible is in large measure a “glimpse behind the veil,” Jeremiah is a profoundly poetic message that reminds us that the seen portion of history is not all that there is. The events of history cannot be explained merely in terms of natural cause and effect (such as material, social, economic forces). Rather, God continuously works into space-time history which he has made, and he always works into it on the basis of his own character. That is, human history is not “chance history,” nor is the history of redemption random and unpredictable.
8. *Creation* and *redemption* theology are the backbone of Jeremiah’s theology.
9. *Messianic* theology was the hope of Jeremiah’s future-perspective.
10. Lamentations is a collection of Jeremiah’s “laments” over the fall of Jerusalem, post 586. Authorship is unstated, so debate continues. Yet, it is most likely written by Jeremiah.
11. *Theodicy* is also a concern in both of these books, in which questions of Jeremiah’s suffering, Judah’s suffering, the treatment of the prophet by foreigners and compatriots are all framed in the context of God’s absolute justice contrasted with Judah’s wickedness. God has not failed his people, for he is faithful even when they are unfaithful.

## 5. Major prophecies

1. The destruction of Jerusalem.
2. The remnant will return.
3. The destruction of Babylon and Judah's foreign allies.
4. The coming of the Righteous Branch.

## 6. Outline, structure/composition of Jeremiah

➤ See Lamentations structure, p. 460.

Jeremiah poses considerable difficulty for the expositor trying to find a structure to outline. No small part of the problem results from its length (longest in OT), the diversity of material and genre in the book itself, as well as the long time period it covers. There is also the modern difficulty that many contemporaries have in reading poetry and thinking poetically; we tend to force the organization of the text into the "box" of our sermon models or theological treatises.

VanGemerer says the genres of Jeremiah are shaped (rhetorically) chronologically and thematically<sup>502</sup>:

1. Prophecies and poems: Jer 1-20
2. Historical narratives (time of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah): Jer 21-36
3. Historical narratives (surrounding the fall of Jerusalem): Jer 37-45
4. Oracles against the nations: Jer 46-51
5. Historical appendix: Jer 52

The two major sections according to VanGemerer:<sup>503</sup>

- Jer 1-25 – extensive judgment oracles
- Jer 26-52 – an anthology of anthologies

The major sections according to Freeman:<sup>504</sup>

- Jer 1-45 – prophecies concerning Judah and the future Messianic kingdom.
- Jer 46-51 – prophecies concerning foreign nations.
- Jer 52 – historical appendix

Freeman summarizes the widely accepted chronological arrangement of Jeremiah's prophecies:<sup>505</sup>

- ⇒ *Prophecies under Josiah and Jehoiakim*: Jer 2-20.
- ⇒ *Prophecies under Jehoiakim*: Jer 25-27; 35-36; 45:1-49:33.
- ⇒ *Prophecies under Zedekiah*: Jer 21-24; 28-34; 37-39; 49:34-51:64.
- ⇒ *Prophecies and events under Gedaliah*: Jer 43-44.
- ⇒ *Historical appendix*: Jer 52.

“The present canonical shaping reflects an affinity with the exilic setting, a time of upheaval.”<sup>506</sup>

Dorsey also charts the kings under which some of the sections are concerned, showing that the material is not organized chronologically.<sup>507</sup> He points out, however that the material is also not consistently topical. Rather, he suggests seven well-defined units, each having an internal organization. He places the center of Jeremiah at the word of hope in Jer 30:1-33:26. Dorsey provides a helpful summary of the correspondences between the large units, in which language and motifs are remarkably parallel (e.g., Jer 6:22-24 and 50:41-43 in which a reversal of subjects occurs, from Babylon coming against Zion to Persia coming against Babylon).<sup>508</sup>

In order to keep the outline as simple as possible, I will roughly adapt the *NIV Study Bible* outline (p. 1118). There is both a thematic and chronological sequencing in a diversity of patterns, in which some sections follow a more chronological pattern than others, and as Dorsey highlights there is often a conspicuous symmetry:

<sup>502</sup> VanGemerer, *Prophetic Word*, p. 293.

<sup>503</sup> VanGemerer, *Prophetic Word*, p.

<sup>504</sup> Freeman, *Introduction to the OT Prophets*, p. 240.

<sup>505</sup> Freeman, *Introduction to the OT Prophets*, p. 240-241.

<sup>506</sup> VanGemerer, *Prophetic Word*, p. 294.

<sup>507</sup> Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, p. 236.

<sup>508</sup> Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, pp. 243-245.

1. Jeremiah's call: Jer 1
2. Prophecies to Judah: Jer 2-35
3. Jeremiah's suffering: Jer 36-38
4. Jerusalem falls: Jer 39-45
5. Prophecies to the nations: Jer 46-51
6. Historical appendix: Jer 52

## 7. *Exposition and the history of redemption themes in Jeremiah*

### a) *Jeremiah's call: Jer 1*

Anathoth (modern Anata), home of Jeremiah.<sup>509</sup> Anathoth: modern day Anata, 2½ miles north of Jerusalem. The



tell nearby is called Tell Ras el-Kharrubeh, showing occupation since from the Monarchy period up through the Muslim conquest.

Jeremiah's call is one of the most personal of the prophetic calls, for it begins with the proclamation that the Lord has ways *known him* and had set him apart before he was born (1:5). This personal affirmation will serve to prepare him for the extremely difficult ministry ahead. The affirmation also echoes the covenant promise Israel/Judah to know the Lord, as well as the promise to Moses to reveal his word of redemption to them. In light of the latter, it is often noted that Jeremiah's reaction to the Lord's initial word to him was very similar to Moses': "I do not know how to speak. I am only a child" (1:6).

Ex 1:10 Moses said to the LORD, "O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue."

Jeremiah's objection is repudiated by the Lord, while he also reaffirms the covenant-presence promise "I am with you" (1:8).

*Creation and redemption theology:* the Lord is the one who created him and set him apart for his redemptive purposes. Creation of the prophet of God's word corresponds to the word of the Lord, as the creation was created by the word of the Lord. Central in this introduction is the word of God put in Jeremiah's mouth. To confirm that word, he is given two visions at the outset. These

visions also evoke creation-redemption theology, for the Lord is going to use Jeremiah to "destroy" before he recreates in building and planting the remnant.

*Jeremiah's ministry:*

"To pluck and destroy" the wicked (1:10a).  
 "to build and to plant" the remnant of Israel/Judah (1:10b; 31:28).

*Jeremiah's visions:*

**Almond tree** (1:11-12) ~ the Lord is wakeful and watchful that his word will be fulfilled.  
**Boiling pot** (1:13-16) ~ the Lord's judgment-word will be fulfilled.

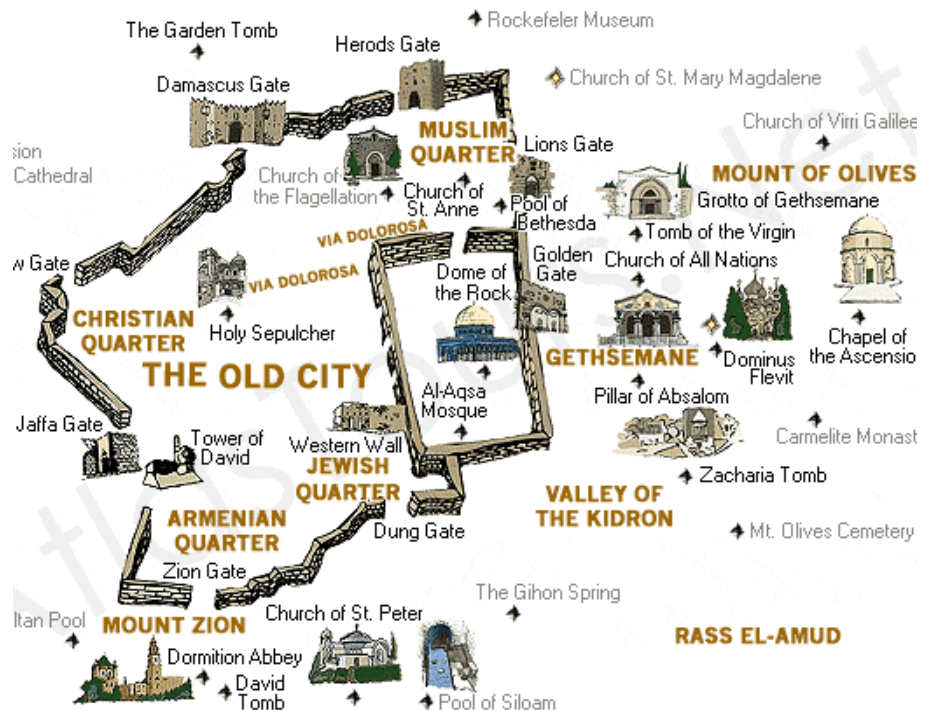
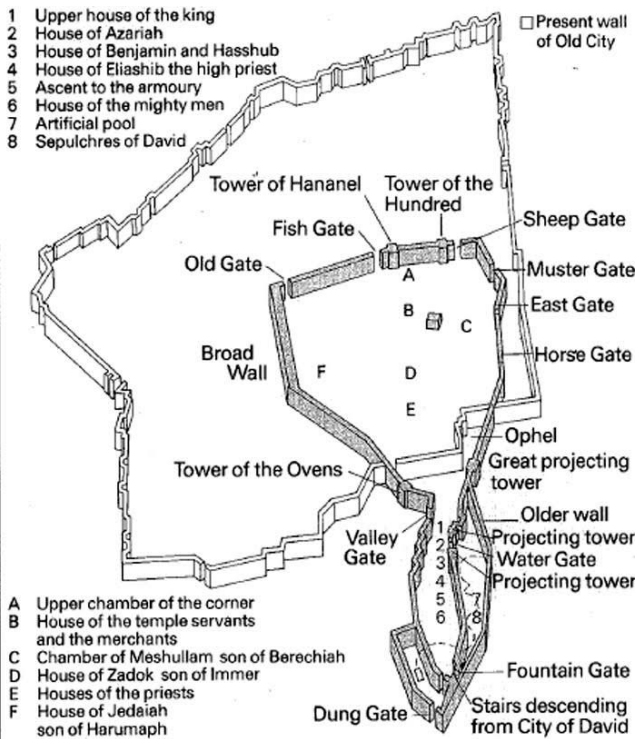
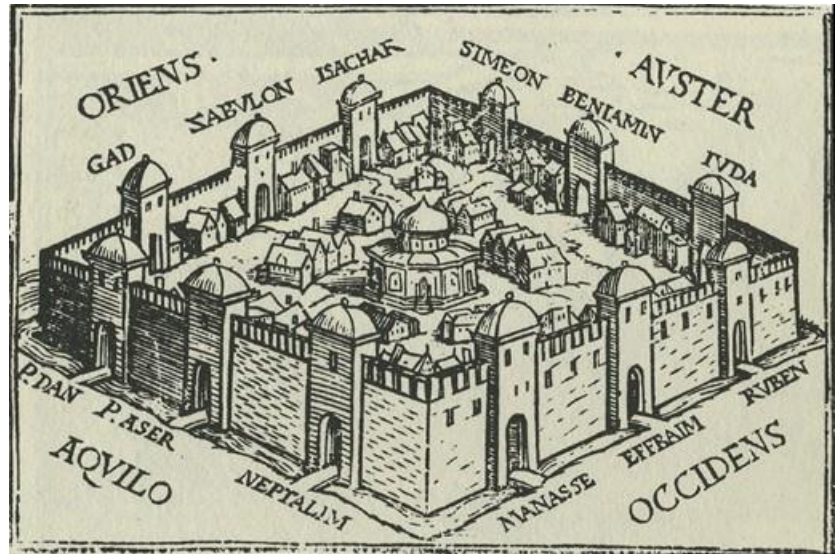
*The judgment is described very specifically: due to their idolatrous apostasy*

- ⇒ Northern kingdoms will attack from the north (1:15a).
- ⇒ Foreign kings will set up their thrones in Jerusalem's gates (1:15b; 39:3) (poss. between Mt Zion and lower city).
- ⇒ Foreign nations will break down Jerusalem's walls (1:15c).
- ⇒ YHWH will pronounce his judgments on his people (1:16a)

<sup>509</sup> Anathoth from Matson Photo Service, Hendricksen, *Survey*, p. 256.

Jer 39:1-4 In the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army and laid siege to it. <sup>2</sup> And on the ninth day of the fourth month of Zedekiah's eleventh year, the city wall was broken through. <sup>3</sup> Then all the officials of the king of Babylon came and **took seats in the Middle Gate**: Nergal-Sharezzer of Samgar, Nebo-Sarsekim a chief officer, Nergal-Sharezzer a high official and all the other officials of the king of Babylon. <sup>4</sup> When Zedekiah king of Judah and all the soldiers saw them, they fled; they left the city at night by way of the king's garden, through the gate between the two walls, and headed toward the Arabah.

(right) Twelve gates of Jerusalem from Holbein's *Illustrations to the Old Testament*, from the Lyons edition of 1543.<sup>510</sup>



<sup>510</sup> From <http://colonialart.org/archive/artList?row=15&col=786a-786b>



Zion Gate



Jaffa Gate



New Gate



Damascus Gate



Herod's Gate



Lion's Gate



Dung Gate



Golden Gate

(left) Gates of Jerusalem today<sup>511</sup>

Jeremiah is solemnly exhorted to preach the whole word of God given to him (1:17-19).

“It is sometimes a temptation for a man to proclaim only as much of God’s Word as the people will receive without rejecting him and his ministry. But God warns Jeremiah in advance that any failure to proclaim faithfully His whole counsel will result in judgment upon the messenger as well as the people. If he fears the consequences of faithful preaching, then he will face a severer judgment at the hands of the Lord. Fidelity to the Word of God is not merely preaching carefully selected themes in order to please the hearers, nor following some liturgy; it is the proclamation of the whole counsel of God, the threats as well as the promises, the judgments as well as the blessings, the rebukes as well as the condolences, at whatever personal cost.<sup>512</sup>”

### b) *Prophecies of judgment and hope to Israel/Judah: Jer 2-35*

- Prophecies in Jer 2-20 were given during the reigns of Josiah (640-609) and Jehoiakim (609-598) (see p. 413).
- Judgment and redemption (see p. 56) are the twin themes throughout this section, wherein the former motif takes precedence over the latter (the judgment prophecies are realized in ch. 39-45).
- The catalogue of Judah/Israel is very extensive in this section.

*Judah’s sins in sum:*

- ➔ Forsaking the fountain of waters (2:13c). Cf. Jn 7:37.
- ➔ Hewing out for themselves broken cisterns (2:13b).

Jeremiah, as the other pre-exilic prophets, appealed at the outset to the Exodus from Egypt (see “creation and exodus-redemption,” pp. ff.) (2:1-7). In the beautiful imagery of a bride and groom, he illustrates their present harlotry by evoking the motifs of the Exodus and wanderings in the desert (Jer 2:1-3, 31-37; 3:1-5).

- ➔ Worthless idols made them worthless (2:5, 20-25, 27-28).
- ➔ Priests did not even *seek* the Lord (2:8a).
- ➔ Judges did not *know* the Lord (2:8b).
- ➔ Prophets prophesied for Baal not YHWH (2:9).
- ➔ Leaders rebelled against YHWH (2:8b, 26f.).
- ➔ The people exchanged the Lord for numerous false gods (2:11, 26-28).
- ➔ The people sought help from foreign nations (Egypt, Assyria) (2:16-18, 36).
- ➔ The people are guilty of “spiritual adultery” with false gods and foreign nations (3:1-10)



<sup>511</sup> From <http://www02.so-net.ne.jp/~saito13i/citymap.gif>.

<sup>512</sup> Freeman, *Introduction to the OT Prophets*, p. 246.



⇒ The people pray with presumption and hypocrisy (3:4)

*True repentance is still an option: Jer 3:11-4:4*

Despite all that the prophet has just said about their apostasies, the Lord offers a remarkable opportunity to repent! (see also Jer 7). The two key facets of this opportunity are that:

- The Lord is merciful (3:12b).
- Israel *must* acknowledge its guilt (3:13, 22-4:4).

Also:

- The Lord is their father and husband (3:14, 19-20).
- Israel is the Lord's son and unfaithful bride (3:19-20) (compare Hosea).

*The gospel of Jeremiah: a profoundly eschatological promise regarding the covenant presence-promise is embedded in Jeremiah's call to repentance:*

Jer 3:16-17 In those days, when your numbers have increased greatly in the land," declares the LORD, "men will no longer say, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' It will never enter their minds or be remembered; it will not be missed, nor will another one be made.<sup>17</sup> At that time they will call Jerusalem The Throne of the LORD, and all nations will gather in Jerusalem to honor the name of the LORD.

Considering that the ark was *the* central item in the sanctuary worship, this is an astounding picture of the freedom of YHWH to manifest his presence as he chooses. That is, his presence was not *dependent* upon the ark or the sanctuary. The promises of redemption are all summarized in the restoration of God's presence, or rather, the restoration of humankind to God's presence through the atoning sacrifices before the ark of the covenant (see Pentateuch Syllabus on Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers). The ark and sanctuary are only *provisional*, and do not provide the final redemption for God's people. These are a people who had become so superstitious that they were even worshipping a multiplicity of gods in order "to cover their bases," and yet the Lord reveals that even his own ark and sanctuary were not the *means* of redemption, but rather they pointed forward to the only One capable of providing that redemption: Messiah. It reminds me of *materialist-Communist* Chinese students of mine that on occasion when we were near Taoist or Buddhist shrines would bow or offer sacrifices "just in case." They also strongly urged me to do the same, "just in case."

The ark was lost (or hidden) sometime before or during the exile (see Jer 3:16-17). It has never been found, and despite contemporary efforts to reinstitute sacrifices and sanctuary worship through remaking all the accoutrements of the sanctuary, we learn from Jeremiah that this will never take place after the remnant returns from exile.<sup>513</sup> Indeed, the ark will not even be missed for there will be a new, intimate knowledge of the Lord. The loss of ark points to Christ the Messiah who will fulfill all that the ark represented in the history of redemption. The remnant will no longer worship other gods, but even more significant, the nations will also worship the Lord. This is the heart of the gospel in Jeremiah.

*Judgment on Judah described: Jer 4:5-31*

- ⇒ Disaster and destruction is coming from the north (4:6).
- ⇒ Kings, officials, priests, and prophets will be afraid (4:9).
- ⇒ The enemy will rapidly destroy Judah (4:7, 13, 16, 20-21).
- ⇒ The entire land will be destroyed (4:27-31).

*True repentance is still an option: Jer 4:1-4, 8, 14; 5:1-1*

Once again, interspersed within descriptions of dire judgment and devastation, the Lord offers repentance. Yet, even if the judgment comes, they would be expected to repent in sackcloth. Repentance means (universal gospel principles):

- ⇒ Return to YHWH (4:1a) ~ exclusive monotheism.
- ⇒ Put away all idols (4:2b) ~ exclusive monotheism.
- ⇒ Serve the Lord truthfully, justly, and righteously (4:2) ~ true worship.
- ⇒ Circumcise your hearts (4:3-4) ~ the internalization of the law through the Spirit.
- ⇒ Put on sackcloth and wail (4:8) ~ external signs of internal repentance.
- ⇒ Wash/cleanse the evil from your heart (4:14a) ~ internalization of the law through the Spirit.
- ⇒ Do not harbor wicked thoughts (4:14b) ~ internalization of the law through the Spirit.
- ⇒ Deal honestly, seek the truth (5:1) ~ the standards of the Torah.
- ⇒ AND, God will forgive (5:1d).

<sup>513</sup> See Robertson, *The Israel of God*, pp.

Yet, as in the other pre-exilic prophets, this offer of repentance is given in the context of impending judgment and with the reasonable certainty that the people will *not* repent. This is seen particularly in Jeremiah's deeply heart-felt cries of anguish in which he speaks *as if* he already sees the enemy in sight:

Jer 4:19 Oh, my anguish, my anguish!

I writhe in pain.

Oh, the agony of my heart!

My heart pounds within me,

I cannot keep silent.

For I have heard the sound of the trumpet;

I have heard the battle cry.

(right) An alabaster relief of an Arab - Assyrian battle found near Nineveh (c. 660 BC).<sup>514</sup>



Also, when the prophet is told to try and find even one person who “deals honestly and seeks the truth” (5:1), it is a forgone conclusion that he will not succeed, for this challenge correlates with the story of Abraham and Lot regarding the sparing of Sodom and Gomorrah for even ten righteous (Gen 18:26-32).

*God's sad indictment against his people* (presented as involving the *creation* itself): Jer 4:22-26; 5:2-31

- ⇒ God's people are fools (4:22a) ~ an absolute oxymoron.
- ⇒ They do not know him (4:22b) ~ ditto.
- ⇒ They are senseless (4:22c).
- ⇒ They have no understanding (4:22d).
- ⇒ They are *skilled* at doing evil (4:22e).
- ⇒ They are like a harlot (4:30).
- ⇒ They are like a woman dying in childbirth (4:31)
- ⇒ They swear falsely (5:2).
- ⇒ They refused to repent, despite being punished (5:3).
- ⇒ The leaders had torn off their bonds (5:5).
- ⇒ They have sworn by gods that are not gods (5:7b).
- ⇒ They covet their neighbor's wife (5:8-9).
- ⇒ They lie about the Lord (5:12), saying he will do nothing.” This is perhaps one of the most serious charges against them (similar to what we saw in Zeph 2:12, those “who think, “The Lord will do nothing”). They were a kind of ancient Deist, or those who placed YHWH on the level of ancient deities who were finite and impersonal.
- ⇒ They are deaf and blind, having rebellious hearts (5:21-24).
- ⇒ They are murderous (5:26-28).
- ⇒ They do not defend the poor and fatherless (5:28).
- ⇒ They *love* prophets who lie and corrupt priests (5:30-31).

The *anti-creational* theology context in which the Jeremiah contrasts their present situation to the beginnings of creation in Genesis 1:

- ⇒ The earth is formless and void (4:23a).
- ⇒ The heavens have no light (4:24b).
- ⇒ The mountains and hills have no foundation (4:25).
- ⇒ The people have all vanished (4:25a).
- ⇒ The birds have vanished (4:25b).
- ⇒ The land is barren (4:26).



The covenant-curse is assumed through this entire passage, in which the Lord is going to destroy his creational and revelational blessings. The temporal and conditional aspects of the covenant were going to be removed (5:6, 14-17): their land, their temple, their provisions, their harvest, their children, their homes would all be taken away by a people who speak a foreign language (5:15).

Yet, even again, the Lord promises a *remnant* (5:18-19): The judgment meant hope for Israel. Without the purging of the exile, there could be no hope of survival. It reminds us of the original need for the provisional *ban* in Canaan in which the need for complete disassociation from pagan religions and cultures was necessary to establish a holy

commonwealth, considering the human propensity to idolatry and sin. The Lord answers the anticipated question, “Why has the Lord done all this to us?,” by reminding them that they did it to themselves through their idolatry (5:19).

*Judgment on Judah is described: Jer 6:1-29*

- ⇒ Jerusalem is attacked by cruel enemies from the north who will come on horses (6:1, 22-25). Cf. 50:41-43 where there is a reversal of meaning.
- ⇒ Siege ramps will be built against Jerusalem (6:6).
- ⇒ They will lose lands, houses, wives, children (6:11-12). ~ covenant-curse in force.

*True repentance is still an option: Jer 6:8, 16-17, 26* (see Jer 4:1-4, 8)

The Lord again offers repentance, though in each of these cases the prophet notes that the people are not interested in repentance. And, as previously, though the offer of repentance and possible mercy is real, it is evident that the people will not accept this grace.

*“Rejected silver”~ the indictment against God’s people (involves the witness of the nations and creation itself: Jer 6:18-19* God the Creator calls on the nations and the natural world to witness his just acts of judgment. The people, who have rejected their God, will be rejected. God’s people are full of contradictions:

- ⇒ They are full of oppression, wickedness, violence (6:6b-7).
- ⇒ They have closed ears (6:10).
- ⇒ They are offended by the word of the Lord (6:10c).
- ⇒ They are greedy for gain (6:13a).
- ⇒ Their prophets and priests are deceitful (6:13b).
- ⇒ They dress their wound as though it was not serious (6:14).
- ⇒ They claim peace when there is none (6:14b).
- ⇒ They are shameless (6:15-16).
- ⇒ They *refuse* to walk in the ancient paths (6:16-17).
- ⇒ They are all corrupted “hardened rebels” (6:28).

*Appeals to creation to witness against God’s people: “Hear, O earth . . .”*

- ⇒ They would not listen to the word of God (6:19b).
- ⇒ They rejected the law of the Lord (6:19c).
- ⇒ They brought worthless sacrifices (6:20).

Despite these prophecies, predictions, and calls to repentance the people, the Lord proclaims that the purging of his people is even in vain (6:29).

*Hypocrisy or repentance to true religion: Jer 7-10 ~ the “Temple Sermon”*

☞ See also Jer 3:11-4:4.

Jeremiah appropriately is called to prophesy this message at the gates of the temple. It is similar to Jesus’ preaching in the environs of the temple against hypocrisy. Prophecies against hypocrisy are one of the most bitter pills to swallow in all generations, for at the heart of our faith is the certainty that we will never “measure up” to God’s standards in this life. Nevertheless, there is a fine line between honest admission of sin and failing and pretentious religion that presumes on God’s grace and forbearance. One central aspect of that hypocritical religion is the bringing of sacrifices without true repentance and contrition in heart and deed. Assuming that God does not care about our sin, while we go through the motions of piety, presumes that God is amoral and impersonal and disinterested. The presumption that being near or in the temple somehow made them safe was utterly unacceptable (7:4, 9). This counters the common notion that “holy places” even exist at all!

*True repentance is still an option: Jer 7:3-8 ~ “If you really change your ways . . .”* (7:5) – witness to the nations of ethical righteousness:

- ⇒ Reform your ways (7:3) ~ true religion acts truly.
- ⇒ Do not oppress the alien, fatherless, or widow (7:6a) ~ the law of God.
- ⇒ Do not shed innocent blood (7:6b, 9) ~ the law of God.
- ⇒ Do not steal (7:9) ~ the law of God.
- ⇒ Do not follow other gods (7:6:c, 9) ~ exclusive monotheism.

*God’s indictment against his people: Jer 7:12-29*

- ⇒ They refused to listen to the Lord (7:13).
- ⇒ They trusted in the temple instead of the Lord (7:12, 14)
- ⇒ They worshipped the Babylonian goddess Ishtar (7:18).



- ⇒ They offered sacrifices as though they were adequate (7:21-22)
- ⇒ They followed their stubborn, evil hearts (7:24).
- ⇒ They refused to listen to the Lord's prophets (7:25-26).
- ⇒ They have set up idols even in YHWH's sanctuary (7:30). ~ abomination.
- ⇒ They have sacrificed their sons and daughters in the fire (7:31).



(left) Goddess Ishtar, leading a king by the hand, Ca. 1700 B.C.<sup>515</sup>

*Ben Hinnom was a well known center of Baalism, and one place Jeremiah prophesied:*

2 Ki 23:10 He [Josiah] desecrated Topheth, which was in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, so no one could use it to sacrifice his son or daughter in the fire to Molech.

2 Ch 28:3 He burned sacrifices in the Valley of Ben Hinnom and sacrificed his sons in the fire, following the detestable ways of the nations the LORD had driven out before the Israelites.

2 Ch 33:6 He sacrificed his sons in the fire in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, practiced sorcery, divination and witchcraft, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger.

Jer 7:31 They have built the high places of Topheth in the Valley of Ben Hinnom to burn their sons and daughters in the fire—something I did not command, nor did it enter my mind.

Jer 7:32 So beware, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when people will no longer call it Topheth or the Valley of Ben Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter, for they will bury the dead in Topheth until there is no more room.

Jer 19:2 and go out to the Valley of Ben Hinnom, near the entrance of the Potsherd Gate. There proclaim the words I tell you,

Jer 19:6 So beware, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when people will no longer call this place Topheth or the Valley of Ben Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter.

Jer 32:35 They built high places for Baal in the Valley of Ben Hinnom to sacrifice their sons and daughters to Molech, though I never commanded, nor did it enter my mind, that they should do such a detestable thing and so make Judah sin.

### *The presence of YHWH and the sanctuary: Jer 7:12-14, 30*

Shiloh, the Name of YHWH, and the presence of YHWH all represented the central motif in the history of redemption. The sanctuary was the place of God's manifested and abiding presence. It was also the place of God's ongoing revelation and the priestly atonement for human sin. There was no more important place in Israel's covenant faith in God. The Name of God represented the immanent and transcendent presence of YHWH, the place he had chosen for his abiding, covenantal, efficacious, glorious presence. Because they had profaned the place of dwelling and worship with idols and immorality, they would lose the immediate presence of YHWH in terms of God's temporal and conditional promises, as well as the sanctuary promise of covenantal-presence there. They had forsaken the presence of God, and he would temporarily be *absent from them*. Most egregious would be God's removal of his abiding presence with them.

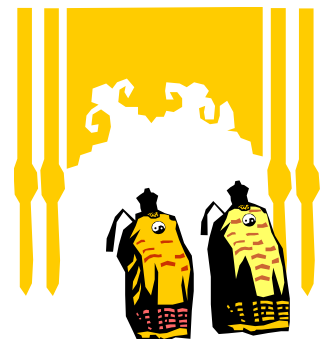
He reminds them again of the root reason for his impending "departure": they had forsaken the covenant of God in which he promised, "Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people" (7:23). The essential heart of the covenant had been trampled on through their syncretism with Baalism and Babylonian idolatry. They even set up abominable idols within the sanctuary itself that "*bears my Name*" (8:30-31)! There could be no worse form of taking the name of the Lord in vain than placing idols in the sanctuary of God's presence.

Further, their presumption that burnt offerings would suffice, regardless of their spiritual state, meant that they had no grasp of the ways of God. It is remarkable here that the Lord says in exodus imagery that when he brought them out of Egypt, he "did not just give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices, but I gave them this command: 'Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people.'" The essence of true faith is again expounded (see the "law and gospel-grace," p. and the "law and the spirit of the law," pp. ff.). That is, contrary to modern Marcionite assumptions that the law of God and the grace of God are divergent dispensations of revelation and redemption, the prophet here tells us that true religion is *knowing and walking with God* and having the law written on the heart. As for the critical notion of *collusion* between prophets and priests (p. ), it is obvious that this prophet understood that there is a *proper*, God-intended relationship between the law, the sacrifices, and the grace of God.

### *Judgment on Judah described: Jer 7:15-8:3*

- ⇒ They will be cast from the presence of YHWH (7:15).

<sup>515</sup> From <http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/ishtar.gif>.



- ⇒ The Lord will not answer their prayers (7:16).
- ⇒ The Lord will reject their generation as his people (7:29).
- ⇒ The city and people of Jerusalem will be devastated (7:32-34).
- ⇒ The graves of the false prophets and priests will be desecrated (8:1-3).

*God's indictment and judgment against his people: Jer 8:4-10:22*

Interweaving the main themes he has already addressed, Jeremiah in this poetic section also includes the beginning of his heartfelt personal grief. God's people:

- ⇒ They cling to deceit (8:5).
- ⇒ They do not repent of their course (8:6).
- ⇒ They do not know the requirements of God (8:7c).
- ⇒ They claim wisdom when actually they are false and will be shamed (8:8-9).
- ⇒ They are all greedy (8:10b).
- ⇒ The priests and prophets practice deceit (8:10c).
  - They "dress the wound as though it were not serious" (8:11a).
  - They falsely proclaim peace (8:11b).
  - They are shameless (8:12).
- ⇒ They have provoked God with idols (19:c, 14).
- ⇒ They speak lies (9:3).
- ⇒ They are untrustworthy, slanderous, deceptive, false (9:4-6, 8).
- ⇒ They have forsaken the law of God (9:13).

*Jeremiah laments: Jer 8:18, 21-22, 9:1-2, 10 (compare Lamentations)*

As Jeremiah is called the "weeping prophet," we are introduced to this compassionate side of his character here. Although many of the prophets "get emotional," Jeremiah is generally considered the most transparent. Of course his length gives us plenty of material to draw upon. Yet, the Psalms provide us with comparable material, as well as Paul:

Rom 9:2-4 I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. <sup>3</sup> For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, <sup>4</sup> the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. <sup>5</sup> Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

Jeremiah cries out that his heart is faint, and even asks the rhetorical question, reflecting on the earlier prophesy about the Lord's presence in 8:12-15, "Is the Lord not in Zion? Is her King no longer there?" (cf. 8:18). The "absence" of the Lord was part of the covenant-curse, though of course this is *not the absence of God*, but rather the absence of his immediate, covenantal-presence manifesting the temporal, conditional blessings and his word. Redemption history is the story of God restoring us to his presence, thus the significance of Jeremiah's rhetorical question was obvious to all. The removal of Elijah was one of their most poignant earlier lessons about the removal of the word of God and his covenantal-presence (see Judges-Esther syllabus). They had many opportunities to learn that the presence of God was conditional, even if the eternal redemption-promises were unconditional. Complacency is probably too gentle a description of their spiritual state, for they were in radical disjunction with the conditions of the covenant.

*The people's lament: Jer 9:17-22*

The Lord tells the people they need to prepare to lament for all the disaster coming upon them. The loss of the blessings of the covenant are going to be real and pervasive: death, loss of riches, loss of cattle and flocks, and exile.

*True faith is still an option: Jer 9:3, 12-13, 23-24; 10:1-25*

Even in the midst of all this ominous prophecy, Jeremiah elicits true faith on the part of God's people and himself. They can have faith and orthodoxy even now, even after all that he has said about their rebellion and the coming judgment. If there ever was a time that this would seem impossible, it would have been during Jeremiah's lifetime. The people are called implicitly and explicitly to true faith and living in God:

- ⇒ Triumph by truth in the land (9:3b) ~ the revealed truth of God and reality.
- ⇒ Obey the law of God (9:13) ~ the revealed standards of God's character.
- ⇒ Understand and know the Lord (9:24) ~ the essence of the covenant-promise and relation.
- ⇒ Circumcise hearts not just flesh (9:25-26) ~ the spirit of the law written on the heart by the Spirit.
- ⇒ Do not learn the idolatrous/superstitious ways of the nations (10:1-5) ~ sound orthodoxy is not an "option." Do not fear them.

- Jeremiah's confession of orthodox faith:
  - Monotheism: YHWH is unique (10:6).
  - Omnipotence: God alone is all-powerful (10:7).
  - Idols are nothing compared to YHWH (10:8-9, 14-15).
  - YHWH is:
    - The true God ~ righteous and just.
    - The living God ~ active, involved, immanent.
    - The eternal King ~ uncreated ruler of all.
    - The Judge of the nations (10:10) ~ holy God.
    - Creator of the universe (10:12-13) ~ omnipotent maker/ruler of all.
    - Creator of all things is the "portion ( ) of Jacob" ~ personal and infinite God.
    - Lord of hosts (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת) is his name (10:16).

*Jeremiah laments and prays: Jer 10:19-25 (see esp. Lamentations)*

The prophet ends this beautiful confession of faith in God with a powerful lament about the coming judgment on his people in Judah. He feels the pain of their loss even more than those it is coming upon, even before it happens, even though he himself is not culpable in their guilt. His sensitive conscience and compassion prevent any charge that he is harsh and "judgmental." He then prays, acknowledging that "a man's life is not his own," giving his life into the hands of God, and asks for God's mercy based on justice not wrath (10:23-25). This is appropriate in the context of great grief over Judah's impending judgment, and it also prepares us for the plot against him that will soon follow in Jer 11:18-23), for as the story unfolds we see the principle of providence worked out powerfully in Jeremiah's life.

Prov 16:9 In his heart a man plans his course,  
but the LORD determines his steps.



*Jeremiah proclaims the covenant of God: Jer 11:1-17*

As noted, (see "covenant law and prophets," p. ), the prophets were sent to call the people of God back to the ideals and standards of the law and covenant of God. Contrary to many critics, the prophets were very cognizant of the covenant concept. This section is a good example of just how well Jeremiah understood the covenant. It is also worth considering that Jeremiah himself as a priest and prophet knew so much and understood so much of the law and the covenant in a time when the people as a whole had forgotten both. Note: shortly after Jeremiah's call to prophesy, the books of the law were found in the temple and Josiah institutes sweeping reforms in response (621). How much did the people know is harder to determine than how much they had forgotten.

*The covenant reaffirmation in Jeremiah 11 entails:*

- ⇒ Reaffirmation of the covenant curses (11:3, 8b) (read Deut 27:9-28:68; cf. Jer 17:1-8).
- ⇒ Obedience to the law of God (11:4b).
- ⇒ Remembrance of the exodus from Egypt (11:4a, 7, 10).
- ⇒ Reaffirmation of the covenant promise *to be their God* (11:4c).
- ⇒ Reaffirmation of the conditional blessings of the covenant (11:5).
- ⇒ Condemnation of useless idolatry (11:9-13).
- ⇒ The absence and silence of God as judgment (11:14-17).

*Jeremiah's danger and God's deliverance: Jer 11:18-23*

This begins the narratives of Jeremiah's personal battles resulting from his prophetic ministry.

Jeremiah's conspirators:

- ⇒ Sought to kill him (11:19).
- ⇒ Came from his hometown (11:21).

Compare:

**Isa 53:7 He was oppressed and afflicted,  
yet he did not open his mouth;  
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,  
and as a sheep before her shearers is silent,  
so he did not open his mouth.**  
**Mtt 10:36 a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'**

Yet, God would protect and deliver him and bring into judgment those responsible for seeking Jeremiah's life (11:18, 21-22).

*Jeremiah's prayer and God's answer: Jer 12:1-17*

Jeremiah prays for understanding, though many call this a “complaint.” He asks a difficult question, “Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why do the faithless live at ease?” (12:1), similarly to Asaph the psalmist:

Ps 73:1-3 Surely God is good to Israel,  
to those who are pure in heart.  
But as for me, my feet had almost slipped;  
I had nearly lost my foothold.  
For I envied the arrogant  
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

*The Lord answers Jeremiah with hope: Jer 12:5-13*

Even though Jeremiah will suffer more in the future (12:5-6), God is going to judge the one he loves (12:7-13), while on the other hand he will bring their enemies into judgment (12:14-15), and then he will bring his own loved remnant back from exile (12:15-17). The latter promise includes a messianic element of the promise to the Gentile nations to be included in the promises of the covenant. Thus, we should marvel at the Lord giving such an unexpected response of hope to Jeremiah's prayer, despite Jeremiah's own impending suffering.

*Jeremiah's prophetic enactment and symbolic warnings: Jer 13:1-14**1. Linen belt: 13:1-11*

The linen was unwashed (unclean), representing Israel (corrupt priests who wore linen as a sign of holiness). The ruined belt portrayed the state of Israel: worthless in their pride of rebellion and idolatry. Buried at Perath, a place near the Euphrates river (350 miles from Anathoth), suggests the dangerous, corrupting influence of Babylon and Assyria upon Judah.

*2. Wineskins: 13:12-14*

Wine pictured the blessing of God upon them in the land of the promise, yet the “drunkenness” pictured in the Lord's coming wrath upon them indicted them in their *intoxication* with foreign gods and powers, as well as their certain propensity to literal drunkenness. The effects of drunkenness, staggering and blindness, are like the coming effects of God's judgment upon them: there will be chaos and confusion, blindness and darkness. The prophet indicts all: kings, priests, prophets, and those in Jerusalem (13:13).

*3. Dark hills: 13:15-17*

Once again, in the heart of a very dark prophecy of judgment, the prophet calls for repentance, which presumably means it was a real offer (even if it would not at this stage pre-empt the judgment). This passage may echo Isa 58: the people hope for light, but all is darkness. Polarities of darkness and light represent a key motif in the Bible: they are the primary distinction between truth and falsehood, righteousness and wickedness, good and evil. Though the offer to repent is real, the certainty that they will not avail themselves of it is evident, as well as is the exile of Judah (13:17d). “Give glory to God” means to confess, repent, and honor God.



**Give glory to God  
before the darkness on the darkening hills  
Hope for light  
before the thick darkness and gloom**

*4. Fallen thrones: 13:18-19*

Jeremiah possibly addresses Jehoiachin and his mother Nehushta:

2 Ki 24:8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Nehushta daughter of Elnathan; she was from Jerusalem.

Jer 22:24-26 “As surely as I live,” declares the LORD, “even if you, Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, were a signet ring on my right hand, I would still pull you off. 25 I will hand you over to those who seek your life, those you fear—to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and to the Babylonians. 26 I will hurl you and the mother who gave you birth into another country, where neither of you was born, and there you both will die.”

The fulfillment of this specific prediction occurred in 597 B.C., when Jehoiachin and his mother were carried into exile (2 Ki 24:8, 12, 15):

Jer 29:2 (This was after King Jehoiachin and the queen mother, the court officials and the leaders of Judah and



Jerusalem, the craftsmen and the artisans had gone into exile from Jerusalem.)

Pride of power would be reduced to nothing in the exile. Royalty would be but commoners, exiles with all the rest of those living in Judah. The prophetic condemnation of *Realpolitik* could not get much more specific than this. The extent of the judgment would be far reaching, even to the Negev (due to Nebuchadnezzar's campaigns).

#### 5. *Skirts torn off: 13:20-27*

This section combines several images that illustrate the spiritual state of Judah: essentially "spiritual adultery."

- ⇒ The shepherdess who has abandoned her flock is Judah (13:20) ~ unfaithful Judah had betrayed the entire nation.
- ⇒ The woman in labor who has no conscience of shame (13:21) ~ unfaithful Judah turned to foreign powers.
- ⇒ The shameless prostitute who is accustomed to doing evil (13:22-27) ~ unfaithful Judah had turned to foreign gods.

All of these motifs can overlap in meaning, and can also have two levels of meaning, both literal and spiritual. That is, the spiritual adultery of Israel with foreign nations and gods also involved sexual corruption at all levels of society. He describes a people that are so habituated in their sin that there is as much hope of them repenting as there is of an Ethiopian changing his skin or of a leopard changing his spots (13:23) (motifs from ancient proverbs and tales). The *Bondage of the Will* (Luther) is in view!



He includes a motif of winnowing which illustrates the purging that would come through the exile-judgment (13:24).

Concluding with a rhetorical question, "How long will you be unclean?", suggests still a remote possibility of repentance. Nevertheless, as before, he does not offer any hope with his question that they will answer it.

#### *Judgment on Judah described and Jeremiah laments and prays: Jer 14:1-15:21*

The covenant-curse is described in vivid detail in this section.

##### *The indictment and judgment against God's people:*

- ⇒ They have great backsliding (14:7).
- ⇒ They love to wander in sin (14:10).
- ⇒ The prophets prophesy lies against God's judgment (14:14-16).

##### *Judgment on Judah described: Jer 14:1-18*

- ⇒ Famine in the land of Judah (14:2-6) ~ severity of the covenant-curse in force.
- ⇒ God will "absent himself" although there is hope of his presence (14:8-9) ~ hope of redemption in jeopardy.
- ⇒ Their sacrifices will be rejected (14:12a) ~ pretentious religion rejected.
- ⇒ They will be destroyed by enemies, famine (drought), and plague (14:12b) ~ covenant curse.
- ⇒ Prophet, priest, and people are all going into exile (14:17-18) ~ God & prophet are deeply "grieved."

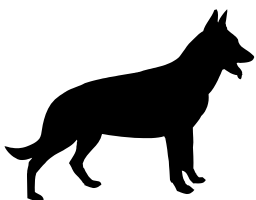


##### *Jeremiah prays confession of orthodox faith: Jer 14:19-22*

- ⇒ God has rejected and afflicted Judah (14:19) ~ divine Judge.
- ⇒ Judah hoped for healing and peace, but none came (14:19c) ~ divine healer.
- ⇒ He acknowledges his part in their wickedness (14:20) ~ holiness a prerequisite.
- ⇒ God's name needs to be protected and honored (14:21a) ~ holy God.
- ⇒ God remembers his covenant (14:21c) ~ covenanting God of presence.
- ⇒ Idols avail nothing to end droughts (14:22) ~ finite gods *versus* omnipotent God.
- ⇒ God alone can heal, bring peace, remember his covenant, end droughts (14:22c).

##### *God answers Jeremiah's prayer of confession: Jer 15:1-9*

- ⇒ Moses and Samuel could not even intercede for these people (15:1) ~ need for a Savior.
- ⇒ The people will be sent away from God's presence (15:1b) ~ covenantal "absence."
- ⇒ Foreigners will accomplish God's judgment-work (15:2) ~ his "strange task."
- ⇒ Swords, dogs, birds, beasts will accomplish God's judgment-work (15:3).
- ⇒ Judah will be rejected, winnowed, and widowed (15:5-9) ~ purging of the exile.





*Jeremiah laments and prays and the Lord answers him with hope: Jer 15:10-21*

Jeremiah greatly feels the pain of the judgment coming on Judah, and, as previously, does not conceal his feeling from us. He is feeling the pain of rejection for his prophetic message, although he has been upright (15:10). God answers him with hope: he would be delivered *for a good purpose* (שְׁרִיטֶיךָ לְטוֹבָה), and his enemies would be brought down (15:11). Undoubtedly, the most meaningful side of this response to Jeremiah is that his suffering had meaning. See discussion on the prosperity gospel and suffering, p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.f.**

On the other hand, the Lord addresses Judah with no hope of escaping judgment (15:12-14): they will be plundered, enslaved, and taken to a foreign country.

Jeremiah then prays again for protection, deliverance, and vindication (15:15-18). Further, he is struggling with his faith and his suffering. He applies the retribution principle to himself, concluding that he loves the word of God, the name of God, and righteous living, thus he is suffering unjustly. He is looking at the surface and appearances, and questions God's reliability. We need not speculate on all the variables of his questioning, for like Job we see a human faced with the difficult questions of existence in the midst of severe hardship. God's answer to him helps to clarify the situation for us:

- ☉ Repent (תָּשׁוּבָה) and be restored (וְאֶשְׁיבֶךָ) to serve me (15:19a) ~ Jeremiah sinned in word.
- ☉ Speak worthy words (the word of God) and be my spokesman (15:19b) ~ the prophet of God.
- ☉ Let Judah turn to you (יָשׁוּבָה), but do not turn to them (לֹא-תִשָּׁוּבוּ) ~ do not be conformed to the world.
- ☉ You will be a fortified wall (15:20a) ~ God is his strength, fortress, and shield.
- ☉ They will not overcome you (15:20b) ~ God is his redeemer.
- ☉ I am with you to rescue and save you (15:20c-21) ~ savior (נִצְלָה and פָּדָה).

*Jeremiah's prophetic enactment of bachelorhood and Judah's judgment: Jer 16:1-21*

The Lord had Jeremiah suffer even the greater humiliation of being wifeless and childless because of the illustration this would communicate to Israel of their impending doom. Jeremiah is further instructed to avoid all funerals and mourning, as well as all feasts. Underlying his prohibition concerning these mourning rituals, were pagan religious rites of cutting oneself and shaving (cf. Lev 19:28; Deut 14:1; Jer 5:1).



All of the signs of covenant-blessing are illustrated by Jeremiah's prophetic actions foretelling the covenant-curses: progeny, promised-land, and produce/prosperity:

- ⊕ *Unmarried* ~ because the children of Israel will perish (16:1-4) ~ progeny and land.
- ⊕ *Unmourned* ~ because the Lord's pity had ceased (16:5-7) ~ progeny and land.
- ⊕ *Unfeasted* ~ because the Lord will bring to an end all sounds of joy (16:8-9) ~ prosperity.

*Elect remnant of God's people will return after their certain exile and his self-revelation: 16:14-16*

Again, in the midst of dire prophetic doom, the Lord promises the preservation of a remnant. Hope is alive, so long as YHWH is a living God: "As surely as the Lord lives . . ." He affirms, in stark contrast to the idols, that

- ⇒ YHWH is a living God (16:14-15) -- monotheism
- ⇒ YHWH brought Israel up out of Egypt (16:14b) – Deliverer
- ⇒ YHWH will bring Israel down from exile in Babylon (16:15a) – elect remnant restored
- ⇒ YHWH will restore the remnant (16:15b – Sovereignty in salvation)
  - Thus he will repay them with exile from the land for their idolatries (16:16-18).
- ⇒ YHWH is their strength and fortress (16:19a) – omnipotent God
- ⇒ YHWH will draw the nations to himself (16:19b) – the mission of God in fulfilling the covenant-promise to Adam and Eve, Abraham, etc.
- ⇒ YHWH will teach them his power and might (16:21a) -- omnipotent God, sovereign
- ⇒ YHWH will reaffirm his covenant promise: They will know the Lord's name (16:21b).

*Covenant cursing and covenant blessing (read Deut 27:9-28:68): Jer 17:1-27 (cf. Jer 11:1-17)*

He places the contrasts of the cursings and blessings in the context of describing Judah's sin as being *inscribed* on their hearts, in deviation from the standards of the law being written on the heart by the Spirit of God. God's people had become so corrupt that their idolatrous sin was more habitual than their faith in YHWH. Their sins are written on the horns of the altar, as well, illustrating that even sacrifice on the altar could not erase them. As in Deuteronomy, there is a contrasting of blessings and cursings:

*Curses for all the idolaters of the land: the land-promise is not irrevocable (see Deut 4, 6)*

- ⇒ Their land will be taken (17:2-3a).
- ⇒ Their prosperity will be taken (17:3b-4).
- ⇒ Their freedom will be taken (17:5).

- ⇒ They will be cursed (17:5).
- ⇒ They will not prosper (17:6).
- ⇒ They will be exiled (17:4, 6b).
- ⇒ They will be "rewarded" (17:10-11).
- ⇒ They will be put to shame (17:3, 18a).
- ⇒ They will be terrified on the day of disaster (17:18b).

*Blessings for all the obedient of the land:*

- ⇒ They will have confidence in YHWH (17:7).
- ⇒ They will be like trees planted by water (17:8a).
- ⇒ They will be provided for without fear, bearing fruit (7:8b).
- ⇒ They will be rewarded (17:10).
- ⇒ They will not be put to shame who hope in YHWH (17:13).
- ⇒ They will be healed and saved (17:14).
- ⇒ They will be kept from terror (17:11-18).



In the midst of these blessings and curses, we have perhaps the most quoted rhetorical question from the OT, yet it is generally cited without its answer in the following verse:

**The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure.  
Who can understand it? Jer 17:9**

**I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind . . . Jer 17: 10**

This strikes at the center of history of redemption: the goal of redemption is a new heart and mind, the spirit of the law written on the heart, hearts of stone turned to hearts of flesh (see "new covenant," pp. 50, 53 and Jer 30:1-31:40 below). God is telling us in the midst of this doom filled passage of curses that he will still bless his covenant-people, and particularly will renew their hearts, for *he alone* knows the heart. If we fail to see the remarkable promise of hope here, then the entire passage becomes a tangled mess of themes. Yet, it is entirely coherent when understood as rooted in the Torah, the covenant blessings and the covenant curses, the conditional blessings/curses and the eternal, unconditional promise of redemption.

*Jeremiah prays and laments and God answers: Jer 17:14-27*

As part of the contrasts of this section of cursing and blessing motifs, Jeremiah interjects another prayer for his healing and redemption. Despite his emotional turmoil and personal struggle with his life and ministry, he knows that only the Lord can help him. He knows where his hope comes from. This presupposes that the exile-judgment had not yet arrived, for he asks for his persecutors to be put to shame.

The Lord's answer to Jeremiah may appear unexpected, for he tells him to go stand in the gate of the city (east gate "of the people"?) and proclaim to them the *Sabbath law*. We have not seen this theme before in Jeremiah, but it makes good sense that one of their most important laws would be brought into view at this point. The Sabbath principle essentially represented all the Torah to them, for it was most distinctively revelatory for the people of God to honor the day of YHWH's Sabbath. It also has great eschatological significance (see hermeneutics section above on "Creational eschatology," p. , and Isa 56 discussion for Sabbath texts, p. ). It is a remarkable inclusion, for the tone of these verses is Deuteronomical, in that he sets out the conditions of the covenant: obey this and you will be blessed, disobey and you will be cursed. That is, he seems to be saying that they still could get their lives back in line with the covenant-law and even escape the impending judgment!

*Jeremiah's prophetic enactment at the potter's house: Jer 18:1-19:15*

The motif of the potter in the Bible:

Job 10:9 Remember that you molded me like clay.  
Will you now turn me to dust again?

Psa 2:9 You will rule them with an iron scepter;  
you will dash them to pieces like pottery.

Isa 29:16 You turn things upside down,



as if the potter were thought to be like the clay!  
 Shall what is formed say to him who formed it,  
 “He did not make me”?  
 Can the pot say of the potter,  
 “He knows nothing”?

Isa 41:25 “I have stirred up one from the north, and he comes—  
 one from the rising sun who calls on my name.  
 He treads on rulers as if they were mortar,  
 as if he were a potter treading the clay.

Isa 45:9 “Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker,  
 to him who is but a potsherd among the potsherds on the ground.  
 Does the clay say to the potter, ‘What are you making?’  
 Does your work say, ‘He has no hands’?

Isa 64:8 Yet, O LORD, you are our Father.  
 We are the clay, you are the potter;  
 we are all the work of your hand.

Zech 11:13 And the LORD said to me, “Throw it to the potter”—the handsome price  
 at which they priced me! So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the  
 house of the LORD to the potter.

Ro 9:21 Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay  
 some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?

● Clay in the potter’s hand is reshaped (18:1-23):

Jer 18:4 But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the  
 potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him.  
 Jer 18:6 “O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does?” declares the  
 LORD. “Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of  
 Israel.



(right) Egyptian Potter

Old Kingdom (2544-2260) limestone.

*True repentance is still possible:*

The illustration of the potter is an ideal one to convey the personal involvement of YHWH with his people: he is shaping them, remolding them, and here reminds them of the covenant stipulations and his willingness to forgive those who repent (18:7-8, 11-12). This is thus a *conditional predictive prophecy* of judgment. As previously, despite the dire doom in store for the unrepentant, the Lord does not leave any opportunity for naysayers to claim that God was not longsuffering or just (“fair”): he again allows them opportunity to repent (cf. 18:20c). Also, the illustration demonstrates that God is faithfully persevering in redeeming his people. He does not give up on account of some poorly usable clay, but starts anew until he accomplishes his task. Israel was clay in the *creative* hands of the Lord, contrary to their presumptions of self-sufficiency and human sovereignty. This conveys also the conditional and eternal aspects of the covenant promises, for the conditional aspects depended on Israel’s obedience, whereas the unconditional aspects were dependent on God’s faithfulness. Yet, this potter also illustrates God’s creative, sovereign rule over all the nations, and that his rule is not capricious or arbitrary (18:7-10).

*God’s indictment against his people is that they: 18:12-15*

- ⇒ Have forgotten their Lord (18:13-15a).
- ⇒ Burn incense to worthless idols (18:15b).

*Judgment on Judah described in terms of the covenant-curse: Jer 18:16-17*

- ⇒ Their land will be laid waste (18:16a) ~ conditional covenant blessing lost in covenant curse on land.

**PROSPERITY**

- ⇒ They will be scorned (18:16b-c) ~ covenant curse on people. **PROGENY**
- ⇒ They will be scattered before their enemies [Babylon] (18:17a) ~ covenant curse on land and people.
- ⇒ They will lose the immediate covenant-presence of YHWH (18:17b) ~ God’s “absence,” his face hidden.

**PRESENCE**

“In short, with God repentance is not a change of mind but is his consistent response according to his changeless nature to the change in the nation’s conduct.”<sup>516</sup>

*Jeremiah’s prayer, danger, and God’s answer: Jer 18:18-23*

As before, in the midst of his prophesying, Jeremiah is faced with grave danger from those who despise his message. They very deliberately set out to encourage people to pay no attention to what he was saying and to kill him (18:18, 20a). This time Jeremiah prays a prayer for vindication, even that these people would suffer famine, the sword, barrenness, and foreign invaders. Like the *imprecatory psalms*, this kind of prayer in Jeremiah is not a prayer of personal *vengeance*, quite the contrary they are prayers for *God’s* justice. That is, instead of taking things into his own hands he prays within the context of imminent death that God would deliver and vindicate him and judge his enemies. These enemies would rather trust the false priests and prophets among them than trust the Lord’s priest and prophet. They plotted to murder him on the false charges of treason. Jeremiah’s prayer is not *vindictive*, but rather *judicial*, that God would intervene with justice. Despite their persistent plans to kill him, Jeremiah had repeatedly prayed for them and continued to have deep compassion for them.

The covenant ideal is best expressed by Jesus and Paul:

Matt 5:44 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

Rom 12:20 On the contrary: “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”



The answer to Jeremiah’s prayer is contained in the following prophetic enactment involving a fired clay pot.

● Clay pot is shattered (19:1-13):

Jer 19:1 This is what the LORD says: “Go and buy a clay jar from a potter. Take along some of the elders of the people and of the priests

Jeremiah is told to go out the infamous Valley of Ben Hinnom (one place of Ahaz’s and Manasseh’s evils) where Baalism was deeply entrenched (see Hinnom, p. 420). Josiah attempted to defile the place in order to prevent further idolatry there (2 Ki 23:10). Jeremiah takes elders and priests to the entrances to the Potsherd Gate (probably associated with the Dung Gate due to the dumping of potters’ material there, as well as garbage after Josiah ordered such a desecration [2 Ki 23:10]). This appears in the NT as Gehenna (hell), standing for the “Ge(valley) of Hinnom.” After Jeremiah prophesied the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem, he smashed the clay jar as an illustration of what the Divine Potter would do to them (19:10). There is a progression of severity in these potter enactments, for the potter at the wheel can still refashion the clay, whereas the prophet with a smashed pot can do nothing to put it back together. This prophetic enactment was not well received (Jer 20), for it sent the clear message that Judah’s future was near its end.

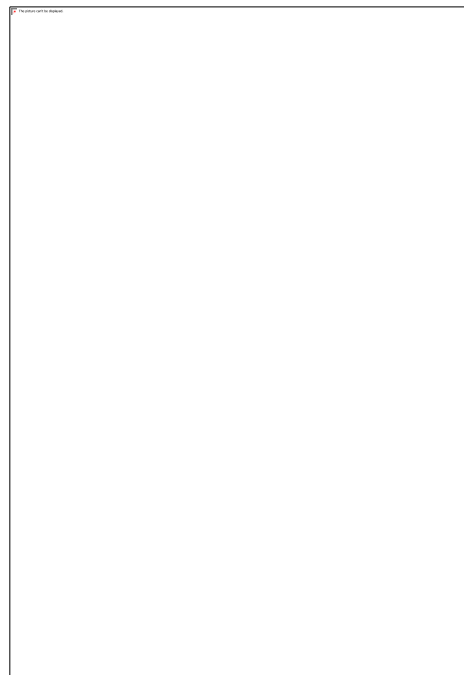
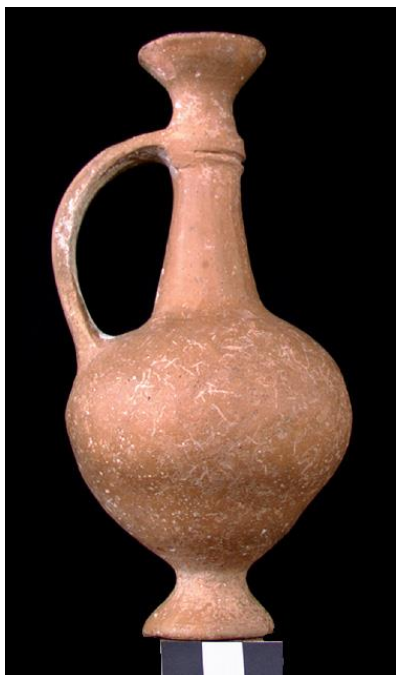
*God’s indictment against his people is that they: Jer 19:3-7*

- Forsaken YHWH (19:4a).
- Worshipped foreign gods (19:4b).
- Filled the place with the murder of innocent (19:4c).
- Burned their sons for Baal (19:5a).
- Were “stiff-necked” (19:15b).

*Judgment on Judah described: Jer 19:6-15*

- Hinnom will be called the Valley of Slaughter (19:6).
- Judah will fall by the sword (19:7).
- Jerusalem will be devastated (19:8-9).
- Broken Judah can not simply be mended, the pot is smashed (19:10).

<sup>516</sup> Feinberg, *Jeremiah*, p. 135.



(left) Ceramic juglet. Basinger II ware. Cypriot import.

Late Bronze II. Israel.<sup>517</sup>

(right) Ceramic juglet. vertical burnish. Early Bronze (Canaanite). Israel.<sup>518</sup>

*Jeremiah is beaten and put in stocks by Pashhur (פִּשְׁחֻר) the priest: Jer 20:1-6*

The reaction to Jeremiah's message of destruction was not received well: the priest Pashur had Jeremiah beaten and put in "stocks" (הַמִּקְפָּזִים, 20:1) at the Upper Gate of Benjamin *at the Lord's temple* (Feinberg say this was a most conspicuous place in the city<sup>519</sup>). In contrast to this egregious sin against the Lord's prophet, a *false* prophet had been placed in stocks earlier:

2 Chron 16:10 Asa was angry with the seer because of this; he was so enraged that he put him in prison [הַמִּקְפָּזִים, "stocks"]. At the same time Asa brutally oppressed some of the people.

Jeremiah takes the opportunity to prophesy there against the priest Pashhur when he released Jeremiah from the stocks (20:3).

*Judgment on Judah described: Jer 20:4-6*

- ⇒ Priest Pashur will be a terror to all because of his devastation (20:4a).
- ⇒ He will see the devastation with his own eyes (20:4b).
- ⇒ The king of Babylon will carry them into Babylon (20:4c).
- ⇒ The king of Babylon will receive their wealth (20:5).
- ⇒ Priest Pashur himself will be carried into Babylon and die (20:6).

*Jeremiah's lament-prayer and confession of orthodox faith: Jer 20:7-18*

Jeremiah is terribly grieved at his persecution: they mock him, ridicule him, insult him, whisper against him, "report" against him, seek revenge on him (20:7-10).

Yet, Jeremiah still confesses orthodox faith in the Lord, trusting that he will be delivered and vindicated in time:

- ⇒ The Lord is with him as his defense (20:11a).
- ⇒ The enemies of the Lord's prophet will be disgraced (20:11b).
- ⇒ The Lord is Almighty (20:12a).
- ⇒ The Lord examines the righteous (20:12b).
- ⇒ The Lord rescues the needy from the wicked (20:13b).

Jeremiah's orthodoxy does not make him immune to intense feelings of anguish over his situation and that of the nation (20:14-18). Indeed, it may be the source of his anguish! He wishes he could never have been born, much like Job many years earlier:

Job 3:3 "May the day of my birth perish, and the night it was said, 'A boy is born!'"

<sup>517</sup> From the Cobb Institute Museum at <http://www.cobb.msstate.edu/museum/jpgs/S-219.jpg>.

<sup>518</sup> From the Cobb Institute Museum at <http://www.cobb.msstate.edu/museum/jpgs/S-203-A.jpg>.

<sup>519</sup> Feinberg, *Jeremiah*, p. 144.

“Jeremiah’s response was normal for one caught between two inescapable contrarities: faithfulness to the message of God and love for his sinful countrymen.”<sup>520</sup>

*King Zedekiah’s prayer refused and judgment described: Jer 21:1-14*

Note: chapters 21-23 begin a new section and address the time of the reigns of Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. Chronologically, this section may fit best after Jeremiah 37. If this initial address to Zedekiah is given before Nebuchadnezzar reaches Jerusalem, then it would place it in the ninth year of Zedekiah’s reign. Nebuchadnezzar’s eventual siege lasted one and a half years (see 52:1-7).

Jeremiah warns Zedekiah that Babylon will attack and succeed. The best policy would have thus been submission, precisely what Zedekiah refused. Once again, the prophet intimates (less forcefully here) that they still had opportunity to *repent*, although repentance now meant submission to Babylon. Real repentance meant *obedience to the word of the prophet*. To listen to the prophet of the Lord, meant to trust the Lord, the very thing they had been unwilling to do:

Jer 21:8 Furthermore, tell the people, “This is what the LORD says: See, I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death.”

Jer 21:12 O house of David, this is what the LORD says:

“Administer justice every morning;  
rescue from the hand of his oppressor  
the one who has been robbed,  
or my wrath will break out and burn like fire  
because of the evil you have done—  
burn with no one to quench it.”

The *way of life* was to trust YHWH with their life. What did they have to fear when they belonged to the living God who delivered them miraculously from Egypt? The *way of life* was also to exercise *justice*, honor the Torah of God, and *turn from doing evil*.

Compare Moses:

Deut 30:19 This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live



**King Zedekiah of Judah:** Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, attacked Judah after Zedekiah rebelled against him in 588.<sup>521</sup> *Zedekiah* (Mattaniah), son of king Josiah and Hamutal (Jeremiah’s daughter), uncle of Jehoiachin, reigned in Jerusalem for eleven years (597-586) (2 Ki 24:17-20; 2 Chron 36:10-16; Jeremiah mentions Zedekiah many times. His rein was basically evil. Zedekiah had the “distinction” of being the last Judean king on David’s throne. January 15, 588, Nebuchadnezzar eventually besieged Jerusalem and brought it to famine and broke through the walls on August, 14, 586. See Jerusalem falls into exile: Jer 39-45, pp. 450, p. 460.

Zedekiah failed to heed the prophet Jeremiah to submit to Babylon, while at the same time Zedekiah was relying on Egypt (Pharaoh Hophra, Jer 37:5-10; 44:30). It may be helpful to read the main Zedekiah/Jeremiah texts together to get the full picture of their complex relation:

Jer 21:1-7 The word came to Jeremiah from the LORD when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur son of Malkijah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah. They said: 2 “Inquire now of the LORD for us because Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is attacking us. Perhaps the LORD will perform wonders for us as in times past so that he will withdraw from us.” 3 But Jeremiah answered them, “Tell Zedekiah, 4 ‘This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: I am about to turn against you the weapons of war that are in your hands, which you are using to fight the king of Babylon and the Babylonians who are outside the wall besieging you. And I will gather them inside this city. 5 I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and a mighty arm in anger and fury and great wrath. 6 I will strike down those who live in this city—both men and animals—and they will die of a terrible plague. 7 After that, declares the LORD, I will hand over Zedekiah king of Judah, his officials and the people in this city who survive the plague, sword and famine, to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and to their enemies who seek their lives. He will put them to the sword; he will show them no mercy or pity or compassion.’”

Jer 24:8-10 “‘But like the poor figs, which are so bad they cannot be eaten,’ says the LORD, ‘so will I deal with Zedekiah king of Judah, his officials and the survivors from Jerusalem, whether they remain in this land or live in Egypt. 9 I will make them abhorrent and an offense to all the kingdoms of the earth, a reproach and a byword, an object of ridicule and cursing, wherever I banish them. 10 I will send the sword, famine and plague against them until they are destroyed from the land I gave to them and their fathers.’”

Jer 27:12 I gave the same message to Zedekiah king of Judah. I said, “Bow your neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon; serve him and his people, and you will live.

<sup>520</sup> Feinberg, *Jeremiah*, p. 148.

<sup>521</sup> Historical notes adapted from Judges-Esther syllabus.

Jer 32:1-5 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. 2 The army of the king of Babylon was then besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was confined in the courtyard of the guard in the royal palace of Judah. 3 Now Zedekiah king of Judah had imprisoned him there, saying, “Why do you prophesy as you do? You say, ‘This is what the LORD says: I am about to hand this city over to the king of Babylon, and he will capture it. 4 Zedekiah king of Judah will not escape out of the hands of the Babylonians but will certainly be handed over to the king of Babylon, and will speak with him face to face and see him with his own eyes. 5 He will take Zedekiah to Babylon, where he will remain until I deal with him, declares the LORD. If you fight against the Babylonians, you will not succeed.’”

Jer 34:2-5 “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Go to Zedekiah king of Judah and tell him, ‘This is what the LORD says: I am about to hand this city over to the king of Babylon, and he will burn it down. 3 You will not escape from his grasp but will surely be captured and handed over to him. You will see the king of Babylon with your own eyes, and he will speak with you face to face. And you will go to Babylon. 4 “‘Yet hear the promise of the LORD, O Zedekiah king of Judah. This is what the LORD says concerning you: You will not die by the sword; 5 you will die peacefully. As people made a funeral fire in honor of your fathers, the former kings who preceded you, so they will make a fire in your honor and lament, “Alas, O master!” I myself make this promise, declares the LORD.’”

Jer 37:3-10 King Zedekiah, however, sent Jehucal son of Shelemiah with the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah to Jeremiah the prophet with this message: “Please pray to the LORD our God for us.” 4 Now Jeremiah was free to come and go among the people, for he had not yet been put in prison. 5 Pharaoh’s army had marched out of Egypt [under Pharaoh Hophra], and when the Babylonians who were besieging Jerusalem heard the report about them, they withdrew from Jerusalem. 6 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet: 7 “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Tell the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of me, ‘Pharaoh’s army, which has marched out to support you, will go back to its own land, to Egypt. 8 Then the Babylonians will return and attack this city; they will capture it and burn it down.’ 9 “This is what the LORD says: Do not deceive yourselves, thinking, ‘The Babylonians will surely leave us.’ They will not! 10 Even if you were to defeat the entire Babylonian army that is attacking you and only wounded men were left in their tents, they would come out and burn this city down.”

Jer 38:14-28 Then King Zedekiah sent for Jeremiah the prophet and had him brought to the third entrance to the temple of the LORD. “I am going to ask you something,” the king said to Jeremiah. “Do not hide anything from me.” 15 Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, “If I give you an answer, will you not kill me? Even if I did give you counsel, you would not listen to me.” 16 But King Zedekiah swore this oath secretly to Jeremiah: “As surely as the LORD lives, who has given us breath, I will neither kill you nor hand you over to those who are seeking your life.” 17 Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, “This is what the LORD God Almighty, the God of Israel, says: ‘If you surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, your life will be spared and this city will not be burned down; you and your family will live. 18 But if you will not surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, this city will be handed over to the Babylonians and they will burn it down; you yourself will not escape from their hands.’” 19 King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, “I am afraid of the Jews who have gone over to the Babylonians, for the Babylonians may hand me over to them and they will mistreat me.” 20 “They will not hand you over,” Jeremiah replied. “Obey the LORD by doing what I tell you. Then it will go well with you, and your life will be spared. 21 But if you refuse to surrender, this is what the LORD has revealed to me: 22 All the women left in the palace of the king of Judah will be brought out to the officials of the king of Babylon. Those women will say to you: “‘They misled you and overcame you— those trusted friends of yours. Your feet are sunk in the mud; your friends have deserted you.’ 23 “All your wives and children will be brought out to the Babylonians. You yourself will not escape from their hands but will be captured by the king of Babylon; and this city will be burned down.” 24 Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, “Do not let anyone know about this conversation, or you may die. 25 If the officials hear that I talked with you, and they come to you and say, ‘Tell us what you said to the king and what the king said to you; do not hide it from us or we will kill you,’ 26 then tell them, ‘I was pleading with the king not to send me back to Jonathan’s house to die there.’” 27 All the officials did come to Jeremiah and question him, and he told them everything the king had ordered him to say. So they said no more to him, for no one had heard his conversation with the king. 28 And Jeremiah remained in the courtyard of the guard until the day Jerusalem was captured.

Jer 44:30 This is what the LORD says: ‘I am going to hand Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt over to his enemies who seek his life, just as I handed Zedekiah king of Judah over to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the enemy who was seeking his life.’”

Jer 52:1-10 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. His mother’s name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah; she was from Libnah. 2 He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as Jehoiakim had done. 3 It was because of the LORD’s anger that all this happened to Jerusalem and Judah, and in the end he thrust them from his presence. Now Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. 4 So in the ninth year of Zedekiah’s reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. They camped outside the city and built siege works all around it. 5 The city was kept under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. 6 By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city had become so severe that there was no food for the people to eat. 7 Then the city wall was broken through, and the whole army fled. They left the city at night through the gate between the two walls near the king’s garden, though the Babylonians were surrounding the city. They fled toward the Arabah, 8 but the Babylonian army pursued King Zedekiah and overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his soldiers were separated from him and scattered, 9 and he was captured. He was taken to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he pronounced sentence on him. 10 There at Riblah the king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes; he also killed all the officials of Judah.



*Prophetic indictment against Davidic kings with true repentance is still possible: Jer 22:1-30*

Jeremiah is told to go to the palace of king Zedekiah. The prophet does not shy away from the most dangerous of all places for an unwelcome prophet. His message is initially, and remarkably, once again an offer to repent. He

proclaims that justice is the Torah standard, and if they obey the Lord then possibly his wrath will be pre-empted. If not, then the judgment will be disastrous (22:1-10). The prophecy and offer to repent are presented in conditional terms: “*true religion*” is described

- ⇒ Do what is just and right (22:3a).
- ⇒ Rescue those oppressed (22:2b).
- ⇒ Be kind to foreigners, fatherless, widows (22:3c)
- ⇒ Do not shed innocent blood (22:3d).
- ⇒ IF you are careful (אָמַרְתֶּם וַעֲשׂוּ) to carry out these commands (22:4a),
  - Then Davidic kings will reign (22:4b).
- ⇒ Otherwise, destruction will come to Judah (22:5-10):
  - The palace of Jerusalem will become a ruin (22:6a).
  - Judah will be like a desert (22:6b)
  - Judah’s towns will be uninhabited (22:6c).
  - Destroying enemies will come against Judah (22:7a).
  - The cedar (palaces and temples exclusively) will be burned (22:7c).

Jeremiah concludes with the exhortation not to weep for the dead kind (presumably Josiah, a king greatly mourned in Judah) (22:10), but rather they should weep for his son Shallum (Jehoahaz), because he will die in exile.

### ● **Shallum** (Jehoahaz) (22:11-17)<sup>522</sup>

*Jehoahaz [Shallum]*, son of Josiah, reigned in Jerusalem for three months (609) (2 Ki 23:29-33; 2 Chron 36:2-4). The prophetic assessment of Jehoahaz [Shallum] was entirely negative. After Josiah’s death at the hands of Pharaoh Neco II, Syria and Judah were temporarily under Egyptian control. This allowed Neco to remove Jehoahaz, taking him in chains to Riblah (military headquarters on the Orontes River). Egypt then imposed a heavy tribute burden on Judah (2 Ki 23:33; 2 Chron 36:3). Jehoahaz [Shallum] became the first Judahite king to die in exile. Reversal of the covenant-blessings. Loss of promised land, return to Egypt.

Jeremiah contrasts Jehoahaz, [Shallum] sins with the righteousness of his father, Josiah<sup>523</sup>:

- ⇒ He built his palace[kingdom] in unrighteousness and injustice (22:13-14a).
- ⇒ He did not act as his father in righteousness and justice (defended the poor and needy) (22:15b-16a).
- ⇒ Josiah knew the Lord as *demonstrated by his deeds* (22:16b).
- ⇒ His eyes and heart were set on dishonest gain (22:17a).
- ⇒ He shed innocent blood (22:17b).
- ⇒ He practiced oppression and extortion (22:17c).

The important principle of true religion is expressed again (22:16):

To know the Lord is to live in obedience.

“*If you love me, you will obey what I command*” (Jn 15:15).

### ● **Jehoiakim** (22:18-23).

☞ See Jer 1:3.

*Jehoiakim* (Eliakim), son of Josiah and Zebidah (daughter of Pedaiah), reigned in Jerusalem eleven years (609-597) (2 Ki 23:34-24:6; 2 Chron 36:4-8). Prophetic assessment of his reign was entirely negative. In 605 Nebuchadnezzar defeated Egypt at the Battle of Carchemish on the Orontes, and Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. This decisive turning-point brought the wrath of Babylon, and Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem (c. 605) and took the first deportation of people: the puppet Jehoiakim (some confusion about this in commentaries) in chains, the prophet Daniel (605-570), and many others were carried off:

Dan 1:1-2 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. 2 And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god.

Jeremiah says that Jehoiakim’s death would not even be mourned.

2 Ki 24:6 Jehoiakim rested with his fathers. And Jehoiachin his son succeeded him as king.

As in Shallum’s case, Jeremiah contrasts this son of Josiah with his father’s high standing. He concludes with a description of the judgment coming as a result of such kings as Jehoiakim:

<sup>522</sup> The historical background on these kings is taken from the Judges-Esther syllabus notes.

<sup>523</sup> Feinberg understands 22:13-23 to be addressed to Jehoiakim (*Jeremiah*, pp. 156-158).



- ⇒ They will cry out in anguish (22:20a).
- ⇒ Their allies will be crushed (22:20b).
  - [Because] Judah would not listen to the prophet and they were rebellious (22:21).
- ⇒ Their shepherds will be driven away (22:22a).
- ⇒ They will be ashamed and disgraced (22:22b)
- ⇒ Their allies will go into exile [Assyria, Egypt, Moab, Ammon, Phoenicia] (22:22c) (cf. 27:3).
- ⇒ They will groan in pain like a woman in labor (22:23)

## DOCUMENTS • NEBUCHADNEZZAR II

## NEBUCHADNEZZAR II (605-562)

(1) From administrative documents found in Babylon, some information concerning the fate of Jehoiachin, king of Judah, can now be gathered. These cuneiform tablets list deliveries of oil for the subsistence of individuals who are either prisoners of war or otherwise dependent upon the royal household. They are identified by name, profession, and/or nationality. The two tablets, so far published, also mention, beside Judeans, inhabitants of Ashkelon, Tyre, Byblos, Arvad, and, further, Egyptians, Medeans, Persians, Lydians, and Greeks.

(text Babylon 28122, obverse 29-33)

... t[o?] *Ia'-ú-kin*, king ...  
to the *qipútu*-house of ...  
... for Shalamiamu, the ...  
... for 126 men from Tyre ...  
... for Zabiria, the Ly[dian] ...

(text Babylon 28178, obverse ii 38-40)

10 (*sila* of oil) to ... [*Ia*]-'*kin*, king of *Ia* [ ... ]  
2½ *sila* (oil) to [ ... so]ns of the king of Judah  
(*Ia-a-hu-du*)  
4 *sila* to 8 men from Judah (<sup>amei</sup>*Ia-a-hu-da-a-a*) ...

(text Babylon 28186, reverse ii 13-18)

1½ *sila* (oil) for 3 carpenters from Arvad, ½ *sila* each  
11½ *sila* for 8 ditto from Byblos, 1 *sila* each ...  
3½ *sila* for 7 ditto, Greeks, ½ *sila* each  
½ *sila* to *Nabú-épir* the carpenter  
10 (*sila*) to *Ia-ku-ú-ki-nu*, the son of the king of *Ia-ku-du* (i.e. Judah)  
2½ *sila* for the 5 sons of the king of Judah (*Ia-ku-du*)  
through Qana'a [ ... ]

(2) From a fragmentary historical text (BrM 78-10-15, 22, 37, and 38).

(13—22)

... [in] the 37th year, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Bab[ylon] mar[ched against] Egypt (*Mi-sir*) to deliver a battle. [*Ama*]sis (text: [ ... ]-a(?)-*su*), of Egypt, [called up his a]rm[y] ... [ ... ]*ku* from the town *Pušu-laman* ... distant regions which (are situated on islands) amidst the sea ... many ... which/who (are) in Egypt ... [car]rying weapons, horses and [chariot]s ... he called up to assist him and ... did [ ... ] in front of him ... he put his trust ... (only the first signs at the beginning and the end of the following 7 or 8 lines are legible).

Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East*, vol. 1, p. 205.

carried into exile together. Jeremiah predicts further in 22:25-26 that Jehoiachin would never return from exile. This is precisely what happened, as Jeremiah relays in the last verses of his book:

See Jeremiah 52:31-34 In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the year Evil-Merodach became king of Babylon, he released Jehoiachin king of Judah and freed him from prison on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month. 32 He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat of honor higher than those of the other kings who were with him in Babylon. 33 So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes and for the rest of his life ate regularly at the king's table. 34 Day by day the king of Babylon gave Jehoiachin a regular allowance as long as he lived, till the day of his death.

(left) Nubuchadnezzar's ration lists including Judahites and Jehoiachin.<sup>524</sup>

Jeremiah elsewhere warned Jehoiakim against rebellion against Babylon. Jehoiakim paid no heed:

Jer 27:9-11 So do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your interpreters of dreams, your mediums or your sorcerers who tell you, 'You will not serve the king of Babylon.' 10 They prophesy lies to you that will only serve to remove you far from your lands; I will banish you and you will perish. 11 But if any nation will bow its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will let that nation remain in its own land to till it and to live there, declares the LORD.

Jeremiah informs us that Jehoiakim actively suppressed/oppressed the prophets: Jer 26:1-15, 20-23. Jeremiah also had much to say to Jehoiakim: Jer 25-26; 36. Jehoiakim has the undesirable distinction of being the king who burned the Word of God from Jeremiah:

Jer 36:23-24 Whenever Jehudi had read three or four columns of the scroll, the king cut them off with a scribe's knife and threw them into the firepot, until the entire scroll was burned in the fire. 24 The king and all his attendants who heard all these words showed no fear, nor did they tear their clothes.

Although Jehoiakim orders Jeremiah arrested, Jeremiah then prophesied that Jehoiakim's end would be a humiliating death (36:30-31).

● **Jehoiachin**<sup>525</sup> (22:24-30)

☞ See below on exile.

☞ See Nebuchadnezzar II document (left) which lists Jehoiachin and other men of Judah.

*Jehoiachin*, son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and Nehushta (daughter of Elnathan) from Jerusalem, for three months (598-597) (2 Ki 24:6, 8-16; 2 Chron 36:9-10). His reign was evil. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon advanced on Jerusalem and laid siege to it in 597 (p. 450, 460). Judah surrendered, and Jehoiachin was taken into Babylonian captivity with the second deportation, and the temple treasures were removed (2 Ki 24:10; 2 Chron 36). This was according to the word of the Lord, "as the Lord declared."

Jeremiah tells the king that he would be carried off by the very ones (Babylonians) he feared (22:25). Recall Jer 13:18-19, where Jeremiah predicted that Jehoiachin and his mother would be

<sup>524</sup> Pritchard, *The ANE*, vol. 1, p. 205.

<sup>525</sup> Also called Coniah (the abbreviated form of Jeconiah, a variant of Jehoiachin).

Even though this does not give us a very “happy ending” to Jeremiah, it does present a glimmer of hope. That the king of Judah is released and treated well, has often been understood to present hope to the exiles, for the same God who had fulfilled the judgment-word of the prophets had also promised a remnant to return.

In one of the most beautifully poetic and prophetic verses in the Bible, Jeremiah calls the earth *to witness* to his prediction in very strong terms of repetition for emphasis 6:19:

O earth, earth, earth . . . (אֶרֶץ אֶרֶץ אֶרֶץ)  
hear the word of the Lord!

*God's indictment against his people and God's promises of hope to the remnant: Jer 23:1-4*

- ⇒ The shepherds of God's people are scattering them (23:1)
  - Therefore, they will be driven away (23:2).
- ⇒ But, the remnant will be brought back (23:3).
- ⇒ The remnant will have shepherds that will not terrify them (23:4).
- ⇒ A righteous Branch will be raised up (23:5).
- ⇒ Israel will live safely (23:6a).

*The Messiah is the Righteous Branch: Jer 23:1-8*

Contrasted with the Judean kings of the previous chapter, here the Righteous messianic King from David's line is presented as the trustworthy Shepherd:

- ☞ The Branch (23:5b).
- ☞ Wise and just King (23:5c).
- ☞ The Lord of Righteousness (23:6c).
- ☞ The Living Lord (23:7-8).
- ☞ The Deliverer (23:8).

The basis of these promises is twofold: the one who delivered them from Egypt is the same one who will deliver them from exile, thus he can be trusted to complete his word of promise. This same text is used in Jer 16:14-15 (see faith affirmations of orthodox theology above), “As surely as the Lord lives . . .”:

- ⇒ YHWH is a living God who brought Israel up out of Egypt, who will bring Israel down from exile in Babylon, and who will restore the remnant

*False prophets face “everlasting disgrace”: Jer 23:9-40*

Contrasted with the Messiah in the previous chapter, the false prophets are again described.

*God's indictment against the false prophets and priests: Jer 23*

- ⇒ They are full of adulteries (23:10a, 14c).
- ⇒ They follow an evil course (23:10c).
- ⇒ They use power unjustly (23:10c).
- ⇒ They are godless (23:11).
- ⇒ They prophesy by Baal (23:13a).
- ⇒ They led Israel astray (23:13b).
- ⇒ They live a lie (23:14c).
- ⇒ They encourage evildoers (23:14d).
- ⇒ They have spread ungodliness everywhere (23:15c).
- ⇒ They prophesy lies and false hopes (23:16b).
- ⇒ They speak visions and oracles from their own minds (23:16c-17, 33-40).
- ⇒ They have not heard the word of God (23:18, 21-22, 25-28, 30-38).
- ⇒ They *distort the words of the living God, the Lord Almighty* (23:36b).

*Judgment on Judah described: Jer 23*

- ⇒ Their land will be parched (cursed) (23:10b-c).
- ⇒ Their path will be slippery (23:12a).
- ⇒ They will be banished (23:12b).
- ⇒ They will fall (23:12c).
- ⇒ They will know disaster (23:12d).
- ⇒ They will be destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah (23:14e).
- ⇒ They will eat bitter food and drink poisoned water (23:15b).
- ⇒ The wrath of God will burst upon them (23:19-20).



- ⇒ They will be cast out of God's presence (23:39).
- ⇒ They will have everlasting shame (23:40).

*Jeremiah concludes with an orthodox affirmation of God, in contrast to the false gods of the false prophets:*

*Jer 23*

- ⇒ God is omnipresent, a God nearby and faraway (23:23).
- ⇒ God is omniscient, knowing and seeing all people and places (23:24a).
- ⇒ God is transcendent and immanent, filling heaven and earth (23:24b).
- ⇒ God's word is like a fire (in contrast to the false prophets) (23:29).

*Jeremiah's vision of good and bad figs: Jer 24:1-10*

This was given in the exilic period, following the 597 B.C. deportation.

*Good figs: God's word of hope to the remnant: Jer 24:3-7*



The good figs refers to the first exiles from Judah under Jehoiachin in 597. This prophecy concerning the future circumstances of God's remnant is not a statement about their personal goodness, but rather that the Lord would have compassion on his exiled remnant. There is an implicit assumption that the bad figs refer to the rebellious, but the inverse that the remnant is returned on their own merits is not to be deduced. They would eventually be blessed with prosperity, restoration of land, and spiritual life.

It is to be noted that the baskets are placed *in front of the temple of YHWH* (24:1), for this illustrates the most important motif in the history of redemption: *the presence of God* and the sinfulness of humanity. The phrase *לְפָנַי הַיְהוָה* echoes the most important presence-phrase in the OT, *לְפָנַי הַיְהוָה* ("before the Lord's presence"). It also contains the important word *יָעַד*

(to meet) which is used in Exo 25:22 in reference to the Lord's promise *to meet* with Moses (Israel) at the ark of the covenant. YHWH's *meeting* and *dwelling* are complementary concepts that are found throughout the OT, conveying his freedom from time and space, yet his immanence in time and space.



In light of this proposal, it is very significant that the Lord then reaffirms the covenant promise:

**Jer 24:7 I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the LORD. They will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me with all their heart.**

The center of redemption history is captured here: the conversion of the hearts of God's people is the goal of redemption, hearts of flesh and not of stone. Then they will willingly love and obey.

Compare:

Ezek 11:19 I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh.

Ezek 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

*Bad figs: God's word of judgment to the exiles: Jer 24:8-10*

The bad figs, King Zedekiah (see p. 430), his officials, and those remaining in the land are named as the object of this illustration. It would be folly for those left in the land to presume that they are there because of some virtue on their part! The prophet wants to create no misunderstanding on this score. In the case of all, God's justice and mercy are not preferential: his justice is merited for all, his mercy merited to none. The bad figs will be:

- ⇒ Abhorrent and offensive to the nations (24:8-9a).
- ⇒ A reproach, a byword, an object of ridicule and cursing (24:9b).
- ⇒ A dispersed people (24:9c).
- ⇒ Destroyed by sword, famine, and plague (24:10).

*Judah's seventy years of captivity: Jer 25:1-38*

Prophecies in Jer 25-27 were given during the reign of Jehoiakim (609-598) (see p. 413). The fourth year of Jehoiakim was 605.<sup>526</sup>

Jeremiah pronounces the wrath of God upon Judah: in light of their *repeated* and *persistent* failure to listen to the prophets (25:4-7), God's judgment would come upon them (25:8-38). He even gives them the number of years (twenty three) he had prophesied to them, during which they would not listen (25:3). The most serious charge

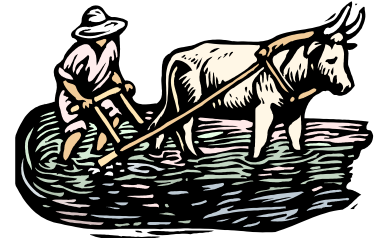
<sup>526</sup> Compare Dan 1:1 which is based on the *nonaccession year* chronology (see Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers*, pp. 6-7).

against them in this section is not just their idolatries, but that they would not listen to the word of the Lord (25:7-8). He even reiterates that they had been given many opportunities to repent but they refused (25:5). Despite the people's rejection of Jeremiah's message, he was still allowed to prophesy at this stage, due to the Lord's protection.

*Judgment on Judah and the nations described: Jer 25:8-38*

These very specific predictions provide remarkable evidence of the divine inspiration of Jeremiah's message and the fulfillment of the covenant curses:

- ⇒ Nebuchadnezzar ("my servant") and peoples of the north will invade Judah (25:9a).
- ⇒ Judah will be destroyed (25:9b).
- ⇒ Judah will be exiled from their joys and life (25:10).
- ⇒ Judah will serve Babylon for seventy years (25:11).
- ⇒ After seventy years Babylon ("Sheshach") will be punished (25:12-14).



The irony of calling Nebuchadnezzar the "servant" of God would have been apparent to Judah, for they were to be the servants of the Lord but were serving the Baals. The covenant curses are again illustrated with the predictions. Seventy years of captivity illustrates a lifetime, or generation, and may be a "round number" designating the years between 587-520/515.<sup>527</sup>

Jeremiah next gives a sweeping roster of nations upon whom God's judgment was coming. They were going to drink the cup (figurative) of God's wrath (25:15). The list is similar to Jer 46-51 (p. 457), although there are some variations. The list here begins with Judah and ends with Babylon. Whether there is great significance to this is speculation, but it may be a two pronged message of doom and hope:

- (1) Judah will be judged just like any other nation.
- (2) Judah will be delivered from Babylon when Babylon is destroyed.



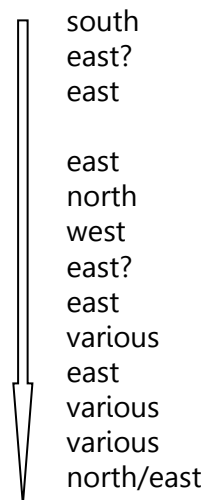
*Vivid imagery and motifs of judgment:*

- The cup of God's wrath (25:15-19).
- The sword of God's wrath (25:29).
- The lion of God's wrath (25:30b).
- The vintner of God's wrath (25:30c).
- The shout (war) of God's wrath (25:31a).
- The law suit of God's wrath (25:31b)
- The storm (creation) of God's wrath (25:32).

Judgment-compass, see pp. 457, 520

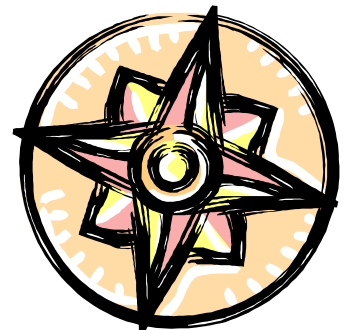
*The sweeping judgment points in all directions of the compass*

- ⇒ Judah/Jerusalem
- ⇒ Pharaoh in Egypt
- ⇒ kings of Uz
- ⇒ kings of the Philistines (Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and the people left at Ashdod)
- ⇒ Edom, Moab and Ammon
- ⇒ kings of Tyre and Sidon
- ⇒ kings of the coastlands across the sea
- ⇒ Dedan, Tema, Buz and all who are in distant places
- ⇒ kings of Arabia
- ⇒ all the kings of the foreign people who live in the desert
- ⇒ all the kings of Zimri, Elam and Media
- ⇒ all the kings of the north, near and far, one after the other
- ⇒ all the kingdoms on the face of the earth
- ⇒ the king of Sheshach (Babylon)



south  
east?  
east

east  
north  
west  
east?  
east  
various  
east  
various  
north/east



The storm of God's wrath likens the judgment to an aspect of creation, thus linking creation and judgment in contrast to the many times we have seen creation theology linked with redemption theology (see p. ).

<sup>527</sup> Some argue that the number is precise (see Feinberg, *Jeremiah*, p. 176).

*True repentance still possible, yet Jeremiah faces death at the hands of priests and prophets: Jer 26:1-24*

This historical section gives us some insights into the times and into Jeremiah's character. Jeremiah's call to prophesy in the temple courtyard shows his faithful resilience and courage (26:1-6). Once again, the Lord offers opportunity to repent, the very reason for the prophet's message: "Perhaps they will listen and each will turn from his evil way. then I will relent and not bring on them the disaster I was planning . . ." (26:3). The religious establishment of "priests and prophets" turned on Jeremiah with vengeance for this gracious offer! Initially the people were involved in seizing Jeremiah, but after his fearless proclamation to them all in the New Gate of the Temple, the elders and the people refused the demands of the priests and prophets to kill Jeremiah (26:12-23). Even in this extended proclamation of Jeremiah, the Lord offers the gracious gift of repentance and forgiveness (26:13). In his defense, the elders and people reminded the priests and the prophets that the prophet Micah's message of judgment was heeded under Hezekiah and it thus forestalled the judgment of God (26:17-19).

Despite this amazing defense of Jeremiah, and his release from a death sentence, the narrator relays a story about another true prophet (Uriah) of the Lord during Jeremiah's time period that was persecuted by Jehoiakim (26:20-23). He fled to Egypt where Jehoiakim still sought him out and had him killed. This parenthetical story highlights the *sovereign providence* of God in protecting Jeremiah, for it illustrates the terribly dark and corrupt regime that Jeremiah was prophesying against. It also illustrates the *grace of God* in sending other prophets during the time of Jeremiah, even though we do not know anything else about this martyr Uriah.

*Jeremiah's prophetic enactment using yoke to describe Judah's exile: Jer 27:1-22*

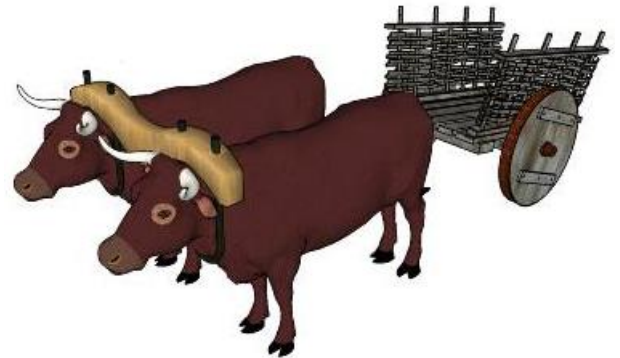
The prophet is called to act out a humiliating picture of being yoked like an ox that is to be demonstrated before three recipients, all of whom were exhorted to submit to the yoke of Babylon (27:8). Distinctive in the pronouncements here is the one to the nations, proclaiming that the Lord as Almighty Creator of the world and sovereign over the nations in history (27:4-5).

- ⇒ Foreign alliances: Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, Sidon (27:3-11).
- ⇒ Zedekiah, king of Judah (27:12-15).
- ⇒ Priests and people (27:16-18).

*Each of these recipients is told:*

- ⇒ Submit to Babylon and live (27:6-7, 11, 12, 17).
- ⇒ Refuse to submit to Babylon and die (27:8, 13, 17-18).
- ⇒ Do not listen to false prophets or diviners (27:9-10, 14-15, 16-19).

(above) Yoked oxen<sup>528</sup>



Another remarkable prediction concludes this section: the remaining articles (first batch carried away in 605, then second in 587) of the temple would be removed to Babylon, contrary to the word of the false prophets, until the Lord would choose to "come for them" (return them) (27:19-22).

Note: Assyrians used yokes on human captives, as well as animals.

*False prophet Hananiah's death is prophesied by Jeremiah: Jer 28:1-17*

The prophecies in Jeremiah 28-34 were given under king Zedekiah (597-586) (see p. 413).

Jeremiah faced the incredible challenge of a false prophet proclaiming a message *antithetical* to his own, and in the temple before Zedekiah, the priests, the people, and Jeremiah himself (28:1-4). Nevertheless, Jeremiah fearlessly prophesied against Hananiah (28:5-9) before Hananiah took the yoke off Jeremiah's neck and broke it (28:10-11). Jeremiah gets the last word, however, that Hananiah would soon die for falsely prophesying peace to the nation (28:12-17).

Jeremiah applies one of the key *validation criteria* for prophets to Hananiah: whether his prediction would come to pass or not (28:8-9).

*Jeremiah's letter to those in exile: Jer 29:1-23*

- ☞ See "life in exile" notes in Ezra-Nehemiah of Judges-Esther syllabus. Families and some social structures remained relatively intact. Jews were fairly integrated into life there.
- ☞ See the *Marashu Archives* which document the commercial life of Jews in Mesopotamia after Ezra.

Further evidence of God's faithfulness to Israel/Judah is the word of the prophet to the exiles in Babylon. He reminds them that the Lord is the Almighty God of Israel, and the one who carried them into exile (as he had prophesied). He tells them to:

- ⇒ Settle down (29:4-6).
- ⇒ Seek peace (29:7a).
- ⇒ Pray for peace (29:7b)
- ⇒ Reject all false prophets (29:8-9).

*The prophet then proclaims remnant-hope:*

- ⇒ The remnant will be preserved (29:10).
- ⇒ The Lord would prosper them (29:11).
- ⇒ The Lord would be found by them (29:12-14).
- ⇒ The remnant would be returned after seventy years (29:14b).

*Jeremiah's prophecy against the false prophets Ahab, Zedekiah, and Shemaiah: Jer 29:20-32*

In response to Jeremiah's word of God to exile, the false prophets acted against him. Besides the grace of God in prophesying hope for the exiles (outlined above), the Lord now tells them clearly and specifically who the false prophets were and what their message was. In light of this, they could have no excuse for their complicity in any false prophet's lies. These prophets had their own motives for proclaiming falsehood, but the cost (judgment) would be greater than their human reward. False prophets prophesy though God has not sent them, prophesying what is untrue, and thus "preach rebellion" (29:32c).

*Jeremiah's "Book of Consolation" regarding Israel's and Judah's hope of restoration (remnant): Jer 30:1-31:40*

Two entire chapters are given now as a peak in the promises of hope, written while Jeremiah was still imprisoned in the court of the guard. This section was apparently *written* out first (30:2), and is expressed largely in poetry. Critics sometimes place this section after the exile (Ezra/Nehemiah), thus it would be anonymous, or containing only fragments from Jeremiah (similarly to arguments for placing the second half of Isaiah very late). [Ho ho hum and really big yawn].

This prophecy is in part a *dream revelation* (31:26), which interweaves the primary motifs of judgment and hope, with hope being the primary message. The yoke of Babylonian exile will be broken off (30:8) ~ covenant blessings restored.

- ⇒ They will serve the Lord and the king of Judah (30:9) ~ Messianic allusions.
- ⇒ YHWH will return the remnant to the land (30:10-11, 17-21; 31:3-4, 8-14, 16-25) ~ prophetic word of deliverance fulfilled.
- ⇒ YHWH is *with them* (30:11a) ~ the covenant promise.
- ⇒ YHWH will *save them* (30:11b). ~ remnant and redemption promise.
- ⇒ YHWH disciplines them with justice (30:11c) ~ covenant curses and blessings.
- ⇒ Their enemies will be devoured (30:16).
- ⇒ YHWH will *be their God and they will be his people* (30:22) ~ covenant promise.
- ⇒ YHWH will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they will be his people (31:1) ~ covenant promise.
- ⇒ YHWH will give them rest, love, land, produce, joy, singing, and dancing again (31:3-13) ~ conditional covenant blessings restored.
- ⇒ YHWH will bring them back "from the ends of the earth" (31:8; cf. Isa 11:11).
- ⇒ Jerusalem will be rebuilt (31:38-40).
- ⇒ The nations will bear witness to this great deliverance (31:10-14).

After Jeremiah wakes from his dream, he is given one of the highpoints in prophetic history in a sequence of prophecies centered on the covenant promise:

- ⇒ Israel and Judah will rebuilt and replanted (literal and figurative) (31:27-30) ~ redemption and sanctification.
- ⇒ YHWH will make a *new covenant* with Israel and Judah (31:31-32).
- ⇒ YHWH will write his law on their hearts and minds (31:33) ~ spirit of the law.
- ⇒ YHWH will be known by all (31:34) ~ redemption and restoration.



⇒ YHWH will forgive their sins (31:34c) ~ redemption realized.

The new covenant (read Hengstenberg, “The New Covenant”<sup>529</sup>) will be the completion of the old covenant, not a displacement of it (see discussion under hermeneutics of prophecy on “old covenant, new covenant,” p. ). The new covenant is the covenant promise renewed, reaffirmed, consummated.

“The necessary condition for the true and lasting bestowal of outward salvation,  
is the bestowal of internal salvation . . .”<sup>530</sup>

Rom 11:27 And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.

Heb 10:14-18 because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. 15 The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says:

16 “This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord.

I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.”

17 Then he adds: “Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.”

18 And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.



**THE SEAL OF  
JEREMIAH'S SCRIBE**

In 1975 some fascinating artifacts began to surface in Arab antiquities shops in Israel. They were Hebrew bullae—clay impressions of seals once used to validate official documents. The bullae were scorched and baked—indicating that their storage site had been burned, possibly in the fire that engulfed Jerusalem and destroyed Solomon’s Temple in 586 B.C.

Experts were able to link two of the bullae to people mentioned in the Bible. One carried the seal impression of Jerahmeel, King Jehoiakim’s son, who had been sent to arrest Jeremiah and Baruch. The other, shown above, is inscribed with the words, “Belonging to Baruch son of Neriah the scribe.”

Thus, after 26 centuries, the modern world had uncovered tangible links to one of the Bible’s most dramatic chapters.

The Bible Through the Ages, 1996, p. 83.

Expositors of all shades of conviction have written in glowing terms of the significance of this portion of the book. It has been acclaimed as one of the most important passages in the entire OT, signally validated against hypercritical doubts and theories (so Bewer et al.). It is beyond dispute that the passage has had tremendous influence on NT doctrine. Many expositors maintain that the concept of the new covenant is Jeremiah’s greatest contribution to biblical truth. At this point an outline of the remainder of the chapter, detailing the fullness of Jeremiah’s revelation, will be useful:

1. The time of the covenant (v.31) -- “The time is coming”
2. The Maker of the covenant (v.31) -- the LORD (vv.3, 20, 32, 35)
3. The name of the covenant (v.31) -- “new” (Rom 11:27; Heb 8:6—13; 10:14—18; also Matt 26:26-28; Mark 14:22—24; Luke 22:19—20; 1 Cor 11:23—25)
4. The parties of the covenant (v.31) -- “house of Israel” and “house of Judah” (cf. Ezek 37:15-19; Rom 9:4-5—the nation of the covenants)
5. The contrasted covenant (v. 32) -- not like the old covenant: based on merit and works, susceptible of infraction, no enablement (nonfulfilling), did not give life (Gal 3:21)
6. The nature of the covenant (vv.33-34) — not dependent on external law nor human interpretation; law written on the heart; gives intimate knowledge of and fellowship with God, forgiveness of sins, and peace of heart
7. The immutability of the covenant (vv.35-37) — the unchanging purpose of God reflected in the fixed order of nature
8. The physical aspects of the covenant (vv.38-40)— rebuilt Jerusalem in holiness and permanence
9. The Guarantor of the covenant (vv. 31-40) — “declares the Lord” or “the Lord says” (nine times), as though to swear by himself (cf. Heb 6: 17—18).<sup>531</sup>

Further, creation and redemption theology are linked again to illustrate the certain hope of the promises of redemption being outlined here (31:35-37): the decrees of God’s covenant promises could vanish only if the heavens could be measured and the foundations of the earth searched out (31:37). That is, the very One who created the immeasurable heavens has promised redemption. This text may suggest *infinitude* in the created order, but that is an unnecessary deduction, despite the fact that we now know the universe contains billions upon billions of galaxies and their stars, and is seemingly *innumerable*. From the human vantage point, there could be no measuring of God’s *natural* universe, how then could they doubt God’s eternal, spiritual promises of redemption? Such logic is compellingly simple, but never simplistic. Further, no ANE gods had complete knowledge of the universe or the earth, thus placing YHWH far above all terrestrial and cosmic deities.

*Jeremiah’s prophetic enactment of buying a field: Jer 32:1-35*

*Jeremiah’s act of faith: buys land in the face of certain exile (Jer 32:7-16):*

<sup>529</sup> See F.C. Holmgren, *The OT & the Significance of Jesus*, “Israel and the New Covenant in Jer 31:31-34,” pp. 75-95 and “Jesus and the New Covenant,” pp. 96-104.”

<sup>530</sup> Hengstenberg, “New Covenant,” p. 241. See “the spirit of the law,” p. .

<sup>531</sup> Feinberg, *Jeremiah*, p. 218.

To redeem land was a central feature of the covenant stipulations designed to *protect property rights* and family inheritances. Jeremiah paid about ½ pound of sterling for the land, which is equal to approximately 1½ years of labor in ancient Judah. We do not know why his uncle Hanamel needed to have Jeremiah redeem the land, but it may have been related to debt, he may have wanted to sell it, the threat of the Babylonian incursion, or simply the “prompting” of the Lord to have Jeremiah redeem it for illustrative purposes. The deed had to be sealed at the end of the transaction (see seal on left). The law strictly protected the family lands:

Lev 25:23-25 The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants. 24 Throughout the country that you hold as a possession, you must provide for the redemption of the land. 25 If one of your countrymen becomes poor and sells some of his property, his nearest relative is to come and redeem what his countryman has sold.

- Considering the frequent forsaking of the law among God’s people, it is significant at several levels that the prophet is commanded to enact a *land redemption*.
- It must be done in faith that the *conditional promises* of God would be restored to the remnant.
- It represents the central biblical theme of *redemption*. God gave various illustrations of redemption in the OT.
- It represents the *eternal promises*, in that the conditional promises are a “trust” of the eternal *unconditional* promises of redemption.
- It pictures the coming judgment, as well as the eventual *restoration* of the land: Jer 32:15 For this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Houses, fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.



(left) Jewish seal from Elephantine.<sup>532</sup>

*Jeremiah’s prayer and confession of orthodox faith*

(32:16-25):

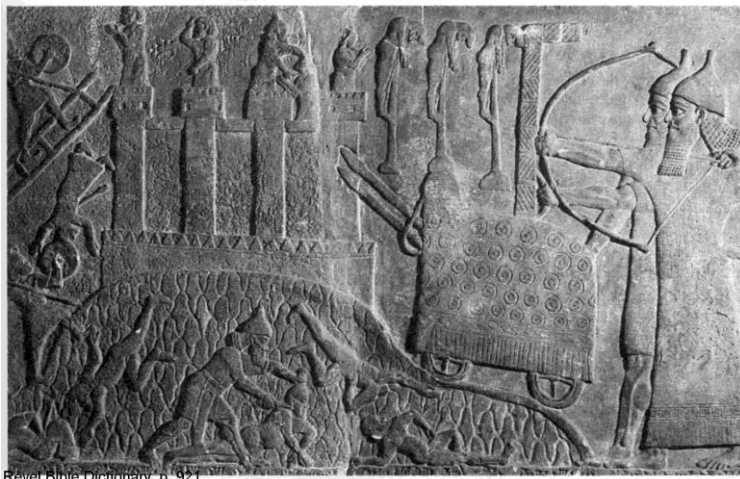
- ⇒ YHWH is sovereign (32:17a) ~ Almighty.
- ⇒ YHWH is Creator of the heavens and the earth (32:17b; 33:2) ~ Creator.
- ⇒ YHWH loves (forgives) and is holy (punishes) (32:18-19) ~ loving/holy.
- ⇒ YHWH’s purposes are great and concern all people (32:19b) ~ sovereign over nations and history.
- ⇒ YHWH miraculously delivered them from Egypt (32:20-22) ~ omnipotent.
  - YET, the people did not obey God’s law,
  - Therefore, the Babylonians were attacking Jerusalem (32:23-25).

Creation, judgment, and redemption theology are expressed in Jeremiah’s prayer: he links the fact that God is the Creator with the fact that *nothing is too hard* (meaning judgment) for YHWH (32:17b, 27). God is both loving and holy-judging. Indeed, his love is the basis for his punishing his people (32:18). That is, the Lord who redeemed his people out of Egypt had full rights to express both his love and his holiness depending on their obedience to his law. That is, the Lord who

created the universe, and who redeemed his people from Egypt, can certainly bring Babylon to punish them for their rebellion. Jerusalem was being besieged as the prophet spoke!

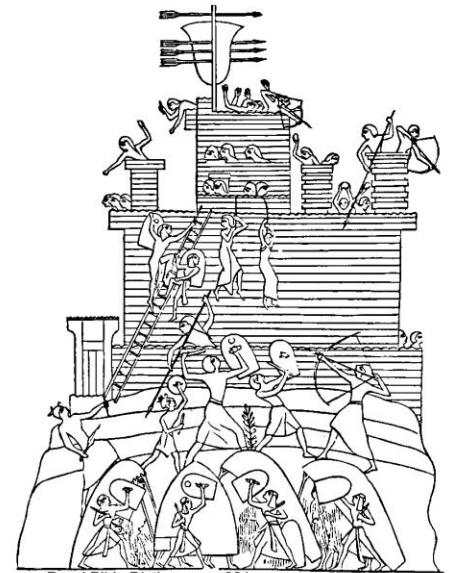
<sup>532</sup> R. Deutsch, “New Bullae Reveal Egyptian-Style Emblems on Judah’s Royal Seals,” BAR July/August 2002 vol 28 no. 4, p. 46.





Revel Bible Dictionary, p. 921.

(left) Assyrian archers with wheeled siege engine tower Nimrud, 865BC.<sup>533</sup>



Revel Bible Dictionary, p. 921.

(right) Egyptian soldiers besieging a fortress.<sup>534</sup>

*God's promises of hope for the remnant (Jer 32:26-44) ~ the covenant promise restated.*

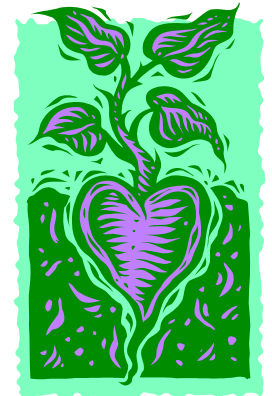
The end of this subsection contains another remarkable prophecy of judgment and redemption involving detailed descriptions of judgment through the Babylonians who were presently attacking Jerusalem (confirming Jeremiah's previous predictions), are interspersed with hope of redemption and the fulfillment of the covenant promise of YHWH. As the word of judgment to the nation was *being fulfilled*, so also the word of redemption would be fulfilled.

Jeremiah repeats again the centrally grievous sin of Israel and Judah: idolatry (32:26-35), noting that the people, priests, and prophets were all culpable (32:30-32). They had even set up idols in the temple of the Lord, and had even sacrificed their sons and daughters in the fire (repeated from Jer 7:30-31). Nevertheless, the Lord reiterates both the promise of the remnant as well as the covenant promise in the following text.

*Israel and Judah's restoration (remnant) and the messianic Branch: Jer 32:36-33:26*

This is a long section of hope (with some judgment interwoven) in stark contrast to the preceding section of judgment on their idolatries.

- ⇒ YHWH will regather/replant the remnant and bring them back to Judah (32:37, 41-42; 33:6-13) ~ covenant promises.
- ⇒ YHWH will make them his people, and he will be their God (32:38) ~ the covenant promise of redemption.
- ⇒ YHWH will give them single hearts and minds (32:39a) ~ the heart of redemption is the law written on the heart.
- ⇒ They will fear the Lord (32:39b, 40b) ~ restored relationship with YHWH.
- ⇒ YHWH will give them an everlasting covenant (32:40) ~ the unconditional promise of redemption.
- ⇒ YHWH is the Creator of heaven and earth (33:2) ~ Creator is Redeemer.
- ⇒ YHWH will answer Jeremiah with "unsearchable things" (33:3) ~ God is beyond comprehension, yet revealed.
- ⇒ YHWH will send the messianic Branch from the line (seed –promise) of David (33:14-16) ~ the goal of redemption.
  - Messiah will be righteous
  - Messiah will do what is right and just
  - Jerusalem will be saved



*The Lord's covenant with the heavens, the earth, day and night, the Levites, and David: Jer 33:19-26 (see the "two overlapping levels of the covenant-promise," p. 29, and the "two covenants," 27):*

The prophetic enactment of Jeremiah *redeeming* his uncle's field is given as the backdrop to the future restoration of the remnant to the land. The fact that YHWH is the *Creator* of the universe is also appealed to as the backdrop to

<sup>533</sup> Revell Bible Dictionary, p. 921.

<sup>534</sup> Revell Bible Dictionary, p. 921.

all that he is going to do in judgment and redemption. Further, in terms of general revelation, the Lord presents the certainty of his covenant promises with that of YHWH's unbreakable "covenants" with the day and with the night (אֶת-בְּרִיתִי הַיּוֹם וְאֶת-בְּרִיתִי הַלַּיְלָה) and the "fixed laws of heaven and earth" (חֻקֹּת שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ) (33:19-22, 25-26). Not only as creator of these heavenly laws, but as the sustainer of them, he will follow through with his promises of redemption. The *hypothetical* "if" means that God is faithful to his promises, they are as certain as the day and the night.

The "covenant with the Levites" (33:21) sparks continued debate among the divergent eschatologies, whether it is figurative or literal or both (premls taking the Levitical priesthood promise as literal, and amils taking it as figurative of all those who are in Christ):

Mal 2:4 "And you will know that I have sent you this admonition so that my covenant with Levi may continue," says the LORD Almighty.

The important principle is that the royal (Davidic) and priestly (Levitical) aspects are central to the covenant promises, and indeed focus on the Messiah himself, regardless of one's eschatology of the end times. Surely all the promises of God to the Levites and David are fulfilled in Christ.

Note: the Levitical priesthood is not presented in the Pentateuch as a covenant but as a calling. Keil and Delitzsch offer some explanation:

"But, inasmuch as they were thereby brought into a peculiar relation to the Lord, and thus had vouchsafed to them not merely privileges and promises, but also had laid on them duties, the fulfillment of which was a condition of receiving the privileges, this relation might be called a covenant. . . <sup>535</sup>

"The import of the words of the verse is simply that the Lord purposes to fulfill the promise of His blessing, made to the patriarchs in favor of their whole posterity, in the shape of a numerous increase; but this promise will now be specially applied to the posterity of David and to the priests, so that there shall never be wanting descendants of David to occupy the throne, nor Levites to perform the service of the Lord." <sup>536</sup>

Ex 28:1 Have Aaron your brother brought to you from among the Israelites, along with his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, so they may serve me as priests.

Further, take note of Num 25:

Num 25:11-13 "Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, has turned my anger away from the Israelites; for he was as zealous as I am for my honor among them, so that in my zeal I did not put an end to them. 12 Therefore tell him I am making my covenant of peace with him. 13 He and his descendants will have a covenant of a lasting priesthood, because he was zealous for the honor of his God and made atonement for the Israelites."

Levites, or spiritually, of their spiritual posterity, cannot be decided, as Hengstenberg and Nägelsbach think, by referring to the words of the Lord in Ex. xix. 6, that all Israel shall be a kingdom of priests, and to the prophetic passages, Isa. lxi. 6, lxvi. 23 ff., according to which the whole people shall be priests to God, while Levites also shall be taken from among the heathen. For this prophecy does not treat of the final glory of the people of God, but only of the innumerable increase of those who shall attain membership in the family of David and the Levitical priests. The question that has been raised is rather to be decided in accordance with the general promises regarding the increase of Israel; and in conformity with these, we answer that it will not result from the countless increase of the descendants of Jacob according to the flesh, but from the incorporation, among the people of God, of the heathen who return to the God of Israel. As the God-fearing among the heathen will be raised, for their piety, to be the children of Abraham, and according to the promise, Isa. lxvi. 20 ff., even Levitical priests taken from among them, so shall the increase placed in prospect before the descendants of David and Levi be realized by the reception of the heathen into the royal and sacerdotal privileges of the people of God under the new covenant. <sup>537</sup>

*Jeremiah's prophetic word to king Zedekiah: Jer 34:1-22*

- ☞ See the map of Nebuchadnezzar's campaigns, p. 501.
- ☞ Compare Jer 21:1-10 for a similar prophetic word to Zedekiah.
- ☞ See the *Lachish Letters* for an extrabiblical portrayal of the attack on Lachish (Judges-Esther syllabus). See Sennacherib's attack on Lachish background in Isaiah section above, Micah 2, p. 383.
- ☞ See *The Babylonian Chronicle* which contains Nebuchadnezzar's campaigns against Syria and Palestine (600-597).

The events recorded here are given in more detail in:

2 Ki 25:1 So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. He camped outside the city and built siege works all around it.

Jer 52:4 So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. They camped outside the city and built siege works all around it.

<sup>535</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Jeremiah*, vol. 2, p. 74.

<sup>536</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Jeremiah*, vol. 2, p. 75.

<sup>537</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Jeremiah*, vol. 2, p. 76.

This would place the context in the early part of 588, before Egypt (Pharaoh Hophra[Apries], Jer 44:30) approached (probably in alliance with Zedekiah) and temporarily forced the lifting of the siege (37:5). The Greek historian Herodotus recorded that Egypt also sailed a fleet to Tyre, taking control of the city.<sup>538</sup>

For further background see:

Ezek 30:20-26 In the eleventh year, in the first month on the seventh day, the word of the LORD came to me: 21 “Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt. It has not been bound up for healing or put in a splint so as to become strong enough to hold a sword. 22 Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt. I will break both his arms, the good arm as well as the broken one, and make the sword fall from his hand. 23 I will disperse the Egyptians among the nations and scatter them through the countries. 24 I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put my sword in his hand, but I will break the arms of Pharaoh, and he will groan before him like a mortally wounded man. 25 I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh will fall limp. Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon and he brandishes it against Egypt. 26 I will disperse the Egyptians among the nations and scatter them through the countries. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

The prophet warns them, however, that the Babylonians would return (Jer 37:6-10), for Egypt would be repelled and defeated. The latter happened, and Babylon returned.

### The Conquest of Jerusalem

From the tablet which deals with the period from the last (21st) year of Nabopolassar to the eleventh year of his son and successor Nebuchadnezzar II, the section reporting on the events before and after the conquest of Jerusalem has been translated here. The preceding years saw the conquest of Hatti land by Nabopolassar and his son's annual campaigns through the West (conquest of Askelon, first year), the subsequent campaign against Elam (Year 9), a short rebellion (Year 10) and more campaigns in Hatti land.

Year 4 The king of Akkad sent out his army and marched into Hatti land. [They marched] unopposed through Hatti land. In the month of Kislimu he took the lead of his army and marched toward Egypt. The king of Egypt heard (of it) and sent out his army; they clashed in an open battle and inflicted heavy losses on each other. The king of Akkad and his army turned back and [returned] to Babylon.

Year 5 The king of Akkad (stayed) in his country. He organized his chariots and many horses.

Year 6, month Kislimu: The king of Akkad moved his army into Hatti land, He dispatched his army from Hatti land, they raided the desert, took much booty from the land of the Arabs, (also) their herds and divine images in great number. In the month Addaru, the king returned to his country.

Year 7, month Kislimu: The king of Akkad moved his army into Hatti land, laid siege to the city of Judah (*la-a -hu-du*) and the king took the city on the second day of the month Addaru. He appointed in it a (new) king of his liking, took heavy booty from it and brought it into Babylon.

Year 8, month Tebetu: The king of Akkad (went) into Hatti land as far as Carchemish [ . . . ] from [ . . . ] and in the month Shabatu he returned to his country.<sup>539</sup>

Jeremiah gives very specific details to Zedekiah about the fall of Jerusalem, his own exile to Babylon, and even his own peaceful death. The dramatic picture of Jerusalem holding out (for two years) is further illustrated by the drama at Lachish (SW of Jerusalem) through what are now called the *Lachish Letters*. These twenty one letters were written on pottery shards in Hebrew in black ink and relay the situation of the contemporaneous Babylonian siege on Lachish and Azekah in 587 (Jer 34:6-7). The letters were possibly copies of those sent to Jerusalem during Nebuchadnezzar's attack. Letter No. 4 reads: “We are watching for the fire signals of Lachish, according to all the signs which my lord has given, for we cannot see [the signals] of Azekah.” Jer 6:1 uses the same word for fire signal (the same word for *oracle* used so often in the prophets):

Jer 6:1 “Flee for safety, people of Benjamin! Flee from Jerusalem! Sound the trumpet in Tekoa!

Raise the signal (תִּשְׁמַע) over Beth Hakkerem! For disaster looms out of the north, even terrible destruction.

Jeremiah 34:7 mentions Lachish and Azekah (12 miles northeast of Lachish) as two of the last surviving cities of Judah. Now it would appear that Azekah too has fallen and the Chaldean noose is tightening on the Judean kingdom. However, the signals of Azekah temporarily may not have been visible for climatic or other reasons. It is important to note the external evidence here for the use of fire signals in ancient Israel. The Hebrew word for fire signal is the same as that used in Jeremiah 6:1.

### **Lachish Letters**

Letter No. 6 alludes to the fact that the princes are weakening the hands of the people. Evidently this refers to some insubordination or defeatism. The text reads: “And behold the words of the princes are not good, but to weaken our hands and to slacken the hands of the men who are informed about them.” This is almost identical to the charge which some of the

<sup>538</sup> Walton, Matthews, Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary*, p. 668.

<sup>539</sup> Pritchard, *The ANE*, vol 2, 112-113.

princes lodged against Jeremiah: “For he is weakening the hands of the soldiers who are left in this city, and the hands of all the people, by speaking such words to them” (Jer 38:4).

Letter No. refers to a journey of the Judean army commander to Egypt. Whether he went with an appeal for troops or supplies is not known. This allusion points to the intrigues of the pro-Egyptian party during the reign of Zedekiah. The reason for the present expedition must have been much different from that referred to in Jeremiah 26:20—23. Letter No. also refers to a letter with a warning from a prophet. Efforts to identify this prophet as Uriah or Jeremiah have not been convincing.

Letters 2—6 refer to a defense which a certain Hoshaiah (a name which appears in Jer 42:1; 43:2), the writer of several of the Lachish texts, makes, to his superior, Ya’osh. Though the charges are not always clear, they have something to do with reading confidential documents and presumably divulging some of the information contained therein. One scholar has suggested that this collection of letters in the Lachish guardhouse constituted a “file” used in the court martial of Hoshaiah. The guardhouse was not only a military post, but it was located by the gate, where Palestinian trials were held in biblical times.

The Lachish letters have epigraphic, linguistic, and historical value for the Bible scholar. They indicate the kind of language and script the Hebrews were using in the age of Jeremiah, and they give information for textual criticism. They are firsthand documents of the disturbed political and military situation during the months before Nebuchadnezzar’s destruction of Jerusalem, when Jeremiah was the leading prophet in Judah.<sup>540</sup>

(right) Lachish Tell (Tell ed-Duweir)

### Hebrew slaves freed and unfreed: Jer 34:8-22

Ex 21:2 If you buy a Hebrew servant, he is to serve you for six years. But in the seventh year, he shall go free, without paying anything.

Lev 25:10 Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each one of you is to return to his family property and each to his own clan.<sup>541</sup>

Lev 25:39,42 If one of your countrymen becomes poor among you and sells himself to you, do not make him work as a slave. 42 Because the Israelites are my servants, whom I brought out of Egypt, they must not be sold as slaves.



Considering the law, the Judahites made a remarkably righteous covenant to free the Hebrew slaves (Jer 34:8-10). Yet, they not so remarkably reneged on the covenant (34:11). Such a reversal of covenants is called a *profaning* of God’s name (34:16). It seems Judah is more inclined to evil than good, for even their “good deeds” lead them into greater sin. We are not told why they decided to covenant a release of the Hebrew slaves, so we must speculate: to free men to fight the Babylonians? Out of repentance for a greatly overdue act of obedience to the law (repentance in 34:15)? An act of mercy to free them before the Babylonians captured the city? An act of necessity, to relieve the owners of financial responsibility to feed and house the slaves? If the context of verse 11 is the temporary withdrawal of the Babylonian army, due to Egypt’s approach, then perhaps they thought they would not need the men to fight against the Babylonians and thus broke their covenant.

Such injustice to slaves is symptomatic of the very ills at the spiritual heart of Judah, implicating the people, leaders, court officials, and priests, 34:19. The pre-exilic prophets had repeatedly condemned such unrighteousness, but to little avail. The Lord reverses their covenant-reversal with a double-meaning play on the word “freedom” (דְּרוּר, 34:8. 17)<sup>542</sup>, in which they would know the “freedom” of the full covenant curses: the sword, plague, and famine (loss of land, nation, people, produce). Isaiah 61:1 may serve as further background to this incident. In contrast to what the Lord is here promising in Jeremiah 34, he promised in Isaiah that the captives in exile would be eventually freed (See Jesus’ quoting of this in Lu 4:16-17):

Isa 61:1 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me

<sup>540</sup> Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible, pp. 1298-1299.

<sup>541</sup> “Proclaim liberty . . .” is the phrase on our American Liberty Bell.

<sup>542</sup> See J.P.J. Olivier, “דְּרוּר,” NIDOTTE, vol. 1, pp. 986-989

to preach good news to the poor.  
 He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
 to proclaim freedom for the captives  
 and release from darkness for the prisoners,

Note: is there something principal here in terms of the history of revelation and slavery? Surely, even in the Pentateuch we see an unfolding *antislavery principle* that would have eventually eliminated slavery among a more righteous people.

*Jeremiah’s prophetic enactment of the teetotaler Recabites: Jer 35:1-19*

Prophecies in Jer 35-36 were given during the reign of Jehoiakim (609-598) (see p. 413). Thus they serve as a “flashback” to a time when Judah was being attacked by Babylon and the Recabites had fled to Jerusalem for safety. This places them speaking with Jeremiah during the first sieges of the city (600-597) (see map of “Assyrian Campaigns Against Israel and Judah,” p. ). This historical “sidebar” highlights the seriousness of the Babylonian incursions, for it even forced this separatist group to seek refuge in Jerusalem. Keep in mind that during Isaiah’s prophecies of Babylon’s rise, it would have seemed incredible to Judah that Assyria could be displaced, whereas now the reality was becoming all too clear:

2 Ki 24:2 The LORD sent Babylonian, Aramean, Moabite and Ammonite raiders against him. He sent them to destroy Judah, in accordance with the word of the LORD proclaimed by his servants the prophets.  
 Jer 35:11 But when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon invaded this land, we[Recabites] said, ‘Come, we must go to Jerusalem to escape the Babylonian and Aramean armies.’ So we have remained in Jerusalem.”

*Recabites: Kenite descendents of Recab and a separatist clan related to Jonadab [Jehonadab]*

1 Chron 2:55 and the clans of scribes who lived at Jabez: the Tirathites, Shimeathites and Sucathites. These are the Kenites who came from Hammath, the father of the house of Recab.  
 Judg 1:16 The descendants of Moses’ father-in-law, the Kenite, went up from the City of Palms with the men of Judah to live among the people of the Desert of Judah in the Negev near Arad.  
 2 Kings 10:15 After he left there, he came upon Jehonadab son of Recab, who was on his way to meet him. Jehu greeted him and said, “Are you in accord with me, as I am with you?”  
 Jer 35:14 Jonadab son of Recab ordered his sons not to drink wine and this command has been kept. To this day they do not drink wine, because they obey their forefather’s command. But I have spoken to you again and again, yet you have not obeyed me.

*Jonadab[Jehonadab]* had a significant role in purging the north of Baalism two hundred years earlier during Jehu’s reign (840):

2 Ki 10:23 Then Jehu and Jehonadab son of Recab went into the temple of Baal. Jehu said to the ministers of Baal, “Look around and see that no servants of the LORD are here with you—only ministers of Baal.”

Jeremiah’s prophetic enactment in ch. 35 illustrates an example of faithfulness to God in the midst of great political and spiritual upheaval in the land, that even this small sectarian group had more faith than the rest of Judah. As a result, the Lord promised them that the descendents of Jonadab would always have a faithful remnant (35:19). It also was an example of faithful opposition (Jonadab’s and Jehu’s) to idolatry in their past. Regardless of the motivations of Jonadab in ordering his sons never to drink wine and live in tents (despite some exemplorizers, this is not to be taken as normatively exemploristic!), the story is given as a graphic illustration of ongoing faithfulness in the midst of unfaithful Judah (35:12-16). The Recabite’s faithfulness contrasted vividly with Israel’s persistent refusal to heed the prophets God sent them (35:14b-15).

Feinberg contrasts the Recabites with the Judahites:<sup>543</sup>

<u>Recabites</u>	<u>Judahites</u>
1. Obeyed a fallible leader.	Disobeyed the eternal God.
2. Jonadab’s command was given but once.	God repeatedly sent them messages.
3. Their restrictions not concerned with eternal matters.	God’s message was eternal/temporal.
4. They obeyed Jonadab for some three hundred years.	They disobeyed constantly.
5. Their loyalty would be rewarded.	They would be punished.

**c) Jeremiah’s suffering worsens: Jer 36-38**

“The narratives have been carefully selected to establish the point that Judah’s leaders and people rejected and mistreated God’s prophet Jeremiah and therefore deserved the divine punishment they received. The narratives form a series of relentlessly condemnatory stories about the people of Judah.”<sup>544</sup>

<sup>543</sup> Adapted from Feinberg, *Jeremiah*, p. 246.

<sup>544</sup> Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, p. 241.

(right) The proposed house of Jeremiah excavated in Jerusalem.

There are two figures in this section that treat Jeremiah well, and they are both foreigners (Ebed-Melech, a Cushite, and Nebuzaradan, a Babylonian).

Jeremiah 37-39 was prophesied under king Zedekiah (597-586) (see p. 413).

[This material covers the time prior to the fall of Jerusalem until after it falls.]

*True repentance still possible, three readings of the word of the prophet, yet Jehoiakim burns the word of the Lord from Jeremiah: Jer 36:1-32*

Clear evidence that Jeremiah penned his book at the Lord's command (36:2). The *reason* for the Lord's command to write down all that he had spoken to Jeremiah, since the reign of Josiah, is even given: that each might yet "turn from his wicked way; then I will forgive their wickedness and their sin" (36:3). The offer of repentance has already been given many times, and even now when exile was absolutely certain. Indeed, the Lord does not here offer to *circumvent the judgment*, only to forgive their wickedness.

In the winter of December, 604 B.C. (fifth month, Kislev), Baruch, Jeremiah's faithful scribe, wrote the entire text out as dictated by Jeremiah and then went himself to the temple to read it in the presence of the people from the room of Gemariah (the secretary) (36:8-10). The prophet himself was "banned" somehow from going into the temple, a striking commentary on the reign of Jehoiakim.

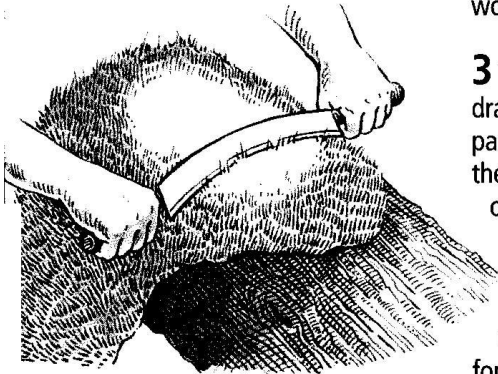
A most appropriate time for Baruch to read (three times in one day) the word of the Lord was during a fast in Jerusalem. The fast that was proclaimed in Jerusalem was evidence of religious faith(?) or hypocrisy, for though the people who initially heard the word of the prophet responded appropriately with fear, the rest of the story is one of complacent indifference, even *calculated rejection* of the prophet's word when Jehoiakim burned the scroll bit by bit (36:22-24). No regular fast was designated for this month (only the day of Atonement in the seventh month[Tishri]), so it may have been related to their fear of the capture of Jerusalem that had occurred in 605. Also, Babylon was sacking the Philistine city of Ashkelon in this same month. It appears that the fast was proclaimed either by the temple or the people, but most likely not from king Jehoiakim. It is important, in light of the Lord's offer of repentance, that this fast was not perceived by the Lord as an adequate response to the situation! As in the following part of the narrative (excepting Jehoiakim and his retinue), the fact that many people were fasting may suggest that the faithful had not vanished in Israel, even if mixed with those who were fasting out of pure fear to manipulate the hand of God to save them(?). Nevertheless, we have many prophetic texts condemning hypocritical fasting: e.g.,

Baruch's reading of the scroll in the temple-room of Gemariah shows the support of the faithful in Jerusalem. Gemariah was the brother of Ahikam and Elasah (all sons of Shaphan, 26:24; 29:3). Shaphan had been King Josiah's secretary of state, and was the one who read the Book of the Law to King Josiah when it was found in the temple (2 Ki 22:8, 12, 14). Elasah was the one Jeremiah entrusted with his letter to the exiles in Babylon (29:1-3). Having such a godly father, it is not surprising that Ahikam, Elasah, and Gemariah supported Jeremiah. Ahikam had also been present when Josiah was read the Book of the Law, and he witnessed the king tear his robes and his repentance and reforms. Ahikam then later protected Jeremiah when the leaders had tried to have him put to death. No doubt, Gemariah was well informed of such events, and was also a faithful follower of the Lord, yet he witnessed King Jehoiakim cut and burn the scroll of Jeremiah, despite his urging him not to burn it (36:25). Elthanah (son of Achbor who was also present when Josiah was read the Book of the Law, 2 Ki 22:11) is another one who supported Jeremiah at this point, alongside Gemariah, but he had earlier opposed Jeremiah (Jer 26:22). Delaiah (son of Shemaiah, Jer 36:12) was also present to urge King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll (Jer 36:25) (see below, Jer 36:25).



## The Making of Parchment<sup>545</sup>

Parchment was the writing surface of choice between the time that papyrus supplies began to dwindle in the second century B.C. and paper came into widespread use in the late Middle Ages. The parchment maker was known as a *percamenarius*. The steps for making parchment follow.

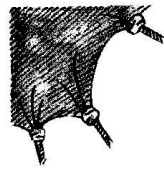
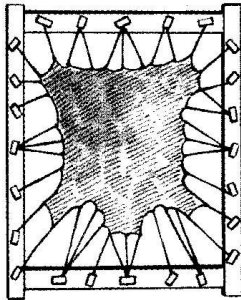


**1** The flayed skin of an animal—such as a calf, goat, or sheep—is first carefully washed and then soaked in a vat of clean water for approximately 24 hours.

**2** To loosen the hair on the hide, the skin is then placed in a vat containing a solution of lime and water for anywhere from 8 to 16 days (depending on the air temperature) and stirred several times a day with a wooden paddle or pole.

**3** The slippery skins are taken out of the vat and draped hair side out over an angled beam or log. The parchment maker stands behind the high end of the beam and scrapes downward, pushing the hair off the skin with the blunt edge of a curved, two-handed knife. This surface is called the grain side of the parchment. The skin is turned over and any residue of flesh is removed from the underside. Then the skin is soaked in fresh water for two days to remove the lime.

*On the parchment below, writing from the seventh century overrides a manuscript written in the fourth century. Manuscript pages that are scraped down and used again are called palimpsests.*



**4** The skin is stretched with cords onto a wooden frame fitted with adjustable pegs. The pegs are turned to pull the skin tight. To avoid cutting slits into the skin, which would expand into holes as the skin tightens and dries, small pebbles are folded into the edge of the skin to form knobs that are used to help in attaching the skin to the frame.

**5** While keeping the skin wet, the parchment maker begins the crucial process of scraping both surfaces of the skin, right, using a *lunellum*, a knife with a deeply curved blade. The taut skin is then allowed to dry on the frame. Direct sunlight quickens the process and shrinks the hide tighter.

**6** When dry, the drum-tight skin is scraped again to the desired thinness. The grain side particularly requires shaving to remove its natural shine, which is not acceptable for a writing surface. Finally, the parchment is removed from the frame and rolled up until needed. Before use, the parchment is buffed with pumice to whiten the surface.



The Bible Through the Ages, p. 86.

Micaiah, son of Gemariah above, made a considerable effort to get the prophet's word to the officials of the royal palace (36:11-19), who made the proper response of inviting Baruch to read them the scroll of Jeremiah. They

<sup>545</sup> The Bible Through the Ages, p. 86.

even made the effort to protect both the prophet and his scribe when they planned to inform the king of the scroll (36:19). This latter detail indicates that a real tension existed among the leadership with the king, and that they were working hard to prevent the king's excesses. That the people were fasting, that the leadership of the temple was interested in presenting the prophet's word to the political leadership, and that the political leadership was interested in presenting it to the king, may suggest to us that all was not lost in Judah. That is, there were people still responding to the Lord's word, and thus sensitive to the message of his prophet. This would give us a possible explanation for the Lord's repeated offers of repentance. It also helps us to see some light in a period of otherwise great apostasy and darkness.

Jehoiakim's calculated rejection of the word of the Lord was a rebellious act of blasphemy against God himself (36:23). Even though his officials were entirely complacent and complicit, there were leaders (Elthanah, Gemariah, Delaiah, see above) from the temple who "urged the king not burn the scroll" (36:25). The guilt of Jehoiakim, however, would have disastrous consequences of Babylonian victory, punishment on his attendants and Judah, and his own death (36:29-31).

*Jeremiah goes to jail for prophesying God's word, yet continues prophesying: Jer 37:1-21*

➤ See texts of Zedekiah under discussion on Jer 21, p. 430.

Jeremiah 37-39 was prophesied under king Zedekiah (597-586) (see p. 413).

Zedekiah was a puppet king of Nebuchadnezzar for nine years, but eventually rebelled with Egypt's encouragement (in direct rebellion against the word of God, Jer 38:17-19) along with Tyre and Ammon. Jeremiah spends the last two years of Zedekiah's reign in prison (588-586), until Jerusalem falls. Zedekiah is a complete failure as a covenantal king for Judah. They were not *paying attention* to the word of God:

Jer 37:2 Neither he nor his attendants nor the people of the land paid any attention to the words the LORD had spoken through Jeremiah the prophet.

Zedekiah displays what appears to be a real faith in God, on the other hand, when he asks Jeremiah to pray for them (37:2). Yet, this appears to be more a superstitious "covering his bases" than true faith in YHWH. Perhaps this is a good example of *Realpolitik* and the *pragmatic* use of *religion* to get some desired result. Jeremiah also upbraids Zedekiah for having false prophets prophesy, indicating that Zedekiah was something of an opportunist (37:19). Although Zedekiah does not harm Jeremiah, and even finally allowed him to get out of prison, and gave him daily bread in the courtyard of the guard, it is not certain that these were acts of obedience to God so much as the result of his own fears. Nevertheless, after Jeremiah was beaten and put in prison on false charges of desertion (37:11-15), Zedekiah pointedly asked Jeremiah, "Is there any word from the Lord?" (37:17). Regardless of speculations about Zedekiah's personal faith (or syncretism), it is evident that he was up against his own court officials who were very hostile to the word of God. The latter is seen in Jer 38:5 where Zedekiah caves in to the voice of the officials to have Jeremiah thrown into a cistern. Zedekiah claims that "The king can do nothing to oppose you" (38:5b). This is also evident in the following narrative in which Zedekiah secretly asks Jeremiah to speak God's word to him (38:14-26). On the one hand, Zedekiah expresses his knowledge that the Lord is God: "As surely as the Lord lives, who has given us breath . . ." (38:16), while on the other hand he claims he is powerless to protect Jeremiah from the officials (38:5, 24). There is a mix of duplicity and acknowledgment of the truth in Zedekiah.

Zedekiah asked for prayer, but the word of God came to Jeremiah that judgment was irrevocable, there was no longer any way to circumvent the exile (37:6-10). This remarkably precise prediction involved the temporary withdrawal of the Babylonian army because Egypt was approaching, and the eventual return of Babylon to finish the job. It is apparent that Zedekiah had more power than he acknowledged, for when it was convenient to him he claimed to be powerless, although he could retrieve Jeremiah from the dungeon to ask him for a word from the Lord, he could also protect Jeremiah when he chose, and he instilled some degree of fear in the officials that he might actually heed the word of the prophet (38:27). This latter detail is puzzling in light of Zedekiah's apparent fear of the officials, unless they were watching and controlling him closely, for they feared he might begin to accept the words of the prophet Jeremiah. Perhaps they sensed his ambiguous response to the word of the prophet. The *prophetic assessment* of Zedekiah (noted above) is entirely negative:

Jer 52:2-3 He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as Jehoiakim had done. 3 It was because of the LORD's anger that all this happened to Jerusalem and Judah, and in the end he thrust them from his presence. Now Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

The prophet Jeremiah stands in stark contrast to the rest of the characters in this narrative, for he never ceases speaking God's word even when he is persecuted beyond human toleration. This is highlighted by the worst episode in his prophetic ministry when he was put into a cistern.

*Jeremiah is put in a cistern, yet prophesies to Zedekiah: Jer 38:1-13, 14-28*



There are two figures in this section that treat Jeremiah well, and they are both foreigners (Ebed-Melech, a Cushite, and Nebuzaradan, a Babylonian).

**Cisterns** (קִיבּוּר) represented the life-source of water preservation in the ANE. They were the pre-requisite for survival during periods of typically limited rainfall, drought, or siege. Pits and cisterns were basically the same, but distinct from wells (contra some English translations). Cisterns were bottle shaped, plastered for water retention, and covered by a stone. Cisterns feature in OT narratives numerous times, being used as places to hide, landmarks, prisons/dungeons, burial holes, etc. The latter, and several of these texts, indicates that cisterns were not easily maintained, and thus their water was undoubtedly not always the best.

Gen 37:20 “Come now, let’s kill him[Joseph] and throw him into one of these cisterns and say that a ferocious animal devoured him. Then we’ll see what comes of his dreams.”

Moses includes cisterns as part of the imagery of the promised land of security and covenant blessings:

Deut 6:11 (NASB) and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you shall eat and be satisfied,

1 Sam 13:6 When the men of Israel saw that their situation was critical and that their army was hard pressed, they hid in caves and thickets, among the rocks, and in pits and cisterns.

2 Ch 26:10 He[Azariah/Uzziah] also built towers in the desert and dug many cisterns, because he had much livestock in the foothills and in the plain. He had people working his fields and vineyards in the hills and in the fertile lands, for he loved the soil.

Isaiah used the motif of a cistern to describe the result of (utter devastation) of Jerusalem’s rebellion (note also the similarity with Jeremiah’s prophetic enactment of smashing the clay pot, Jer 19):

Isa 30:14 It will break in pieces like pottery, shattered so mercilessly that among its pieces not a fragment will be found for taking coals from a hearth or scooping water out of a cistern.

Jeremiah had used the cistern motif to describe Judah’s rebellion, which had significant allusions to the provision of water in the desert wanderings by YHWH who was the source of life, while also alluding to the coming judgment:

Jer 2:13 “My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.  
Jer 14:3 The nobles send their servants for water; they go to the cisterns but find no water. They return with their jars unfilled; dismayed and despairing, they cover their heads.

(left) ancient cistern<sup>546</sup>



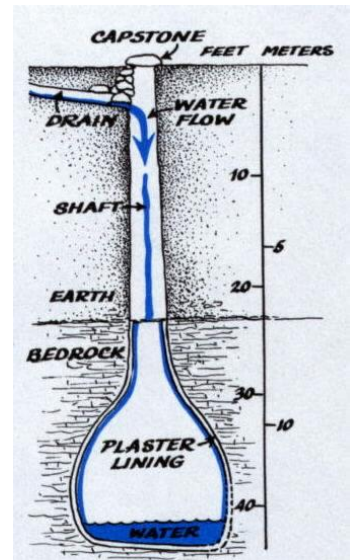
Jer 38:6 So they took Jeremiah and put him into the cistern of Malkijah, the king’s son, which was in the courtyard of the guard. They lowered Jeremiah by ropes into the cistern; it had no water in it, only mud, and Jeremiah sank down into the mud.

(right) Cistern.<sup>547</sup>

Jer 41:7-9 When they went into the city, Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the men who were with him slaughtered them and threw them into a cistern. 8 But ten of them said to Ishmael, “Don’t kill us! We have wheat and barley, oil and honey, hidden in a field.” So he let them alone and did not kill them with the others. 9 Now the cistern where he threw all the bodies of the men he had killed along with Gedaliah was the one King Asa had made as part of his defense against Baasha king of Israel. Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled it with the dead.

Zechariah portrays the exilic situation in Babylon as an empty cistern:

Zech 9:11 As for you also, because of the blood of My covenant with you, I have set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.



Typical cistern construction. Jeremiah, who was imprisoned in a cistern, likened Judah’s interest in foreign deities to forsaking “springs of water” in favor of “broken cisterns that cannot hold water” (Jer. 2:13). Revell, 221.

<sup>546</sup> <http://www.bible-history.com/biblestudy/cisterns.html>

<sup>547</sup> Revell Bible Dictionary, p. 221.

See also the presentation of cisterns in relation to marriage metaphorically in Proverbs:

Prov 5:15 Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well.

---

The fact that Jeremiah is thrown into a cistern located “in the courtyard of the guard” (38:6) indicates the dire situation in Jerusalem, for the water was already low even in the courtyard!

It takes a foreigner (with a Hebrew name, Ebed-Melech, “king’s servant”) to rescue the prophet of the Lord, sending us the clear picture that all was not well with God’s people in Judah (38:7-12). Ebed-Melech must have been a powerful person in the royal palace to get the king to acknowledge the wickedness of the men who put Jeremiah in the cistern, and to release Jeremiah. Presumably, he was an Egyptian, but we have no other information about him, except that the prophet Jeremiah promised that his life would be spared when Babylon captured Jerusalem:

Jer 39:16-17 Go and tell Ebed-Melech the Cushite, ‘This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: I am about to fulfill my words against this city through disaster, not prosperity. At that time they will be fulfilled before your eyes. 17 But I will rescue you on that day, declares the LORD; you will not be handed over to those you fear.’

Zedekiah questions Jeremiah in the “third entrance to the temple” (38:14), suggesting a very private place reserved only for the king. Considering the danger he placed himself in to speak to Jeremiah, it is noteworthy that he had sworn an oath not to kill Jeremiah (very generous of him), but as discussed above we can only speculate concerning his motives. Nevertheless, Zedekiah does tell us that he is *afraid of* the traitors who have gone over to Babylon (38:19). Jeremiah was placed in this category by his enemies, for he repeatedly counseled submission to Nebuchadnezzar. Thus, Jeremiah prophesied to Zedekiah in this setting, at great risk to his own life, that Zedekiah must submit to Babylon, otherwise they would be carried into exile, the city would be burned, and Zedekiah would be captured (38:18). Jeremiah uses a line reminiscent of Ob 7, concerning those that Zedekiah had wrongly trusted:

Obad 7 All your allies will force you to the border;  
your friends will deceive and overpower you;  
those who eat your bread will set a trap for you,  
but you will not detect it.

Jeremiah adds the provocative motif of feet stuck in mud that would have reminded Zedekiah that Jeremiah, the prophet of the Lord, had been thrown into a muddy cistern:

Jer 38:22 All the women left in the palace of the king of Judah will be brought out to the officials of the king of Babylon. Those women will say to you: ‘They misled you and overcame you— those trusted friends of yours. Your feet are sunk in the mud; your friends have deserted you.’

Jeremiah agrees to Zedekiah’s demands that the officials not hear the words of prophecy that Jeremiah had spoken in private. Zedekiah tells his reason for secrecy (though we can only speculate about his motives again), yet we must ask why the officials just question Jeremiah in this section (38:27), whereas they beat and imprison him in chapter 37? Is it because he has not again prophesied to them, and they felt they he had been chastened because he told them he was only asking the king not to send him back to the dungeon to die (as the king told him to say)? If they had known that he was speaking God’s prophetic word to the king, undoubtedly they would have killed him.

### ***a) Jerusalem falls into exile: Jer 39-45***

- See exile p. 460.
- Fulfills prophecies of ch 2f

Jeremiah 43-44 was prophesied under king Gedaliah (587-586) (see p. 413).

Jeremiah 45:1-49:33 was prophesied during the reign of Jehoiakim (609-598) (see p. 413).

- ✎ Seige began in January 588.
- ✎ Wall was breached on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 586
- ✎ Temple was destroyed in mid August (2 Ki 25:1-12)

---

Historical background adapted from Judges-Esther:

*Nebuchadnezzar captures Jerusalem; Judah is exiled (Jer 39:1-18; 2 Ki 24:20-25:21; 2 Chron 36:13-20):*

☞ See material on Zedekiah in Jeremiah, p. 430.

When Jerusalem fell, Zedekiah fled to the plains of Jericho, hoping to cross the Jordan River, probably seeking asylum in Ammon or Moab. This journey was approximately fifteen miles, but he did not get out with enough time

ahead to cross over (Jer 39:5; 2 Ki 25:4-6). Zedekiah was taken to the Babylonian headquarters in Riblah,<sup>548</sup> a city on a plain in Syria (Jer 39:5). Zedekiah had the most gruesome experience of watching his sons get executed, and his own eyes put out (Jer 39:6-7; 2 Ki 25:7). By design, the last images he would retain for the rest of his earthly days would be this execution.

*Blinding as punishment:*

Judg 16:21 Then the Philistines seized him[Samson], gouged out his eyes and took him down to Gaza. Binding him with bronze shackles, they set him to grinding in the prison.

1 Sam 11:2 But Nahash the Ammonite replied, "I will make a treaty with you only on the condition that I gouge out the right eye of every one of you and so bring disgrace on all Israel."

The remaining people in the land (4,600[Jer 52:29-30]) were then carried into Babylon, except for some of the poorest who were (ironically) given vineyards and fields (39:10). This latter humiliation of the proud and powerful was that the covenant-promises were given to the "no-bodies" of the land.

Recall king Jehoiachin (597) who was earlier carried into Babylonian captivity by Nebuchadnezzar with some 10,000 people, 7,000 fighting men, and 1,000 artists (Jer 22:24-30; 2 Ki 24:15), as well as a young man named Ezekiel. A preliminary word of judgment from the prophet Jeremiah was thus earlier fulfilled (Jer 22:24). See further background, p. 502.

*Nebuzadaran*, Nebuchadnezzar's commander of the imperial guard, came into Jerusalem and burned the temple, the palace, and all the houses, plundered the temple treasures and pillars, etc., and exiled the remaining populace, as well as the chief priest and other advisers and leaders (Jer 39:1-10; 52:1-30; 2 Ki 25:8-21; 2 Chron 36:18-20). The ark of the covenant is from this time onward only a memory and a mystery. Tradition holds that Jeremiah hid the ark on mount Nebo (2 Macc 2:4-8), while others hold that the priests hid it somewhere. Some say it is in Ethiopia today.

Missing pictures:

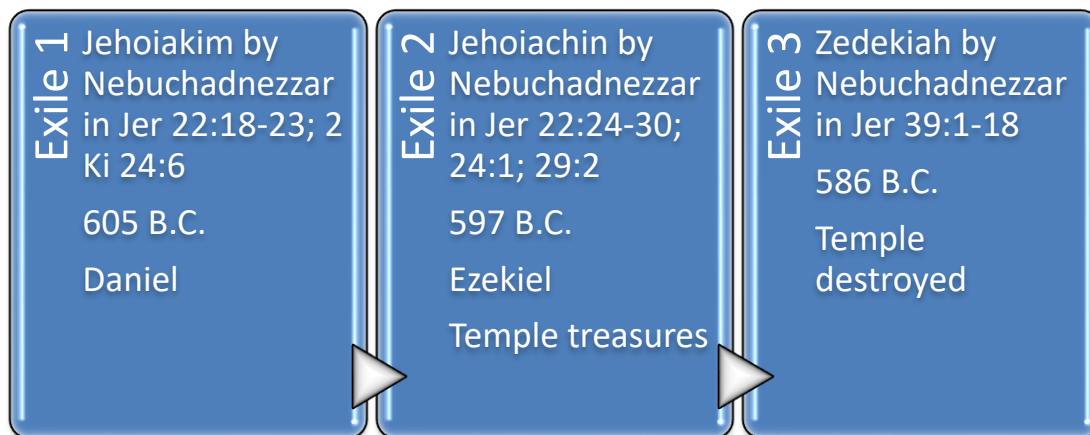
(below) High Priest<sup>549</sup>

(right) High priest on Day of Atonement<sup>550</sup>

(left) Jerusalem falls to Babylon<sup>551</sup>

(right) The Ark of the Covenant.<sup>552</sup>

Nebuchadnezzar ordered Nebuzadaran to release Jeremiah from prison chains in the courtyard of Zedekiah's guard



<sup>548</sup> The "land of Hamath" refers to several towns in Syria-Palestine, as well as a broad district extending to the Euphrates River.

<sup>549</sup> From.

<sup>550</sup> From.

<sup>551</sup> From

<sup>552</sup> From.

(Jer

A small lump of clay with the impression of a seal inscribed

יהויהוה  
 שש  
 יהויהוה

lhnyhw

Belonging to Hannaniah

bn

son of

gdlyhw

Gedaliah

and showing the impression of papyrus and thread on the back.

The two names, which are identified as Hebrew by the ending *-yhw* (-iah), an abbreviated form of the divine name Yahweh (see Document 41). are both born by several individuals in the Old Testament. Gedaliah was, of course, the name of the ruler left by Nebuchadnezzar in Jerusalem in 586 BC (2 Ki. 25:22). He was descended from a line of state officials (cf. 2 Ki 22:3–20; 2 Ch. 34:14–28) having no connection with the royal family of Judah. It is possible, but by no means certain, that the seal which made this impression was that of an otherwise unknown son of Gedaliah.

The surface on the back of this lump shows that it was used to seal a rolled-up papyrus document. References in the Old Testament to inscribed scrolls (Ps. 40:8; Jer. 36:2–4; Ezek. 2:9) suggest that these were papyrus rather than leather. The episode in which Jehioaqim has the written prophecy of Jeremiah burnt piece by piece in his brazier strongly suggests that the material was papyrus (Jer. 36:20–25).

Clay sealing, probably from Palestine; 6th century BC. Lth 1.1cm. WA 134695



T.C. Mitchell, *The Bible in the British Museum*, p. 76.

39:11-14; see Jer 26:24). Nebuzadaran is very kind to Jeremiah (see also Ebed-Melech), even acknowledging YHWH’s role in Judah’s exile (Jer 38:28; 11-14; 40:1-6), and giving him a gift:

Jer 40:2-3 When the commander of the guard found Jeremiah, he said to him, “The LORD your God decreed this disaster for this place. 3 And now the LORD has brought it about; he has done just as he said he would. All this happened because you people sinned against the LORD and did not obey him.”

Gedaliah Seal<sup>553</sup>

*Jeremiah in chains and freed: Jer 40:1-6*

Jeremiah is again freed from captivity at Ramah, apparently having been placed in chains when the captives were being carried off. There is debate as to the historical details because we are not told how Jeremiah ended up in chains after all. For a second time, Nebuzadaran rescued Jeremiah. Nebuchadnezzar had appointed *Gedaliah*, son of Ahikam (2 Ki 22:12), to reign in Jerusalem (586/7) (Jer 39:1-10; 2 Ki 25:22-26; 40:7-9; 41:1-3, 16-18; 52:4-27). Gedaliah became the protector of Jeremiah at the request of Nebuzadaran (40:5), as was his father Ahikam (Jer 26:24; 39:1; 2 K 22:12).

*The assignation of Governor Gedaliah: Jer 40:7-41:3*

Gedaliah advised Judah in Jeremiah’s counsel of non-resistance, accepting the circumstances as God’s judgment (Jer 40:7-10; 2 Ki 25:24). This led to Gedaliah’s unfortunate assassination by Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, and his men (Jer 40:11-41:9; 2 Ki 25:22-26). It is quite remarkable that this last “ruler” in Judah counseled obedience to the

<sup>553</sup> Mitchell, *The Bible in the British Museum*, p. 76.

word of the Lord’s prophet, yet his reward from them was death. Nevertheless, it appears to have been a small contingent of rebels that opposed Gedaliah, and not the whole community of the remnant in the land.

The portrayal of Gedaliah’s puppet-reign is surprisingly positive, containing motifs of covenantal blessedness in the land of promise:

- ⇒ He honored the prophet Jeremiah (40:6).
- ⇒ He obeyed Jeremiah’s call to submission to Babylon (40:9).
- ⇒ The people were blessed with a rich harvest (40:10-12).
- ⇒ Many dispersed Jews returned to the land for the abundant harvest (40:11-12).

The plot against Gedaliah, led by Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah (40:13f.), was from the anti-Babylon faction. Ishmael was not sensible, but rather a power mongering usurper who would not heed Gedaliah’s call to submit to Babylon. He was utterly foolish to think he could kill the regent of Babylon without serious repercussions. Ishmael had become an agent of anti-Babylonian Ammon under king Baalis. Gedaliah naively ignored the counsel of Johanan, son of Kareah, to be aware of Ishmael’s plot. While Gedaliah kindly shared hospitality with Ishmael, the latter transgressed one of the sacred rules of ANE hospitality in murdering his host Gedaliah.

Some speculations: Gedaliah rightly did not allow Johanan to secretly murder Ishmael, but Gedaliah may have been led to distrust Johanan after Johanan’s offer to murder Ishmael (see later, Johanan accused Jeremiah of lying to the people, 43:2). Perhaps Ishmael, being of the line of David, was angry that Gedaliah was given to rule instead of himself. Perhaps Baalis, an enemy of Babylon, was also afraid of Gedaliah’s submission to Babylon as well as the potential prosperity of Judah, posing a potential threat to Ammon.

*Ishmael’s further deeds of destruction causes the remnant to flee to Egypt: Jer 41:4-43:13*  
 Ishmael’s wickedness is further illustrated in his profoundly deceptive ruse against eighty men who had come to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices (41:4-9). His acting abilities to deceive such a large number of people enabled him to weep as he went (41:6), then he lied to the men (also allowing them to assume Gedaliah was still alive), slaughtered them, and threw their bodies into a cistern (see cisterns, p. 449). The pilgrims had come to Jerusalem from afar, for the altar of



Bethel had been destroyed by Josiah. This indicates some kind of residual faith among the northern remnant left in the land (see 2 Ki 17:24-41; 2 Chron 34:9; and later Samaritans), as well as *syncretism* in “slashing themselves” (41:5; cf. Deut 14:1). Ishmael’s folly is further illustrated by ruining a good cistern with the unclean bodies of these eighty men he slew, as well as his greed in allowing ten men to live in order to get their provisions of wheat, barley, oil, and honey which they had hidden. Why these men had hidden food for themselves is not explained(?). Then, Ishmael took captive many people from Mizpah, and sought to bring them to the Ammonites (as slaves?). There was nary a single sensible choice made by Ishmael!

*The fearful remnant flees Babylon’s wrath: Jer 41:16-43:13*

Against the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the people all refused to stay in the land of Judah, for fear of the Babylonian reprisal (read Lamentations):

Jer 42:10-12 ‘If you stay in this land, I will build you up and not tear you down; I will plant you and not uproot you, for I am grieved over the disaster I have inflicted on you. 11 Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon, whom you now fear. Do not be afraid of him, declares the LORD, for I am with you and will save you and deliver you from his hands. 12 I will show you compassion so that he will have compassion on you and restore you to your land.’

Jer 43:4-7 So Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers and all the people disobeyed the LORD’s command to stay in the land of Judah. 5 Instead, Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers led away all the remnant of Judah who had come back to live in the land of Judah from all the nations where they had been scattered. 6 They also led away all the men, women and children and the king’s daughters whom Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard had left with Gedaliah son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch son of Neriah. 7 So they entered Egypt in disobedience to the LORD and went as far as Tahpanhes.

Despite Johanan’s sense of justice (perhaps revenge?) against Ishmael, he lacked the character required for leadership in the difficult circumstances they now faced.

- ⇒ He initially offered to murder someone without due process (40:15).
- ⇒ He was afraid of the Babylonians (41:18).
- ⇒ He *apparently* sought the word of the prophet Jeremiah, but called Jeremiah a liar for his prophecy (42:1; 43:2).
- ⇒ He led the people to disobey the word of the prophet and flee to Egypt (43:4).
- ⇒ He forced Jeremiah into Egyptian exile, as well (43:6). The prophetic word of God is removed from the land of the promise: (Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel go into exile). The worst form of judgment.

Jeremiah receives an extensive prophecy for this confused and fretful remnant, thus suggesting that their prayer was not entirely hypocritical. Nevertheless, the primary emphasis in the prophet’s word is that disobedience, going to Egypt, would result in disaster (42:13-22). Only a few lines are given to the positive blessings for obedience and all the rest are negative cursings for disobedience. Some commentators propose that the people had hoped the prophet would answer according to their own desires. That is, they wanted him to confirm the decision they had already made. God’s positive promises to them are full of the covenant-ideals of the land and a people living under God’s protecting hand, while the cursings are frightfully specific of death and destruction if they flee to Egypt.

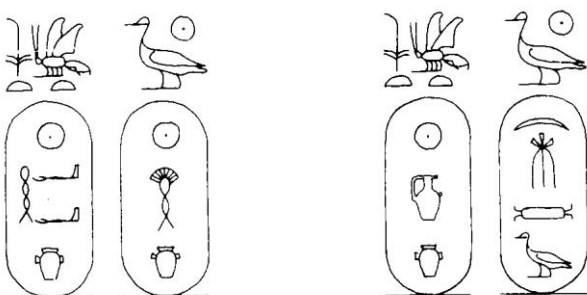
Jeremiah faithfully promised to seek the Lord on their behalf, while they solemnly swore to obey the word of God (42:4). Their first mistake was insincerely seeking the Lord, their second was promising to obey the word of God, and their third was boldly breaking their promise.

Jer 43:7 So they entered Egypt in disobedience to the LORD and went as far as Tahpanhes.

Consider: it is worth noting that the prophecies concerning this last remnant in the land are parallel to all those that had been given prior to the fall of the nation. Is the Lord offering them the same mercy and grace to create a community of true faith and obedience? His mercy and grace included great long-suffering. Nevertheless, the inverse of covenant blessing was prophesied in the prediction of *sword, famine, and plague* (42:22). Perhaps the worst aspect of their rebellion is their return to Egypt, the land of their deliverance. After some nine

hundred years of seeing God’s provision and protection in Canaan, they return as a rag-tag group of rebels against YHWH.

(left) The names of Hophra and Amasis<sup>554</sup>



Wahibre (Apries) Ahmose (Amasis) II  
Quirke and Spencer, *Ancient Egypt*, p. 231.



*Jeremiah’s prophetic enactment of burying a stone and prophesies judgment: Jer 43:8-13*

Jeremiah carries on his prophetic ministry in Egyptian exile at Tahpanhes and returns to the theme of judgment (see Tahpanhes in 2:16). He is instructed to bury some large stones in the brick pavement of Pharaoh Hophra's palace, symbolizing the inevitable subjection of Egypt to Babylon. Even in Egypt, they could not flee from Nebuchadnezzar (43:10). This may have been fulfilled when the latter invaded Egypt in 568-567, during the reign of Pharaoh Amasis. Amasis, a court official of Hophra, revolted against Hophra (later strangled) and then co-reigned with him until Amasis rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar in 570. Amasis was defeated in 568.



Jeremiah gives very specific predictions of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion, victory, throne, and the destruction he would bring which would include destruction of Egyptian gods (43:10-13). The temple of the sun (בֵּית שֶׁמֶשׁ, 43:13) was in the capital called On (Heliopolis).<sup>555</sup> The temples had been adorned with many **obelisks** (sacred pillars, מְצִלֹת) which were tall pillars with small pyramids at the

top that captured the first and last rays of the sun each day. There is only one obelisk remaining in Heliopolis, many

144 DOCUMENTS Jean Vercoutter, *The Search For Ancient Egypt*, pp. 144-145.

DOCUMENTS 145

### The obelisk's long journey

*In October 1836 a new monument was erected at the centre of the Place de la Concorde in Paris, and notices were posted around the city inviting Parisians to attend the ceremony. The monument, a gift from the government of Egypt, was the Luxor obelisk. In 1878 the English followed suit, erecting the obelisk they had been given, Cleopatra's Needle, on the Thames Embankment, London.*

#### The Luxor obelisk: material and dimensions

The obelisk is made of fine red granite, quarried at Aswan, in southern Egypt, at the First Cataract. It is a monolith, that is, cut from a single block of granite. The surface of each side is highly polished and slightly convex; the base is square and the shaft then tapers towards the top and ends in a small pyramidion.

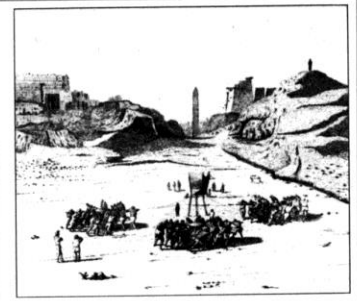
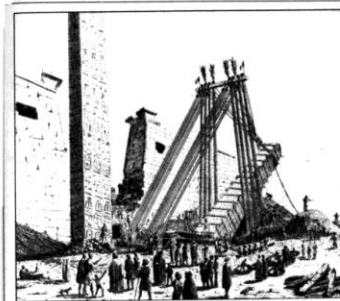
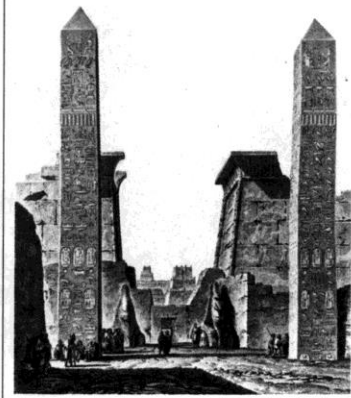
Each of its four surfaces carries three columns of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. The hieroglyphs of the central column are quite deeply carved and are perfectly polished; those in the flanking columns are cut to a lesser depth. The total number of characters is 1600 and the inscriptions read from top to bottom.

The obelisk is 72 feet tall and weighs 254 tons. This impressive monument was constructed in c. 1550 BC, in the reign of Tuthmosis III, who has been called 'the Napoleon of ancient Egypt'.

#### The organization of the French ceremony

Once the obelisk has been raised to the correct height vis-à-vis its intended pedestal, it can be set in place in a matter of hours.

It will be a curious sight to which Parisians will now be treated: this massive block of stone being raised into the air as it responds, with mathematical precision, to the turning movement imparted to it. Imagine the lid of a snuff box opening bit by bit and, as it turns on its hinge, coming to rest at a right angle to the rest of the box. This, precisely, will be the movement described by the monolith. From a horizontal position, it will be levered against a piece of curved wood – a hinge of sorts – so that it rises little by little into the air, until finally achieving a state of perfect equilibrium in



The two obelisks at Luxor (opposite). The obelisk being taken down (above left). The beginning of its journey to the Nile, protected by a wooden frame (right).

relation to its base. Ten winches will be used, each one operated by thirty gunners, making three hundred men in all. M. Lebas [the engineer] will take up a position on the pedestal and direct operations himself using a megaphone. It is easy to see just how precise the movements will have to be and how punctual the men's response to his orders. No threats will be needed; patriotism combined with intelligence, even more than perfect discipline, will be a sufficiently powerful driving force for Lebas' orders to be executed down to the last detail.

The area between the obelisk and the railings of the Pont Tournant will be turned into a semicircular enclosure which can hold two thousand people. The remainder of the Place de la Concorde, Rue Royale, the Pont de la Révolution and the terraces of the Tuileries will be opened up to the public.

The obelisk will be erected on Saturday 22 October 1836.

Public notice, Paris, October 1836

#### Transporting Cleopatra's Needle

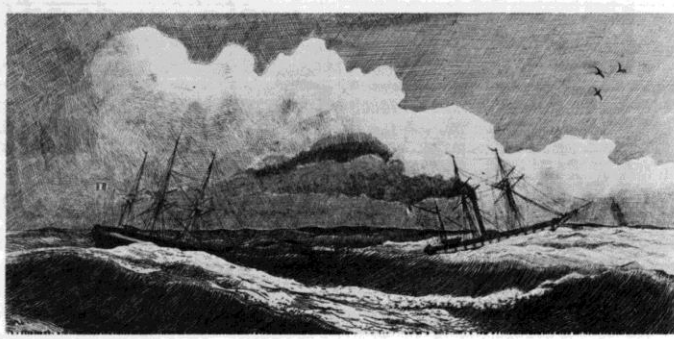
The design of a vessel is generally made to meet the requirements of the service

on which she will be employed at sea. In this particular case, however, the builders had the novel experience of constructing a seaworthy craft in which every thing had to be subordinated to the one prime feature that would enable her to be launched by rolling down the beach. That is to say, the vessel had to be perfectly cylindrical; stability and other desirable qualities had to be obtained mostly by internal arrangements. Were the axis of the Needle to coincide with the axis of the cylinder, it is evident that when once started rolling in the water, it would keep on almost indefinitely, retarded and finally stopped only by the skin resistance. By bringing the centre of gravity of the Needle below that axis, the vessel would be in a state of stable equilibrium; that is to say, however much the wind and sea might careen it over, the action of gravity would bring it back to the vertical; and this would obtain until the vessel were actually upside down. The lower the weight, the greater the righting force, and therefore the greater stability, but also the more violent rolling motion....

In order to ease the pitching motion as much as possible, the bed of the obelisk

having been carried off to different far-flung places (Alexandria, Rome, London, New York, etc.). See also his predictions concerning Egypt in Jer 46 and ANE backgrounds on Egypt, p. 606.

<sup>555</sup> The "sun-god took the name Atum 'the All', meaning the unbroken completeness of matter, to signify the pre-eminence of the god over the rest of creation. The Egyptians expressed the sovereignty of Atum over creation by representing him as Pharaoh, in human form wearing the Double Crown of the Two Lands" (Quirke and Spencer, *Ancient Egypt*, p. 60).



View of the *Louxor* being towed from Alexandria to Le Havre by the *Sphinx* (above). The obelisk being erected in the Place de la Concorde (opposite).

was also prepared so that it would lie with the thick end forward. The centre of gravity of the Needle being at about one third its height from the base, and being naturally placed in the centre of the vessel (in regard to its length), the upper or longer end would extend farther from that centre, or nearer to the end of the vessel, than would the larger and shorter end; therefore putting the latter forward would throw less weight into the bows than the small end would bring. The lines of the bow were also made as full as was consistent with a reasonable expenditure of power in towing....

**Erecting Cleopatra's Needle**

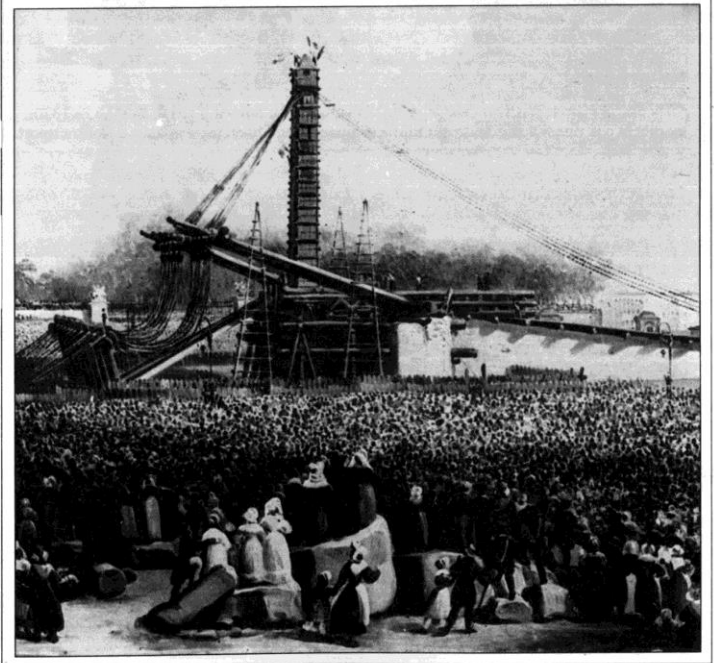
Work was commenced on the apparatus for erecting the Needle. First of all, four immense uprights were fashioned, each formed of six heavy balks of timber over sixty feet high and a foot square, strengthened and braced together by tie-beams, and supported in their vertical position by struts thrown out on all sides. These uprights were to do duty as guide-rods for the carriage, so to speak, on

which the obelisk would be borne aloft and held while turning. This carriage consisted of two horizontal box-girders, one on either side of the stone, supported on wooden blocking fitted in between the balks composing the uprights. A wrought-iron jacket, twenty feet long, was riveted round the Needle, from which projected on opposite sides, at the centre of gravity, two knife-edge pivots, which should rest on the box-girders. The jacket was made twenty feet long, to guard against any possible danger of the Needle being fractured by the weight of its own ends. Wooden packing was driven in between it and the sides of the monolith to save the surface of the stone from injury. To prevent the middle from slipping through while being swung into a vertical position, a stirrup-strap was passed round the base from two sides of the jacket. The object in having the movable girders take the weight during the operation was to afford the means of lowering the Needle on the pedestal after being swung into the vertical. Hydraulic jacks under the girders would effect this

easily. As soon as the scaffolding was ready the monolith was slowly raised in a horizontal position by hydraulic jacks, being followed up in the ascent by timber-blocking.... When the obelisk reached such a height that on being turned the heel would be several inches above and clear of the pedestal, controlling tackles were secured to both heel and point, and, a preliminary trial on the 11th proving successful, September 12th was fixed upon for the erection. The time was three p.m. An inopportune shower coming on suddenly early in the afternoon somewhat thinned out the crowd that had begun to

assemble; but the sun reappeared, and, under the pleasant auspices of a clearing sky, a vast concourse lined the river front. At the appointed hour the controlling tackles were handled, and in half an hour the obelisk was vertical. The Union Jack and Turkish flag were run up in token of success, and ringing cheers bespoke the congratulations of the multitude. The operation of lowering the monument to the pedestal was deferred until the following day, and was then performed with complete success.

H. H. Gorrington  
*Egyptian Obelisks*, 1882



Obelisks.<sup>556</sup>

*Jeremiah's prophetic indictment against the Jews in Egyptian exile: Jer 44:1-30*

This prophecy narrows in on the offering of incense to false gods as the rationale for their present exile of Judah.

- ⇒ The Lord is God Almighty and God of Israel (44:2) ~ holy omnipotent covenanting Lord.
- ⇒ Judah is in ruins because of God's judgment on their idolatry (44:2-3) ~ spiritual adultery.
- ⇒ The Lord sent many prophets to them whom they ignored (44:4-5) ~ mercy and grace refused.
- ⇒ The Lord's fierce anger was unleashed as a result (44:6) ~ holy omnipotent covenanting Lord.

The context of Judah's rebellion and judgment-exile is the context in which the prophet now proclaims extended judgment to the remnant in Egypt (44:9-14, 24-30). It quickly becomes obvious why the burning of incense is an issue in Egypt, for the people respond to the prophet's words with defiance of YHWH and defense of burning incense to their "Queen of Heaven" (44:17-19). This was nothing new in the history of their idolatry. See:

Jer 7:18 The children gather wood, the fathers light the fire, and the women knead the dough and make cakes of bread for the Queen of Heaven. They pour out drink offerings to other gods to provoke me to anger.

The Queen of Heaven (לְמַלְכֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם) was given credit by the foolish remnant in Egypt for their previous prosperity and safety (44:17-18). The Queen of Heaven (לְמַלְכֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם) is anything but a queen of Heaven, but rather a powerless fabrication of the Hebrew apostates! It is remarkable that they should so defiantly seek to displace the true Lord of Heaven with a human invention of a female idol. Calvin proposed that the entire heaven of stars was meant, the very fabric of the universe.<sup>557</sup> K&D propose it was the moon-goddess.<sup>558</sup> Feinberg proposes the

<sup>556</sup> Jean Vercoutter, *The Search For Ancient Egypt*, pp. 144-147.

<sup>557</sup> Calvin, *Jeremiah*, vol. III, p. 544.

<sup>558</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Jeremiah*, p. 163.



Assyro-Babylonian Ishtar, possibly syncretized with a Canaanite goddess.<sup>559</sup> Anath, sister of Astarte and wife of Baal, was called the Queen of Heaven.<sup>560</sup> “Cakes like her image”: Cakes have often been a central part of goddess worship in the Ancient world. Consider the Moon Festival in China even today.

The exiles actually blame their present misfortunes on their failing to worship the Queen of Heaven properly, in direct contradiction of Jeremiah’s previous prophecy explaining why their nation had fallen to Babylon! The Lord was also going to further judge those in Egyptian exile for their lack of humility and reverence before God (44:10), as well as for their ongoing idolatry (44:15-19). The same judgment promised earlier to the Judahites is repeated here in the inverse of the covenant-blessings: sword (loss of land), famine (loss of prosperity), plague (loss of life) (44:13).

*Jeremiah reproves them with an orthodox interpretation: Jer 44:20-30*

- ⇒ The Lord *remembered* the incense they burned to idols (44:20-23) ~ covenantal Lord.
- ⇒ The idols were the reason for the exile (44:22-23) ~ exclusive monotheism.
- ⇒ The broken promise of the exiles to obey God’s word through Jeremiah will result in the death of most of the Egyptian exiles (44:25-28) ~ spiritual adultery.
- ⇒ The validation-sign of this prophecy/prediction would be the demise of Pharaoh Hophra against Babylon (fulfillment discussed above on Pharaoh Amasis) (44:30).

The Lord had honored their request and their vow to Jeremiah in ch 42:

Jer 42:5 Then they said to Jeremiah, “May the LORD be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not act in accordance with everything the LORD your God sends you to tell us.

### d) Prophecies of judgment to the nations: Jer 46-51

(below) Jeremiah prophesying in Egypt

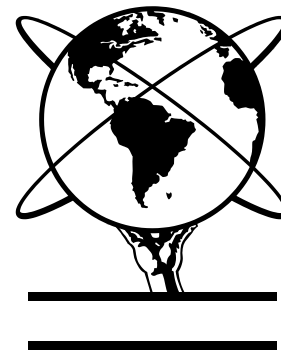


Jeremiah 49:34-51:64 was prophesied under king Zedekiah (597-586) (see p. 413).

Note: this roster of nations of the compass coming under God’s judgment is similar to that in Jer 25:19-26 (p. 416, 436). Similarly to Zephaniah (p. 403), the ordering of the oracles against the nations has geographical (closest/farthest) and political (most powerful/weaker) significance, wherein Egypt and Babylon sandwich seven less powerful nations (North to South axis) (see Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, pp. 241-242):

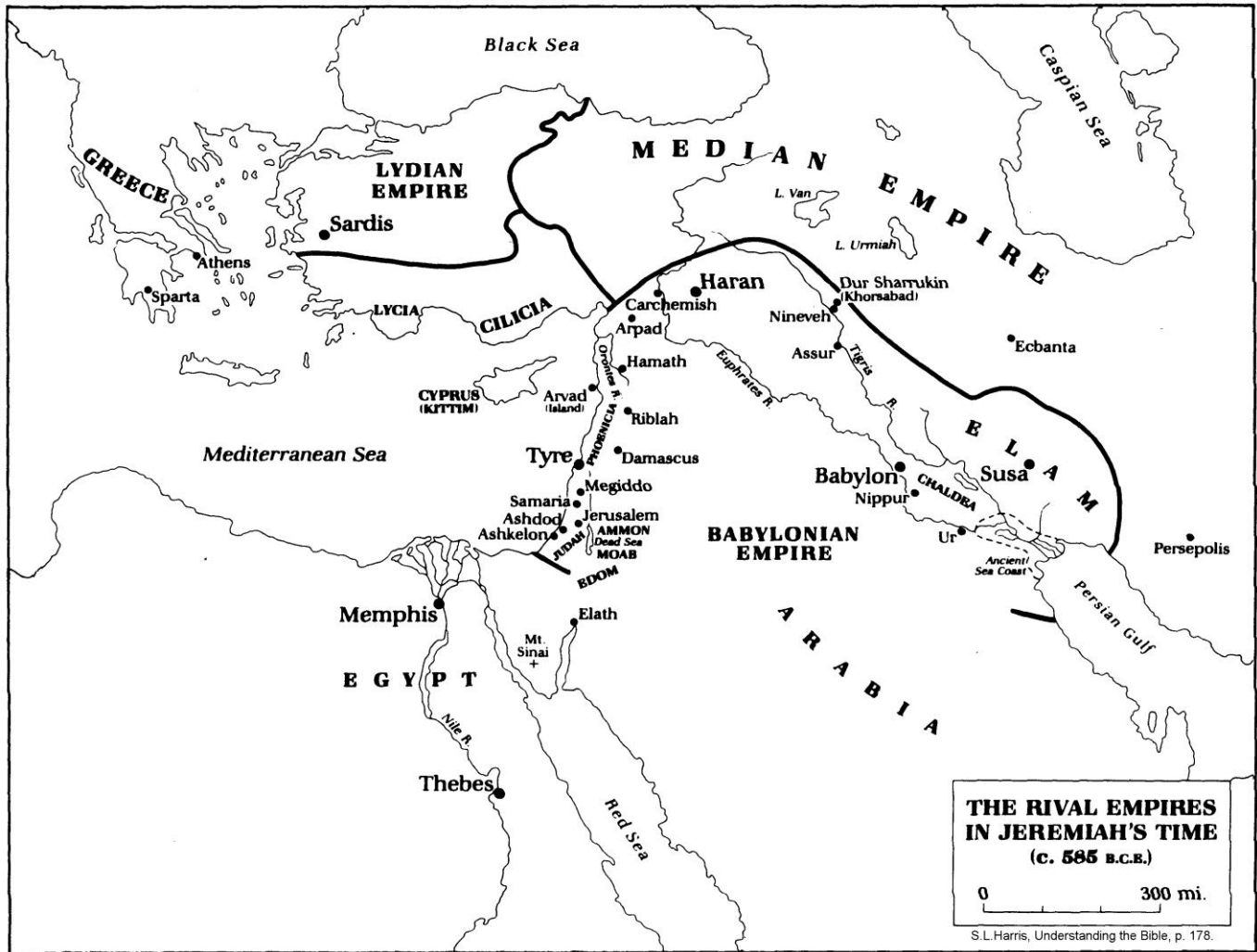
See judgment-compass, pp. 436.

- |                   |       |     |
|-------------------|-------|-----|
| ⇒ Egypt –         | south |     |
| ○ Philistia –     | west  | } ↓ |
| ○ Moab –          | east  |     |
| ○ Ammon –         | east  |     |
| ○ Edom –          | east  |     |
| ○ Aram –          | east  |     |
| ○ Kedar –         | east  |     |
| ○ Elam –          | east  |     |
| ⇒ Babylon – north | north | far |



<sup>559</sup> Feinberg, *Jeremiah*, p. 287.

<sup>560</sup> See ANE background on Ishtar/Ashteroth: “The Pantheon of the Levant” (p. ) and “Canaan and Israel’s culture and religion,” (p. ).



(above) Empires of Jeremiah's time.<sup>561</sup>

The following section of prophetic indictments against the surrounding nations is largely *poetic*, adding to the literary impact of the proclamations, predictions, and prophecies. This genre of prophecies is generally called an *oracle against foreign nations* (see also Isa 14-21; Ezek 25-30; Amos 1-2; Zeph 2; Obad; Nahum). It is not certain that these oracles were delivered to the nations addressed, for they were for the spiritual benefit of God's people. Nevertheless, considering how the Babylonians seemed well aware of Jeremiah's prophetic ministry, as other aspects of Israel's religious life were often widely known to their neighbors, it is not unreasonable to suppose these oracles could have been sent to the nations addressed. Indeed, we do know that Seraiah was instructed by Jeremiah to read the entire scroll in Babylon before throwing the scroll into the Euphrates as a prophetic enactment of Babylon's sinking (51:61-64). The emphasis throughout the oracles is on their judgment, not on their particular sins. These oracles were given at a wide diversity of times and places, but put together here in a powerful poetic unity of divine revelation to the nations. These final oracles essentially round out in fuller detail what Jeremiah had already proclaimed in ch. 25: Babylon had been appointed to bring God's judgment to the nations, but would itself suffer God's judgment.

- See ANE section for background on these nations.
- Consider the phrase "declares the Lord" used over 170x in Jeremiah.
- Consider the phrase "the Lord Almighty" used some 80x in Jeremiah.

*Egypt – south: Jer 46*

- ⇒ The Lord Almighty proclaims that Babylon will attack Egypt (46:10, 18).
- ⇒ The Lord Almighty, the God of Israel proclaims the gods (Amon) of Egypt will be punished (46:25).
- ⇒ The Lord offers great hope to the remnant of Judah (46:27-28; cf. Jer 30:10-11), reaffirming the covenant promise, for I am with you (46:28).

*Philistia – west: Jer 47*

<sup>561</sup> Stephen L. Harris, *Understanding the Bible*, p. 178.

- ⇒ The Lord will destroy the Philistines (47:4).
- ⇒ The Lord has commanded the sword against Philistia (47:7).

*Moab – east: Jer 48*

- ⇒ The Lord has spoken judgment on Moab and its gods (Chemosh) (48:7-8).
- ⇒ Moab, who trusted in their deeds and riches, will be destroyed (48:7-8).
- ⇒ The Lord, the King, whose name is the Lord Almighty, declares the destruction of Moab and its false gods (Chemosh) (48:12-15).
- ⇒ Moab, who defied the Lord, was proud, conceited, haughty, and arrogant will be broken (48:26-29, 42).
- ⇒ The Lord declares that Moab will be restored in days to come (48:47).

*Ammon – east: Jer 49:1-6*

- ⇒ The Lord declares judgment on Ammon and its gods (Molech/Milcom) (49:1).
- ⇒ Ammon, who boasted in its produce, and trusted in its riches, will be destroyed (49:4).
- ⇒ The Lord declares that Ammon will be restored (49:6).

*Edom – east: Jer 49:7-22*

- ⇒ The Lord Almighty declares Edom's downfall (49:7-14).
- ⇒ Moab, deceived by its pride and place in the rocks, will be brought down (49:14-16).
- ⇒ Moab, like Sodom & Gomorrah, will be uninhabited (49:18).
- ⇒ The Lord has planned Edom's demise (49:19-22).

*Syria/Aram – east: Jer 49:23-27*

- ⇒ The Lord Almighty proclaims judgment on the cities of Aram/Syria (49:23-27).
- ⇒ The Lord will burn the cities and fortresses of Damascus (49:27).

*Kedar/Hazor – east: Jer 49:28-33*

- ⇒ The Lord declares judgment from Babylon on Kedar and Hazor (49:28-33).
- ⇒ The Lord declares that these kingdoms, which live in false confidence and security will themselves become booty (49:31-32).
- ⇒ The Lord declares that Hazor will be uninhabited (49:33).

*Elam – north: Jer 49:34-39*

- ⇒ The Lord Almighty declares disaster upon Elam (49:34-39).
- ⇒ The Lord declares that Elam will be scattered afar (49:36).
- ⇒ The Lord will pursue and destroy them with the sword (49:37).
- ⇒ The Lord declares that Elam will be restored in days to come (49:39).

*Babylon – north: Jer 50-51* ~ Babylon will be destroyed (539), but, distinct in these oracles (also briefly in the Egypt oracle), the Lord proclaims hope that Israel will be saved.

- ⇒ The Lord declares that Judah will return to the covenant of the Lord (50:4-5).
- ⇒ The Lord declares that a coalition of nations will overcome Babylon (50:-10, 41-46; 51:1-33).
- ⇒ Babylon's presumption of innocence in devouring Judah is their downfall (50:6-7).
- ⇒ The Lord declares punishment for those he used to punish his people (50:10-19).
- ⇒ The Lord declares forgiveness for his remnant (50:20).
- ⇒ The Lord declares desolation for Babylon who opposed the Lord (50:22-28) and defied the Lord (50:29).
- ⇒ The Lord Almighty Redeemer will save the remnant (50:34).
- ⇒ The Lord declares the sword against Babylon and its idols (50:35-38).
- ⇒ The Lord declares Babylon will be deserted as Sodom & Gomorrah (50:39-40).
- ⇒ The Lord Almighty declares deliverance for Israel and Judah (51:5, 10, 19, 36).
- ⇒ The Lord Almighty has *sworn by himself* that he will "carry out his purpose" (51:12-14).
- ⇒ The Lord made the earth and heavens by his wisdom and understanding (51:15). Creation and redemption theology (51:19).
- ⇒ The idols by contrast are a "fraud" and "worthless" and will perish (50:19, 47).
- ⇒ The Lord Almighty is the God of Israel (51:33).
- ⇒ The Lord declares that the heavens and earth will shout for joy over Babylon's fall. Creation and judgment theology (51:48).
- ⇒ The Lord declares Babylon's fall for slaying Israel (51:49).
- ⇒ The Lord himself will *destroy* Babylon (51:55).
- ⇒ The Lord, the King, the Lord Almighty is a God of retribution (51:56-57).

## e) *Jerusalem falls into exile: Jer 52 appendix*

➤ <sup>562</sup>See exile, p. 450.



Babylonian Siege of Jerusalem<sup>563</sup>



(right) Babylonian Siege of Jerusalem by Julius Schnoor von Carolsfeld<sup>564</sup>

The material in Jer 52 was adapted from 2 Ki 24-25.

The conclusion of Jeremiah's book highlights the reality of the judgment, while it also confirms the word of the Lord that came through Jeremiah to Judah. Despite the people's rejection of Jeremiah's word and ministry, the Lord had sent him. For their sin of rejecting the word of the Lord, they suffered the loss of their land, palace, temple, and homes. The pre-exilic prophets spoke of the future exile and Jeremiah saw their word from God confirmed, as well as his own. The last verse of the book highlights the hope of God's people, for in the preservation of king Jehoiachin at the table of the king of Babylon there is hope in God's sovereign provision, preservation, and eventual deliverance promised by the prophets.

We are given the number of people taken into captivity (4,600) in 52:29-30.

## 8. *Outline, structure/composition of Lamentations*

In the Hebrew Bible, Lamentations is considered a Megilloth (scroll) of the Hagiographa (sacred writings, "Writings") which are read on Jewish holidays: Lamentations (ninth month of Ab commemorating the destruction of temple), Esther (Purim commemorating Haman's failure to plot against the Jews in Persia), Ruth (Pentecost celebrating harvest), Ecclesiastes (Tabernacles commemorating the wilderness wanderings) and the Song of Solomon (Passover commemorating deliverance from Egypt).

### *The Megilloth*

In the Heb Bible the Sacred Writings (Hagiographa) include Ruth, Eccl, Cant, Lamen, and Esther, though they follow a different order in our English Bible.

We are therefore following the English order here, and in this case the chronological correlation with the historical age of Ruth is consistent with considering Ruth here. It also serves as a narrative relief from the painful record of the Judges period. It is not comic relief, but a kind of poetic relief in the form of a strikingly beautiful romance. Megilloth: Heb "to roll," and thus the rolling/unrolling of scrolls that could each be read in its entirety during the religious celebrations in Israel, as follows:

<p>Canticles: Passover (Pesach) in Nisan (March-April) for deliverance from Egypt  Ruth: Pentecost (Shavuoth) in Sivan (May-June) for harvest  Lamentations: Tish'ah be'ab in Ab (July-August) for destruction of Jerusalem and Temple  Ecclesiastes: Tabernacles (Succoth) in Tishri (September-October)  Esther: Purim in Adar (February-March) for Haman's failure</p>
---

<sup>562</sup>

<sup>563</sup> <http://factsanddetails.com/world.php?itemid=1533&catid=56&subcatid=363>

<sup>564</sup> *The Bible Through the Ages*, p. 83.

**Alphabetic acrostics:**

Lam 1-4 ~ alphabetic acrostics of 22 verses (number of letters in alphabet).

Lam 1-2 ~ each verse begins with the next next letter in the alphabet and contains three stanzas (66 lines each).

Lam 3 ~ each verse begins with the next letter in the alphabet which begins each of three distinct verses (equalling 66 verses).

Lam 4 ~ each verse begins with the next letter in the alphabet and contains two stanzas (44 lines).

Lam 5 ~ contains 22 verses of one stanza each, but is not acrostic (22 verses).

The poetic artistry of Lamentations is simply remarkable, suggesting a very concentrated effort of time and thought by the prophet to produce such *lyric poetry*. It consists entirely of poetic acrostics of complexity and unity. The acrostics become

progressively shorter: Lam 1-3 are equal (three lines per letter), Lam 4 is shorter (two lines per letter), Lam 5 is shorter (one line per letter).

Dorsey calls these oracles of lament *eulogies* in which the second line of the couplet is generally shorter than the first. He notes that “It is speculated that the shortening of the second line gives the sense that the line is ‘cut off’ before its anticipated completion, which represents in literary form the tragic ‘cutting off’ of the mourned person’s life before its natural completion. The pattern is sometimes referred to as the ‘dying out’ or ‘dying away’ pattern.”<sup>565</sup> This sense of depletion and “dying out” is further enhanced by the progressive shortening of the acrostics themselves.

Dorsey places the center of the book at the affirmation of YHWH’s great love (3:21-32). He also points out that the latter half has repeating mitigating notes, suggesting an attempt to justify YHWH’s judgments and to provide a theodicy of hope to help the exiles understand God’s justice. The prophet ends with a prayer, also showing hope in God’s graciousness in restoring the remnant to the land.

Lamentations

**24.1 The Book of Lamentations**

**a she—Zion—is desolate and devastated (1:1–11)**

- terrible reversal of Judah’s fortunes
- prosperous days of old (*yēmē qedem*) are over
- gates are desolate
- fate of princes
- desperation to acquire bread
- pursuers allow no rest; reason: she has sinned

**b I—Zion—was betrayed and defeated: there is none to help or comfort me (1:12–22)**

- they rejoice over my fall
- vain hope for help from allies
- cry for vengeance

**c he—Yahweh—has caused this in his anger (2:1–8)**

- Yahweh has poured out his anger and wrath, which has devoured Zion like fire

**d they—princes, maidens, nurslings, children, mothers—suffer (2:9–12)**

- children starve and perish in the town squares

**e you—Zion—should cry out to God (2:13–22)**

- let tears stream down like a river without ceasing or rest
- enemies open mouths against you
- Yahweh has slain without pity
- prayer

**f he—Yahweh—has afflicted (‘nh) me (3:1–20)**

- the poet—a man (*geber*)—is afflicted; his complaint

**g CLIMAX: Yahweh’s great love! (3:21–32)**

**f he—Yahweh—afflicts (‘nh) humans (3:33–39)**

- mitigating note: Yahweh does not enjoy afflicting humans
- a man (*geber*) shouldn’t complain if he suffers for sins

**e’ you—Yahweh—to you I cry out (3:40–66)**

- mitigating note: prayer for Yahweh’s justice
- my tears stream down like a river without ceasing or rest
- enemies open mouths against me
- Yahweh has slain without pity
- prayer

**d’ they—princes, maidens, nurslings, children, mothers—suffer (4:1–10)**

- mitigating note: Yahweh is just; his punishment was because Judah’s sins and iniquities were worse than Sodom’s
- children starve and perish in the town squares

**c’ he—Yahweh—has caused this in his anger (4:11–16)**

- mitigating note: Yahweh is just; his punishment was for Judah’s sins and iniquities
- Yahweh has poured out his anger and wrath, which has devoured Zion like fire

**b’ we—the people of Zion—were betrayed and defeated (4:17–22)**

- mitigating note: Yahweh is just; he will restore Judah and punish Edom for her sins and iniquities
- our allies failed to help
- Edom rejoices

**a’ we—the people of Zion—are desolate and devastated (5:1–22)**

- mitigating note: poet’s prayer, “Restore us, so that we may return!”
- terrible reversal of Judah’s fortunes
- prosperous days of old (*yēmē qedem*) are over
- gates are desolate
- fate of princes
- desperation to acquire bread
- pursuers allow no rest; reason: we have sinned

<sup>565</sup> Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, p. 246.

The importance of the Lamentations, as a part of the Canon, does not so much consist in the mere fact that they were composed by Jeremiah, and contain outpourings of sorrow on different occasions over the misery of his people, as rather in their being an evidence of the interest with which Jeremiah, in the discharge of his functions as a prophet, continued to watch over the ruins of Jerusalem. In these Lamentations he seeks not merely to give expression to the sorrow of the people that he may weep with them, but by his outpour of complaint to rouse his fellow-countrymen to an acknowledgment of God's justice in this visitation, to keep them from despair under the burden of unutterable woe, and by teaching them how to give due submission to the judgment that has befallen them, to lead once more to God those who would not let themselves be brought to Him through his previous testimony regarding that judgment while it was yet impending. The Jewish synagogue has recognised and duly estimated the importance of the Lamentations in these respects, by appointing that the book should be read on the anniversary of the destruction of the temple. A like appreciation has been made by the Christian Church, which, rightly perceiving that the Israelitish community is the subject in these poems, attributed to them a reference to the church militant; and, viewing the judgment on the people of God as a prophecy of the judgment that came on Him who took the sins of the whole world upon Himself, it has received a portion of the Lamentations into the ritual for the Passion Week, and concludes each of these lessons with the words, "*Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum, Deum tuum.*"<sup>566</sup>

## 9. *Exposition and the history of redemption themes in Lamentations*

(left) Jeremiah wood engraving taken from Michelangelo<sup>567</sup>



### a) *Jeremiah's lament: Lam 1*

A lamentation concerning the exile of Judah in Babylon and Jerusalem's great suffering of plundering, starvation, and desolation. The covenant curse was fully unleashed upon Judah, after many years of God's patience. Loss of land, prosperity, protection, and people was the consequence of their rebellion.

Lam 1:8 Jerusalem has sinned greatly  
and so has become unclean.  
All who honored her despise her,  
for they have seen her nakedness;  
she herself groans  
and turns away.

### a) *YHWH's anger: Lam 2*

A lamentation about God's wrath against inconsolable Jerusalem and Judah which contains an exhortation to seek YHWH. The emphasis in this lament is on the fact *the Lord* is the one who brought about all the events of their exile, but their sin was the catalyst.

*The Lord:*

- ⇒ Covered Zion with his cloud of anger (2:1a).
- ⇒ Hurling down Israel's splendor (2:1b).
- ⇒ Has not remembered his footstool (Zion) (2:1c).
- ⇒ Swallowed up Judah/Israel (2:2a, 5).
- ⇒ Brought Judah down (2:2c).
- ⇒ Cut off Israel (2:3a).
- ⇒ Withdrawn his protecting hand (2:3b).
- ⇒ Laid waste his dwelling/meeting place (2:6).
- ⇒ Abandoned his sanctuary (2:7).
- ⇒ Destroyed the walls of Jerusalem (2:8).

Lam 2:17 The LORD has done what he planned;  
he has fulfilled his word,  
which he decreed long ago.  
He has overthrown you without pity,

<sup>566</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Lamentations*, p. 352.

<sup>567</sup> From <http://www.antiquemapsandprints.com/p-14237.jpg>

he has let the enemy gloat over you,  
 he has exalted the horn  
 of your foes.

### **b) *Jeremiah's lament and hope: Lam 3***

A lamentation concerning the grievous suffering of the prophet and his people under God's wrath which contains the peak hope of God's merciful compassion and vindication (deliverance) and a call to return to YHWH:

Lam 3:40 Let us examine our ways and test them,  
 and let us return to the LORD. (see also 5:21)

As in Lam 2, the prophet emphasizes that fact that it was the Lord who brought about all the events of their exile: see this outlined in 3:2-16. Despite all their suffering, the prophet affirms that the one who brought all their afflictions upon them was the same one who gives them hope, because he alone preserves them in his great *love* and *compassion* (3:21-23). The prophet affirms that hope is possible because *the Lord*:

- ⇒ Is good (3:25).
- ⇒ Will bring salvation (3:26).
- ⇒ Does not cast off forever (3:31).
- ⇒ Brings grief, but shows compassion (3:32).
- ⇒ Does not willingly bring affliction and grief (3:33).

In light of these truths, the prophet calls the remnant to repent and return to the Lord, confessing their sin and asking for forgiveness (3:40-48). He concludes this lament with an affirmation that he had been mercifully saved and delivered, and he also prays for further vindication against his enemies.

### **c) *YHWH's anger and mercy: Lam 4***

Lamentation for the sins of Judah which were the cause of their present afflictions in Judah, yet concludes with hope that God will relent and show mercy:

Lam 4:22 O Daughter of Zion, your punishment will end;  
 he will not prolong your exile.  
 But, O Daughter of Edom, he will punish your sin  
 and expose your wickedness.

The prophet describes in pointed detail the present state of Judah, emphasizing that the Lord is the one who vented his wrath upon them, but that it was strictly on account of their great sins.

- ⇒ Judah has become but potter's clay (4:1-2).
- ⇒ Judah's punishment is great from beast to baby (4:3-8).
- ⇒ Judah's land is severely cursed with judgment in famine (4:9-11).
- ⇒ Judah's corrupt priests and prophets led to their exile and dispersion (4:12-20).
- ⇒ Judah's punishment will end, exile will not last forever (4:22).

### **d) *Jeremiah's prayer: Lam 5***

A prophetic prayer for mercy despite their great sins, that the Lord would *restore them so that* they could *return to the Lord*:

Lam 5:21 Restore us to yourself, O LORD, that we may return;  
 renew our days as of old

The prophet outlines the specifics of the covenant curse, the removal of the temporal-conditional aspects of the covenant promises:

- ⇒ Inheritance lost ~ land promise (5:2).
- ⇒ Became fatherless orphans ~ progeny promise (5:3).
- ⇒ Became beggars and buyers of essential water ~ provision promise (5:4).

The prophet's prayer affirms the orthodox belief and hope that:

- ⇒ YHWH abides and reigns forever (5:19).
- ⇒ YHWH judges his people, but does not forget them (5:20).
- ⇒ YHWH can and may restore and renew his people (5:21a).
  - If they return to him and (5:21b).
  - If he has not utterly rejected them (5:22)

## **10. *History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling***

➤ See F.A. Schaeffer, *Death in the City*.

## a) *Revelation and redemption from YHWH*

### (1) *Who God is*

God is the LIVING Sovereign Lord, God, King, Judge, Creator, Redeemer over all the nations and peoples of the world. He is intensely *personal*, as demonstrated in Jeremiah's life and ministry. God is continuing his blessing-promise to the nations through Israel, since his judgment upon Israel expresses his loyalty to the covenant with Israel. God is present with his people, immanently and deeply involved in every aspect of their life, but he is also exalted and lifted up as the transcendent God. The anguish of God over Israel's idolatry and sins is revealed in both Jeremiah's words and actions/circumstances. God cares for his prophet, and in the line of prophets since Moses, holds accountable those who reject and mistreat them.

### (2) *What God has done*

God keeps his word. He also continues mercifully to send his word through his prophets. Jeremiah represents a pinnacle of that expression of revelation. This revelation was in the prophetic tradition of a visionary application of the OT law and promises to the nation of Israel and the surrounding nations. Israel was to return to obedience to the Lord in order to pre-empt God's judgment on promised exile (Deut 4:15-31; 7:11-26; 8:10-20), the so-called *covenant-curse*. God speaks his words and does not leave the nation in the dark; they are given revelation sufficient to repent and remedy their dire spiritual state. God has acted in Jeremiah's ministry to preserve him as his spokesman and vehicle of prophetic revelation, even rescuing him from the hands of wicked men (God responds to his prayers). While on the other hand, he fulfilled his word to Israel (through the prophet Isaiah particularly) that judgment would come on the south (Judah) as it did in the north (Israel). In the former, through the Assyrian captivity, and for Judah through Babylonian captivity.

God had planted and grown up, but would pluck up and destroy. He will use foreign nations to punish his people, while at the same time hold those nations accountable for their destruction of Israel and Judah. This was his "strange work" Isaiah referred to in 28:21.

God's law written on hearts and minds:

Jer 31:33-35 (NASB95) "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." 35 Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for light by day And the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; The LORD of hosts is His name:

### (3) *What God has promised*

- Judgment on Judah (from the north). Removal of his presence. The destruction of Jerusalem. Judah a desert. Palaces burned. Captivity in Babylon for seventy years. The nations will see God's holy power. See Lamentations for this fulfillment.
- Blessing and forgiveness for repentance and resoration of the covenant.
- National restoration, the remnant. If they settle in Babylon and submit to God by seeking peace they would be blessed. Also, if they reject the false prophets.
- Jerusalem will be rebuilt after the return from exile.
- Judgment on Babylon and any who mistreat God's people. The nations will see God's holy power.
- Judgment on the other local nations (Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Aram, Kedar, Elam, Egypt).
- Redemption to the nations (no need of ark) in the Messianic hope: the Branch, the Wise King, the Lord of Righteousness, the Deliverer.
- A new heart for God's people, in which his law will be written on their heart.

## b) *Humankind and redemption*

### (1) *Worship of redeemed*

Repentance and reformation of their ways would lead to healing and life. Their repentance and reformation would lead to worship that is worthy of God's people and their testimony to the nations. Corruption in their midst meant that their testimony to the Lord was in ruins, as would be Jerusalem. Worship is thus far more than sanctuary adherence and religious piety. Jeremiah stressed the need for a new heart in worship, and that new heart would be



evidenced by Israel's holy behavior before the nations. Holy worship was their means of *living* before the nations in covenant loyalty to YHWH. The worship, work, and ethics of Israel were thus interconnected as the whole of the *testimony to the nations*. The theology of the presence of YHWH is expanded to include the view that the ark would eventually become superfluous (in light of Messiah's work?) and forgotten (Jer 3:16).

## (2) *Work of redeemed*

Jeremiah exemplified in all his actions and words what it means to work unto the Lord. The ethics of God's people must be governed by God's law, wisdom, and prophets. Foreign alliances lead to compromise of Israel's testimony to the those very nations they sought as allies. Self-defeating alliances with pagan nations always worked against God's purposes in Israel. The dual principles of being both a holy nation and being a light to the nations depended upon purity, remaining uncorrupted morally/spiritually. Work was to be redeemed by the law of God, sanctified by the Spirit of God, and aligned with God's mission purposes. Justice, honesty, truthfulness, fairness, and equality were to characterize the business of Israel

## (3) *Ethics of redeemed*

The sins of corruption were not just relate to the sanctuary, or "religious life," of Judah, they were related to how they were living in the world and before the world. They needed to dramatically reform their ways of idolatry oppression of the alien, fatherless, and widow, false prophesying, misuse of power, shedding innocent blood, stealing and extortion, and child sacrifice. The witness of Judah to the nations was destroyed because of these things and thus God would destroy them. Realpolitik and Vox Populi were inadequate models for ethics for the people of God. Indeed, they led to "spiritual adultery." With the ways of the nations, rather than leading the Way of righteousness for the nations. In so doing, Israel utterly failed in its mission to (bless) the world. They even severely persecuted the Lord's anointed prophet! The one who represented God himself, in the tradition of Moses, and forshadow of the Messianic Prophet, was put in stock, prison, and dungeons.

---

Considering the extent of Jeremiah's suffering, and Israel's, I thought this an appropriate place to include some thoughts on suffering and the prosperity gospel, as follows:

---

In times of hardship, our first inclination is to think that we are out of accord with God's will. Conversely, that if things are "going our way" that we are in God's will. Blessing thus equals prospering and suffering equals retribution. In fact, this is plainly the opposite of what the Bible teaches. For we know from the Bible that those who would follow Jesus *will suffer*. We also know that those who preach a gospel of prosperity teach false doctrine. God's free gifts of both material prosperity and spiritual redemption are both rejected in the prosperity gospel, since in both cases we say "My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth" (Deut 8:17, NASB):

Deut 8:10-17 When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.<sup>11</sup> Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day.<sup>12</sup> Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down,<sup>13</sup> and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied,<sup>14</sup> then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.<sup>15</sup> He led you through the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock.<sup>16</sup> He gave you manna to eat in the desert, something your fathers had never known, to humble and to test you so that in the end it might go well with you.<sup>17</sup> You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me."<sup>18</sup> But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

2 Tim 3:12 In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,

Jam 1:2, 9-10 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 9 The brother in humble circumstances ought to take pride in his high position. 10 But the one who is rich should take pride in his low position, because he will pass away like a wild flower.

Jam 2:1-6 My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. 2 Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. 3 If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," 4 have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich

in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? 6 But you have insulted the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court?

Jam 4:3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

1 Tim 6:3-10 If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, 4 he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions 5 and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain. 6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. 8 But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 9 People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

1 Tim 6:17-19 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

### ***Some further conclusions based on a consideration of the Book of Job from Poets syllabus:***

The drama of Job involves a number of immense concerns of all people in all times: the suffering of the individual in a universe that seems inexplicable and at times unbearable, while human wisdom, though based on God's wisdom, often fails to answer or to comfort those in suffering,



We should begin with the important fact that people suffer and live between two realms, the seen and the unseen, or the spiritual and the material.<sup>568</sup> Those in the seen realm cannot, of course, “see” behind the veil of the material apart from what God has revealed in his word. We only “see through a glass darkly.” That is to say, we walk in faith in the word of God revealed (wisdom), trusting his promises and presence, but we can not claim absolute certainty about the meaning of any given moment of suffering or blessing, except that God allows and uses both as a means to draw us into conformity to his character (among



other reasons). Our knowledge is limited in the visible realm to what we can see and learn, and is limited in the invisible realm to what the Word of God reveals. God speaks and man is silenced.

Modern naturalistic answers to explain man's dilemmas or life are utterly inadequate and unsatisfactory. We have in Job the unveiling of the two *simultaneous* realms of history, which have a “cause and effect relationship in both directions” (F.A.Schaeffer). This is profound, for it shows the positive answer to man's suffering that God is there and answers the cries of his people. The angels in heaven rejoice at the Lord's work in the visible realm. History is thus to be understood as a totality of seen and unseen realms in which rebellion has occurred on both sides, effecting both sides, yet God's redemption of mankind has also been revealed and enacted on both sides. A naturalistic perspective is utterly false and thus it is *sinful*. A “naturalistic” Christianity is not only a contradiction in terms, it is blasphemous, for it claims to acknowledge God, yet denies his power and presence for both realms.

There is also the implicit and explicit danger illustrated by Job's friends that good intentions might bring God's censure when they make judgments based on half-truths or truth more weighted to judging by externals or to applying truths inappropriately because they lack enough information. Compassion does not deny possible “sin” causes for suffering, but it allows us to care for the sinner with sympathy and love and kindness, for we too are sinners. Judging a “righteous judgment” suspends judgment where there is ignorance, as love “believes all things,” and is characterized by the attitude, “we will rejoice (shout for joy) when you are victorious” (Ps 20:5). Judgment does not cancel our responsibility to show empathy and compassion, even where suffering is the direct result of sin. “Love covers over all sins. . .” “Love keeps no record of wrongs . . .” (Prov 10:12; 1 Pet 1:8; 1 Cor 13:5). I cannot tell how many times I have heard Christians callously say such things of a suffering Christian as, “Well, they cooked their own goose.” What exactly do such dismissals accomplish, especially when it is *clear to all* that the

<sup>568</sup> Considering the likely ancient dating of Job as the earliest OT book, it has profound significance in the way that such major and minor themes found throughout biblical history are given in such sophisticated writing at the beginning of special revelation. If this is true, it should cause us to consider how this reflects the nature and character of God and his revelation.

person is suffering the consequences of their own failings or sins? Such comments are neither illuminating nor instructive, but simply get us off the undesirable hook of compassion.

Job's friends had a *reductionist* view of his suffering and God's justice, that suffering is always caused by sin, and that suffering is always immediate punishment from God. Nevertheless, the suffering of the righteous is not necessarily due to their "sins," for we all occupy a fallen world and body, any more than their deliverance is related to their personal righteousness. Salvific righteousness must come from God alone.

Further, the belief that the Mosaic law teaches strict retribution, that all suffering is a divine retribution, is simply false. Some suffering may come as a result of God's love:

Deut 8:16 He gave you manna to eat in the desert, something your fathers had never known, to humble and to test you so that in the end it might go well with you.

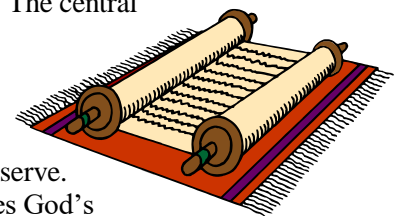
While there is general agreement that the idea of divine retribution for good and evil is deeply embedded in the OT, the concept does not become solidified into a simplistic dogma in which every misfortune is viewed as evidence of sin and every success as evidence of obedience and piety.<sup>569</sup>

The OT clearly recognizes that there are many examples in human experience where the innocent suffer and the wicked prosper. This recognition, however, does not nullify the underlying OT concept of a divinely structured moral order with its attending notion of divine retribution for good and evil, but it does mean that in some cases there is an inscrutable connection between divine sovereignty and the cause and effect relationship of actions and their consequences.<sup>570</sup>

Job's friends were so concerned with protecting both God's honor and their belief in exact retribution against Job's fervent complaints that their rhetoric actually tempted Job to seek God for personal gain. Their religious zeal led them into condemning Job, the very person they had come to comfort.<sup>571</sup>

The "standard wisdom" that "disobedience causes suffering" and "obedience causes blessing" is not contradicted in Job so much as it is qualified with a fuller and deeper picture that allows for *unknowns*, the mercy of God, as well as the discipline of God experienced through *testing*. In this sense, Job provides a kind of *anti-wisdom*, not that it is against wisdom but that it provides a categorically new approach to wisdom that seeks a depth previously unknown in A.N.E. wisdom. It takes the essential "stuff" of wisdom and makes of it a masterpiece of wisdom. Job argues that the righteous often suffer and that the wicked often prosper, thus contradicting the simplistic and *categorical* application of the retribution-principle of reward and punishment. Job argues that the righteous do often suffer, and is not necessarily due to a loss integrity nor causing a loss of their integrity. Further, divine blessing for covenantal obedience is not necessarily *meritorious*, ultimately God's favors and blessings are *undeserved*. Although, it can be said that Israel always fully deserved whatever punishment they received.

*The balancing of the books* is not in this life for all, but for some, but in eternity alone for all. The central item in Job's response to his friends is that the books are not *yet* balanced, contrary to their simplistic equation that they are balanced in this life. On the other hand, if there is no *final* balancing of the books then the universe is morally bankrupt and the nihilists are right. In discussing the question of evil, sin, and the justice of God, let us not forget that each and every person *deserves* what they get, yet what they get is generally far less than what they deserve. As the *Shorter Catechism* reads in Q 84 **What does every sin deserve?** A. Every sin deserves God's anger and curse, both in this life and in the life to come.



The point is, if we are going to argue about whether any particular individual in suffering *deserves* to suffer, the answer is obvious. Nevertheless, though they deserve the full wrath of God, it does not mean that their particular suffering is the result of God's particular wrath against a particular sin. The converse can be said of prospering and freedom from suffering, what is often wrongly called "blessing." The seen and unseen realms must be considered as a unity to understand the whole picture of history. There is a *correspondence in both directions*. Both historical events and particular human suffering must take into account the whole picture, not reducing historical events to simplistic examples of the retribution-principle, nor naturalistically ruling out the ongoing historical relationship of the two realms and the effect of the revolt on both.

<sup>569</sup> Vannoy, "Retribution," *NIDOTTE*, p. 1141.

<sup>570</sup> Vannoy, "Retribution," *NIDOTTE*, p. 1142.

<sup>571</sup> Hartley, "Job," p. 785.

Discussion: consider also the presently popular “needs fulfillment” view of our humanity.

It is better to consider suffering as a prelude to glory, than to wrangle over its particular “reasons.” As Jesus described it:

Luke 6:20-23 Looking at his disciples, he said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.

21 Blessed are you who hunger now,  
for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.

22 Blessed are you when men hate you,  
when they exclude you and insult you  
and reject your name as evil,  
because of the Son of Man.

23 “**Rejoice** in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets.”

In sum, consider Habakkuk’s conclusion below regarding the coming suffering of Judah at the hands of Babylon. He affirms that the latter themselves will be judged but in the meantime:

Hab 3:17-18 Though the fig tree does not bud  
and there are no grapes on the vines . . .  
I will rejoice in the Lord . . .

## B. *Habakkuk* חַבְקֻק (Judah ~ 609-605)

. . . the righteous will live by his faith— (Hab 2b)



(left) Habakkuk by Donatello (b. cca. 1386, Firenze, d. 1466, Firenze)

### 1. *Title, author, and dates*

1. Name: some say “heartener” or “one who takes another to his heart,” or wrestler (Jerome). Comes from Hebrew *embrace*. Some say his name may be derived from a Babylonian word for a plant.

2. Some relate him to the Shunammite women (2 Ki 4:16); others, the watchman of Isaiah (Isa 21:6); in *Bel and the Dragon* he was the son of Jesus of the tribe of Levi. He was possibly a Levite who lived in Judah during the last days of Josiah (640-609) and in the early reign of Jehoiakim (608-598).

3. Habakkuk was a contemporary of Jeremiah (who prophesied the coming Babylonian invasion, as did Isaiah earlier) and possibly Nahum (sovereign God of moral righteousness).

4. The Babylonians conquered Assyria, defeated Egypt (Battle of Carchemish 605), and defeated Israel (1:6 - reference to resurgent Chaldeans [Babylonians in power 612-539]).

5. The fall of the capital of Assyria was prophesied by Jonah (782), but they repented, and also later by Nahum (650), and it was fulfilled in 612 B.C.

6. The King of Judah at the time was Josiah (639-606), a reformer and a good king, but he was killed by the Egyptian army when he interfered with one of their military campaigns. His message fits historically the fall of Nineveh (612) and the emergence of Babylon (Neo-Babylonian) (605). Habakkuk saw the changes after Josiah’s death and the end of reform; the loss of independence and the antics of godless king Jehoahaz (609). Habakkuk probably lived to see his prophecy begin to come true in the attack on Jerusalem in 597 by Nebuchadnezzar. (Ezekiel taken to Babylon, p.)

7. Habakkuk certainly saw the corruption of his society first hand, and that is what leads to his first question (1:2).

## 2. *Critical matters*

1. Some claim the book is an agglomeration of material (some even from the Maccabean period).
2. The word *Chaldeans* is at the heart of the matter: if it is original, then the first two chapters must be early. Otherwise, it could be dated as late as Alexander the Great,<sup>572</sup> emending *kasdim* (Chaldeans) to *kittim* (Greeks).
3. E.W. Heaton claims a cultic background (600 BC), except for the psalm in ch. 3 which he calls post-exilic. The psalm: “This is how Hebrew faith at its best answered intellectual difficulties at their worst.”<sup>573</sup>
4. B. Stade denies Habakkuk’s authorship, as did Wellhausen.<sup>574</sup> H. Schmidt thinks there are additions (3:1-17; 1:2-4, 12-13; 3:18-19).
5. G. Fohrer dates it ca. 626-612. Calls Habakkuk a cult prophet. The DSS commentary missing ch. 3 is no grounds to deny Habakkuk’s authorship. Chapter 3 was written by the same author as chapters 1-2, yet there is not an absolute unity to the book.<sup>575</sup>
6. G.von Rad calls it “a liturgical dialogue” (1:2-2:4) in a cultic prophecy.<sup>576</sup>
7. Dillard/Longman say that there is insufficient data to propose that he was a “cult prophet” in the sense that he received pay, etc., from temple revenues and was a cult official.<sup>577</sup> Nevertheless, some prophets were priests (Ezek, Zech), but their prophet status did not derive from this role nor from hereditary. He may have been well aware of the environs of the temple, etc.

## 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

- a) “*How long, O Lord . . .*” (1:2)
- b) “*The righteous will live by his faith*” (2:4)
- c) “*He makes my feet like the feet of a deer*”(3:19)

## 4. *Major themes*

1. Habakkuk was a man who would unquestionably understand our times, and his message is entirely relevant for us today. His was a time of great upheavals and changes, and a time of great sinfulness in the land, and apostasy was widespread.
2. He preached against the violence (1:2), lawlessness, and injustice in Judah. Wealth is an unstable foundation for security.
3. A theological question: why the seeming discrepancy between the experience of history and God’s revelation? The Lord’s “strange work” (Isa 28:21): *i.e.*, why does he use an enemy nation to punish his people? Hab 2:4 - human arrogance brings its own destruction in contrast to the faithful. He deals with the *moral* question of God raising up the godless, pagan Babylonians (presumably more sinful than Judah?) to inflict judgment on God’s people. The question of final justice: the verdict is in, justice will come, the books are not settled in this life.
4. The Lord’s answer to be written down *for future generations* (2:2): the righteous will live by faith (2:4) (the gospel itself ~ see Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38). He encourages God’s people to live by faith (2:4) and to submit to God’s sovereignty. Perseverance: God will establish his kingdom.
5. *Faith* and spiritual uprightness and trust in God are essential for the strength of the individual and the nation.
6. The Lord reveals to him that His kingdom is coming and will prevail in the end.
7. Evil will ultimately fail.

Compare:

Hab	NT
1:5	Acts 13:40-41
2:4	Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38
3:17-18	Phil 4:4, 10-19

<sup>572</sup> See Harrison, *Intro to the OT*, p. 934.

<sup>573</sup> Heaton, *OT Prophets*, p. 23.

<sup>574</sup> See Harrison, *Intro to the OT*, p. 935.

<sup>575</sup> Fohrer, pp. 452-453.

<sup>576</sup> Von Rad, pp. 189-191.

<sup>577</sup> Dillard/Longman, *Intro to the OT*, p. 409.

"The book of Habakkuk differs from the regular addresses of the prophets who ministered to Israel. His is a record of his own experience of soul with God. Prophets spoke for God to men; he expostulates with God about his dealings with men."<sup>578</sup>

## 5. Major prophecies

1. Babylon will attack and overcome Judah.
2. Babylon itself will be destroyed.
3. Gods will preserve his people.

## 6. Outline, structure/composition

Based on the subscription at the end, the entire poem was apparently sung to accompaniment (3:19b). Dorsey places the center of the book at the exhortation to *wait* and have *faith* (2:1-5). See waiting below.

Outlined in brief:

1. Two prophetic laments (1:2-4, 12-17): Habakkuk questions the Lord's justice.
2. The Lord's responses: oracles of judgment (1:5-2:1; 2:2-5) and woe (2:6-19).
3. Habakkuk's prayer (3).

## 7. Exposition and the history of redemption themes

(left) Habakkuk<sup>579</sup>

### a) Habakkuk's first prophetic lament: Hab 1:2-4

Habakkuk initially questions the Lord's justice at making him face so much human injustice (2:2-3). The result of the people's rebellion: violence, injustice, wrong, destruction, strife, paralyzed law, wicked hem in the righteous, justice is perverted (1:2-4). Compare Habakkuk's strong complaint against injustice with that of Amos to the northern kingdom:

Amos 2:6-8 This is what the LORD says:  
 "For three sins of Israel,  
 even for four, I will not turn back my wrath.  
 They sell the righteous for silver,  
 and the needy for a pair of sandals.  
 7 They trample on the heads of the poor  
 as upon the dust of the ground  
 and deny justice to the oppressed.  
 Father and son use the same girl  
 and so profane my holy name.  
 8 They lie down beside every altar  
 on garments taken in pledge.  
 In the house of their god  
 they drink wine taken as fines.



**The history of humanity is essentially the history of inhumanity.**

Justice has always been in short supply, but this does not lessen its seriousness before God. In modern times we are so "desensitized" to injustice that we hardly blink at the worst forms of injustice ever known to humanity.

➤ See discussion of Christ and culture in the hermeneutics of prophecy, p. .

"In the ancient Near East justice was the most basic and necessary characteristic of society. It was the job of the king

<sup>578</sup> Feinberg, *Minor Prophets*, p. 205.

<sup>579</sup> From <http://www.oca.org/images/IconDirectory/December/SM/habbakukdec2sm.JPG>.

to maintain justice. To an even greater extent, the covenant required of Israel that justice be strictly maintained on both a personal and societal level.”<sup>580</sup>

### b) *The Lord’s first response: oracle of judgment: Hab 1:5-2:1*

Habakkuk’s first complaint is answered immediately after (in the text, if not in history) by the Lord. The Lord reveals in striking detail and sobriety that he is going to raise up the Babylonians as his instrument (1:5-11). This begins our confidence that YHWH is present and is answering the prophet very forthrightly. This should give all subsequent readers hope that YHWH is active-omnipotent in the affairs of his people. The Babylonians were ruthless, impetuous, lawless, self-promoting, proud and scoffing, and finding their own strength their god. Yet, YHWH could demonstrate his power by effortlessly raising them up as his own instrument. We will then see later that they will be brought down just as effortlessly. God alone is this powerful.

### c) *Habakkuk’s second prophetic lament: Hab 1:12-17*

Habakkuk then questions the Lord for allowing Babylon to destroy His people. He confesses an orthodox view of God, while raising this difficult question:

- ⇒ YHWH is from everlasting (1:12a).
- ⇒ YHWH is his God (1:12b).
- ⇒ YHWH is holy (1:12c).
- ⇒ YHWH appointed Babylon to bring judgment (1:12d).
- ⇒ YHWH is too pure to abide evil (1:13).
- WHY THEN . . .
  - Does YHWH tolerate the wicked? (1:13a)
  - Is YHWH silent when the wicked swallow up the righteous? (1:13b)
- ⇒ YHWH will answer his “complaint” (or his own rebuke?).

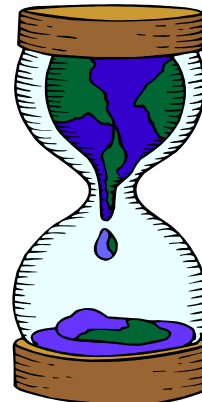
BDB 10:182 תוכחה n.f. argument, reproof -- 1. argument, impeachment, spoken by lips and mouth. Reproof, chiding; מוסר ת' reproofs for discipline; ת' חיים reproof that giveth life; ש תוכחות man of reproofs (who deserves them). Correction, rebuke.

### d) *The Lord’s second response: oracle of judgment: Hab 2:2-4 and woe: Hab 2:6-19*

However the last line (2:1) is best translated, Habakkuk affirms that YHWH is present and *will answer* him. And that is indeed what happened immediately after each of his “complaints.” God’s response to him is a prophetic *revelation* (תְּרוּמָה) (2:2). This alone is a hopeful sign: the Lord had not completely abandoned his people, but was carrying on the covenant-promise of redemption. Yet, more significantly is the prediction that though the Babylonians are his instrument they will meet their end. Yet, more significantly still is the gospel proclaimed through the prophet *by contrast with the Babylonians* in 2:4: “. . . but the righteous will live by his faith” (יְחִיֶּהוּ בְּאֵמוּנָתוֹ יְחִיֶּהוּ). (The center of the book, according to Dorsey.)

The prophet is exhorted *to wait*, and he picks up this theme in his concluding prayer:

Hab 2:3 For the revelation awaits an appointed time;  
it speaks of the end  
and will not prove false.  
Though it linger, wait for it;  
it will certainly come and will not delay.  
Hab 3:16 I heard and my heart pounded,  
my lips quivered at the sound;  
decay crept into my bones,  
and my legs trembled.  
Yet I will wait patiently for the day of calamity  
to come on the nation invading us.



The divine dialogue ends with a taunt comprising five woes against:

- 1) Theft, extortion, murder (2:6-8).
- 2) Unjust gain to build realm (2:9).
- 3) Murderous city builders (2:12).

<sup>580</sup> Walton, Mathews, Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary*, p. 791.

- 4) Drunkenness (2:15-17).
- 5) Idolatry (2:18-19).

In contrast to the *lifeless idols*, another profoundly eschatological promise is contained in this dark oracle of woe: it is as if the truth of God's glory filling the earth is proof/evidence against the rebellious of the earth. It is indeed the very backdrop, the rationale, the certainty that what the prophet proclaims of God is valid. God himself will validate it when knowledge of his glory fills the earth:

**Hab 2:14 For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD,  
as the waters cover the sea.**

After the final two woes, the prophet makes a further eschatological proclamation concerning YHWH's presence in his holy temple(heaven itself) and an exhortation to respond properly:

**Hab 2:20 But the LORD is in his holy temple;  
let all the earth be silent before him.**

This understanding of God's presence encompasses a grasp of transcendence and immanence, that God is present "in heaven" while being present "on earth." Indeed, this fact alone is enough to call the entire earth to *be silent before him*. To be silent before God is the appropriate response to his glory: to have one's "mouth stopped" is the description of the believer (convinced of his own sin and God's holy glory) in Romans:<sup>581</sup>

Rom 3:19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God.

*Be silent:*

Deut 27:9 Levites, said to all Israel, "Be silent, O Israel, and listen!  
Job 33:31 Job, and listen to me; be silent, and I will speak.  
Job 33:33 if not, then listen to me; be silent, and I will teach you wisdom.  
Ps 4:4 search your hearts and be silent. Selah  
Ps 50:3 Our God comes and will not be silent; a fire devours before him,  
Eccl 3:7 a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak,  
Isa 23:2 word has come to them. 2 Be silent, you people of the island  
Isa 41:1 Be silent before me, you islands!  
Zeph 1:7 Be silent before the Sovereign LORD  
Lk 1:20 And now you will be silent and not able to speak

### e) ***Habakkuk's prayer: Hab 3:1-19***

Consists of several genres (hymn, lament, thanksgiving): the Divine Warrior theme – celebration of God's power and glory and coming deliverance. This prayer is more a praise of God and a recollection of the spiritual battle in the history of redemption than it is a petition (cf. the militaristic vision he received about Babylon in 1:5-11<sup>582</sup>). Habakkuk does petition the Lord to renew his awe inspiring deeds (חַיִּים וְעֹדֵד). Thus, the prophet affirms the *work* of God in the history of redemption as the foundation for his praise. The petition itself, however, consists of only one verse to *renew his works in their day* (3:2b).

In reciting the broad sweep of redemption history, he takes an equally broad sweep against the gods of the ancient world. For *example*:<sup>583</sup>

His glory covered the heavens (3:3)	<i>versus</i>	El (Supremo in Canaan) Shemesh the Babylonian sun god, Ra-Atum of Egypt, Marduk (creator god of order favored by Nebuchadnezzar) Ra (Egypt) (cf. An of Sumer)
His splendor flashed from his hand (3:4)	<i>versus</i>	Baal of lightning (storm gods)
He sends plague and pestilence (3:5)	<i>versus</i>	Resheph the Canaanite god of the plague & Nergal of Babylon
He stood and shook the earth (3:6)	<i>versus</i>	Asherah (earth) of Canaan, Geb of Egypt, (cf. Ki of Sumer)
He raged against the rivers and sea (3:8-10)	<i>versus</i>	Baal & Yamm (sea) and Nahor (river), Nu (ocean) of Egypt, Adad (storms) (cf. Nammu of Sumer)

<sup>581</sup> See L. Jones' remarkable sermons on Rom 3 and this particular verse.

<sup>582</sup> See Dorsey's comparison, *Literary Structure*, p. 307. He says,, "The two descriptions also stand in intentional and instructive contrast, with the forces of Yahweh purposely depicted as more powerful. The Babylonian force is described first, and it seems formidable; it overwhelms dwellings, kings, and fortified cities. But Yahweh's power is portrayed as vastly superior. Yahweh overwhelms the heavens, earth, mountains, hills, sea, nations – and the forces of Babylon!" (*ibid.*, p. 307).

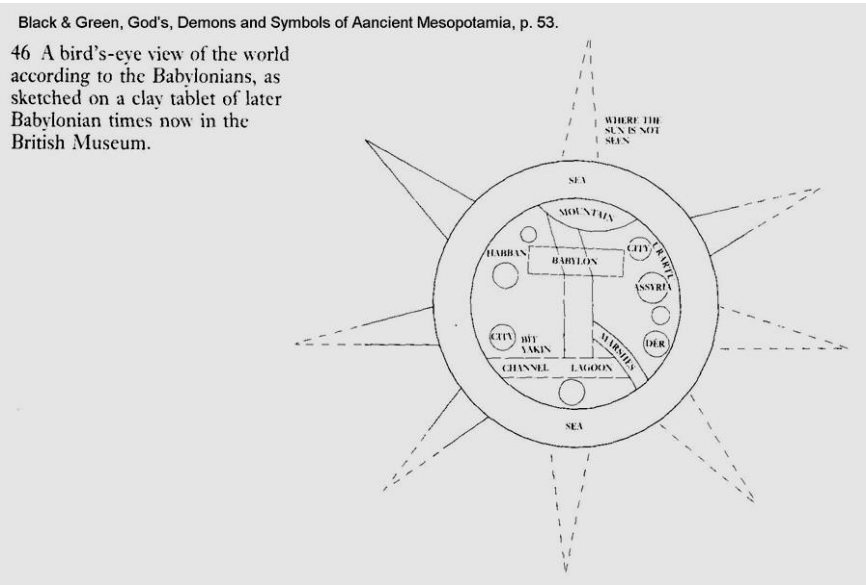
<sup>583</sup> For reference see Walton, Matthews, and Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary*, p. 739.



He uncovered his bow (3:9)	versus	Baal (lightning), Ishtar (war)
The deep roared (3:10)	versus	Tiamat
He stopped the sun and moon (3:11)	versus	Shamash (sun) and Sin (moon) in Canaan, Amon and Thoth (moon) of Egypt, Haran of Babylon
He trampled the sea (3:15)	versus	Yamm (sea)

(right) Babylonian map of the world.<sup>584</sup> The earth is represented as a flat disk with a salt sea surrounding it. Beyond the sea are eight regions where the sun is not seen.

These identifications are somewhat speculative and arbitrary, because there were many gods in each of the ANE pantheons that represented the various aspects of ancient belief concerning the earth, sea, sky, heaven, war, etc.<sup>585</sup> For example, the *Divine Warrior* theme invokes contrasts with the many ANE gods of war: Ashtarte and Ishtar (goddess of love and war) (cf. Venus), and Resheph. Thus, it is best to propose that the sweeping affirmations of YHWH’s absolute sovereignty over all the various forces of the universe is simultaneously a sweeping condemnation of *all* ANE beliefs in the pantheons of multitudinous and powerless deities.



Black & Green, *God's, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia*, p. 53.  
 46 A bird's-eye view of the world according to the Babylonians, as sketched on a clay tablet of later Babylonian times now in the British Museum.

(right) Nergal, Babylonian god of the underworld.<sup>586</sup>

Habakkuk’s prayer interweaves the central redemptive historical themes of **creation – judgment – redemption** theology. The God who created all things, who is infinitely more powerful and loving than all ANE gods/idols combined, who is living and omni-active, omnipresent, omnipotent, he will fulfill his word. His word created the universe, his word judged his people, his word would restore and redeem his people.

Implicit in the redemption theme are allusions to the captivity in, and Exodus from, Egypt. The promise of redemption from Egypt is central to the promise to create a new people with a new heart in a new land. That promise is central to the prophetic promise to renew them again after judgment in exile, God would preserve the remnant. The Exodus imagery forms the backdrop for all the history of redemption being played on both the temporal/material plane as well as the eternal/spiritual plane.



13 Design of an Old Babylonian cylinder seal from Larsa, depicting the underworld god Nergal, holding his distinctive scimitar and the double lion-headed standard. The inscription is a dedication to Nergal by Abisarê, perhaps the king of Larsa of that name.  
 Black & Green, *God's Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia*, p. 19.

- ⇒ Exodus-Sinaitic imagery: God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran (3:3).
- ⇒ Exodus imagery of wilderness wanderings: His glory, splendor, and power (3:4-5).
- ⇒ Exodus imagery of plagues: plague went before him (3:5).
- ⇒ Exodus-Sinaitic imagery of theophany: earth shaking and crumbling (2:6).
- ⇒ Exodus imagery of tents of neighbors: tents of Cushan and Midian (3:7).
- ⇒ Exodus imagery of rivers and seas: wrath against rivers, streams, and sea (3:8).
- ⇒ Exodus victory at Gibeon (Josh 10:12-13): sun and moon stood still (3:11).
- ⇒ Exodus deliverance from nations: wrath against the nations (3:12-13).

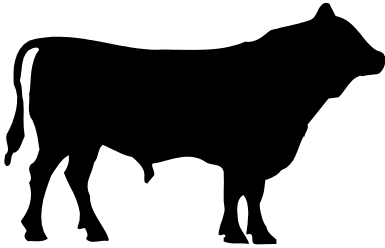
<sup>584</sup> Black & Green, *God's, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia*, p. 53.

<sup>585</sup> See “Summary of ANE gods,” pp. ff., and “A comparison of ANE pantheons,” p.

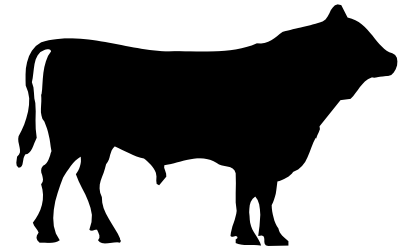
<sup>586</sup> Black & Green, *God's Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia*, p. 19.

⇒ Exodus destruction of Egyptian forces: he tramples the sea with his horses (3:13-14).

The most remarkable aspect of Habakkuk's prayer is his conclusion of profound faith in God, God's judgment on their enemy Babylon (3:16), the preservation of God's people in exile, and the spiritual sustenance of God's people until their deliverance:



Hab 3:17-18 Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines,  
though the olive crop fails  
and the fields produce no food,  
though there are no sheep in the pen  
and no cattle in the stalls,  
18 yet I will rejoice in the LORD,  
I will be joyful in God my Savior.



Habakkuk says he is overwhelmed by God's deeds which he has recited, as well as the coming judgment, and yet he transitions immediately into a boldly positive affirmation that the enemy they fear will itself meet calamity (3:16), for which he "will patiently *wait*," and thus expresses his confidence that despite their deprivations he will rejoice and have joy! Thus, we can conclude that Habakkuk's prophecy was given to offer *hope* and *encouragement* to the people of God, despite all their present and future difficult circumstances.

## 8. *History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling*

### b) *Revelation and redemption from YHWH*

#### (1) *Who God is*

God is the One wanting to be known by the whole world (2:14; 3:1-16). His mission is for the entire world. Knowledge of God will fill the earth. God shows his compassion to his creation (new creation), that all might come to know him and his glory. Though Babylon is powerful to destroy Judah, they are nothing unless YHWH called them to their task. YHWH is the Creator of all, and thus has the power to judge and redeem.

YHWH is everlasting, holy, pure, and longsuffering.

Habakkuk affirms that God is his Savior. Redemption is at the heart of judgment. Not to destroy but to restore, reclaim, recreate.

#### (2) *What God has done*

God in his mercy sent his prophet to warn, teach, exhort, and prepare his people. Jeremiah prophesies during Jeremiah's tenure; the Lord gave the same message to Habakkuk that Babylon was coming to destroy Judah. God loved Judah by sending such clear revelation of his heart. God responds to his prophet's prayers, questions, and complaints. This importantly shows that God has not even abandoned his people in their coming judgment. Indeed, their judgment is proof of his love. God also is patient with them, even longsuffering, yet that will expire. His work is not just judgment, however, for he will redeem.

The prophet uses the Exodus motif as the backdrop to his prophetic (ch 3): plagues, wanderings, theophany, tents of nations, seas, sun and moon, deliverance, destruction of Egypt.

#### (3) *What God has promised*

- Repentance may not now be possible.
- Babylon will destroy Judah, but God will preserve his people.
- Revealed the gospel to the prophet and to Israel and to the nations: *The righteous will live by faith.*
- All are guilty/judged before God, and thus all need God's mercy. Israel is equal to the nations in terms of forgiveness and the need for grace (see Rom 11:32).

## b) *Humankind and redemption*

### (1) *Worship of redeemed*

Be silent before God. This is the appropriate response to God's word from the prophet. L. Jones says that a Christian is a person "whose mouth has been stopped." *Humility is requisite to holiness*. Prayer is central to the prophet's ministry and life, exemplifying for us the calling, asking, and expecting God to answer. In his prayers, he stresses a biblical theology of creation, judgment, redemption. He also acknowledges the utter futility of turning to idols. Proper biblical worship is demonstrated in a biblical ethic of justice and righteousness.

### (2) *Work of redeemed*

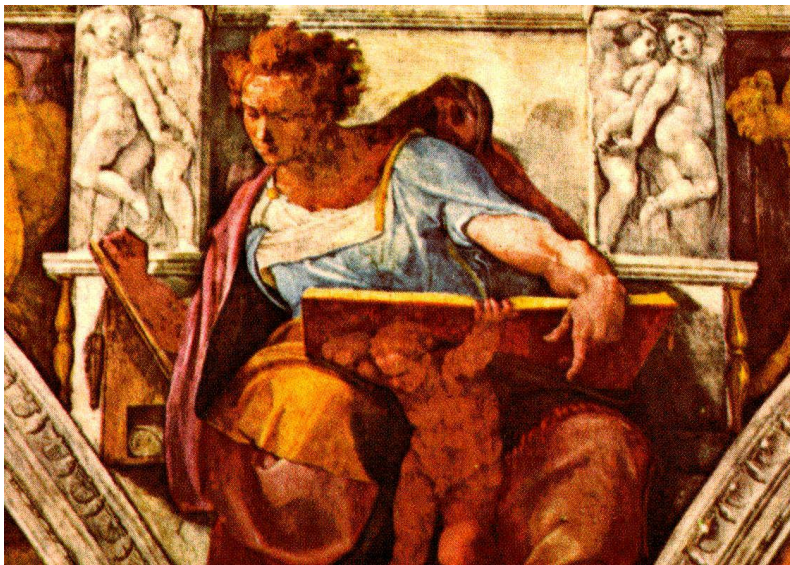
Must not be to fashion idols or build cities on bloodshed or unjust gain or stolen goods or extortion (ch 2).

Hab. says that he will trust in YHWH even though the ground produces no food and there are no sheep in the pen. To trust God with our labor expresses Adamic creation-theology here of dominion in God's creation; it must be one of trust in God alone and not the fruit of our hands' labors (see Deut 4).

### (3) *Ethics of redeemed*

Justice must be according to God's law. Corruption must be rooted out, and indeed would be in the coming judgment. The law was "paralyzed" and justice was perverted (1:4). Babylon's *building* on injustice would revert destruction upon their own heads! Holiness is directly related to ethical behavior and life before the nations. The testimony of Israel to YHWH was suffering. The same message as the other pre-exilic prophets. Instead of glory, they would know *shame* just like the Babylonians who would be destroyed. This leveling of the moral playing field places all peoples on the same ground before God; God's people were "chosen" but were no less (even more so) accountable before God to live according to his law. They are like Paul described in Romans 11:32 – "God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he might have mercy on them all"

## C. *Daniel דַּנְיֵאל (Babylon ~ 605-530)*



Daniel by Michelangelo in Sistine Chapel

Title, author, and dates

1. Daniel "God is my judge" (Belteshezzar) himself claims authorship of his book by speaking in the first person (9:2; 10:2; on writing, see especially 7:2; 12:4[scroll]), and thus when he places himself firmly in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim (605 BC) king of Judah and Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon we can be confident that he began his account with the beginning of his own exile (605-530 BC) in Babylon, along with Hananiah (Shadrach), Mishael (Meshach) and Azariah (Abednego).

2. Daniel was carried into exile in the first deportation of Judah in 605 by Nebuchadnezzar II. During the reign of *Jehoiakim* (Eliakim), son of

Josiah and Zebidah (daughter of Pedaiah) (2 Ki 23:34-24:6; 2 Chron 36:4-8) Nebuchadnezzar defeated Egypt at the Battle of Carchemish on the Orontes (605), and then Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. This decisive turning-point brought the wrath of Babylon, and Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem (c. 605) and took the first deportation of people, including the puppet Jehoiakim in chains, the prophet Daniel, and many others (Dan 1:1-2).

3. Daniel served sixty-five years in the foreign courts of Nebuchadnezzar (605-562) and Belshazzar (553-539), Cyrus the Great (539-530) and Darius the Mede (Dan 5:31).<sup>587</sup>
4. See Persian conquest of Babylon in 539 BC, p. 542.

## ***1. Critical matters***

- See Harrison, *Intro to the OT*, pp. 1110-1127.

Concerning the “Historical Critics” on Daniel who say he was at least a “pious man”:

“The necessities of the critical position must surely be painfully great when honorable men have to justify supposed pious frauds, the like of which, were they to disgrace the history of their own times, they would visit with the most ungrateful condemnation and scorn.”<sup>588</sup>

1. Because of the remarkable predictive prophecies in Daniel it has often been placed much later, or considered fictional. Nevertheless, such views seriously threaten the integrity of the book which would be in error at the points mentioned of historical identification, etc. Jesus himself refers to Daniel as the author of this book (Mtt 24:15; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). VanGemeren proposes that the book must have been completed shortly after Babylon was conquered by Persia, for it records the transfer of authority without any mention of Cyrus’ decree in 538.<sup>589</sup>
2. Many critical scholars also claim inaccuracies in the historical details.
3. The standard critical viewpoint dates *authorship* of the book to the period of Antiochus Epiphanes (175-163 BC).
4. Hebrew and Aramaic data are often used to argue for a late date. Persian and Greek words are said to support a late date. “In 1891 S.R. Driver could write quite confidently that the Persian words in Daniel presupposed a period of composition after the Persian empire had been well established; the Greek words demanded, the Hebrew supported, and the Aramaic permitted a date subsequent to the conquest of Palestine by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C.”<sup>590</sup> Such linguistic proposals have largely been discredited in subsequent scholarship, while Maccabean dating is refuted by the evidence from Qumran (popularity of Daniel in many fragments).
5. In contrast to the critical emphasis on the dating of the book in the period of Antiochus Epiphanes, conservative interpretations include (early dating is assumed) those that see an emphasis on the first coming of Christ as central to the book of Daniel (amillennialists), while others see an emphasis on both the period of Antiochus Epiphanes and the second coming of Christ (persecution) (some amils and premillennial).
6. Daniel is placed in the Hagiographa (Writings), along with Lamentations, probably due to the original division of the Law and the Prophets which changed to the Law, Prophets, Writings. This may have been because of its “apocalyptic,” and some thought it was not perceived as properly “prophetic” until much later when the prophecies were fulfilled.

## ***2. Distinctive words/phrases***

### ***c) “Seventy sevens”: Dan 9:20-27***

- See discussion of millennium, p. 85f.  
 ➤ See Daniel 9, p. 490.

### ***a) “Ancient of Days”***

Dan 7:9 As I looked,  
 thrones were set in place,  
 and the Ancient of Days took his seat.  
 His clothing was as white as snow;  
 the hair of his head was white like wool.

<sup>587</sup> Confusion about Darius the Mede, as to whether he is Cyrus or Gubaru (an appointed governor), or simply a throne name for Cyrus. (Do not confuse this Darius with the later Darius the Great, 521-486 BC). Presently, there is no sure evidence proving any theory.

<sup>588</sup> John Urquhart, *The Wonders of Prophecy*, p. 153.

<sup>589</sup> VanGemeren, *Prophetic Word*, p. 341.

<sup>590</sup> Harrison, *Intro to the OT*, p. 1124.

His throne was flaming with fire,  
and its wheels were all ablaze.

Dan 7:13 In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.

Dan 7:22 until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom.

### b) “Anointed One”: Dan 9:25

Dan 9:25-26 Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. 26 After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.

### c) “Son of Man”: Dan 7:13-14

- See Ezekiel, over 90x.
- See NT, over 80x.
- See Edward J. Young, “Daniel’s Vision of the Son of Man.”

Dan 7:13-14 In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. 14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

### d) “Abomination of desolation”: מְשַׁחֵם שְׁקִצִים

The meaning of the abominating of desolation or “desolating sacrilege” (שְׁקִצִים מְשַׁחֵם) of Dan 9:27 has long been debated. The nominative שְׁמָמָה [שְׁמָם] is defined as desolated, waste, appalled. שְׁקִיץ is defined as a *detested thing*, something of filth, sometimes of unclean food or of idols and idolatrous practices. Many relate this combined expression to the idol set up by Antiochus Ephiphanes (1 Macc. 1:54ff.), awhile others to the Roman desecration of the temple (or their military standards) in the first century A.D, while others relate it to the Antichrist’s works in the last days (2 Thes. 2:3f.). (Some also suggest it refers to Caligula’s intention to set up a statue of himself in the temple in 44 A.D.) Under Antiochus Ephiphanes “The Syrian Baal Shamen (‘Lord of Heaven’) was the deity whose worship was instituted in the temple on the altar of sacrifice by the Syrians citizens who were brought into Jerusalem by Antiochus and his military commander, Apollonius.”<sup>591</sup> Perhaps the expression מְשַׁחֵם שְׁקִצִים is a sarcastic pun on Baal Shamen.

Jesus was undoubtedly looking forward to an event of abomination that may have corresponded to the abomination that Daniel spoke of regarding Antiochus, or they both spoke of a post-resurrection event.

On detestable abominations in the OT: Deut. 27:15; 29:17; 1 Ki 11:7; 2 Ki 23:13). On detestable acts: Lev. 18:22; Deut. 22:5; Prov. 20:23.

Dan 9:27 He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven.’ In the middle of the ‘seven’ he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.”

Dan 11:31 His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation.

Dan 12:11 From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days.

Mtt 24:15 So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—

Mk 13:14 When you see ‘the abomination that causes desolation’ standing where it does not belong—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

<sup>591</sup> Walton, Mathews, Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary*, p. 745.

### 3. *Major themes*

1. The sovereignty and supremacy of God in the history of redemption and the history of the world is central to the prophecy of Daniel.
2. The ultimate victory of God over all the kingdoms of the world is a central sub theme, and thus the ultimate victory of God's people. God's kingdom is presently reigning over all, but will inevitably reign exclusively. Daniel draws a clear contrast between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of humankind. This would have provided encouragement and comfort to the Jews in exile to be reminded that God's kingdom will gain complete supremacy over the powerful and wicked kingdoms of this world. It would have later also provided to the returned exiles a reminder of the history of redemption of the exilic period from a prophet *who was there with them*.
3. The life of true believers in a pagan and foreign culture is illustrated beautifully by the central characters, especially Daniel. This highlights the importance of faithfulness and loyalty to God (and his law) in exile. They refused to worship in any way contrary to their Jewish faith, and also became renowned in understanding and wisdom. It also highlights the difficult relationship of believers to their unbelieving sovereigns and neighbors. That is, Daniel is one of several stories about God-fearing believers working within extremely pagan contexts without compromising the faith.
4. The book of Daniel was designed to inspire the exiles to renewed faith and trust in YHWH, for even the dreaded Nebuchadnezzar is brought to acknowledge the Lord as the true God.

Daniel gives a *kingdom perspective*: "It presents a realized eschatology, giving the saints a vision of the Lord's working out his plan of redemption in history. This revelation is not intended to further speculation but to encourage perseverance in faith, hope, and love. It is to inspire confident hope in the final establishment of the everlasting kingdom of God."<sup>592</sup>

### 4. *Major prophecies*

- The rise and fall of the major kingdoms of the ancient world: Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, Rome.
- The fall of Babylon, Belshazzar, and the rise of Persia.
- The temporary madness of Nebuchadnezzar and his restoration to acknowledge YHWH as the Most High God.
- The coming of the eternal Messianic kingdom.
- The second coming of the Messiah.
- The bodily resurrection of all.

### 5. *Outline, structure/composition*

As noted above, in the Hebrew Bible, Daniel is placed under the Writings (Hagiographa) after Esther and before Ezra, and not with the Latter Prophets. This may be due to the same historical setting in exile, the historical narrative, and to the fact that Daniel was not always considered a prophet like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. Yet, Josephus attests that Daniel was placed earlier among the writing Prophets.

Daniel is largely historical narrative combined with what is often called *apocalyptic* literature (keeping in mind distinctions between biblical and non-biblical apocalyptic[dualism, pessimism, determinism]). According to Payne, Daniel contains "the highest proportion of symbolic prophecy to be found within the word of God . . ."<sup>593</sup> Daniel 1-6 are historical and Dan 7-12 are prophetic. The material of Daniel can be outlined according to the content:<sup>594</sup>

**Dan 1-6 ~ inspiring stories of encouragement about godly Jews in pagan courts.**  
**Dan 7-12 ~ dreams, visions, prayers of Daniel.**

The outline of Daniel below is based in part on the languages used: those texts directly addressed to Israel are in Hebrew, whereas those with a broad address to the nations are in Aramaic (the official international *lingua franca* of the ANE). The reason for this shift is presumably a focus from national-present to international-present, to national and international-future concerns.

<sup>592</sup> VanGemeren, *Prophetic Word*, p. 342.

<sup>593</sup> Payne, *Biblical Prophecy*, p. 369.

<sup>594</sup> Based on Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, p. 259.

1. Exile to Babylon (*Hebrew*): Dan 1:1-2:4a ~ written in third person.
2. Prophecies concerning the nations (*Aramaic*): Dan 2:4b-7:28 (7:1-28) ~ written in first person.
3. Prophecies concerning the nations and Israel (*Hebrew*): Dan 8-12 ~ written in first person.

**Language shifts:** Dorsey says that the shift in languages (to Aramaic) in chapters 2-7 “coincides with the shift in these chapters to a focus on the international events in world history . . . The use of the international language in these chapters underscores the theme (particularly emphasized in this section) that Israel’s God has knowledge and jurisdiction over not only Hebrew-speaking people, but all the nations of the earth.”<sup>595</sup> He also notes that the Aramaic sections would speak to those Jews in exile who had come to speak Aramaic, and who would have needed encouragement to know that God was mightier than even Nebuchadnezzar or King Darius or King Belshazzar. On the other hand, the following Hebrew sections (8-12) would speak to the (returning and resident) Hebrew speaking Israelites after the exile.



(above) Daniel and lions by Briton Rivière

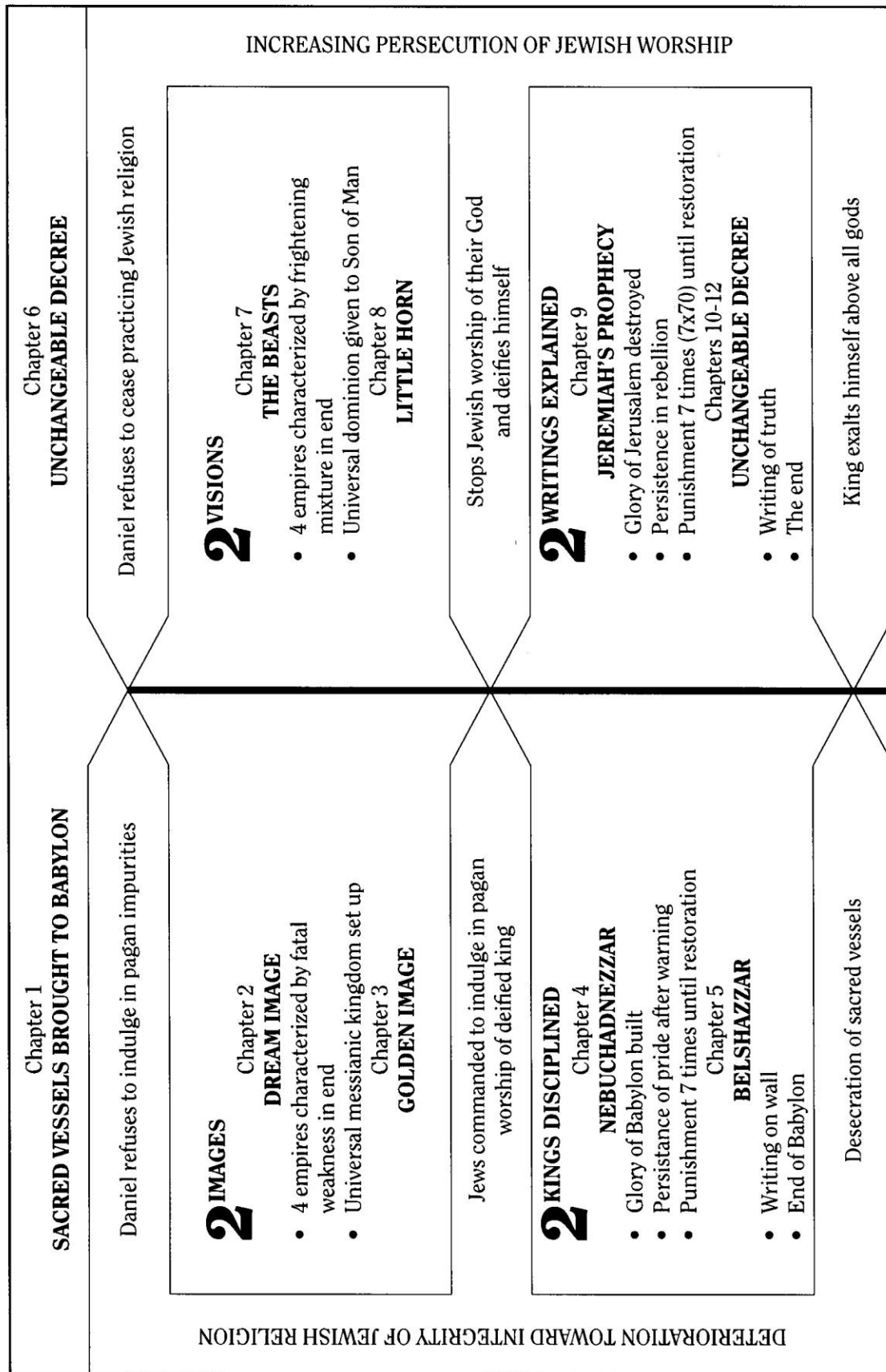
(right) Daniel and lions by Rubens



<sup>595</sup> Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, p. 260.

John H. Walton, Chronological and Background Charts of the OT, p. 57.

# The Parallel Structure of the Book of Daniel



Analysis of D. W. Gooding, "The Literary Structure of the Book of Daniel and its implications," *Tyndale Bulletin* 32 (1981): 52.

Parallel structures in Daniel by Walton.<sup>596</sup>

<sup>596</sup> Walton, *Chronological Charts*, p. 57.



## 6. *Exposition and the history of redemption themes*

Having said that the first six chapters of Daniel are historical narrative, it should be clarified that it is *prophetic* historical narrative. There is no clear chronology connecting the different stories. There are gaps in historical details, and prophetic details, and no full picture of any of the particular events is conveyed. Prophetic narrative is history written with a theological message, much like a sermon. As noted, this message would have been an encouragement to the Hebrew nation during the exile, but also in all periods of subsequent hardship and persecution.

The prophetic revelation is *progressive*: on the level of the predictive, the dreams and visions of Daniel gradually complete a picture of the major future earthly kingdoms in which the particulars (lion, bear, leopard, beast, ram, goat, etc.) make up a remarkably precise outline of the pre-Messianic era, and which also has elements that point to the latter days of the end times. It might also be suggested that there is some progression of *clarity* in the revelations (esp. in Dan 11-12). Two revelations concern specific predictions about the immediate lives of two Babylonian rulers (Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar), while the others all point to future predictive eschatologies. The revelations also progress in *form* through various vehicles and *interpreters* (and we are given precise dates for all but one):

- ⇒ Dan 2 ~ Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a statue is interpreted by Daniel (as revealed by God). 604 BC
- ⇒ Dan 4 ~ Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a tree is interpreted by Daniel (as revealed by God). ? BC
- ⇒ Dan 5 ~ Belshazzar's handwriting on the wall is interpreted by Daniel (as revealed by God). 539 BC
- ⇒ Dan 7 ~ Daniel's dream (before ch 5 event) of four beasts is interpreted by someone in the vision. 553 BC
- ⇒ Dan 8 ~ Daniel's vision of a ram and a goat (after his first dream, before ch 5) is interpreted by the angel Gabriel. 551 BC
- ⇒ Dan 9 ~ Daniel's prayer and vision of Gabriel about the seventy sevens is interpreted by the angel Gabriel. 539 BC
- ⇒ Dan 10-12 ~ Daniel's revelation-vision of a great spiritual war and the time before and leading up to the end-times is interpreted by a man dressed in linen, looking like chrysolite and lightning. 539 BC

*The eschatological content of the progressive revelation:*

- ⇒ Dan 2 ~ four kingdoms revealed.
- ⇒ Dan 7 ~ fourth kingdom clarified.
- ⇒ Dan 8 ~ second and third kingdoms clarified.
- ⇒ Dan 11 ~ second kingdom mentioned, third kingdom is clarified, end-times is revealed.
- ⇒ Dan 12 ~ end-times is clarified.

A.A. MacRae outlines some dangers to avoid in interpreting Daniel:<sup>597</sup>

### 1. **Oversystematizing**

In studying any part of the Bible we should be aware of certain common dangers. One that is extremely difficult to avoid is that of oversystematizing. On the basis of only a few facts one may build a whole system of interpretation, and then, as new facts are encountered, endeavor to fit them into the system that is already established in his mind.

This danger is particularly acute in the study of predictions, which may contain references to facts or situations quite different from those known by the particular interpreter. It is natural to try to relate each verse to a preconceived system, forcing into line statements that resist such a relation, and passing over with little attention any that do not seem to fit.

Even in those fields of science where verification by experiment is possible this danger is always present. When tests are made to determine the effect of drugs on people there is always a control group, as it is recognized that preconceived ideas often affect the results produced by experimental drugs. If this danger is so great in matters that can be repeated under controlled conditions, there is even greater need to avoid it in areas in which the only evidence consists of interpretation of words and sentences.

In the study of any portion of the Bible there are two reasons why it is vital to avoid oversystematizing: 1) There is always a danger of misinterpreting individual statements in order to fit them into a system; 2) even more important, there is a tendency to overlook vital matters if they do not appear clearly to fit into a general scheme.

### 2. **Circular Reasoning**

A second common error is that of circular reasoning. It is easy to draw conclusions from a passage of Scripture and then to find the same results in another passage, even though it may actually be dealing with a different subject or looking at the same subject from quite a different angle. It is true that it is desirable to explain the complex in the light of the simple; yet if the difficulties of a complicated passage are too lightly brushed aside, a large part of its important meaning may be missed.

The Bible expresses the mind of the infinite God, and it is reasonable to expect that any part of it may throw valuable light on any other part. Studies that bring together the teaching of various sections of the Scripture and show their interrelation are important and useful. Yet the

<sup>597</sup> MacRae, *Daniel*, pp. 35-39.

purpose of the present treatise is somewhat different. Realizing fully the great danger of circular reasoning, it is our endeavor, so far as possible, to see exactly what are the possibilities of each passage, taken by itself.

Thus in the present work an attempt will be made to see what can be said about the prophecies of Daniel without bringing into consideration evidence from other Biblical passages except when their bearing is so clear that no intelligent person should question it. Important as it is to use the light of the New Testament in interpreting the Old Testament, this will be to a large extent avoided in the present discussion. In fact, our use of New Testament passages will be restricted to a few very clear New Testament teachings. The same attitude will be taken toward other Old Testament books, except where the relevance is absolutely unmistakable. Even in the book of Daniel itself earlier predictions will be studied without light from later ones, though it will be considered proper in studying Daniel's later predictions to note their relation to his earlier ones.

Synthetic study is highly desirable, but it is a further step, and can often produce serious error if the earlier procedure, which this book is attempting to perform, has not first been carried to its conclusion.

### 3. Failure to Differentiate Levels of Certainty

Two remaining dangers in Bible study need to be briefly mentioned. The first of these is the danger of failing to differentiate between levels of certainty. In the study of the Bible, as in any field of history or of science, some facts are well established while others are far less certain. Failure to differentiate can do great harm, both in affecting the results of the study and in giving readers a false impression.

In this connection the writer often thinks of a book on the ancient history of an important country that appeared several years ago. It was written by a professor in a great university who had devoted many years to the study of ancient history. He was probably as familiar with the many archaeological activities that had been carried on in that particular country as any man living. The book was well illustrated and beautifully printed. The writer's ideas were clearly expressed. At first sight it seemed to be an ideal book to introduce readers to the study of this very important area. Yet the book failed completely in its purpose.

The book contained a great many statements about facts that were well known and recognized by all students in this field. These statements were made almost incidentally, with no attempt to give evidence for them or to support them. Upon reading these statements a person unfamiliar with that field of study would think that they were only incidental and were unimportant. On all matters on which various viewpoints are possible the author selected a particular viewpoint and expressed it dogmatically. The less certain the view, the more positive would be his statements in its favor. When the author would present a new theory of his own of which no one else had yet heard, or even if he desired ironically to present an idea that he felt sure no sensible person would take seriously, he would state the idea in such a dogmatic and positive form that a reader who was not an expert in this field would think it was one of the matters on which no expert could hold a different opinion. Thus the statements in the book were stressed in a way that was quite the reverse of the degree of certainty. While the book contained a great deal of valuable material it was practically valueless for anyone who was not already a master of the subject.

Among the many books that have been published on Daniel, I have rarely seen one that has gone to such an extreme, but there is often a tendency in that direction. The intent of the present volume is the exact opposite. It is not our purpose to urge a definite conclusion as to matters that are questionable, and it is certainly not our purpose to try to fit the statements of Daniel into any particular scheme of eschatology. It is our purpose to take the book as a vital divine record and see exactly what it says. We desire to stress those matters that are so clearly stated that they are unquestionable, and to state positively those matters on which the evidence should lead any intelligent person to hold a definite opinion. Wherever, in the light of intelligent examination of the facts, a valid argument can be made for each of two positions, it is our purpose to present both interpretations and leave it to the reader to decide between them. Where there is so little evidence that it is so slight that it is highly questionable whether a correct answer can be given at present it is our desire to state that fact, and sometimes to pass lightly over such matters since lengthy discussion of them might divert attention from our primary objective.

### 4. Failure to Follow Scriptural Emphasis

Another danger that we shall seek to avoid is that of neglecting the emphasis of Scripture. It is truly sad when churches or denominations divide over matters on which there may be legitimate differences of opinion. Sometimes such divisions have occurred because one group of Christian leaders has laid great stress on a certain interpretation of a few verses, while another group has felt that these particular verses should be interpreted in a different way. God's people should stand firmly on the entire Scripture, accepting everything that they find clearly taught in it, but reserving judgment on points that are not clear, and showing Christian charity toward Bible believers who hold other views regarding matters on which equally earnest and intelligent Christians may differ.

It is easy to make much of a few verses and ignore the rest of Scripture. Not only is it important to find what Scripture teaches; it is important to note its emphasis. We should stand firmly upon all that is clearly taught in Scripture. We should carefully study matters on which Scripture does not speak clearly, but should endeavor, in expressing our ideas, to avoid every form of dogmatism and every type of expression that can be used by Satan to cause unnecessary controversy among equally dedicated Christians.

#### *a) Exile to Babylon (Hebrew): Dan 1:1-2:4a*

*Faithfulness and blessing: Dan 1:1-2:4*

God blessed Daniel and his friends with knowledge, understanding, and insight for their faithfulness. He also raised them all up to great prominence (1:18-21).

The exilic context confirms all the previous words of the various prophets that God would accomplish what he promises, predicts, proclaims, and prophesies through his messengers. The number of prophecies concerning the

end of the Jewish kingdom are too many to count, and their details are so specific, that the *apologetic* value of the prophetic books is manifest.

➤ See Payne's above "Statistics by Biblical Books," p. .

Nebuchadnezzar ||



The situation described for Daniel and his three companions, in which they are described as excelling in all of the ancient literature and learning of Babylon, poses some questions. We know that much of the Babylonian literature was pagan, astrological, occultic, and cultic. It included divination, curses, omens, fortune telling, astronomical events, and all of the worst forms of superstitious idolatry known in the ancient world.

Did these monotheistic Israelites simply employ God's power and enabling in these ancient "sciences," or did they in some way compromise their faith through syncretism. The latter question is easy to answer: Daniel and his friends appear to be thoroughly orthodox in belief and practice, they are blessed by God amidst the exiles God that was punishing for pagan excesses in idolatry and syncretism with ANE religion. Thus, it seems entirely

improbable that Daniel and his friends became idolaters in any sense of the word! Indeed, they far *surpassed* the understanding provided to them through their Babylonian training, for "God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning" (1:17). Their knowledge was more than human study, but involved divine revelation from God. The answer to the first question, as to what exactly they did study in Babylon, and how they "processed," it is not so certain. We do not know if their Babylonian learning was general in the scribal and literary fashion or whether it was focused on that knowledge used by diviners.<sup>598</sup>

➤ Consider the discussion on false prophets in the Hermeneutics of prophecy, p. .

Two texts which might help clarify the issue are found in Dan 2:

Dan 2:15 He asked the king's officer, "Why did the king issue such a harsh decree?" Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel.

Dan 2:18 He urged them to plead for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that he and his friends might not be executed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

These texts indicate that Daniel and his friends were not part of the company of magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and astrologers mentioned in 2:2, but also that Daniel had to have someone explain to him their plight before Nebuchadnezzar, and also his fear that he and his Jewish counterparts might get "lumped" together with the rest of these "wise" men of Babylon and be executed.

Nevertheless, after Daniel is given the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the Babylonian king actually bows down to Daniel acknowledging that the Lord is God of gods (2:46-47). Further, he placed Daniel over all the wise men, thus now clearly *associating him with them*, though they were unable to do any of the things Daniel could do (2:48; 4:5-6), and he also calls Daniel the "chief of the magicians" (Dan 4:9). Yet, even in Dan 4 Daniel is set apart from the clan of magicians and astrologers, for he was not brought before the king, or asked anything, until *after* all the "wise" men had been asked the meaning of the king's dream:

Dan 4:6-7 So I commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be brought before me to interpret the dream for me. <sup>7</sup> When the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners came, I told them the dream, but they could not interpret it for me.

This same scenario is played out under Belshazzar, when all the diviners and wise men of his kingdom could not interpret the writing on the wall. Daniel is brought in later, and is then remembered as the one Nebuchadnezzar had "appointed chief of the magicians" (5:11), but he is clearly separate from them. Note that in Dan 6, under Darius the Mede, that though Daniel is greatly distinguished among the leaders, he is not associated with diviners or astrologers. Indeed, the entire narrative highlights his faithfulness to God in *not worshipping* the king, as the rest of the people were commanded, at the risk of his own life.

## **b) Prophecies concerning the nations (Aramaic): Dan 2:4b-7:28**

*Faithfulness and blessing: Nebuchadnezzar's divine dream and revelation of statue: Dan 2*

➤ See the statue illustration, p

God blessed Daniel with revelation in understanding Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a large statue. In the process, God reveals a sweeping prediction of the rise and fall of four of the future major kingdoms, as well as the future messianic kingdom. This revelation demonstrates God's supremacy over Nebuchadnezzar and the kingdoms of this world, it showed the Babylonian magicians and enchanters to be powerless before God, and it also brought

<sup>598</sup> See Walton, Matthews, and Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary*, p. 730.

Nebuchadnezzar to acknowledge that YHWH is the “God of gods and the Lord of kings” (2:47) and raise Daniel to a very high position of “ruler over the entire province of Babylon” in the royal court (2:48-49).



Nebuchadnezzar’s dream could not be interpreted by his astrologers and magicians. After Daniel heard of the death-sentence to all the wise men of Babylon for their inefficiency, he himself went to the king to press for more time and ask for an opportunity to interpret the dream (2:16). We see Daniel acting in great faith to take the personal initiative to interpret the dream. This would have created great personal risk at a number of levels, but his confidence in God is seen in urging his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah to “plead for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery” (2:17-18).

Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in Dan 2 introduces one of the most difficult questions in all of biblical prophecy: *is there a time gap period* illustrated by the image of the rock cut out which smashed the feet of the statue? Does it refer to the first coming of Christ or to the second? If it refers to the second coming of Christ, then there must either be a gap in the time span of the fourth kingdom (Roman), or the assumption that the Roman era continues into the present. Many (e.g., E.J. Young) see the rock as the first coming of Christ and gospel going forth.<sup>599</sup>

An other important aspect of this rock is found in Dan 2:35 ~

“the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth.”

Does this convey the spread of the gospel (amil), the Christianization of the world (postmil), or the second coming of Christ (premil, some amil?). The latter view requires a time gap (with two phases?). This question of a time gap will arise in the subsequent visions and dreams of Dan 7, 8, and 11. An underlying question here is, does prophecy move from one time period to another without explicit reference in the text (unmentioned intervals)? Are there unspecified gaps in prophecies that are only evident *after the fact*? (Telescoping?) For example, there is even a time gap in this prophecy concerning Nebuchadnezzar in Dan 2:38d-39a:

“After you another kingdom will rise.”

In the twenty three years subsequent to Nebuchadnezzar’s death there were some four kings reigning in Babylon before the Persian conquest. There are also one hundred and thirty years between the prediction of a fourth Persian rule (Xerxes I, 486-465) and the prediction of Alexander the Great (336-323), though in Dan 11:2-3 Alexander appears to come immediately after Xerxes.<sup>600</sup>

➤ See further discussions on the time intervals in Dan 7, 8, 11 (p. 487f.)

*Unfaithfulness, faithfulness, and blessing: false gods refused and fiery furnaces: Dan 3:1-4:3*

Nebuchadnezzar commanded that all the people of Babylon must worship a ninety foot golden image (3:1-4). It is not certain what this image represented, some suggest an image of the king or an idol. It was certainly something the people were commanded to *worship* [בָּנִי, 3:6, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15], not simply bow down to as one would a king (3:5-6). Perhaps the image was of the king, as Babylonians often gave honors to their kings as they would to their gods, although keeping some distance (inequality) between the kings and their gods. Nevertheless, Nebuchadnezzar himself calls the men in to ask them why they “do not serve my gods” (3:14), so it seems unlikely that this statue was of the king himself, for it is doubtful that he would call himself his own god (לְאֱלֹהֵי) and image (וְצַלְמִי).

Similarly to martyrs throughout the entire history of redemption, the three friends of Daniel affirm their confident faith in God, while refusing to deny their faith at any point. This uncompromising stand is comparable to NT Christians who probably would have been allowed to be syncretistic worshippers of Jesus and the state’s gods, but refused. Exclusive monotheism fairs poorly in polytheistic totalitarian times (much as our own)! All subsequent generations to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego getting thrown into the fire, would know of their remarkable statement that God was *able to save* them, but even if he did not they would still not worship false gods:

Dan 3:17-18 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. 18 But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.

This example of godly faith does not presume upon God, but correctly identifies the complex dynamic of trusting God in a fallen world: God is not weak as many presume, for he is able to what he chooses. Yet, this does not mean that the righteous will never suffer martyrdom or deprivations. We know from scripture that the “general rule” is that God *does* provide for, preserve, and enable perseverance for his people. Yet, there is never any hint that the righteous never suffer, as our modern prosperity gospel proclaims.

<sup>599</sup> Young, *Daniel*, p. 40.

<sup>600</sup> See MacRae on intervals, *Daniel*, pp.47-50.

The furnace they were thrown into would have been at some 900-1,100 degrees C. Their supernatural deliverance brought the great king Nebuchadnezzar to acknowledge God as supreme (3:29) and promoted the three men to higher positions. After (presumably<sup>601</sup>) this incident of the furnace, Nebuchadnezzar confessed orthodox theology (from a syncretistic faith[see 4:8-9]) to all the peoples under him. Nebuchadnezzar's acknowledgment of God included calling him:

- ⇒ Most High God (3:26).
- ⇒ One worthy of praise (3:28:a).
- ⇒ One who sent his angel to save Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (3:28b).
- ⇒ God whose servants trusted, willing to die for him, defying the king, (3:28c).
- ⇒ Only God who can save in this way (3:29b).
- ◆ Therefore, no one was to say anything against this God (3:29a).
- ⇒ Most High God who performed great miracles and signs for Nebuchadnezzar (4:2-3).
- ⇒ Nebuchadnezzar's witnessing these miracles was the *reason* he was proclaiming this affirmation of God (4:2a).
- ⇒ God's kingdom is eternal (4:3b).
- ⇒ God's dominion is eternal (4:3c).

*Faithfulness and blessing: divine dream and revelation of tree: Dan 4:4-27*

When all of the magicians, enchanters, and astrologers again could not interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream, once again Daniel came before him to interpret the dream. In the process, Nebuchadnezzar claims that Daniel had the "spirit of the holy gods" (4:9) and thus could interpret his dream of a large tree that was cut down. Precisely what he meant in claiming Daniel's gift is uncertain, but undoubtedly Daniel's earlier inspiration led the polytheistic king to greatly uphold Daniel's abilities as somehow supernatural. Daniel was greatly afraid

of the dream, for he knew that the dream applied to Nebuchadnezzar's temporary downfall (insanity). The stated goal was that the king would acknowledge the sovereign rule of heaven (4:26). Nebuchadnezzar himself relays the message of the angel in his dream, and the purpose of the prediction of Nebuchadnezzar's insanity communicated by the dream: "so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of men" (4:17).



*The dream prediction is fulfilled: Nebuchadnezzar's insanity ~ Dan 4:28-37*

In fulfillment, Nebuchadnezzar does not experience the fulfillment of this prophetic prediction for one year, after which he boasted:

Dan 4:30 he said, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?"

This response from the Lord to a pagan king's boast indicates that he holds the nations accountable for the same kind of *prideful boasting* he prohibited his people from engaging in:

Deut 18:15-20 He led you through the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. <sup>16</sup> He gave you manna to eat in the desert, something your fathers had never known, to humble and to test you so that in the end it might go well with you. <sup>17</sup> You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." <sup>18</sup> But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today. <sup>19</sup> If you ever forget the LORD your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed. <sup>20</sup> Like the nations the LORD destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the LORD your God.

Nebuchadnezzar loses his sanity and regains it. When he "looks up to heaven" he regains his sanity. He then again offers an orthodox confession of faith (compare with his first "confession" in Dan 3:28-4:3):

- ⇒ The Most High restored him (4:34a).
- ⇒ The Most High is worthy of praise, honor, and glory (4:34b).
- ⇒ The Most High has eternal dominion (4:34c).
- ⇒ The Most high is supreme over all the nations (4:35a).
- ⇒ The Most High is sovereign over all heavenly and earthly powers (4:35b).
- ⇒ The Most High is restrained by no-one, and accountable to no-one (5:35c).
- ⇒ The King of heaven does what is right in all things (4:37b).
- ⇒ The King of heaven is just in all his ways (4:37c).
- ⇒ The King of heaven will humble the proud (4:37d).

<sup>601</sup> There probably should be no chapter break between 3:40 and 4:1.

*Unfaithfulness and judgment: toasting the gods, divine handwriting on the wall, and the interpretation of judgment ~ Dan 5:1-30*

Belshazzar (553-539) (son of Nabonidus, *presumed* son of Nebuchadnezzar) is now reigning in Babylon, and makes foolish use of the articles of the Jerusalem sanctuary to revel in drinking praises gods of gold, silver, iron, wood, and stone” (5:4). The very articles made by human hands at the command of God are used as vessels for worshipping idols! It is likely that Belshazzar was aware of the recent Persian incursions (Opis had fallen that week, October, 539), and the approaching Persian army. We do not know if it was an overconfident celebration or one last final party before the fall(?). Praising their gods may have been their desperate (or overconfident) hope that they would be saved from destruction. In the midst of his revelry, Belshazzar saw a hand-writing on the plaster of the wall (some of the walls in this palace have been found covered with blue enameled brick and some with plaster<sup>602</sup>).



Once again, not until all the enchanters, wise men, astrologers, and diviners failed to interpret the handwriting was Daniel called in at the suggestion of the queen who remembered Daniel from the period of King Nebuchadnezzar (5:10-12). He is again said to have “the spirit of the gods” in him (5:14). Daniel refused payment for his interpretive services (5:17), and interpreted the dream. He made a stark contrast between Belshazzar and his father Nebuchadnezzar in the revelation and interpretation: the latter was humbled through the hand of God, while his son Belshazzar had “set himself up against the Lord of heaven” (5:18-23). God shows his complete and sovereign supremacy over the kingdoms of the world when Belshazzar dies that very night at the word of the Lord through Daniel.

*Unfaithfulness, faithfulness, and blessing: lions and angels ~ Dan 6*

Darius the Mede is now reigning (see fn. 587): do not confuse with the Darius the Great, son of Xerxes (Dan 9:1).

False men and enemies of upright Daniel plot against him, yet Daniel is protected by the supernatural intervention of God. Daniel was so distinguished in his work, honesty, uprightness, trustworthiness that jealous men plotted against him. They recognized that it would take something involving his very deep faith that they must use to trap him. Nevertheless, Daniel proved faithful to God, and continued praying to God against the worship edict they had Darius the Mede foolishly issue (6:6-9). Darius found he had been trapped into throwing Daniel to the lions, but prays that Daniel’s God would rescue him (6:16). Darius then asks upon opening the seal to the den of lions whether the “living God” had rescued Daniel (6:20). Daniel’s *trust* in God as central to his rescue (7:23). Daniel’s false accusers were thrown to the lions (7:24), and Darius the Mede (see fn. 587) issued *for all* an orthodox confession of faith:

- All must fear and reverence the God of Daniel:
- ⇒ God is the eternal and living God (6:26b).
- ⇒ God’s kingdom is everlasting (6:26b).
- ⇒ God rescues and saves (6:27a).
- ⇒ God performs signs and wonders in heaven and earth (6:27b).
- ⇒ God rescued Daniel from the lions (6:27c).



All of these sermonic narratives of faithfulness (contrasted with unfaithfulness of unbelievers) of God’s people in Babylon demonstrate the supremacy of God even over the Babylonians. This links the entire narrative with the pre-exilic prophets who proclaimed the supremacy of God who had control of the foreign armies and nations, raising up and bringing down, which he would even use to punish his rebellious people. Now in exile, this lesson of God’s supremacy over Babylon would have been especially poignant. God who had brought about their captivity even had control over the very lives of the kings of Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius the Mede), including their acknowledgment of Himself. This suggest that the book of Daniel was given for the subsequent encouragement of the nation and all believers, that God is indeed the living God in all places, times, and circumstances.

The transition section between the Aramaic and Hebrew section concluding the book contains a link with the revelation of the statue in Dan 2: the parts of the statue correspond with the visions of animals in both Dan 7 and Dan 8. Thus a proper division in our outline could be made here between Dan 6 and Dan 7, but for the sake of following the Hebrew/Aramaic/Hebrew structure of the material, I am making a transitional break at this point. As noted, this is not a chronological narrative, for Dan 7-8 is about the reign of Belshazzar which comes before Dan 6 and the reign of Darius the Mede. There is also the progressive revelation in the period itself of this tripartite vision

<sup>602</sup> Walton, Matthews, and Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary*, p.738.

of the future kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome as represented in the particulars of the dreams and visions of both Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel.

Note: It is interesting that a significant revelation of future realities was revealed doubly, initially through a pagan Babylonian king and secondly through the prophet of YHWH.

*Daniel's divine dream and revelation of four beasts: Dan 7*

As noted previously, this dream links with Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a statue in Dan 2. The images of both dreams were revelations of the future kingdoms of the ancient world. Whereas the first four parts (Neo-Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome) of Nebuchadnezzar's statue correspond with Daniel's four beasts, the next dream of Daniel's Ram and Goat narrows the focus with more details to the Medo-Persian and Greek periods (see 2:39, 48, 8:20-21).

In this initial complementary revelation to Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Daniel is given a further element in his vision of the demise of Satan/antichrist (7:8). But, more importantly, he is given a profoundly beautiful vision of the throne of God in heaven (7:9-10) and the coming Messiah (second coming?). (7:13). The latter is made more explicit in the interpretation of his dream which describes an everlasting period of heavenly reign after the Messiah comes (7:27). This points to the eternal kingdom. This raises the question already asked regarding the gap in Dan 2 (p. 483), and then later in Dan 11 (p. 494). Some claim there is no time gap here, but rather see a *second phase of the fourth kingdom* (E.J. Young). That is, the climax of the phase occurs in the second advent of Christ.

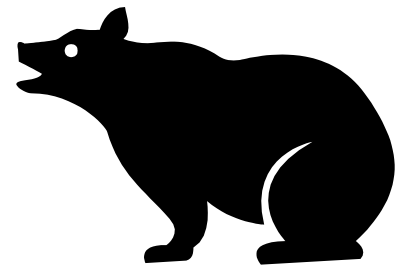


*Diverse interpretations:*

1. Some see the climax in *Antiochus Epiphanes* (critical viewpoint)
2. Others see the climax in the *first advent* of Christ (orthodox, some amil).
3. Others see the climax in the *second advent* (some amil and premil):

Two viewpoints on fourth beast:

1. three phases or periods of history are depicted:
  - i. the beast is the Roman empire.
  - ii. the ten horns are ten nations that arise out of Rome.
  - iii. the little horn is a nation from which arises antichrist.
2. two phases of history with a time gap somewhere between phases i. and ii.: i.e., beast – GAP – ten horns (ten toes in Dan 2) (nations *reviving* Roman empire when antichrist arises before millennium).



As noted on Dan 2, an underlying question is, does prophecy move from one time period to another without explicit reference in the text? That is, is there an unstated gap or phases in the last period prophesied in Dan 2, 7, 8, and 11? This will be addressed below, as well.

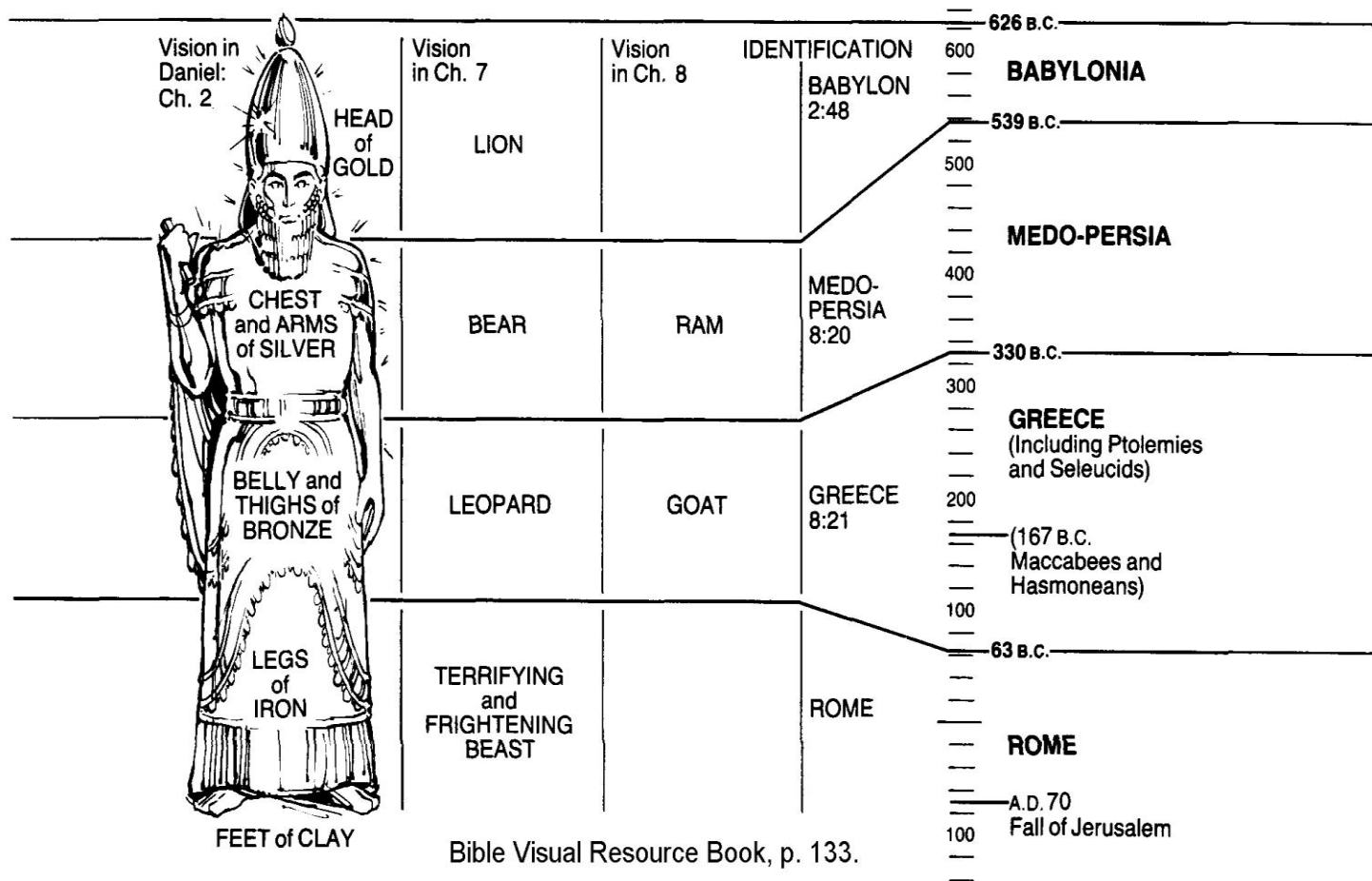
***c) Prophecies concerning the nations and Israel (Hebrew): Dan 8-12***

*The revelations of the future combined: Dan 2, 7, and 8*

In these following chapters the themes developed in Dan 2 and 7 will be particularly discussed furthered in the concluding visions and dreams of Dan 8-12.

# Identification of the Four Kingdoms

Chronology of Major Empires in Daniel



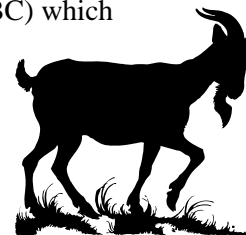
Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a statue and Daniel's visions.<sup>603</sup>

### A Ram and a Goat: Dan 8

Daniel's next vision occurs in Shushan (capital of the province of Elam<sup>604</sup>) within Belshazzar's kingdom. Shushan later became the capital of Medo-Persia and was a renowned city up until the Middle Ages. Today Shushan is known as Susa.

Darius the Great said, "By the grace of Ahura Mazda, I constructed a magnificent palace in Susa" in 521 BC (the Apadana Palace, his administrative capital at Susa). The palace was built on a foundation platform (820 x 490ft) and had main court (116 x 118ft). The entire structure had a wall with towers, as well as a moat to protect it. There is a cone shaped shrine to Daniel which is said to contain the Prophet's remains.<sup>605</sup>

Daniel's vision included a powerful **ram** with two long horns (Medo-Persia[Cyrus the Great & Darius the Great], 539-486) and a more powerful **goat** with one horn (Alexander the Great, 331-323 BC) which came from the west and attacked the ram and shattered its two horns. This great horn broke off at the height of its power, but four horns (Macedon/Greece[Cassander], Thrace/Asia-Minor[Lysimachus], Syria[Seleucus], Palestine/Egypt[Ptolemies]) grew out in its place. Out of one of these four horns grew one into great power (Antiochus IV Epiphanes "manifestation of God," 175-163 BC) who considered himself a manifestation of Zeus and sought the worship of all his subjects. (Some consider this last great horn to be the Antichrist of the end-times, yet this horn comes out of the division of Alexander's empire.) Antiochus



<sup>603</sup> Bible Visual Resource Book, p. 133.

<sup>604</sup> Elam was one of Shem's sons (Gen 10:22). Elam is located east of the Tigris River, including the Khuzistan plain and the Zagros mountains.

<sup>605</sup> See reference background to Susa in ANE section on Persia/Persians, p. .



defiled the Jerusalem temple and sought to destroy the Jewish faith (168-164 BC). More detail is given concerning Antiochus in Daniel 11.

**Antiochus IV** (Antiochus Epiphanes), d. 163 B.C., king of Syria (175 B.C.–163 B.C.), son of Antiochus III and successor of his brother Seleucus IV. His nephew (later Demetrius I) was held as a hostage in Rome, although still claiming the throne. Antiochus is best known for his attempt to Hellenize Judaea and extirpate Judaism—a policy that instigated the rebellion of the Maccabees under Mattathias and his heroic sons. Antiochus invaded Egypt (171 to 168), which was torn by strife between Ptolemy VI and his brother (later Ptolemy VII), and would probably have conquered that region if the Romans had not intervened in his siege of Alexandria (168). Antiochus was briefly succeeded by his son, Antiochus V, a boy king who was overthrown by Demetrius I.

Coin image of Antiochus.



Central to debates about the timing of this vision in Dan 8:17

As he came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate. “Son of man,” he said to me, “understand that the vision concerns the time of the end.” (רָא-תֵּתֵּן)

This also corresponds to Daniel 8:19

He said: “I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns the appointed time of the end” (לְמוֹעֵד אֵל).)

That is, does it mean the entire vision relates to the end of ages?

See Walvoord’s summary of viewpoints:<sup>606</sup>

1. *Historical view*: all of Dan 8 has been fulfilled ~ amillennialists.
2. *Futuristic view*: all of Dan 8 is entirely future ~ minority view.
3. *Dual fulfillment view*: Dan 8 is a prophetic reference to Antiochus Epiphanes, now fulfilled, and to the end of the age (final ruler of world who persecuted Israel before Christ returns) ~ some dispensationalists (Scofield Bible) and many premillennialists.
4. *Prophecy historically fulfilled with typological import of the end-times view*: Dan 8 was historically fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes, but typologically foreshadows a final Gentile world ruler. A variation on the dual fulfillment view ~ many premillennialists.

On the latter view (#4), I am not clear what principle guides the shifts from literal fulfillment to figurative/typological within the same context. Walvoord favors this latter (#4) view, but his primary rationale is rooted in the difficult expressions concerning the “time of the end.”

“ . . . the use of other terms such as *the end* in verses 17 and 19, and *the last end of the indignation* in verse 19 are difficult to harmonize with Antiochus Epiphanes.”<sup>607</sup>

Yet, I would ask why he must find *typological*/figurative end-times features dependent upon what he is assuming must be *literal* expressions of the very end-times period? That is, it seems questionable to this reader that such a move is necessary. The “end” occurs in other contexts without just referring to the outer end-times period:

Dan 11:27 The two kings, with their hearts bent on evil, will sit at the same table and lie to each other, but to no avail, because an end will still come at the appointed time. [not eschatological end-times]

Dan 11:35 Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time. [the context of Antiochus Epiphanes]

Dan 12:4 But you, Daniel, close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge.” [possibly refers to end-times]

See also more of the “end” in Daniel:

Dan 1:15 for ten Days. 15 At the **end** of the ten Days they looked

Dan 1:18 of all kinds. 18 At the **end** of the time set by the king

Dan 2:44 kingdoms and bring them to an **end**, but it will itself **endure**

Dan 4:34 laws of a bird. 34 At the **end** of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar

Dan 5:26 reign and brought it to an **end**.

Dan 6:26 his dominion will never **end**. 27 He rescues and he saves

Dan 7:28 “This is the **end** of the matter. I, Daniel, was

Dan 9:24 transgression, to put an **end** to sin, to atone for wickedness

<sup>606</sup> Walvoord, *Daniel*, p. 192f.

<sup>607</sup> Walvoord, *Daniel*, p. 198.

Dan 9:26 city and the sanctuary. The **end** will come like a flood: War  
 Dan 9:26 War will continue until the **end**, and desolations have been de  
 Dan 9:27 he 'seven' he will put an **end** to sacrifice and offering.  
 Dan 9:27 causes desolation, until the **end** that is decreed is poured out  
 Dan 11:18 but a commander will put an **end** to his insolence and will  
 Dan 11:40 At the time of the **end** the king of the South will  
 Dan 11:45 Yet he will come to his **end**, and no one will help him.  
 Dan 12:9 sealed until the time of the **end**. 10 Many will be purified,  
 Dan 12:12 who waits for and reaches the **end** of the 1,335 Danys.  
 Dan 12:13 You will rest, and then at the **end** of the Days you will rise

Note: the "2,300 evenings and mornings": 2,300 morning/evening sacrifices = 3½ years and 55 days (171-164 BC), the period of Antiochus Euphianes' eventual death. The general period of the desecration of the temple (167) until its purification. This interpretation is of course disputed.



Daniel's vision of beasts. Woodcut from the *Zurich Bible*.<sup>608</sup>

*Daniel's prayer, vision of Gabriel, and revelation of the seventy 'sevens':*  
 Dan 9

Darius the Great (son of Xerxes) is now reigning in Babylon (do not confuse with Darius the Mede).

- See ANE background of Persia/Persians and chart of Persian kings. Darius the Great represents the peak of the Persian empire.
- See Keil & Delitzsch discussion of seventy sevens in *Daniel*, pp. 336-402.

Daniel prays after learning *from scripture* (Jer 25:11-12) that Jerusalem

would be desolate for seventy years:

Jer 25:11-12 This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 "But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt," declares the LORD, "and will make it desolate forever.

See also:

2 Chron 36:21 The land enjoyed its sabbath rests; all the time of its desolation it rested, until the seventy years were completed in fulfillment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah.

Daniel's motive for praying becomes evident only towards the end of the prayer when he begins to plead for mercy and forgiveness from God (9:17-19). He again expresses a thoroughgoing orthodox theology of God in his prayer:

- ⇒ God is great and awesome (9:4a).
- ⇒ God keeps his covenant of love with all who love and obey him (9:4b).
- ⇒ YHWH is righteous (9:7a).
- ⇒ YHWH had scattered them because of their unfaithfulness (9:7b).
- ⇒ God is their Lord (9:9a).
- ⇒ God is merciful and forgiving (9:9b).
- ⇒ God gave his law through his servants the prophets (9:10).
- ⇒ YHWH fulfilled the covenant curses of the Mosaic law (9:11-14a).
- ⇒ YHWH is righteous in all that he does (even in judgment) (9:14b).
- ⇒ YHWH delivered them from Egypt (9:15).
- ⇒ YHWH hears his prayer for mercy (9:16, 17-19).
- ⇒ YHWH's righteousness is also expressed in his mercy (9:16a).
- ⇒ YHWH does not relent from judgment because of human righteousness, but because he is merciful (9:18b).

God answers (in part) Daniel's prayer with another vision of the seventy 'sevens'. Sevens feature very prominently in the Bible (also seventy years in judgment-exile; consider role of Sabbath-breaking), but also in ANE literature (full measure of time). The number seven particularly corresponds with the sabbatical year cycles:

Lev 26:34-35 Then the land will enjoy its sabbath years all the time that it lies desolate and you are in the country of your enemies; then the land will rest and enjoy its sabbaths. 35 All the time that it lies desolate, the land will have the rest it did not have during the sabbaths you lived in it.

Thus, seventy such cycles would equal ten Jubilee cycles, after which slaves were set free and land was returned to its proper owners. The first Jubilee cycle is represented by the seventy sevens (9:25), and the last sabbatical cycle is

<sup>608</sup> From Emory university at <http://www.pitts.emory.edu/dia/booklist5.cfm?ID=131>.

represented by the seventieth week.<sup>609</sup> In relation to the covenant land-promise and the exilic covenant land-curse and foreign bondage, the idea of a Jubilee cycle would have held great theological meaning for the exiles: they had lost their land and were in bondage. The total years represented by the seventy sevens of Daniel would be 490 years. This is perhaps the most complicated debate in OT prophecy for interpreters, and we can not resolve it here. I will attempt to summarize it in a simple fashion, thus risking misunderstanding and misrepresentation.

Note:<sup>610</sup> Seven is often said to represent completeness and totality. This corresponds to the God-designed week of creation, which would make it the perfect cycle of time. Thus, in terms of creation theology, the Sabbath is central to the cycles of time. “If seven represents completeness, seventy-seven represents unrestricted and unsurpassable fullness.”<sup>611</sup> Seventy is used in many contexts in many ways in the OT, and may represent a “schematic precision as a tenfold multiple of seven.”<sup>612</sup> The seventy sevens of Daniel corresponds with the seventy years of exile and judgment predicted in Jer 25:11-12, while pointing further forward to the messianic fulfillment.

“On this all interpreters are agreed, that the seventy weeks which are determined upon the people and the city are in vers. 25-27 divided into three periods, and are closely defined according to their duration and their contents.”<sup>613</sup>

*Traditional Messianic viewpoint* – Sixty nine sevens are between the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the coming of the Messiah. The all-sufficient sacrificial death of the Messiah concludes the seventieth seven, after which Jerusalem is destroyed. The majority view of the church fathers considered Daniel’s prophecy to outline the first advent of the Messiah, the death of the Messiah, and the Roman desolation of Jerusalem.

*Critical viewpoint* – the prophecy of Dan 9 was strictly about the time period of Antiochus Epiphanes.

*Typological Messianic viewpoint* – Dan 9:25 denotes two eras through seven sevens and sixty two sevens. The period of the seven sevens is between the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the first coming of the Messiah. The church age follows for a long time, after which Satan is loosed during a period of rebellion and persecution wherein Antichrist will suppress the worship of the church. But his end is sure.

### **The “gap” in Daniel 7**

#### ***Amillennialists: no gap view***

4. First seven “sevens” relates to the return of the remnant from Babylonian exile.
5. Sixty-two “sevens” relates to the period until the crucifixion of Messiah.
6. Last “seven” relates to the death of Messiah and the desecration of the temple (Romans)<sup>614</sup> (no gap between the 69<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> sevens).

(below) An example of the amil approach with slight variation in the last seven:

<sup>609</sup> Walton, Matthews, and Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary*, p. 744.

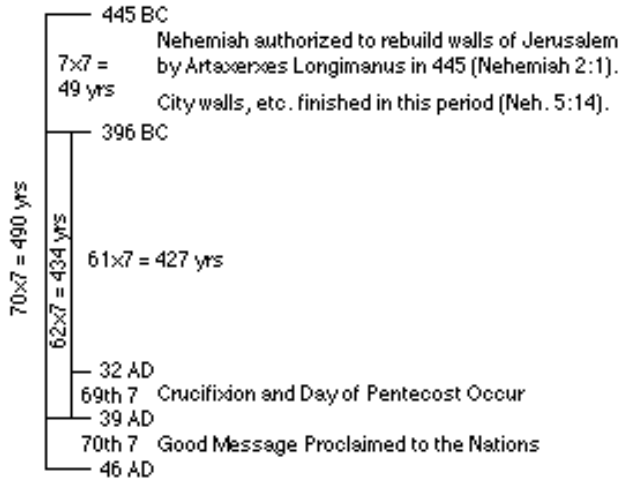
<sup>610</sup> See the *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, pp. 774-776. See also Meredith G. Kline, “The Covenant of the Seventieth Week.”

<sup>611</sup> *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, pp. 775.

<sup>612</sup> *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, pp. 775.

<sup>613</sup> Keil & Delitzsch, *Daniel*, p. 337.

<sup>614</sup> VanGemeren, *Prophetic Word*, p. 349.



See Robertson’s summary in *Christ of the Prophets*, pp. 339f.

- Seven years prior to 536 BC, 605 BC, marks the beginning of seventy years of exile
- Seven sevens
- Sixty two sevens
- One seven

The 490 years of the seventy sevens begins in 445 BC with the return from exile under Nehemiah.

**Premillennialists: gap view**

1. “Seven” equals one week, and if each day stands for one year, there are 490 years.
2. Sixty nine of the seven “days” are after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem in 445 BC until AD 29.<sup>615</sup> The Anointed One will be “cut off” at the end of these sixty nine sevens.
3. The seventieth “seven” will not occur until the very end, after the parenthetical church age, during the final tribulation and after the rapture of believers (preceding the millennium).<sup>616</sup>

**Postmillennialists:**

1. Preterist postmils place the seventieth week in the 40 year period between the resurrection (33 AD) and the destruction of Jerusalem (73 AD).
2. Traditionally postmils have viewed the present period as the millennium, similarly to the amils. Their emphasis is on the unilateral application of biblical law and the Christianization of the world which must precede Christ’s return. I have not found any comments directed to what they make of Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> “7”.

**Abomination of desolation (אָבּוֹמִינַת דְּשׁוֹלָה): 9:27; 11:31; 12:11**

- See p. 477.
  - Antiochus Epiphanes set up an altar to the god Zeus Olympius in 168 BC.
  - Jesus predicted an abomination would be set up in the temple (Mt 24:15; Lk 21:20).
  - Many claim the Roman destruction of the temple was part of this desecration (70 AD). See 2 Thes 2:4; Rev 13:14-15.

<sup>615</sup> Considerable disagreement about the beginning dating for the 490 years persists: Jeremiah’s prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem (Jer 31:38; 32:15, 37, 44), Cyrus’ decree (538), Darius I’s decree (520), Artaxerxes’ decrees (457 or 444). Unfortunately, one’s end-times eschatology often tends to affect the starting point more than anything else.

<sup>616</sup> Other important features common to premils are: 1) Abomination of desolation is the sign of the Great Tribulation. 2) Links Olivet Discourse with Daniel’s 3) The “anointed ruler” (Cyrus king of Persia) issued decree in 538 and the beginning of the 62 sevens is 408 B.C. 4) Daniel’s seventieth seven: “Coming Prince” will make covenant with Israel for seven years. Israel will sacrifice again. The “prince” will stop the Jewish sacrifices. The “prince will set up the abomination of desolation in temple. There will be war and desolations in 2nd half of seventieth seven. The prince and idol will be destroyed at end of seventieth seven. Paul’s “Man of Lawlessness” (II Thessalonians 2:1-11) may be the “prince” of Daniel.

**TABLE 9**  
Interpretations of Daniel 9:24-27<sup>60</sup>

Subject	Liberal (Montgomery)	Traditional (Pusey)	Dispensational (Seiss)	Symbolical (Loupold)
9:24: Thy people	Israel past, p. 393	Israel and church past, p. 185	Israel past and future, p. 240	Israel and church past and future, p. 411
Weeks = periods of	7 years, 373	7 years, 186	7 X 360 days, Gaebelein, 140	Perfecting, 409
Make an end of sins and bring in righteousness	Maccabean utopian dreams, 375	Atonement on Calvary, 194	All promises to Israel fulfilled, 242	The new heaven and earth, 411
Anoint the most holy	Altar cleansed in 165 B.C., 375	Christ anointed by Holy Spirit, 196	Consecration of millennial Jews, 241	Consummation of God with man (Rev 21:3), 416
9:25: Command to rebuild Jerusalem	Jeremiah's word at Jerusalem's fall, 586 B.C., 392	Artaxerxes I's decree to Ezra, 458 B.C., 189	Artaxerxes I to Nehemiah, 444 B.C., 246	Cyrus' decree of return, 538 B.C., 418
End of 7 weeks	The return in 437 B.C., 379	Through the reforms of Nehemiah, 409 B.C., 191	Jerusalem's restoration, 396 B.C. (?), Gaebelein, 136	Christ's incarnation, 421
7 and 62 joined?	No, 392	Yes, 189	Yes, 242	No, 417
Anointed one	Jeshua, 379	Christ, anointed at baptism, 189	Christ, at His triumphal entry, 243	Christ, birth, 422
End of 62 weeks (total of 69)	171 B.C., 394	A.D., 26, 189	A.D. 30, 247	End of expansion of church, 424
9:26: "After" 62	Immediately after, 394	Later, midway in next 7 years, 201	Later, by 5 days, 248	Immediately after, 427
Messiah cut off	Onias III murdered, 381	Christ crucified, 198	Christ crucified, 249	Church progress ends, 427
Nothing for Him	Has no guilt, 381	Rejected by Jews, 197	Rejected by Jews, 250	Has no influence, 427
Prince that shall come	Antiochus IV in 168 B.C., 383	Christ (see No. 35, below), or Titus in A.D. 70, 200	Titus in A.D. 70, 251	Antichrist in the future, 428

**TABLE 9 (Continued)**

Subject	Liberal (Montgomery)	Traditional (Pusey)	Dispensational (Seiss)	Symbolical (Loupold)
Unto the end thereof shall be war	To His death in 164 B.C., 384	To its (Jerusalem's) fall in A.D. 70, 201	To its (Israel's) restoration 7 years before Christ's appearing, 250	To his death at Christ's appearing, 429
9:27: "And"; subsequent event?	No, v. 27 elaborates v. 26, 384	No, v. 27 elaborates v. 26, 192	Yes, different matters, 251	No, v. 27 elaborates v. 26, 431
Firm covenant	Antiochus allied with Hellenizers, 385	Christ's new testament with the saved, 193	Antichrist allied with re-gathered infidel Jews, 252	Antichrist enslaves the masses, 432
Beginning of 70th week	Follows 69th, 386	Follows 69th, 192	Parenthesis between 69 and 70, 251	Follows 69th, 428
In midst of week	For 3 1/2 years, 168-165 B.C., 386	After 3 1/2 years, in A.D. 30, 192	After 3 1/2 years, in middle of tribulation; and for its latter 1/2, 252	After 1/2 his period, 432; and for the latter 1/2, 433
Sacrifice cease	Altar polluted, 386	OT system ended, 192	Altar polluted, 253	No church worship, 433
End of 70th week	Maccabean victory, 386	Stephen stoned, Jews reject new testament, Paul called, A.D. 33, 193	God's judgment, 251	God's judgment, 436
Upon the wing of abominations, a desolator	On a peak of the temple, Greek idolatry, 388	Against the temple with its Jewish sins, Titus; 199	On a peak of the temple, an idol, 253	By means of idolatry, Antichrist, 433
Until an end shall pour forth on a desolate (-tor)	Until Antiochus' death, 389	Until the end of desolate Jerusalem, 200	To the "consummation" and Antichrist's death, 255	Until his death, 436

60. Cf. J. B. Payne, *Theology of the Older Testament*, pp. 520-522. The page numbers in each column refer respectively to: Liberal, J. A. Montgomery, *ICC Daniel*; Traditional, E. B. Pusey, *Daniel the Prophet*; Dispensational, J. A. Seiss, *Voices from Babylon*, with supplementation from A. C. Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel*; and Symbolical, H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*.

J.B. Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp 384-385.

(above) Diverse interpretations of Daniel 9:24-27 by Payne<sup>617</sup>

*Daniel's vision of the chrysolite man: Dan 10*

Cyrus the Great (539-530), king of Persia, is now reigning over Babylon (third year = 536). The vision that Daniel had this time concerned a great (spiritual) war (10:1). Daniel identifies himself here as the recipient of the vision as well as the one who wrote the vision down (10:2) This vision of Daniel has very close similarities with that of John in Revelation 1:

Dan 10:4-6 On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, 5 I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist. 6 His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude.

Rev 1:12-16 I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man," dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. 14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. 15 His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. 16 In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.



Thus, Daniel's vision (along with John's) is often called a *Christophany*. We can not resolve the difficult question of the second Person of the Trinity in the OT, but we must be open to considering the place of the eternal triune Godhead in the OT. This does not mean we must (or can) clearly identify Christ in the OT. Some call this a vision of the "Anointed One." On the surface, it appears to be an angel of the Lord, often represented as the Lord himself. It is Daniel's longest and last vision.

*The "great war" (וְצָבָא גְדוֹלָה) (צָבָא, wage war):*

Daniel had been fasting for three weeks, but we do not know why, other than that he was deeply burdened with sorrow (10:2). It may be that the angel gives us the explanation:

<sup>617</sup> Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, pp. 364-365.

Dan 10:12 Then he continued, “Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them.

If this from the “first day” (10:12, מִן־הַיּוֹם הַרְאִשׁוֹן) refers to the beginning of Daniel’s fasting and mourning, then we can assume that Daniel had humbled himself before God, perhaps seeking a prophetic word or some consolation regarding Israel’s restoration. The angel also clarifies for us that it is in relation to Daniel’s humbling before God that there was a cosmic, spiritual battle (10:13). The angel “pulls back the veil of the unseen” in a dramatic depiction of the personal nature of the angelic hosts and conflicts. This relates to the question we have discussed regarding Satan’s power and present “reign” in the spiritual world. The enemy angel(s) of Persia (where Israel was suffering exile) was eventually overcome by the archangel Michael.

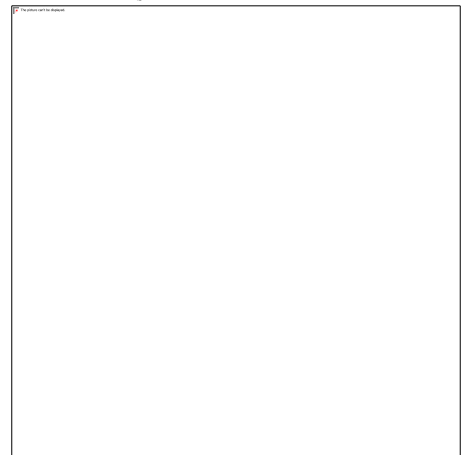
Dan 12:1 At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered.

The angel tells Daniel plainly why he had come to him: to tell him what is “written in the “Book of Truth” (10:21). This truth corresponds with the coming events previously represented by the dreams and visions. The battle the angel had engaged in (11:1) related in part to the Medo-Babylonian victory over the Babylonians. He narrows the focus to specifics of the coming reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, the antichrist(?), as well as the coming Messiah (Dan 12). Thus, this Christophanous angelic vision conveys the theme of future *material* wars and nations in light of the present, ongoing *spiritual* battle that will consummate in the resurrection of the dead (12:2).

(right) Alexander the Great.<sup>618</sup>



(left) Detail from the Alexander mosaic, from the House of the Faun, Pompeii, c. 80 B.C. National Archaeologic Museum, Naples, Italy.<sup>619</sup>



### Daniel’s vision of the kingdoms: Dan 11

Daniel’s vision concerns<sup>620</sup>:

1. Four Kings of Persia (11:2): Cambyses (530-522), Pseudo-Smerdis or Gaumata (522), Darius Hystaspes (522-486), and Xerxes (486-465).
2. Mighty king (11:3): Alexander the Great (336-323) (skipping 130 years from Xerxes) conquered Persia.
3. Four winds (11:4): the division of Alexander’s kingdom (323) into Macedon/Greece[Cassander], Thrace/Asia-Minor[Lysimachus], Syria[Seleucus], Palestine/Egypt[Ptolemies]]. [Out of the Seleucids one grew into great power (Antiochus IV Epiphanes “manifestation of God,” 175-163 BC)].<sup>621</sup>
4. King of the south (11:5): Ptolemy I Soter (305-285) conflicts with Seleucids led to the emergence of Seleucids as the prominent group.
5. Stronger commander (11:5): Seleucus I Nicator (312-280) was a general in the army in alliance with Ptolemy (316-312), and he gained control over Babylon.
6. Alliance between Seleucids and Ptolemies fractures (11:6) (246): the daughter who married the Seleucid king Antiochus II (261-246) to forge an alliance was Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy II from Egypt (285-

<sup>618</sup> From [www.probertencyclopaedia.com/j/Alexander%20The%20Great.jpg](http://www.probertencyclopaedia.com/j/Alexander%20The%20Great.jpg)

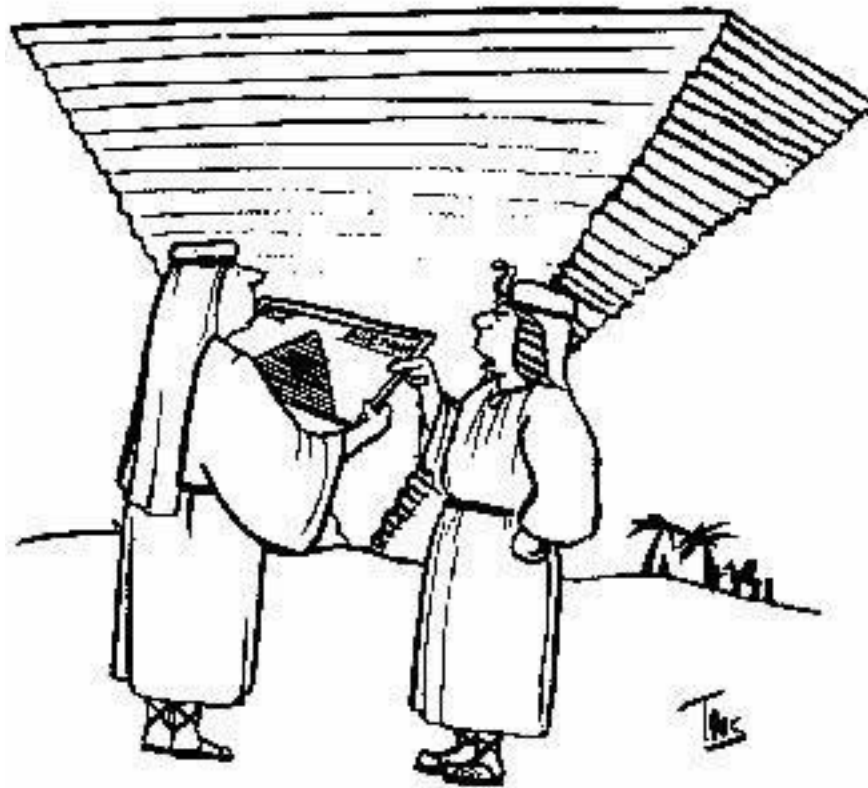
<sup>619</sup> From [faq.macedonia.org/images/alexander.mosaic.jpg](http://faq.macedonia.org/images/alexander.mosaic.jpg)

<sup>620</sup> This outline of historical figures and events is taken from Walton, Matthews, and Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary*, pp. 746-750.

<sup>621</sup> See Alexander and Daniel’s prophecy, p. 488. Daniel’s vision in chapter 8 included a ram with two long horns (Medo-Persia[Cyrus the Great & Darius the Great], 539-486) and a more powerful goat with one horn (Alexander the Great, 331-323 BC) which came from the west and attacked the ram and shattered its two horns. This great horn broke off at the height of its power, but four horns (Macedon/Greece[Cassander], Thrace/Asia-Minor[Lysimachus], Syria[Seleucus], Palestine/Egypt[Ptolemies]) grew out in its place. Out of one of these four horns grew one into great power (Antiochus IV Epiphanes “manifestation of God,” 175-163 BC).

- 246). Internal troubles, murder of Antiochus II and other betrayals led to fifty years for warfare between the two factions.
7. One from the family line who would attack the north (11:7-8): Ptolemy III (246-221) invaded Seleucia and took much plunder, but lost the gains when he returned to Egypt.
  8. King from the north who attacks the south but retreats (11:9): Seleucus II Callinicus (246-226) sought control of the south unsuccessfully.
  9. Sons who prepare for war (11:10, telescopes ten years): Seleucus (III) (226-223) Seleucus II engaged his brother Antiochus Hierax in a long struggle until both died, and after which Seleucus III was enthroned until he was killed and succeeded by Antiochus III, his brother. Antiochus III the Great (223-187) is the subject of the next nine verses of about thirty years. He eventually sends Ptolemaic rule over Israel, giving the Seleucids control.
  10. King from the south who fights the king of the north (11:11): Ptolemy IV (221-203) fought unsuccessfully against Antiochus III. The fourth Syrian war (212) (11:11-12) between Ptolemy IV and Antiochus III resulted in the restoration of Ptolemaic control of Palestine until the death of Ptolemy IV, after which Antiochus initiated the fifth Syrian war (202-200) (11:13) in alliance with Philip V of Macedon.
  11. King of the south *versus* the king of the north (11:14-16): the king of the north was Antiochus III who defeated the Egyptians after two battles (201-200), regaining Seleucid control of Palestine. Rome was beginning to gain control of Greece (Second Macedonian War).
  12. King of north makes alliance with king of south (11:17-19): Antiochus III married his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy V (196) in hopes to neutralize their threat. In his efforts (in tenuous alliance with Greece) to resist Roman advances he was eventually defeated in 190 at Magnesia.
  13. A tax collector (11:20): Seleucus IV (187-175), son of Antiochus III, sent Heliodorus, a chief official, to Jerusalem to get excessive tax funds. Heliodorus then had Seleucus IV assassinated (possibly with help from Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164)).
  14. A contemptible person seized the throne (11:21): **Antiochus IV Epiphanes** (175-164) was called "Epimanes" ("mad man") by the people. He usurped the throne from the rightful heir, Demetrius I, son of Seleucus IV. He had plans to Hellenize Palestine.
  15. Prince of the covenant destroyed (11:22-25): Either Onias III, the high priest who was murdered in 171 (2 Macc), or Ptolemy VI (181-146) from Egypt (181-146). The army in this verse describes the opposition to Antiochus IV. Antiochus IV was successful in his campaign against Egypt (169), eventually defeating Ptolemy VI through deceit and capturing Memphis.
  16. Advisors of the king (Ptolemy VI, 181-146) will seek to destroy him (11:26): Ptolemy's defeat in the First Egyptian War is said to have been due to the misleading advice of two advisors intent on undermining him.
  17. Two kings who lie to each other (11:27): Antiochus IV and Ptolemy VI engage in battle when the city of Alexandria revolt against Antiochus. The latter failed to take the city.
  18. King from the north will return and set his heart against the covenant (11:28): Antiochus IV Epiphanes returned from his Egyptian failure at Alexandria and plundered the temple treasury in Jerusalem, also killing many Jews (this possibly occurred after the Second Egyptian War, 11:29-30).
  19. King from the north will invade the south again (11:29-30): Antiochus IV Epiphanes returned to Egypt (Second Egyptian War, 168) and besieged Memphis and Alexandria again, but the Romans came to Egypt's help and compelled Antiochus IV to retreat in humiliation. He returned north (possibly venting his anger on the holy covenant, v. 28). Jason had rebelled against Menelaus, the high priest, prompting Antiochus IV to suppress the revolt in which many thousands of Jews were killed and the temple was looted. The details of these events are not entirely clear.
  20. One who desecrates the sanctuary (11:31): Antiochus IV sent Geron (Macc) to completely desecrate the sanctuary in Jerusalem. In 167 the Greek religion was set up to replace all Hebrew worship, the sacrifice and festivals ceased, and the sanctuary was consecrated to Zeus and Greek prostitutions. Antiochus associated Zeus with the popular Syrian god, Baal Shamen.
  21. Flatterer who corrupts (11:32): perhaps the pro-Hellenistic Jews who would have compromised the faith, especially Menelaus, the high priest who was corrupted by his links with Antiochus IV.
  22. Those who are wise who fall by the sword (11:33): the Hasmonean family who revolted against Antiochus IV, beginning with the priest Mattathias (166) who killed Antiochus' envoy. Judas Maccabeus led the revolt militarily which recaptured Jerusalem, after which they cleansed the temple (164).
  23. [This is where many place a long time-gap before Antichrist]  
King who exalts himself above all gods (11:36-38): if this is a description of the period of Antiochus IV, then it involves details of his abominations and desecrations.

24. The time of the end (וּבְעֵת קֵץ)(11:40-45): uncertain reference here, either to Antiochus' end (battle in Persia, 164), or some suggest the antichrist and his enemies at war. The expression "at the end of the time" probably refers to the end of the period previously described, *not the very end of time*. See also 12:1 – "at that time" (וּבְעֵת הַהִיא) which suggests a link with 11:40-45, but not necessarily.

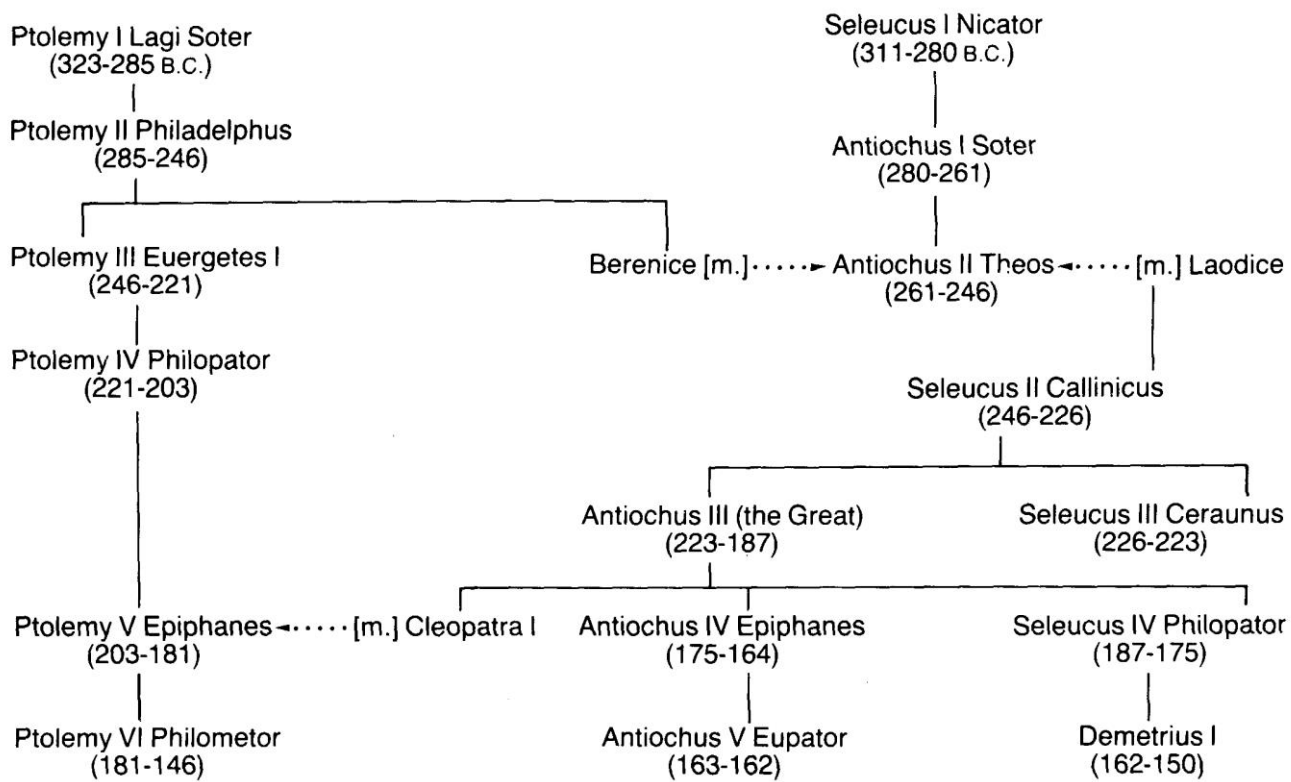


"You hold it this way."



Ptolemies and Seleucids tree.<sup>622</sup>

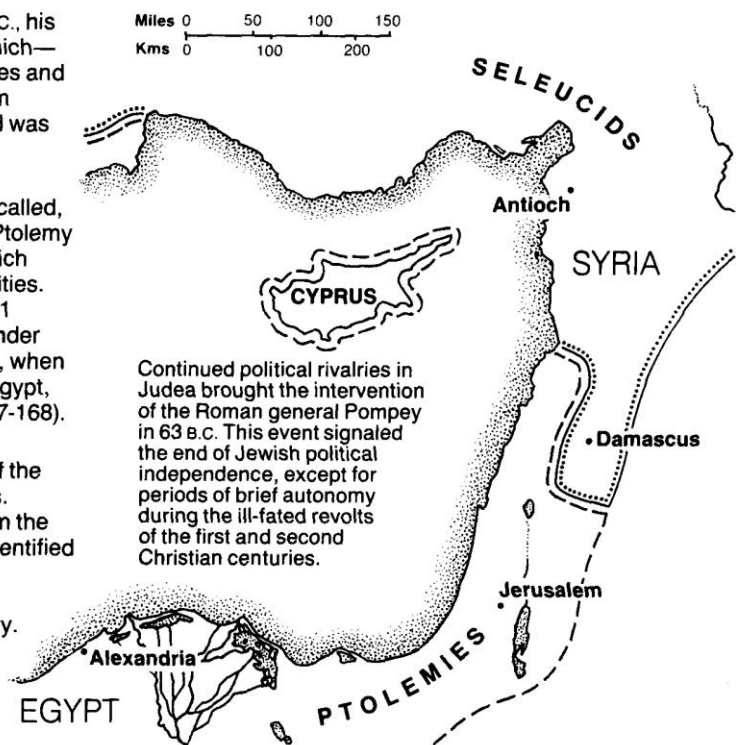
# Ptolemies and Seleucids



Soon after the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C., his generals divided his empire into four parts, two of which—Egypt and Syria—were under the rule of the Ptolemies and Seleucids respectively. Palestine was controlled from Egypt by the Ptolemaic dynasty from 323 to 198, and was subsequently governed by the Seleucids of Syria from 198 to 142.

The Diadochi, as the successors of Alexander were called, struggled bitterly for power over his domain. At first Ptolemy I seized his own satrapy, Egypt and North Africa, which had splendid resources and natural defense capabilities. Seleucus gained Syria and Mesopotamia, and by 301 Lysimachus held Thrace and Asia Minor and Cassander ruled Macedon. The situation changed again by 277, when only three major Hellenistic kingdoms stabilized in Egypt, in Syria, and in Macedonia under the Antigonids (277-168). Each continued until the eventual triumph of Rome.

Da 11 treats the “king of the South” and the “king of the North,” describing their conflicts, wars and alliances. Their hostility toward the people of God culminated in the “abomination that causes desolation” (Da 11:31), identified historically with the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164). The Maccabean revolt followed, leading eventually to the founding of the Hasmonean dynasty.



Continued political rivalries in Judea brought the intervention of the Roman general Pompey in 63 B.C. This event signaled the end of Jewish political independence, except for periods of brief autonomy during the ill-fated revolts of the first and second Christian centuries.

Borders shown } PTOLEMIES -----  
 c. 240 B.C. } SELEUCIDS .....

<sup>622</sup> Bible Visual Resource Book, p.135.

Time-line between the Testaments<sup>623</sup>

# Between the Testaments

## THE PERSIAN PERIOD 450-330 B.C.

For about 200 years after Nehemiah's time the Persians controlled Judah, but the Jews were allowed to carry on their religious observances and were not interfered with. During this time Judah was ruled by high priests who were responsible to the Jewish government.

## THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD 330-166 B.C.

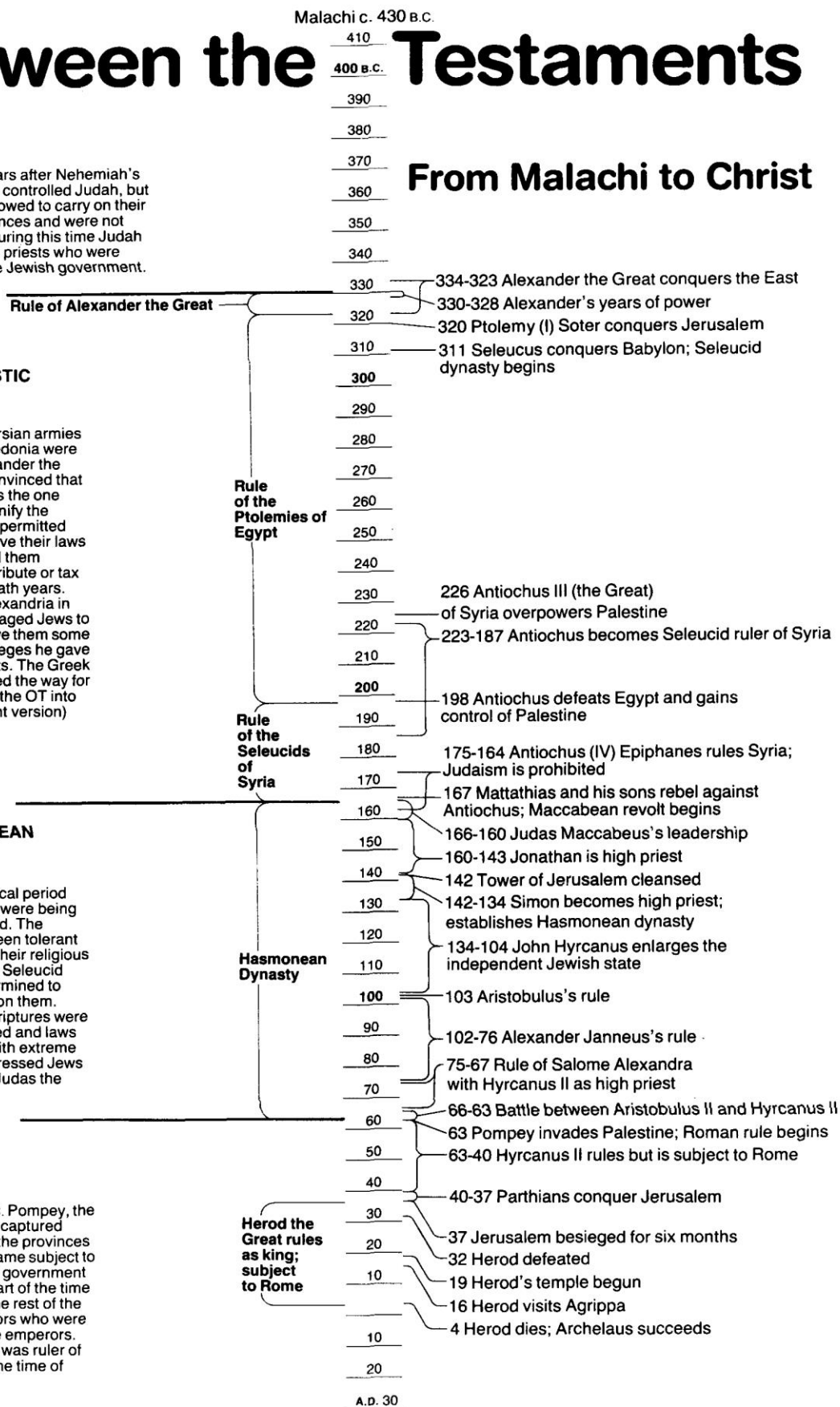
In 333 B.C. the Persian armies stationed in Macedonia were defeated by Alexander the Great. He was convinced that Greek culture was the one force that could unify the world. Alexander permitted the Jews to observe their laws and even granted them exemption from tribute or tax during their sabbath years. When he built Alexandria in Egypt, he encouraged Jews to live there and gave them some of the same privileges he gave his Greek subjects. The Greek conquest prepared the way for the translation of the OT into Greek (Septuagint version) c. 250 B.C.

## THE HASMONEAN PERIOD 166-63 B.C.

When this historical period began, the Jews were being greatly oppressed. The Ptolemies had been tolerant of the Jews and their religious practices but the Seleucid rulers were determined to force Hellenism on them. Copies of the Scriptures were ordered destroyed and laws were enforced with extreme cruelty. The oppressed Jews revolted, led by Judas the Maccabee.

## THE ROMAN PERIOD 63 B.C. ....

In the year 63 B.C. Pompey, the Roman general, captured Jerusalem, and the provinces of Palestine became subject to Rome. The local government was entrusted part of the time to princes and the rest of the time to procurators who were appointed by the emperors. Herod the Great was ruler of all Palestine at the time of Christ's birth.



<sup>623</sup> Bible Visual Resource Book, p.167.

### The GAP in Daniel 11:20-21

Dan 11:20-21 His successor will send out a tax collector to maintain the royal splendor. In a few years, however, he will be destroyed, yet not in anger or in battle. <sup>21</sup> “He will be succeeded by a contemptible person who has not been given the honor of royalty. He will invade the kingdom when its people feel secure, and he will seize it through intrigue.

Much of the controversy concerning the period and context of the prophecy in Daniel 11:20-21 rests on disagreements about the existence of “gaps” (unmentioned time intervals) in the periods. This correlates with Dan 2 in which the question is whether the rock cut out, which smashed the feet of the statue, referred to the first or second coming of Christ. If it refers to the second coming of Christ, then there must either be a gap in the time span of the fourth kingdom (Roman), or assume that the Roman era continues into the present.

#### In Dan 11 either

1. there is a gap between 11:20 and 11:21  
**OR**
2. there is a gap between 11:35 and 11:36  
**OR**
3. there is a gap between 11:39 and 11:40  
**OR**
4. 11:21ff. is concerned entirely with Antiochus Epiphanes.  
**OR . . . ?**

gap between Antiochus Epiphanes and antichrist

It is difficult to avoid all notion of a gap in Daniel’s prophecy, for even if one does so in Dan 11, there is a gap in Dan 12:1 and 12:2 where 12:2 jumps to predict the resurrection in the end-times. If we place any gap in the Dan 11 prophecy, it is probably between 11:35 and 11:36, even though we could attribute the description to Antiochus IV. Regardless of one’s view of the location of the gap, there must be one somewhere in the section, for Dan 11 and 12 seem to flow together, and 12:2 speaks of *eternal life after the resurrection*. The gap may well come only in 12:2, which points to end-times eschatology, and the previous descriptions are all about the desecration of Antiochus IV.

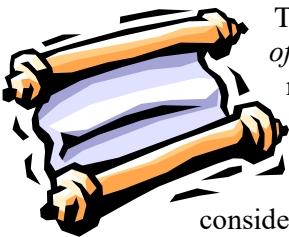
Also, the interpretation of Dan 9:24-27 (any gap?) is central in determining the questions of other gaps, whether in Dan 2 and Dan 7 the climax is in the first (amil) or second (premil) comings of Christ(?). Divergence of interpretation centers on this difficult question. Needless to say, entire systems of end-times eschatologies should not rest on the *much disputed* interpretation of these few texts. It can also be concluded that time gaps need not of necessity be mentioned explicitly in the text, which makes for dogmatism in interpretation uncharitable when such details are open to dispute.

#### Daniel’s vision of the end and resurrection: Dan 12

If there is a time gap between 12:1 and 12:2, then 12:1 corresponds with the events and persons described in 11:40-45. That is, Daniel’s vision jumps from discussion of the difficult times of distress from which God’s people are delivered (12:1c) to discussing the resurrection (12:2-3). Otherwise, Dan 12:1-2 could connect with 12:4-4 which then would describe a period of great distress preceding the resurrection of the dead in the very end of times.

Debate about the time gap should not obscure (though it does) the beautiful profundity of the resurrection predicted through the prophet Daniel more than four hundred years before the resurrection of Jesus, and many thousands of years (presumably) before the final resurrection at the return of Jesus.

➤ See discussion of resurrection at beginning of syllabus, “Resurrection: the fulfillment of the promise and eschatos,” pp.



The giver and interpreter of Daniel’s vision of war tells Daniel to “*close up the seal of the words of the scroll*” (12:4), indicating that Daniel was writing this vision as given(?), and also that its meaning come with obscurity. The man clothed in linen tells him that it will be fulfilled in “a time, times and a half time” (12:7; see also 4:16 and 7:25). The multiple reference to time is plural, and does not necessarily denote different time periods. (Note: Babylonians were very highly sophisticated in their rendering of times). These times = 3 ½ years (42 months). Some consider this the duration of the “great” tribulation of the Antichrist, while others understand this to refer to the tribulations suffered under Antiochus IV.

The concluding time references in Dan 12:11-12 of 1,290 days (7 years<sup>624</sup>) and 1,335 days = 3 years and 7 months (of 30 day months), reckoned on the ancient lunar calendar of 354 day years with adjustments for the actual 365 days.

➤ For a symbolical interpretation, see Keil & Delitzsch, *Daniel*, pp. 491-506.

<sup>624</sup> Of Antiochus IV Epiphanes’s reign?

Dan 12:8 I heard, but I did not understand.  
So I asked, "My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?"

## 7. *History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling*

### d) *Revelation and redemption from YHWH*

#### (1) *Who God is*



God is on a mission TO BE KNOWN AMONG all the peoples of the world. Daniel's ministry is one of the climaxes of this central gospel truth. Even though the people were in Exile, God was using this judgment on his people as a *serious* object lesson to the world, of his power and sovereignty, holiness and love, wisdom and truth. Nothing is outside his scope. There is no chosen nation that is above his law. There is no nation he is not seeking to redeem. God is the Lord of all the universe. *Even* the Babylonians are given revelation of the Living God, and they come to acknowledge his power.

#### (2) *What God has done*

Fulfilled his warnings of exile for disobedience to the covenant-law. God would not tolerate sin in his own people, thus clearly could not tolerate sin in the enemies of God. Yet, he did not leave them hopeless, though they are shown as helpless without his mercy and grace.

God sustained his prophet in a foreign land of exile. Even more, he raised him up to great prominence through his revelatory blessings.

God revealed vast things to Daniel, showing again his profound love to his people in exile. He does not leave them without a word from his heart. He sends them prophets. He intends to encourage them to renewed hope and faith and trust in YHWH. He wants all the people of Israel/Judah and Babylon to turn to him in faith. YHWH brings even the dreaded ruler Nebuchadnezzar to acknowledge him as the true God. Indeed, YHWH *reveals* many things to the pagan king by dreams and visions! Of course, he needs God's prophet to interpret them, but this is another reexample of God's intense compassion for the heathen nations.

God gave very specific visions and dreams regarding history (for us to debate their meaning until the end of time!).

#### (3) *What God has promised*

- He would reign supreme over all the nations. He would use the histories and rulers and peoples of the nations to fulfill his purposes. No nation was outside his concern.
- The rise and fall of the major kingdoms of the ancient world: Media-Persia, Greece, Rome.
- The fall of Babylon, and the rise of Persia. Daniel was able to see the first exiles returning to Judah (under King Cyrus in 539-37 BC)
- Messiah would come twice.
- The dead would be raised up.

### e) *Humankind and redemption*

#### (4) *Worship of redeemed*

True worship of YHWH was remarkably demonstrated by Daniel and his friends, and the the story of Nebuchadnezzar's efforts to get the people to worship his idol. Daniel resolved "not defile himself" (1:8). Worship was possible without the sanctuary, the ark, and all the other accoutrements. This probably changed Israel more than anything in its history, since from that time forward the synagogue system replaced the OT sanctuary cult. Daniel represents perhaps the highest point in all of history (apart from the temptations of Christ by Satan) of humans refusing to bow to that which is not God. This testimony unto the death (similar to the Apostles) had a profound impact on the Babylonians and their king. God seeks worship from all the nations.

### (5) *Work of redeemed*

Biblical work in the fallen world, outside the Garden (though back near the location) in a hostile culture, in a pagan, corrupt, idol worshiping culture, the people of God were called (no, cast) to live before the Gentiles in faith and holiness. They even studied in Babylon, undoubtedly facing compromises and idolatrous ideas and practices. They were able (and expected) to remain godly and obedient to God's law even there. No, *especially there*. God's people, earlier called to implement the ban (destruction) of the Canaanites, are now called to live in the midst of equally pagan people to demonstrate God's existence and character. This has a semblance of *the church in the world but not of the world*. Even there, God was revealing his truth to the people via his prophets. He also condemned the false prophets in exile, further showing his faithfulness to his people.

### (6) *Ethics of redeemed*

Ethics relates to particularly the worship of God by God's people, since their service and faithfulness to God is done before the world. Ethical conformity to the law of God is the prerequisite for the people of God to have a worthy testimony to the world. Israel was called to be a light to the nations, and primarily through their monotheistic, covenantal faith in YHWH and obedience to the holy law from him. Israel was to be righteous and holy in all their dealings with one another and the nations surrounding them. The men of Israel in Exile with Daniel embraced their exceedingly difficult situation and refused to conform to the idolatry and ethic of Babylon. God honored miraculously their faithfulness, and even brought the king to acknowledge YHWH in the process!

The high standard of God's holy law was undoubtedly very pronounced and highlighted by contrast with the ethics of the Babylonians who could be a ruthless and cruel peoples. The Persians had a somewhat lesser strain of cruelty, but Israel was to continue in their midst as a holy people called by the Living God.



(left) Fiery Furnace, Catacomb of Priscilla, Rome, Early 4th century.



(right) Daniel's friends in the furnace, Woodcut from *Zurich Bible*.<sup>625</sup>



<sup>625</sup> From Emory university at <http://www.pitts.emory.edu/dia/booklist5.cfm?ID=131>.

## D. Ezekiel יְחֶזְקֵאל (Babylon ~ 597-570)



Ezekiel by Michelangelo, Sistine chapel

### 1. Title, author, and dates

1. Ezekiel “may God make strong” (597-570) was born in 623-620 into a priestly family in Jerusalem, and grew up in Jerusalem. Ezekiel was a young boy when Josiah died at the hands of the Egyptian Pharaoh Neco II at Megiddo (609, 2 Ki 23:29; 2 Chron 35:20-25). Also, during his youth, the Babylonians placed the puppet Jehoiakim on the throne and exiled Daniel (605-530) with many others. In 597, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and appointed Zedekiah and took many of the population into *the first major exile of Judah*

(some 10,000 people), including Jehoiachin, the royals, many priests, and the young man Ezekiel. He was taken to Tel-abib near Babylon, indicating real judgment on Israel/Judah when the Word of the Lord represented by the prophets (Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel) is removed from the land of the promise: 2 Ki 24:14 He carried into exile all Jerusalem: all the officers and fighting men, and all the craftsmen and artisans—a total of ten thousand. Only the poorest people of the land were left.

Ezek 1:1-3 In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month on the fifth day, while I was among the exiles by the Kebar River, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. 2 On the fifth of the month—it was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin— 3 the word of the LORD came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, by the Kebar River in the land of the Babylonians. There the hand of the LORD was upon him.

2. Several years later, Ezekiel was commissioned to prophesy that Jerusalem was going to fall (Ezek 8-11) (cf. Jeremiah). Seven years later Jerusalem fell (586) and the nation experienced the *final major exile of Judah*. Following his initial seven year prophetic ministry, Ezekiel prophesied for some fifteen more years during which he began to prophesy hope to the captives. He spent his entire ministry on the foreign fields of Babylon.
3. Ezekiel was a priest-prophet, was married, and had his own home in Babylon (Ezek 3:24; 8:1). Along with his exile, he had the tragic loss of his wife to contend with at about the same time (Ezek 24:15-25).
4. One of the most neglected books of the Bible, due in part to its symbolism. Many consider only the latter portions (ch 34ff.) to be important, assuming a future reference for them.
5. Ezekiel may have known of Jeremiah, Daniel, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah.



Bandstra's chart of dates in Ezekiel<sup>626</sup>

<sup>626</sup> By Bandstram, www ?

Dates in Ezekiel.<sup>627</sup>**Dates in Ezekiel** (Bible Visual Resource Book, p. 127.)

REFERENCE	YEAR	MONTH	DAY	MODERN RECKONING	EVENT
1. 1:1 1:2 3:16	30 5 "At the end of seven days"	4 —	5 5	July 31, 593 B.C.	Inaugural vision
2. 8:1	6	6	5	Sept. 17, 592	Transport to Jerusalem
3. 20:1-2	7	5	10	Aug. 14, 591	Negative view of Israel's history
4. 24:1	9	10	10	Jan. 15, 588	Beginning of siege (see also 2 Ki 25:1)
5. 26:1	11	—	1	Apr. 23, 587 to Apr. 13, 586	Oracle against Tyre
6. 29:1	10	10	12	Jan. 7, 587	Oracle against Egypt
7. 29:17	27	1	1	Apr. 26, 571	Egypt in exchange for Tyre
8. 30:20	11	1	7	Apr. 29, 587	Oracle against Pharaoh
9. 31:1	11	3	1	June 21, 587	Oracle against Pharaoh
10. 32:1	12	12	1	Mar. 3, 585	Lament over Pharaoh
11. 32:17	12	—	15	Apr. 13, 586, to Apr. 1, 585	Egypt dead
12. 33:21	12	10	5	Jan. 8, 585	Arrival of first fugitive
13. 40:1 40:1	25 "fourteenth year after the fall of the city"	1	10	Apr. 28, 573	Vision of the future

© 1989 by Gospel Light Publications. Permission granted to purchaser to reproduce this Sheet for class purposes only.

## 2. Critical matters

- See Harrison's survey of the critics, *Introduction*, pp. 823-832, 838-849.
1. Because of the Palestinian focus of the first section (Ezek 1-24), some have supposed that it was written in that context to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. In fact, he was addressing the exiles about the coming fall of Jerusalem. Even if he was addressing Jerusalem, it is not evidence that he was in Jerusalem. Indeed, both audiences may have had reception of the prophet's word.
  2. Some critical opinion considers Ezek 1-39 as prophetic, while 40-48 is seen as an addition. Whereas others see the first part as spurious and inconsistent with the latter authentic Ezekiel prophecy. Some consider Ezekiel a product of the early Persian period, while others consider the book to be entirely pseudepigraphy. A few critics have placed Ezekiel as late as the Greek period (C.C. Torrey, M. Burrows, G. Dahl), setting it against this background rather than a Babylonian exilic period.
  3. Ezekiel has been called every psychological name in the book by negative commentators: pathological, cataleptic [tonic rigidity of limbs], catatonic, and paranoid schizophrenic. Harrison says: "Attempts at psychiatric or psychological profundity by amateurs are serious enough in their import when foisted upon their contemporaries, but when they are urged in all earnestness in connection with long-dead individuals of another culture and a different age they become merely amusing."<sup>628</sup>

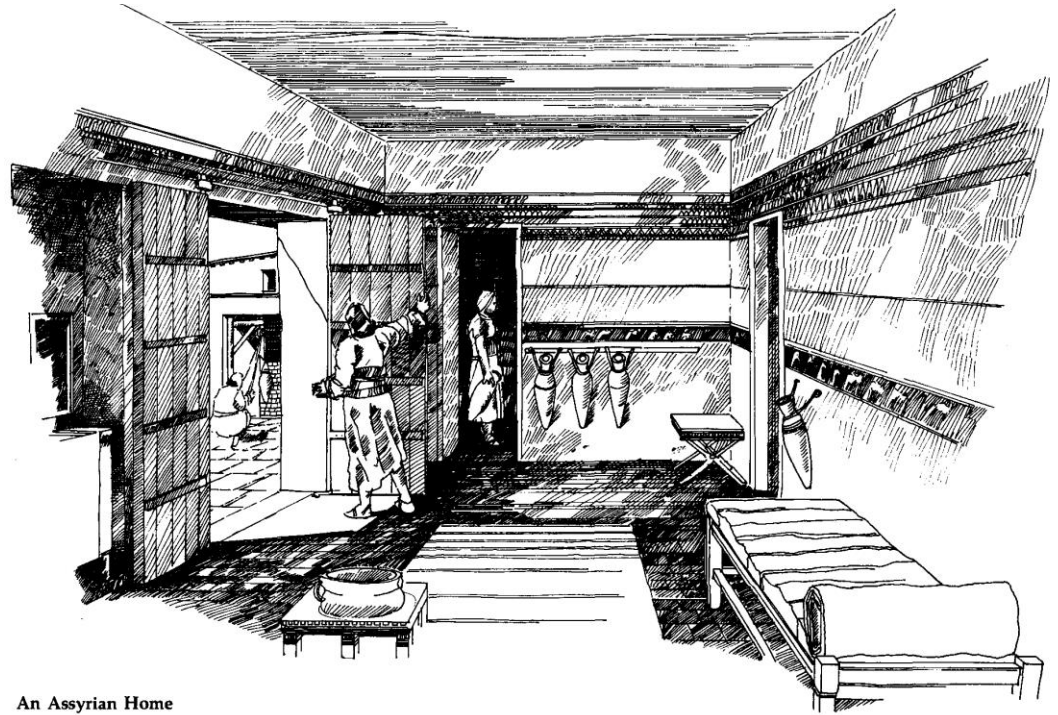
<sup>627</sup> Bible Visual Resource Book, p. 127. Because Ezekiel contains the most dates of all the OT prophets, his prophecies can be precisely dated.

<sup>628</sup> Harrison, *Intro to the OT*, p. 850.

4. Although many use the prophecies concerning Tyre as evidence of biblical inspiration and accuracy, there are critics who assume that Ezekiel was mistaken about Tyre. That is, that Nebuchadnezzar did not fulfill the prophecy of Tyre's destruction. Nevertheless, Ezek 26:3 reads:

Ezek 26:3-4 therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against you, O Tyre, and I will bring many nations against you, like the sea casting up its waves. 4 They will destroy the walls of Tyre and pull down her towers; I will scrape away her rubble and make her a bare rock.

This shift to plural suggests that "they" does not refer solely to Nebuchadnezzar, but rather to a number of forces that eventually brought down the fall of Tyre. See p. 520.



An Assyrian Home

"His book is the one document of the Old Testament that the critics accept in its entirety,

Jewish exiles in Assyria saw homes such as these—boxlike structures with inclined roofs, grouped around a central courtyard. Reed mats alone furnished ordinary homes, but the more affluent had stools and beds. On the walls were a household altar and cooking vessels hung beyond the reach of vermin—the rats, mice, scorpions and lizards that sought refuge inside from the fierce heat of the sun. Reader's Digest, Great People of the Bible, p. 259.

their theories being largely built upon it."<sup>629</sup>

### 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

#### a) *"I am the Lord": the covenant promise*

Eze 6:7 you, and you will know that I am the Lord. 'But I will spare some  
 Eze 6:10 And they will know that I am the Lord; I did not threaten in vain  
 Eze 6:13 And they will know that I am the Lord, when their people lie slain  
 Eze 6:14 Then they will know that I am the Lord.  
 Eze 7:4 you. Then you will know that I am the Lord. 5 "This is what the Sovereign  
 Eze 7:27 Then they will know that I am the Lord."  
 Eze 11:10 Then you will know that I am the Lord. 11 This city will not be  
 Eze 11:12 And you will know that I am the Lord, for you have not followed my  
 Eze 12:15 They will know that I am the Lord, when I disperse them among  
 Eze 12:16 Then they will know that I am the Lord." 17 The word of the LORD  
 Eze 12:20 Then you will know that I am the Lord." 21 The word of the LORD  
 Eze 13:14 in it; and you will know that I am the Lord. 15 So I will spend my wrath  
 Eze 13:21 Then you will know that I am the Lord. 22 Because you dishearten  
 Eze 13:23 And then you will know that I am the Lord."  
 Eze 14:8 Then you will know that I am the Lord. 9 "'And if the prophet is  
 Eze 15:7 you will know that I am the Lord. 8 I will make the land  
 Eze 16:62 you, and you will know that I am the Lord. 63 Then, when I make atonement  
 Eze 20:5 uplifted hand I said to them, "I am the Lord your God." 6 On that day I  
 Eze 20:7 defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.  
 Eze 20:19 with their idols. 19 I am the Lord your God; follow my decrees a  
 Eze 20:20 us. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God." 21 "'But the  
 Eze 20:26 fill them with horror so they would know that I am the Lord.'  
 Eze 20:38 Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord. 39 "'As for you, O house  
 Eze 20:42 Then you will know that I am the Lord, when I bring you into the land  
 Eze 20:44 You will know that I am the Lord, when I deal with you for my

(above) Assyrian home interior.<sup>630</sup>

<sup>629</sup> R.D. Wilson, *Scientific Investigation*, p. 99.



Eze 22:16 nations, you will know that I am the Lord.” 17 Then the word of the  
 Eze 24:27 them, and they will know that I am the Lord.”  
 Eze 25:5 sheep. Then you will know that I am the Lord. 6 For this is what the Sovereign  
 Eze 25:7 you, and you will know that I am the Lord.”  
 Eze 25:11 Moab. Then they will know that I am the Lord.”  
 Eze 25:17 Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I take vengeance on the  
 Eze 26:6 sword. Then they will know that I am the Lord. 7 “For this is what the  
 Eze 28:22 They will know that I am the Lord, when I inflict punishment on her  
 Eze 28:23 Then they will know that I am the Lord. 24 “No longer will the people  
 Eze 28:26 Then they will know that I am the Lord their God.”  
 Eze 29:6 live in Egypt will know that I am the Lord. ” “You have been a staff of  
 Eze 29:9 Then they will know that I am the Lord. ” “Because you said, “The Nile is mine . . .”  
 Eze 29:21 Then they will know that I am the Lord.”  
 Eze 30:8 Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I set fire to Egypt  
 Eze 30:19 and they will know that I am the Lord.” 20 In the eleventh year  
 Eze 30:25 Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I put my sword into the  
 Eze 30:26 Then they will know that I am the Lord.”  
 Eze 32:15 then they will know that I am the Lord.’ 16 “This is the lament  
 Eze 33:29 Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I have made the land a  
 Eze 34:27 their land They will know that I am the Lord, when I break the bars of the  
 Eze 35:4 Then you will know that I am the Lord. 5 ” “Because you harbored  
 Eze 35:9 Then you will know that I am the Lord. 10 ” “Because you have said  
 Eze 35:15 Then they will know that I am the Lord.”  
 Eze 36:11 Then you will know that I am the Lord. 12 I will cause people,  
 Eze 36:23 Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Sovereign LORD,  
 Eze 36:38 people. Then they will know that I am the Lord.”  
 Eze 37:6 life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.” 7 So I prophesied as I  
 Eze 37:13 my people, will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and  
 Eze 38:23 Then they will know that I am the Lord.’  
 Eze 39:6 coastlands, and they will know that I am the Lord. 7 ” “I will make known my  
 Eze 39:22 house of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God. 23 And the nations will know  
 Eze 39:28 Then they will know that I am the Lord their God, for though I sent

### b) “Watchman”: צִפְּנָה

Ezek 3:17 Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me.  
 Ezek 33:2 Son of man, speak to your countrymen and say to them: ‘When I bring the sword against a land, and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman,  
 Ezek 33:6 But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes the life of one of them, that man will be taken away because of his sin, but I will hold the watchman accountable for his blood.’  
 Ezek 33:7 “Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me.

### c) “The Spirit lifted me up”

Ezek 3:12 Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a loud rumbling sound—May the glory of the LORD be praised in his dwelling place!—  
 Ezek 8:3 He stretched out what looked like a hand and took me by the hair of my head. The Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and in visions of God he took me to Jerusalem, to the entrance to the north gate of the inner court, where the idol that provokes to jealousy stood.  
 Ezek 11:1 Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the gate of the house of the LORD that faces east. There at the entrance to the gate were twenty-five men, and I saw among them Jaazaniah son of Azzur and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, leaders of the people.  
 Ezek 11:24 The Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the exiles in Babylonia in the vision given by the Spirit of God. Then the vision I had seen went up from me,  
 Ezek 43:5 Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

### d) Son of man

➤ See Daniel’s use of this expression.

Used some 93x in Ezekiel, indicating the relationship between Almighty God and his finite prophet.

### e) “Set your face”

Ezek 6:2 came to me: 2 “Son of man, set your face against the mountains of Israel  
 Ezek 13:17 Now, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your  
 Ezek 20:46 came to me: 46 “Son of man, set your face toward the south; preach again

Ezek 21:2 came to me: 2 “Son of man, set your face against Jerusalem and preach  
 Ezek 25:2 came to me: 2 “Son of man, set your face against the Ammonites and  
 Ezek 28:21 came to me: 21 “Son of man, set your face against Sidon; prophesy again  
 Ezek 29:2 came to me: 2 “Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt  
 Ezek 35:2 came to me: 2 “Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir; prophesy  
 Ezek 38:2 came to me: 2 “Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog

#### 4. Major themes

1. The priestly ministry and the temple were of utmost concern to Ezekiel, in so far as it related to the promises of God and to heart-religion of true obedience. He did not advocate cultic ritual as the means of sanctification, but rather repentance and godly living in the Spirit. He is identified for us with a threefold office: *prophet, priest, watchman* (צִפְּהָרָה) (p. 505).
2. Judgment at this stage was *inevitable*, there was no offer of circumventing the judgment. They could only seek the peace of God and wait on his hand for deliverance. The judgment of God corresponds with the covenant blessings and covenant cursings. The *absence of God* from the temple has great significance in the history of redemption, for the seal of the covenant promise was YHWH's presence in the sanctuary, it was the sign that he was fulfilling his covenant promise to be their God and to know them (also that God's presence could not be contained in a *localized* sanctuary). Thus, the loss of his presence was altogether the worst aspect of the covenant curse. Nevertheless, God teaches them a profound truth in exile: he is not at all bound or limited by his sanctuary in Jerusalem. Indeed, he is *with them even in exilic judgment*. He also sends his prophets to reveal his word to them, despite their sin and hardheartedness. Ezekiel's ministry was to tell the people that their exile was God's judgment for their sin, and that contrary to their anticipation, Jehoichin would not be returning to Jerusalem at the imminent end their captivity. Indeed, he had to prophesy that Jerusalem would be taken into captivity. Ezekiel is given a profound vision of God's glory in preparation for his own call to prophesy, instilling in him a clear perspective on God's power and presence in light of the coming loss of temple and land. He was to have no doubt about the powerlessness of Babylon's gods before the *living God* of Israel. Further, the loss of the glory-presence in the Temple would be restored once again along with the restoration of the nation to the land.
3. As soon as judgment on Jerusalem is complete (Ezek 33:21), Ezekiel reverts back to prophesying about Israel's future restoration. While Jerusalem was besieged by Babylon (two years), Ezekiel concentrated on prophecies of judgment about the foreign nations. The promise/prediction of a remnant preserved and returned to the land has an interesting rationale: the *holiness* of God. Whereas his holiness took them into exile, it was also the backdrop to his bringing them back. Though they had profaned his holy name, yet he would vindicate it among the nations when he restored them (Ezek 36:23-38). His glory would be restored and his name and glory would be exalted by his presence. In light of this restoration, Ezekiel prophesies the restoration/renewal or reaffirmation of the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and David covenants.
4. The high and exalted qualities of God's character/nature are extolled in Ezekiel, what some would call God's transcendence. (This quality of God's being need *not* be juxtaposed against his immanence in terms of holiness = God's transcendence in contrast to man's sinfulness. That is, God's holiness is as much an aspect of his immanence as his transcendence.)
5. *Individual* human responsibility for sin is emphasized in Ezekiel (Ezek 18:4-24). All individuals are accountable to God, regardless of the collective spiritual state. The promise of a new covenant corresponds with the promise to create a new heart in them to obey God's law (Ezek 36:25-29; cf. Jer 31:31ff.).
6. As in all the prophets, the theme of God's sovereign rule is prominent, but nowhere as much as in Ezekiel. This corresponds with the *covenant promise*, as noted in the expression “I am the Lord” (p. 504). God is Lord over Israel and the nations, but is in special redemptive-covenant with Israel. This is beautifully repeated many times, and remarkably in the contexts of the impending judgment. God is not interested in judgment for judgment's sake, but rather in restoring and redeeming his people from sin. This is summarized perfectly in Ezekiel's last words in 48:35 in which God's presence and the promise are summarized:

The Lord is there (הֲיָהוָה שָׁמָּה?)

#### 5. Major prophecies

1. Prophesied a future hope for the covenant-promises, return to Israel and a new temple:  
 Ezek 36:24 For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land.

Ezek 37:12-13 Therefore prophesy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. 13 Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them.

Ezek 37:23 They will no longer defile themselves with their idols and vile images or with any of their offenses, for I will save them from all their sinful backsliding, and I will cleanse them. They will be my people, and I will be their God.

Ezek 37:27 My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Ezek 38:23 And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD.'

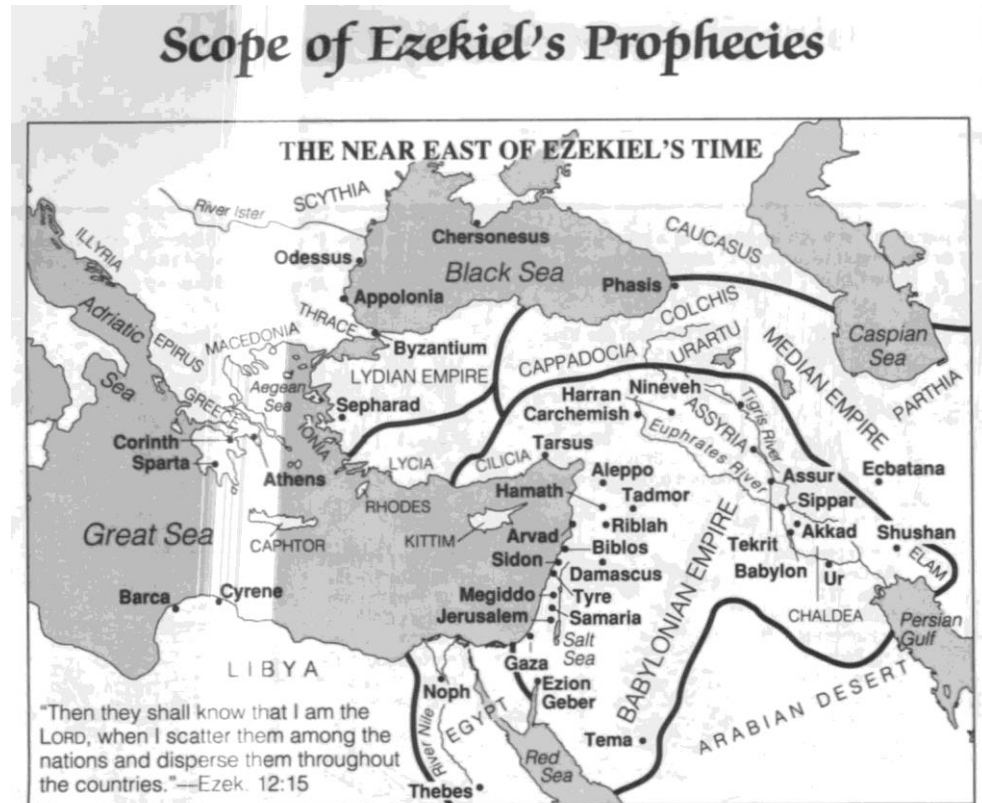
2. The rise of Babylon was a central prediction in Ezekiel's prophecy (also in Isaiah who predicted the fall of Assyria). For example, Tyre and Egypt would fall to the hand of Nebuchadnezzar:

Ezek 26:7 "For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: From the north I am going to bring against Tyre Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses and chariots, with horsemen and a great army.

Ezek 29:18 "Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon drove his army in a hard campaign against Tyre; every head was rubbed bare and every shoulder made raw. Yet he and his army got no reward from the campaign he led against Tyre. Ezek 29:19 Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am going to give Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he will carry off its wealth. He will loot and plunder the land as pay for his army.

Ezek 30:10 "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "I will put an end to the hordes of Egypt by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.

3. Jerusalem was going to fall (Ezek 8-11). Foreign nations were going to fall (Ezek 25-32). But, Jerusalem would be restored. The structure of the book itself is designed to encourage them to look to the promises of God.



Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts © 1993 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

## 6. Outline, structure/composition

Ezekiel combines more imagery, allegory, and symbolism than any other prophet, making his book at points a singular challenge for interpreters but a delight for those who relish the poetic side of revelation. Despite the length of this book, we can attempt to keep the outline fairly simple:

1. Judgment: Ezek 1-32
  - a. Jerusalem will fall: Ezek 1-24
  - b. Nations will fall: Ezek 25-32
2. Redemption/restoration: Ezek 33-48
  - a. Jerusalem judged: Ezek 33
  - b. Nations will fall: Ezek 35; 38-39
  - c. Jerusalem will be restored: Ezek 34; 36-37; 40-48

Dorsey says that although the messages are in chronological order, there is some grouping according to topic. This follows roughly my simplified outline above: oracles against the nations (Ezek 25-32) and messages of hope and restoration (Ezek 33-48). He further proposes a seven-fold structure that comprises the grouping of seven sets of messages (this is not chiasmatic, but progressive: a – b – c – c – d – e – f – g), the first four sets each beginning with a formulaic introduction to a divine revelation. The book is bracketed by the polar themes of God's abandonment of the temple (and promise of presence among the exiles), concluding with the glory returning to the temple. This breakdown has considerable appeal for its simplicity in structuring the book.

## 7. Exposition and the history of redemption themes

### a) Judgment: Ezek 1-32

#### (1) Jerusalem would fall: Ezek 1-24

(right) Ezekiel's vision, Woodcut from Zurich Bible.

#### Ezekiel's vision of God, his call to prophesy, and prophetic enactment: Ezek 1-3



alled to prophesy a very difficult message against his own of God's inevitable "departure" from their midst, Ezekiel is given a remarkable vision of God on his throne of sapphire (ca. 597). This revelation was a sign of God's continued care for his people: "the heavens were opened" clearly indicates that God had not forsaken his people and he will continue to reveal his redemptive word to them. As noted many times, the centrality of the glorious presence of YHWH was central to the revelation of redemption. The "absence" of God was the sobering, purifying result of their sin and exile. Nevertheless, here the Lord's glory is revealed in some of the most profound imagery of the entire Bible, and far from the sanctuary in Jerusalem. This is reflected in the what Ezekiel heard during his vision:

Ezek 3:12 Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a loud rumbling sound—May the glory of the LORD be praised in his dwelling place!—

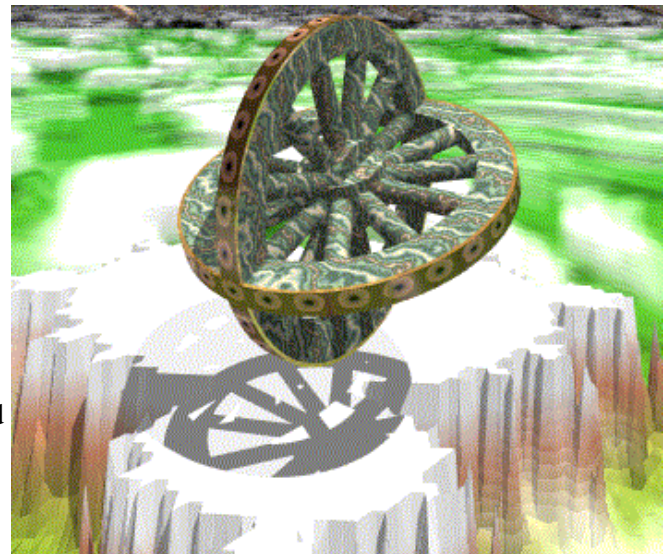


We can understand this to be a revelation of the radical freedom of God's presence and glory: he is *not bound to any place or sanctuary*. This revelation of God's glory set the stage for Ezekiel's call to the ministry: his message was one of certain judgment on Jerusalem. The prophet was thus speaking to his homeland and his people in Israel, through addressing the exiles, the message that had been preached to them by all the other pre-exilic prophets. Ezekiel, however, gives no hope of escaping judgment. The significant fact unveiled in his prophecy is that despite the initial exile of God's people from the land, they had *not repented* and turned back to the Lord (Ezek 2:3; 3:7).

Ezekiel is called to *eat the scroll* of God's words of lament and woe (2:9-3:3), and he finds they are sweet to his taste. The word of God must be internalized by the prophets (no known correlation in the ANE).

Cf. Jer 1:9 Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "Now, I have put my words in your mouth.

(right) Wheel vision (by Josef F. Blumrich)



Ezekiel is shown the glory of the Lord two times at the beginning of his vision and call (Ezek 1; 3:23). After he is give the noble title of "watchman" for Israel (3:17), he is then instructed to convey his first *prophetic enactment* of being tied up and speechless to represent the people's responsibility to listen to the prophet (3:24-27). This prophetic enactment is followed by more enactments against Jerusalem itself in ch. 4ff.<sup>631</sup>

<sup>631</sup> Christians have been known to attempt prophetic enactments in our times, on their own initiative, such as the common sandwich-board prophets of doom. I once knew of a woman who dressed in sackcloth for many days as an enactment to challenge Americans to turn to God on account of presumed coming judgment.



(left) Ezekiel's Vision engravings in *Figures qui Represent les Evenements les Plus Memorables* by Wohlgemuth,, ca. 1680, 23 x 40cms<sup>632</sup>

(right) Ancient map on tablet of Nippur<sup>633</sup>



***Ezekiel's message of God's judgment on Jerusalem: Ezek 4-24***

***Ezekiel's prophetic enactments against Jerusalem: Ezek 4:1-7:27***

1. Clay tablet with map of Jerusalem, siege works, and iron pan: 4:1-3 ~ prediction of Jerusalem's final irrevocable siege.
2. Prophet reclines on his left side for 390 days, and then on his right side for forty days: 4:4-8 ~ prediction of the devastation of the northern and southern kingdoms.
3. Wheat, barley, beans, millet, spelt in storage jar and bread to eat for the time he reclines on his side: 4:9-17 ~ prediction of final siege of Jerusalem and lack of food and water.
4. Sharp sword to shave the prophet's head and burned hair<sup>634</sup>: 5:1-17 ~ prediction of devastation of Jerusalem for their rebellion and idols.
5. Prophet "sets face" against the mountains: 6:1-10 ~ the face of God is set against the high places of the rebellious idolaters which will be destroyed.
6. Prophet "claps hands" and "stamps feet" against the people: 6:11-14 ~ the hand of God is against the people of God who will be desolate.

In all of these the emphasis is on the fact they will know that the Lord has spoken and acted.

<sup>632</sup> From <http://www.fulltable.com/vts/g/god/g.htm>

<sup>633</sup> From <http://archaeology.about.com/od/mesopotamiaarchaeology/ig/Mesopotamian-Art/14th-13th-c-BC-map-of-Nippur.htm>

<sup>634</sup> Compare Nazarite vow in which hair was burned (Num 6:18).

(right) Raphael. *Ezekiel's Vision*. c. 1518. Oil on panel. Palazzo Pitti, Florence, Italy.<sup>635</sup>

### ***Ezekiel's vision of the devastation of Jerusalem: Ezek 7:1-11:25***

In light of all his enactments, he is given the word of judgment and devastation upon Jerusalem. Foreigners will destroy Jerusalem, their idolatrous sanctuaries will be desecrated, the visions from the prophets will cease, and the teaching of the law will cease (7:1-27).

Ezekiel is shown the glory of the Lord again (as he had seen it on the plains), as if he is standing transported before the temple itself in Jerusalem (8:1-4). He is shown the truth of the idolatry occurring in the heart of Israel's religion:



1. Idol of jealousy in the temple (possibly Canaanite<sup>636</sup>): 8:1-6
2. Idols drawn on temple walls of the seventy elders (possibly Egyptian): 8:7-13.
3. Idol Tammuz<sup>637</sup> of a woman in the temple (Mesopotamian): 8:14-15.
4. Idol of the sun in temple (Israel's syncretistic worship): 8:16-18.

Ezekiel is next shown the glory of God move from above the cherubim in the temple to the threshold (9:3-4). The angels that guard the city were sent out to slay the rebellious idolaters and spare the remnant (reminiscent of the exodus departure) (9:1-11), portraying in stark imagery the coming destruction of the city.

Most importantly, the presence of God's glory departs from the temple next (10:1-22). The imagery of this vision corresponds to that of his first vision (Ezek 1) in which he sees the glory of God as if on a throne above all the cherubim. This vision must be understood in light of the glory of God in Exodus 40 filling the tabernacle with and the later filling of the temple with the glory of God in 1 Ki 8:10-11. The centerpiece of redemption, God's mediated-restored presence will be removed. This is the covenantal presence of God that is conditioned upon their obedience to the Torah. It corresponds with the efficacious presence maintained through the sacrifices and offerings, and it does not negate in any way what we call the omnipresence of God. Similarly to the "conditional" aspects of the temporal blessings of the covenant promises of land, prosperity, and progeny, the covenantal sanctuary-presence is conditioned upon obedience. In a stirring vision of the departure of the glory-presence from the temple Ezekiel, he realizes that the living creatures are cherubim as they move with the glory to the east gate of the temple and depart with the glory from the temple (10:18-19).

The final vision Ezekiel has in this sequel unveils the wicked men of the city who are behind the many evils taking place in the city (11:1-15). Nevertheless, these leaders would be judged and driven out of the city. They would lose the land of the promise.

In the midst of this woe, the prophet is given hope of the remnant preserved, and more importantly he is given a glimpse of the gospel in which the presence of God *itself* is their sanctuary. This has great significance in the history of redemption in which the restoration to the presence of God progressively takes place closer and closer to the individual until the individual is represented as the very temple of God (1 Cor 6:19):

Ezek 11:16 "Therefore say: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Although I sent them far away among the nations and scattered them among the countries, yet for a little while I have been a sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone.'"

Compare the NT displacement of the temple as the place of God's mediated presence with:

Jn 2:19-21 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." 20 The Jews replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" 21 But the temple he had spoken of was his body.

As in all that preceded, the emphasis is on the fact they will know that the Lord has spoken and acted. But here, the covenant promise is reiterated explicitly, that the remnant would be his people and that he would be their God (11:20).

His concluding explanations of the vision show that he was not physically transported to Jerusalem (as some suggest), but that he had been given to see all he saw *in the vision* (בְּפִי אֲזַיֵּן, in the *vision, apparition*) which the Spirit God had given him (11:32).



<sup>635</sup>

<sup>636</sup> For identifications of these gods, see Walton, Mathews, & Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary*, p. 696.

<sup>637</sup> Babylonian god of fertility mentioned only here in the Bible.

**Ezekiel's prophetic enactment of the impending exile: Ezek 12:1-28**

Ezekiel is called to pack his belongings in a symbolic enactment of the coming exile. (12:3-7). He was also to prophetically enact their impending departure into exile by digging through the wall and carrying his belongings through the wall at dusk. This is called a *sign* (כִּי-מוֹפֶת) to the house of Israel: their later exilic departure from Jerusalem took place at night when Zedekiah and his forces fled the city through a breach in the wall. Ezekiel himself is called a *sign* to them (12:11; מוֹפֶתְכֶם). Ezekiel's covering his face is predictive of the prince (Zedekiah) who will not see the land of the Babylonians into which he will be brought. We know that he was blinded by Nebuchadnezzar (12:12-13; 2 Ki 25:7).

How Ezekiel broke through the wall of his house is not clear, and to what extent he did this is not clear, but the wall was not the city wall which he could not possibly have dug through by himself.

The goal of the exile was to bring them back to the knowledge of the Lord, the promise of the covenant. God wanted them to know him, and this is so consistently repeated in Ezekiel that we should marvel at this positive faithfulness of God whose primary concern was their restoration and redemption. In this midst of these sobering prophecies and prophetic enactments, the prophet is constantly reminding them of God's love and covenant faithfulness.

Ezekiel then prepares for his condemnation of the false prophets (Ezek 13) by conveying the Lord's reversal of their common proverb and false assumption that "The days go by and every vision comes to nothing" (12:22). That is, they are speaking of Ezekiel's prophecies that they claim will come to nothing, and the Lord says that his words will no longer be delayed. We know that final exile would be only a matter of a short time from this point.

**Ezekiel's condemnation of false prophets: Ezek 13:1-23**

False prophets:

- ⇒ Prophecy out of their own imaginations (13:2) ~ vanity and lies.
- ⇒ Prophecy folly (13:3a) ~ no wisdom.
- ⇒ Prophecy out of their own spirit (13:3b) ~ false and deceiving.
- ⇒ Prophecy nothing that they have truly seen (13:3c) ~ no revelation.
- ⇒ Prophets are like jackals among ruins (13:4) ~ scavenging carnivores.
- ⇒ Prophets refused to rebuild the walls (13:5) ~ true prophets would (see 22:30).
- ⇒ Prophecy false visions (13:6a).
- ⇒ Prophecy false divinations (13:6b).
- ⇒ Prophecy falsely in the name of YHWH (13:6c-7).
- ⇒ Prophecy using magic charms and veils to ensnare people (13:17-23)



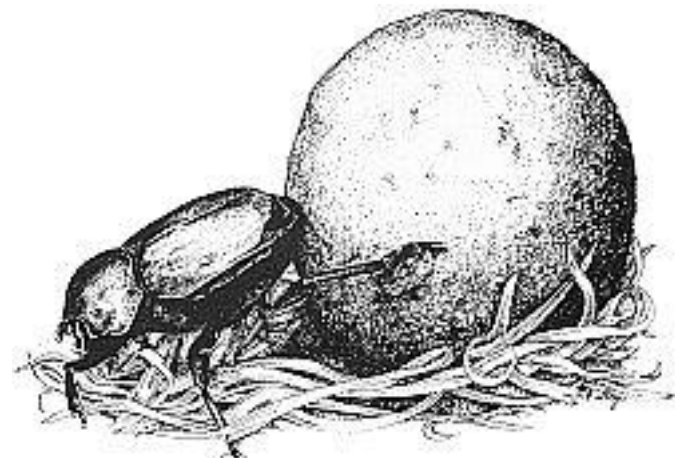
One of the "practical" aspects of the prophetic ministry at this time was to *rebuild the walls of Jerusalem*. The prophetic call was not just "spiritual" and theological, but it was to take action in the protection and preservation of God's people. (This conveys the important principle of a unified sacred/secular realm.) The false prophets had no interest in such, and falsely assumed Ezekiel's messages of coming attacks were untrue. Rather, the false prophets preached *peace* and "whitewashed" the insecure walls (both literally and figuratively). Their solutions were both untenable, unbiblical, and unsupported by the Lord.

Again, when the Lord showed them that the false prophets would be destroyed, he did so with the intention of them knowing "that I am the Lord" (13:14, 22, 23).

**Ezekiel's condemnation of the idolaters: Ezek 14:1-23**

**We have abstracted our idols  
so as to hide them within.**

(right) Dung Beetle.<sup>638</sup>



<sup>638</sup> From [www.museums.org.za/sam/resource/ento/pics/dung\\_s.jpg](http://www.museums.org.za/sam/resource/ento/pics/dung_s.jpg)

גִּלְדָּל - idol

הָעֵלְוֹ גִּלְדָּל יִהְיֶה עַל-לִבָּם (14:3) have set up idols in their hearts

יַעֲלֶה אֶת-גִּלְדָּלָיו אֶל-לִבּוֹ (14:4) set up idols in his heart

(Cf. Dung beetles who *roll* dung into balls.)

The following is adapted (reduced) from Judith M. Hadley, “גִּלְדָּלִים” (*NIDOTTE*, vol. 1, pp. 864-865):

1. This is a pejorative term for images, idols, (“dung-idols”). In Ezekiel the term occurs 39x, especially in chs. 6, 14, 20. The context is one of priestly abhorrence of (ritual) impurity. Ezek 6:4-7, 13 and the curse in Lev 26:30 refer to dead bodies that would be piled on the (dead bodies of) *gillulim*—double impurity; Ezek 20:31 describes Israel as being (ritually) defiled by the *gillulim* (“filth”). Only Ezek uses “defile” in the context of *gillulim* (18:15; 20:7, 18, 31; 22:3-4; 23:7, 30; 36:18, 25; 37:23).
2. Ezekiel is also fond of using sexual imagery (prostitution) with respect to this “filth.” Ezekiel asserts that throughout the land there were high places with altars, incense altars, and *gillulim*. Are these to be seen as actual images? If the pillars are phallic symbols, or could be so construed, Ezekiel’s reaction and association with sexual images would be understandable.
3. The term *gillulim* is Ezekiel’s frequent pejorative term for idols. The difference between Ezek and the “idol parodies” is that while for the satirists the worship of idols is silly, for Ezek it is a *sin* (and filthy).

The people of God had not just bowed down to physical idols, but these important texts shows us that the internalization of idolatry takes precedence over its externalization. This supports my emphasis on the centrality of the internalization of the law in the old covenant in contrast to strict externalization of the law without the spirit writing the law on the heart. Simply put, the heart is the heart of the matter to God.

At this stage, despite their responsibility to repent and turn back to the Lord, judgment is inevitable – for even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in Jerusalem (all three being considered *righteous men*), they could only save themselves (14:14-20). (This is reminiscent of Sodom and Gomorrah, in regards to a city being spared by the presence of righteous people.) Four times the text refers to these three men as hypothetically incapable of saving anyone in the city but themselves. Four judgments would come upon them: sword, famine, beats, plague (14:21-22). The Lord says further that this would be a consolation to them when it happened and survivors made it to Babylon to tell them, for *they would know that the Lord had done it* (14:23).

#### ***Ezekiel’s allegory of a worthless vine: Ezek 15:1-8***

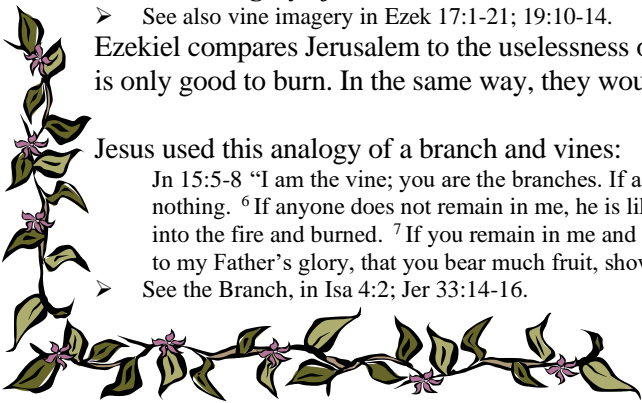
➤ See also vine imagery in Ezek 17:1-21; 19:10-14.

Ezekiel compares Jerusalem to the uselessness of a vine branch after it has been cut off. Nothing can be made from, it is only good to burn. In the same way, they would burn in the fires for their unfaithfulness.

Jesus used this analogy of a branch and vines:

Jn 15:5-8 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. <sup>8</sup> This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

➤ See the Branch, in Isa 4:2; Jer 33:14-16.



#### ***Ezekiel’s allegory of the abandoned child: Ezek 16:1-43***

This chapter contains one of the most graphic depictions of spiritual adultery (See Francis Schaeffer, *Death in the City*) in all of the OT. The rationale of God’s argument is outlined as follows:

Premise:

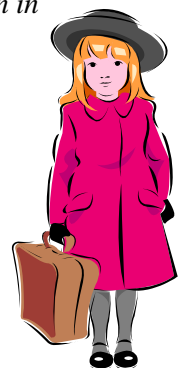
***Abandoned child*** - the allegory describes a child (Jerusalem/Israel) that was abandoned by its parents at birth as being despised (16:1-5).

***Adopted child*** - this child (Jerusalem/Israel) was found kicking about in its birth-blood (16:6).

***Raised/cherished child*** – this child (Jerusalem/Israel) was raised up (by God) like a plant and beautiful jewel into a mature woman (16:7).

***Married child*** – this woman (Jerusalem/Israel) was covenanted with (by God) as a bride (16:8).

***Cherished bride*** – this woman (Jerusalem/Israel) was treated like a queen and given splendor (by God) (16:9-14).





**BUT** – this child (Jerusalem/Israel) became a

**Proud and vain child** – trusting in its own beauty (16:15a).

**Prostituted idolater** – serving many strange idols and gods (16:15b-19).

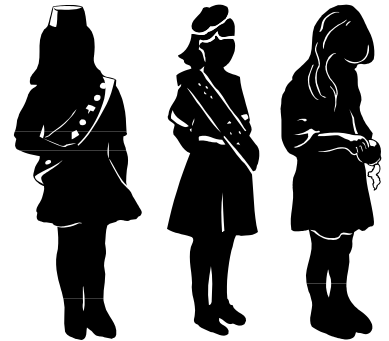
**Sacrificer of children** – the children of this child (Jerusalem/Israel) were sacrificed to idols (16:20-21).

**Prolific idolater** – irrepressible spiritual adultery with idols (16:23-25, 31).

**Prostituted ally** – made foreign alliances with Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon (16:26-34).

**THEREFORE** – *Ezekiel’s allegory of three sisters (Ezek 16:44-52)*

The Lord would use their very lovers (foreign allies) to shame and destroy them (16:35-43). They are then compared to “their sisters” Samaria and Sodom who despised their husband (the Lord) (16:44-52).



**NEVERTHELESS** – *Remnant restored: Ezek 16:53-63*

The Lord would restore his children – he would have mercy on them (16:53-63):

- ⇒ Restore them to their previous glory (16:53-56).
- ⇒ Restore them to his covenant (16:59-60).
- ⇒ Restore them to their sisters (Samaria and Sodom) (16:61).
- ⇒ Restore them to his covenant (16:62a).
- ⇒ Restore them the knowledge of the Lord (16:62b).
- ⇒ God would atone for their sin (16:63).

As noted repeatedly, the goal of God is restoration and redemption, not just judgment and condemnation. He desires his people to *know him*, even after they had forsaken him as a child-bride they went after false gods. Hope is thus the central prophetic feature in Ezekiel: hope that is most remarkable by contrast with the bleak reality of their rebellions.

Note: the marriage imagery is very similar to Hosea’s prophecy.

**Ezekiel’s allegory of eagles and vines: Ezek 17:1-21**



➤ See also vine imagery in Ezek 15:1-8; 19:10-14  
This parable of the eagle and the vine in 17:1-10 is clearly explicated in 17:11-21.

- ✚ The first great eagle would be a king: Nebuchadnezzar (17:12a).
  - ✚ The shoot broken off by the king: Jehoiachin (17:12b)
  - ✚ The land of merchants where the shoot was taken: Babylon (17:12c).
  - ✚ The seed of the land planted: Zedekiah, son of Josiah became king (2 Ki 24:17; Ezek 17:13a).
  - ✚ Low spreading vine: people in the much depopulated land (17:13b).
  - ✚ The second great eagle: Pharaoh Psammetichus II (595-589) or Hophra (Jer 44:30). Probably Zedekiah’s appeal to Egypt for help against Babylonia.
  - ✚ Vine sends reaches out to eagle: Zedekiah appeals to Pharaoh (17:15).
  - ✚ Vine withers and dies before east wind: Zedekiah will be conquered by Nebuchadnezzar and die in Babylon (17:16).
- This is a very specific predictive prophecy of the impending events facing Jerusalem. Another testimony to the supernatural revelation of God to his prophets.



**Tilling a Mesopotamian Field**

“He took of the seed of the land and planted it in fertile soil; he placed it beside abundant waters” (Ezek. 17.5). To the wooden, iron-tipped plow common in Egypt and Israel, the Mesopotamians added the seed drill. As shown above and in the 7th-century B.C. Assyrian relief below, the drill is simply a tube leading downward from a seed basket to just behind the plowpoint. Seeds drop directly into the furrow and wastage is minimized. Although the Hebrews in exile must have become familiar with the seeder plow, it never became common in Israel, where seeds were scattered by hand. Both methods are still used today.



Reader’s Digest Great People of the Bible, p. 258.

(left) Tilling in Assyria.<sup>639</sup>

**Ezekiel’s parable of the cedar: Ezek 17:22-24**

Hope is once again given, but this time it is more significant than the remnant hope given previously. This hope is

<sup>639</sup> Reader’s Digest Great People of the Bible, p. 258.

messianic and combines the promise of God's *word* with his *deed*: "I the Lord have spoken, and I will do it" (17:24).

He will:

- ✚ Break a sprig from the top of a cedar (line of David) and
- ✚ Plant it on the mountains (Israel/Jerusalem) and
- ✚ It will bear much *fruit* (kingdom-redemption of many):

Cf. Mark 4:32 It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade.

The unconditionality of this promise suggests a contrast between the faithlessness of Israel/Judah with the faithfulness of God. They lost the conditioned blessings of the covenant temporarily, but the eternal promise of redemption goes back to the edenic promise of a seed to crush the serpent's head, as well as the promise of redemption. Such promises the Lord would render certain despite his people's failure to obey him.

### ***Ezekiel's proverb of sour grapes: Ezek 18:1-32***

Ezek 18:2 "What do you people mean by quoting this proverb about the land of Israel: "'The fathers eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'?"



The image of sour grapes introduces one of the most remarkable gospel texts in the OT: the corporate solidarity idea of sin is given an important new emphasis that all individuals are in fact responsible *for their own* sin or righteousness. Responsibility for sin is not passed from generation to generation, but resides on each person's head. This puts to rest the unbiblical notion that God punishes children for the sins of their fathers (even though "in Adam we all sinned"). Conversely, the righteousness of a father can not be credited to his children. Conversely, even the righteousness of the righteous will not help them if they rebel against God any more than the wickedness of the wicked will be held against those who turn to God in righteousness. The principle of generational sin and judgment is found in Ex 20:5.

Ex 20:5-6 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me <sup>6</sup> but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

The phrase "**of those who hate me**" should be the one to explicate this principle. God does not punish those who *love him!* Any such view that children have to atone for the sins of their ancestors, based on this Exodus text, is nothing but a complete perversion of understanding the nature of sin and punishment. Thus, Ezekiel can not be said to *correct the law* on this point, but rather to affirm the orthodox view on this matter in the face of a serious heresy widely believed.

Ps103:17-18 But from everlasting to everlasting  
the LORD's love is with those who fear him,  
and his righteousness with their children's children—  
<sup>18</sup> with those who keep his covenant  
and remember to obey his precepts.

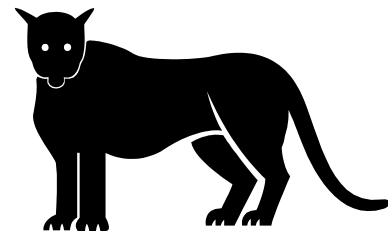
The gospel is expressed in "The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him . . ." (18:20b).

"As the impenitent sinner, even when he can no longer evade the punishment of his sins, endeavours as much as possible to transfer the guilt from himself to others, and comforts himself with the thought that he has to suffer for sins that others have committed, and hardens himself against the chastisement of God through such false consolation as this; so even among the people of Israel, when the divine judgments burst upon them, the delusion arose that the existing generation had to suffer for the father's sins."<sup>640</sup>

### ***Ezekiel's allegory of the lioness: Ezek 19:1-9***

This poetic parable of a lioness corresponds in some details to the parable of Ezek 17. The lioness is presumably the nation of Israel/Judah, and the other details of the allegory follow similarly to those of the pre-exilic history of Ezek 17 up to the exile.

- ✚ A cub who devoured men (19:1-4): Jehoahaz (Jer 22:13).
- ✚ A second cub who devastated towns but was carried to Babylon (19:5-10): Jehoiachin (2 Ki 24:8) or Zedekiah (2 Ki 25:7).



### ***Ezekiel's parable of the vine: Ezek 19:10-14***

<sup>640</sup> Keil & Delitzsch, vol. 9, *Ezekiel*, p. 246-247.

Similar to the previous imagery of a vine in 15:1-8 and 17:1-21.

- ✚ A vine who was a mother (19:10): Jerusalem.
- ✚ An east wind that uprooted and withered the vine (19:12): Nebuchadnezzar
- ✚ A desert where the vine is replanted (19:13): Babylonia.
- ✚ A fire that spread from its branches (19:14): Zedekiah's rebellion (2 Ki 24:20)

The repetitive patterns of prophetic predictions employing the same or similar imagery act as a psychological and moral challenge by force of their cumulative effect. Graphically depicting the spiritual realities surrounding them, whether rebellion and judgment, or redemption and mercy, the prophet drives home his points with merciless precision and repetition. He leaves no hope of denial, or claims of ignorance, to his recipients.



### ***Ezekiel's prophetic-historical recital against Israel: Ezek 20:1-29***

Adding to his full stock of imagistic prophecies, Ezekiel now gives them a redemptive historical recital, recalling their long history of rebellion against the love and covenant of YHWH. This brings them directly back to the Exodus<sup>641</sup> (as we have seen arise in the prophets countless times), and explicitly reminds them that God had revealed himself to them as the Lord their God (20:5).

- ⇒ That the Lord delivered them from Egypt (20:6-7).
- ⇒ That they rebelled against the Lord with Egyptian idols (20:8).
- ⇒ Nevertheless, the Lord still delivered them into the land of promise (20:9-11).
- ⇒ The Lord gave them his Sabbaths as a sign that the Lord made them holy (20:12).
- ⇒ YET, the people still rebelled against the Lord (20:13).
- ⇒ The Lord prevented them from entering the land, but had mercy on their children (20:15-20).
- ⇒ YET, the children rebelled against the Lord and the Lord let them go their own way (20:21-26).

### ***Ezekiel's prophecy of judgment and restoration of Israel: Ezek 20:30-44***

- ⇒ Therefore, judgment awaits them (20:27-30ff.)
  - ❖ This judgment will be a purging, so it speaks of HOPE (20:30-38).
  - ❖ This judgment's purging will bring about renewal and a remnant to the land which will know that God is the Lord (20:39-44).
  - ❖ The *holy name of YHWH* will be honored (20:39). See p. 531.

### ***Ezekiel's parable of the fire: Ezek 20:45-49***

The judgment would come from the north, the judgment would be devastating.

- ✚ The consuming fire (20:46): the Babylonians from the north.
- ✚ The southern forest burned (20:47): the nation of Judah/Jerusalem



### ***Ezekiel's parable of the sword: Ezek 21:1-32***

Babylon is presented as the undisputed enemy and instrument of God's coming judgment. There are five sword oracles in this chapters, all of which reiterate the simple fact of Babylon's coming invasion. The sword is Nebuchadnezzar, and his attack will be from south to north (comprehensive) (21:5).

Nebuchadnezzar is shown as completely idolatrous (a genuine slap in the face of idolatrous Judah), for he consults his idols (*teraphim*) through divination of arrows (bellomancy), livers of sacrificed animals (hepatoscopy), and omens. The irony of this situation should not be overlooked: Israel who was consulting the false gods and idols of the nations was going to see and *know* that the Lord God was the one "who drew my sword" (21:5) using the idolatrous Babylonians to do so. They and their gods were but pawns in the hand of the Almighty God.

- See ANE pantheons, etc., p. .

Liver Omen from Babylonia.<sup>642</sup>

<sup>641</sup> See Yoshiaki Hattori, "Divine Dilemma in Ezekiel's View of the Exodus: An Exegetical Study of Ezekiel 20:5-29."

<sup>642</sup> *Reader's Digest Great People of the Bible*, p 260.

To “read” the future, and for other magical uses, The Babylonians used necromancy (summoning the dead), extispicy (liver entrails), lecanomancy (oil patterns on water), libanomancy (smoke from censers)



*Babylonian medicine combined religion, magic and science. At right a priest-physician examines the liver of a sacrificed sheep to divine the future of a patient, pegging his findings on a clay model of the liver (above) marked with magical omens. Whips, masks and a clay statuette are present to drive off disease-causing demons, who were thought to fear their own image. More practical wisdom is evident here in the foods prescribed: tear-inducing raw onion to cleanse the patient's infected eye, and a medicinal beverage. An exiled Jew takes notes, hoping to add this cure to Jewish medicine.*

Reader's Digest Great People of the Bible, p. 260.

If a man charges another man with practicing witchcraft but cannot bring proof against him, he who is charged with witchcraft shall go to the divine River Ordeal, he shall indeed submit to the divine River Ordeal; if the divine River Ordeal should overwhelm him (that is, he drowns), his accuser shall take full legal possession of his estate; if the divine River Ordeal should clear that man and should he survive, he who made the charge of witchcraft against him shall be killed; he who submitted to the divine River Ordeal shall take full legal possession of his accuser's estate.<sup>33</sup> (Laws of Hammurabi §2)

A large group of omens revealed a predetermined situation, which was avoided by magical means. Omens involved two types of divine revelation given to individuals: (1) a warning about a specific danger predicted by an observable fact, or (2) a notification of a propitious development in the future. Omens were the main way in which Mesopotamian gods communicated their intentions and decisions. That is, the Babylonians believed that the gods disclosed their intentions to humans by signs in natural phenomena and world events. These signs could be interpreted through prolonged observation and deep study. The most common forms of divination were examination of the entrails of sacrificial animals (extispicy) and observation of the stars and planets (astrology). Other forms of communication, though rarely used, were oracles, prophecy, necromancy, or incubation (that is, spending the night in a sanctuary in order to receive a dream message).

Omens were either solicited or unsolicited. In the case of a solicited omen a specialist examined or observed a situation he deliberately induced. The gods could then be asked for advice in a specific situation. Omens predicting disaster for an individual called for the speedy performance of a specific rite to prevent the threat from becoming reality. Rituals were as diverse as the divine signs prompting their use—such rituals were often recorded on individual tablets, each designed for a specific situation.

Unsolicited omens, such as a solar eclipse, the birth of a baby with two heads, or the appearance of a wild animal in the city, could be seen by anybody, and even the casual observer could be affected. If the sign foretold evil, the observer could ward off its evil effect by preventive rites. Signs observed at an individual's house related primarily to that particular person; events that happened in the community (for instance, a wolf seen in town or an untimely regional thunderstorm) affected the city or district. Events in the capital could have consequences for the state administration. Terrestrial or celestial omens, such as earthquakes or eclipses, affected the whole country and its representatives, the king, the court, and their politics or warfare. Preventive rituals were recorded

in various ways. Sometimes they were written on individual tablets, each designed for a specific occurrence. At other times, the ritual instructions and incantations were part of an omen series, so the specialist had easy access to all information necessary.

The common man, upon seeing an omen, probably contacted the nearest literate person, a priest, a scribe, a diviner, an exorcist, or even the local authorities. There was no one specialist to deal with unsolicited omens. If none of these people had access to the necessary manuals, they could contact a more erudite specialist or a higher authority, as in the following case:

To my lord, from your servant Sunkhurabi: In Great Zarrum, among the flocks of sheikh Zazum, a malformed lamb was born, but while I was staying with my lord in Mari, nobody informed me. As soon as I arrived in my district, they brought it to me, telling me the following: "It had one head, (and) its face looked like a ram's face; it (also) had just one breast, heart and (set of) entrails. From its umbilical cord (down) to its loin there were two bodies, but during birth one of its shoulders was ripped off, and (later on?) somebody crushed its head." Now I had it sent immediately to my lord. My lord should inspect it! (Letter from a governor to the king of Mari, Old Babylonian period)<sup>34</sup>

Diviners were specialists who solicited omens from the gods and interpreted the signs. A diviner (literally, "examiner") communicated with divine forces through extispicy, hepatoscopy, lecanomancy, and libanomancy. Diviners also used a variety of procedures to avoid evil events, such as oral formulas, manual rituals, and prayers. The Mesopotamian diviner's most important tool was a copper kettledrum covered with the hide of a black bull. There were rituals describing the ceremonies to provide a new drumhead. The process involved the ritual preparation of a bull chosen to be slaughtered, tanning its skin, and then installing its hide on the drum. After the bull had been slaughtered and its heart burned, they prepared the animal's skin and mourned its death. The bull was given a ritual burial, but its meat supplied food for the priests—as was done with any other sacrificial animal. Unlike exorcists, diviners did not belong to the priesthood of a particular temple. Most diviners known to us by name worked directly for the crown; they were either palace scholars or were attached to local governments or the army. The diviner could have no physical defects and had to be of free descent.<sup>35</sup>

Both private individuals and state officials consulted diviners on all important matters. Diviners usually received communications from the gods through extispicy; the diviner requested the gods to "write" their messages on the entrails, especially the liver, which the diviner "read"

K.Rhea Nemet-Nejat, *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*, pp. 198-199.

<sup>643</sup> K.Rhea Nemet-Nejat, *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*, pp. 198-199.



Liver model inscribed with omens. This model records how the liver of a sacrificed lamb looked when the stars collapsed as Sin-iddinam (1849–1843 BCE) entered the temple of Shamash. Ht. 74 mm, W. 69 mm. © YALE BABYLONIAN COLLECTION, YALE UNIVERSITY, NEW HAVEN. See A. Goetze, *Old Babylonian Omen Texts*, Yale Oriental Series 10 (London and New Haven, Yale University Press, 1947), no 1.

by examining the organs. Sometimes the diviners used liver models, interpreting the signs in order to locate or record unusual features. The diviners had extensive handbooks that listed every conceivable deformation, mark, or discoloration, often further defined by location and significance.

Hepatoscopy, the type of divination in which the liver of a sacrificed animal was examined, continued to be the main way of consulting the will of the gods, even when astral divination gained in importance. In fact, portents from celestial omens were verified by the questions sub-

mitted to the liver diviner or haruspex. A “letter of recommendation” addressed to the king named twenty-three well-trained scholars and described the haruspex in glowing terms—“he is expert in divination.”<sup>36</sup>

Extispicy, the form of divination based on examination of the intestines of slaughtered animals, was used to foretell future events. Extispicy involved at least one animal for each inquiry, so private citizens probably resorted to this technique only in extraordinary circumstances. The diviner was also able to perform cheaper, though less precise, methods for soliciting a divine message, such as lecanomancy (observing the pattern of oil poured onto water, or vice versa) and libanomancy (observing smoke generated by a censer). Also, prayers to the stars, particularly to Ursa Major, the Wagon of the Babylonian sky, were employed by the fortune teller to obtain a reliable omen through a dream. There is a compendium of such information in the Assyrian Dream-book.<sup>37</sup> During first millennium BCE Assyria, there were professional “observers of birds” in the king’s service. They furnished reports on omens derived from the movement of birds. The observers of birds were also interpreters of dreams.

The methods of divination described above sought answers on a binary level. The client, king or citizen, through the medium of the diviner, asked for a “yes” or “no” from the gods for a specific problem or situation.

In the case of an ambiguous reading, the signs were counted, and a mathematical majority of positive or negative aspects were totaled to determine the final verdict. If the totals were the same for positive and negative answers, the process was repeated. There was no immediate danger in a negative sign, as long as the situation under investigation was properly postponed or even canceled in due time. Because of this, no follow-up rituals were required. The handbooks used for interpreting the divine signs were organized by topic and followed a format: the omen was listed in the conditional clause (the protasis), “If such-and-such is seen (or happens),” followed by an apodosis that described the portended event in a declarative clause. The list could be expanded indefinitely by variations on the protasis. For example, multiple births were enumerated from two up to eight or nine. Some omens were traced back to historical events of the past, when the occurrences were observed for the first time. Thousands of different signs were collected, and the resulting texts were expanded into purely theoretical “science” by adding scores of conceivable or inconceivable possibilities.

Astral magic is the art of harnessing the power of the stars through prayers and rituals. Professional diviners and exorcists practiced astral magic to foretell the future, and avoid evil portents (apotropaic rituals), and find the most auspicious

K. Rhea Nemet-Nejat, *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*, pp. 200–201.

<sup>644</sup> K.Rhea Nemet-Nejat, *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*, pp. 200–201.

**Ezekiel's parable of the dross: Ezek 22:1-31**

Ezekiel catalogues their many sins and introduces another potent image of God's people having become *dross*.  
Jerusalem,

- ⇒ Sheds blood (22:1-2, 12).
- ⇒ Makes idols (22:2-3).
- ⇒ Princes use power to shed blood (22:6).
- ⇒ Oppresses foreigners, the fatherless, and widows (22:7, 29).
- ⇒ Desecrates the sanctuary and Sabbath (22:8, 26b).
- ⇒ Dishonors women (22:10-11).
- ⇒ Accepts bribes, extort, practice usury (22:12, 29).
- ⇒ Conspiracy among the princes (22:23-25).
- ⇒ Priests do violence to the law and profane the holy things (22:26).
- ⇒ False prophets whitewash the people's sins with false visions (22:28).

Dross is an apt metaphor for people who have become useless in the plan of redemption. They have become so completely corrupted that there was no longer any proper claim to the covenant of God. Every command of God was being forsaken, and the prophets of God were being ignored and mocked. Despite the negative value of this metaphor of dross, there is the hopeful element of *purging* that it conveys, similar to other motifs of purging Ezekiel has already employed. The dross of Jerusalem will be gathered into the city and burned (22:19-22) (the final destruction), and this would cause the remnant to “know that I the Lord have poured out my wrath upon you” (22:22).

Cf. Isa 1:25 I will turn my hand against you;  
I will thoroughly purge away your dross  
and remove all your impurities.

Jer 6:27-30 “I have made you a tester of metals  
and my people the ore,  
that you may observe  
and test their ways.  
28 They are all hardened rebels,  
going about to slander.  
They are bronze and iron;  
they all act corruptly.  
29 The bellows blow fiercely  
to burn away the lead with fire,  
but the refining goes on in vain;  
the wicked are not purged out.  
30 They are called rejected silver,  
because the LORD has rejected them.”



The Lord seeks someone to “stand before me in the gap” – often assumed to be an intercessor. The problem is, there was no adequate person to do this task(?) If the latter is suggested, it may contain messianic undertones, setting the stage for the only One who is able to perfectly intercede.

Cf. Isa 51:18 Of all the sons she bore  
there was none to guide her;  
of all the sons she reared  
there was none to take her by the hand.

**Ezekiel's allegory of two adulterous sisters: Ezek 23:1-31**

This allegory recalls *Ezekiel's allegory of three sisters* (Ezek 16:44-52), for these two sisters Oholah (“her tent,” Samaria) and Oholibah (“my tent is in her,” Jerusalem) are prostituted to the foreign powers (Egypt and Assyria). *Realpolitik* is given another condemnation in this allegory. This is a well developed allegory with extensive detail comparing their political alliances as a form of prostitution, abandoning their God. Israel's history of rebellion is told in the graphic imagery of prostitution (which contrasted boldly with their history of redemption often told in the imagery of God's fatherly/husbandry love for his people).

As in all the preceding prophecies, the end result was to be that “then you will know that I am the Sovereign Lord” (23:49).



***Ezekiel's allegory of the cooking pot: Ezek: 24:1-14***

This allegory comes at the important juncture of fulfillment, for Jerusalem was under attack (588 BC) and the many words of the prophets warning of such were being fulfilled. The presumption of those remaining in Jerusalem was to end abruptly. The cooking imagery is just as graphic and gripping as that of the two prostituted sisters, describing here the bloodshed of the people of Judah likened to a cooking pot. But further, it predicts that *they* will become like a cooking pot, for due to their sins they will become like a pot on the fire for cooking. *Purging* is the essential meaning of the cooking pot imagery, even though they were nearly impossible to purge (24:12).

***Ezekiel's wife dies as prophetic enactment: Ezek 24:15-27***

Perhaps the saddest of the prophetic enactments is the requirement of Ezekiel to mourn for his dead wife without showing any signs of grief as a picture of the judgment coming on Jerusalem and Judah's exhortation to do as Ezekiel has done (24:22). They would not be given the freedom or luxury to mourn their losses. The grief that Ezekiel would have had for his wife would have been great, and illustrative of the grief God had for his lost people. But the people were not to express their grief over the loss of Jerusalem, for they had it coming to them after many years of prophetic warning to return to the Lord. In that sense, they had *no right* to grieve over their loss as did Ezekiel.



As in all the preceding prophecies, the end result was to be that "they will know that I am the Lord" (24:27).

**(2) Nations would fall: Ezek 25-32**

- Compare judgment-compass, pp. 436, 457.

***Ezekiel's prophecies against the foreign nations: Ezek 25-32***

Note the many times in this section that the same covenantal idea of *knowing the Lord* that is given as the result of God's judgment on the nations. Even the nations will know that YHWH is God. This is the gospel-mission to the nations, which includes the Gentiles.

***The border countries*****(a) Amon (east): Ezek 25:1-7**

Gen 19:37 – the son (Ben-Ammib) of Lot by his younger daughter. The father of the Ammonites. Amon had no concern for the Jerusalem sanctuary when it was desecrated and Israel/Judah went into exile (25:3-4). They rejoiced.

**(b) Moab (south): Ezek 25:8-11**

Gen 19:37 – son of Lot by his older daughter. Moab mocked Judah and her God (25:8).

**(c) Edom (south): Ezek 25:12-14**

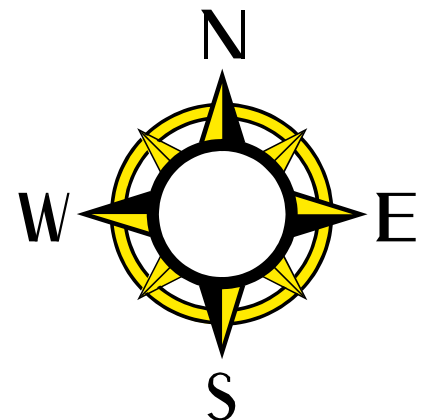
Gen 36:1— sons of Esau, brother of Jacob, son of Isaac and Sarah. Edom took revenge on Judah (refusing them refuge after the attack in 586) (25:12).

**(d) Philistia (west): Ezek 25:15-17**

Gen 10:13 – Mizraim, son of Ham, son of Noah, was the father of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, 14 Pathrusites, Casluhites (from whom the *Philistines* came) and Caphtorites. Philistia took vengeance on Judah (25:15).

**(e) Tyre (west): Ezek 26:1-28:26**

Coastal cities, Tyre and Sidon. Tyre was the Phoenician capital (Lebanon today). Tyre rejoiced at Jerusalem's destruction (26:1-2). Considering the great importance of this ancient coastal city, this prediction is given many verses and detailed descriptions, and thus naturally has become a much debated text. Those who believe in the inspiration of the text hold it forth as evidence of the accuracy of OT prophecy. While those who do not believe in inspiration present it as evidence that OT prophecy is unreliable. That is, because they argue that Nebuchadnezzar did not take Tyre as the text predicts (26:7).

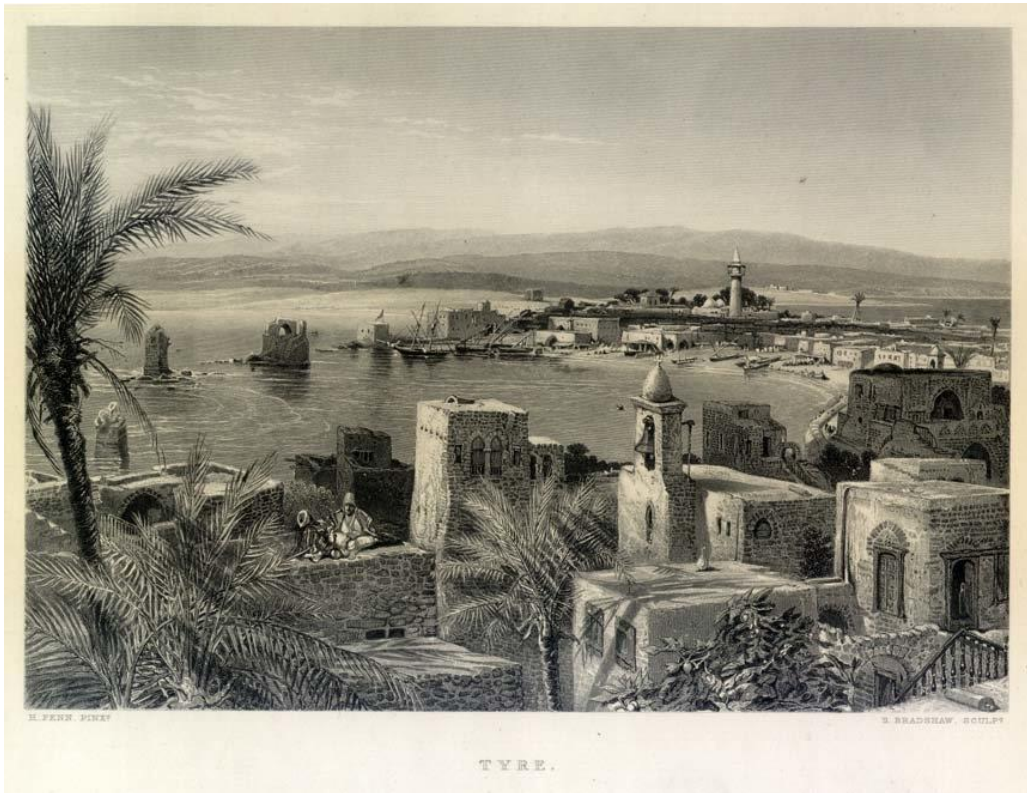




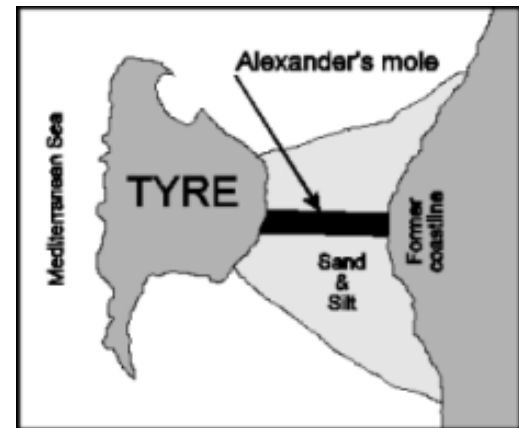
We know that Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Tyre for many years (586-573) (after the fall of Jerusalem). Tyre was the primary enemy of Babylon after the fall of Egypt (605), being the leading trade city of Phoenicia. Even though the city was not destroyed, the siege ended in a treaty which allowed the king of Tyre to remain but the city came under Babylonian control, exhausting the city of its great power. The many details of the text describing the siege of Tyre are a completely accurate depiction of Babylonian tactics. As for the destruction of Tyre, Ezek 26:12-14 describes the *eventual* destruction of the city that would come about through the “they” who would plunder and break down the walls of Tyre. Assumptions that this must refer to Nebuchadnezzar are unwarranted, and indeed historically impossible. The prophet had already announced judgment of Tyre by “many nations” (Ezek 26:3) being brought against Tyre, and that is precisely what happened in through its gradual demise. “They will destroy the walls of Tyre and pull down her towers” (26:4). The third person singular used in reference to Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 7-11) changes to the third person plural in vv. 12ff.

Ezek 26:12 They will plunder your wealth and loot your merchandise; they will break down your walls and demolish your fine houses and throw your stones, timber and rubble into the sea.

This shift to plural suggests that “they” does not refer solely to Nebuchadnezzar, but rather to a number of forces that eventually brought down the fall of Tyre. For example, Alexander the Great was partly responsible for Tyre’s demise, though in the Seleucid period Tyre rebounded in Seleucid times, through the Crusades, even until the Saracens destroyed it in 1292 AD. That is, the fulfillment of this prophecy came, though *progressively*.<sup>645</sup> (See extensive archeological finds at Tyre.) Compare Sidon in Ezek 28:20:24 which is judged but not destroyed. Sidon continues in existence today (Saidon in Lebanon, twenty five miles north of Tyre).



(left) Tyre etched (19<sup>th</sup> cent?).<sup>646</sup>



(above) Alexander the Great's Conquest of Tyre.<sup>647</sup>

Controversial texts: Ezek 28:1-2, 12-19, 16-17

- a. **King of Tyre?** If the person described is human, then Ittobaal, king of Tyre (28:12) is the most likely candidate. He would be claiming equality with Melqart, Tyre’s city-god (28:2). Yet, the prophet condemns him as nothing but a man, and not a god (not wise like Daniel) (28:3). He was a model of perfection (described in creation/fall imagery) in Eden, the garden of God (28:12-13). He was *like* a guardian cherub (28:14-15), as a king, yet through his trade and violence he became proud and corrupted, and was thus [*like* Adam/Eve] thrown out of his heavenly/edenic garden (28:16-19). A negative comparison with Adam in paradisaical Eden, as well as the cherub, sanctuary cherubim, and God. Rebellion – fall – judgment. This is not a literal paradise here, but a comparison for figurative purposes to show parallels.

<sup>645</sup> See R.W. Manweiler, “The Destruction of Tyre,” *The Evidence of Prophecy*, pp. 21-30.

<sup>646</sup> From [www.lombardmaps.com/cat/viewsforeign/holymideast/tyre.jpg](http://www.lombardmaps.com/cat/viewsforeign/holymideast/tyre.jpg)

<sup>647</sup> From <http://www.robibrad.demon.co.uk/images/articles/tyre.gif>

Some think that the king was guilty of wicked trading practices because “his trade lifted him up to wealth and power, his heart was filled with iniquity.”<sup>648</sup>

Keil says the “super terrestrial glory of his position corresponds to his self-deification as depicted,” since the king regarded himself as a god.<sup>649</sup>

- b. **Satan?** Many have seen aspects of this person described that are not human but angelic. And, it would then describe the rise and fall of Satan. He boasted of being equal with God (28:2). Proud and corrupted by his greatness. The model of perfection and beauty (28:12) in Eden as a guardian cherub on the holy mountain of God (28:13-14). He became very proud as a result, and God drove him from his heavenly position (28:16-19). (Cf. espec. [Isa 14:12-15](#).)

The problem with the second interpretation is that the text explicitly states the prophecy is against the “ruler of Tyre” (28:2) the “king of Tyre (28:11). Also, Satan is never presented in the Bible as a cherub, and there is no logical/theological evidence that he was placed in Eden to guard it with the cherub’s *after* the fall of Adam and Eve (Gen 3:24). We can from the text, however, see parallels between the high estate of Adam/Eve before the fall, and the consequences of the rebellion, with both aspects of the life of the king of Tyre. Further extrapolating parallels, this text also illustrates the common pattern from *creation to fall* for all rebellious creatures (whether angelic or human). Applied to all such cases of rebellion, the obvious deduction is that God’s judgment is justified.

#### (f) *Sidon (west): Ezek 28:20-26*

According to tradition, possibly the first Phoenician city to be founded by Canaan’s first born son, Sidon. Gen 10:15 — Canaan was the father of Sidon his firstborn, and of the Hittites.

Sidon had been a “malicious neighbor” (28:24). As noted above, complete destruction was not predicted for Sidon, and it continues to exist even today.

#### (g) *Egypt (south): Ezek 29:1-32:32*

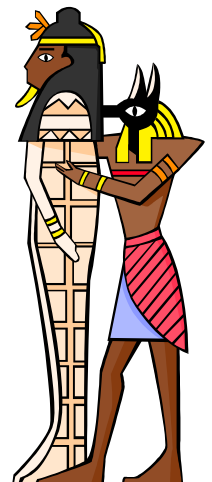
Gen 10:6, 13; 1 Chron 1:8-11 – Mizraim was one of the four sons of Ham, and the legendary ancestor of Egypt. Egypt had been a “staff of reed” for Israel, which splintered when Israel leaned on them (29:6-7). They were no help, despite Pharaoh Hophra’s (589-570) attempts to help Israel against Babylon (Jer 37:1-10). The prophecy against Egypt is extensive and includes seven oracles against them:

- ⇒ Oracle 1 ~ (29:1-16) concludes with promise that they will know the Lord.
- ⇒ Oracle 2 ~ (29:17-21) concludes with messianic promise of the Horn.
- ⇒ Oracle 3 ~ (30:1-19) concludes with promise that they will know the Lord.
- ⇒ Oracle 4 ~ (30:20-26) concludes with promise that they will know the Lord.
- ⇒ Oracle 5 ~ (31:1-19) concludes with promise of Egypt’s demise.
- ⇒ Oracle 6 ~ (32:1-16) concludes with promise that they will know the Lord.
- ⇒ Oracle 7 ~ (32:17-32) concludes with promise of Egypt’s demise.

Remarkably, the Lord expected Egypt to recognize him, forsake their false gods, and prepare for judgment in the same way he prophesied against Israel/Judah. The result of his judgment would be that “they will know that I am the Lord” (see Ezek 29:6, 9, 16, 21; 30: 8, 19, 25, 26). This brings us back to the Egyptian sojourn, the plagues, the Passover, and the Exodus from Egypt. Egypt would also have remembered this history, presumably, as background to all that the prophet Ezekiel was proclaiming. Just as Ezekiel predicted, Nebuchadnezzar came against Egypt (fragmentary Babylonian tablets refer to the invasion of Egypt in 568 BC, as well as Herodotus). Ezekiel predicts that eventually there would no longer be any princes *from Egypt* (not “in Egypt,” NIV):

Ezek 30:13 (NIV) This is what the Sovereign LORD says:  
 “I will destroy the idols  
 and put an end to the images in Memphis.  
 No longer will there be a prince in Egypt,  
 and I will spread fear throughout the land.”

Ezek 30:13 (ESV)  
 “Thus says the Lord God:  
 “I will destroy the idols  
 and put an end to the images in Memphis;  
 there shall no longer be a prince from the land of Egypt;  
 so I will put fear in the land of Egypt.



<sup>648</sup> Keil, Commentary on the OT, vol. IX, p. 416.

<sup>649</sup> Keil, Commentary on the OT, vol. IX, p. 409.

The text does not predict that there will never *be a prince in Egypt*, but that no prince will come from Egypt. Considering that for practically their entire history beginning ca. 3000 BC Egypt was self-rule, this was a remarkable prediction of reversal:

1. Babylon conquered through Nebuchadnezzar.
2. Persia conquered Egypt.
3. Alexander the Great conquered Egypt.
4. Ptolemies (Greeks) rule Egypt.
5. Romans conquered Egypt.
6. Arabs conquered Egypt.
7. Turks conquered Egypt.

## **b) Redemption/restoration: Ezek 33-48**

Ezekiel's prophecies of Israel's restoration begin. These prophecies occur after the fall of Jerusalem and contain a mixture of warning, judgment, and encouragement. As in all his prophecies, Ezekiel repeatedly notes that they "will know that I am the Lord."

Note: some of the order of these texts I am considering slightly differently from that of the text for thematic purposes of structuring.

### **(1) Jerusalem judged: Ezek 33**

Ezekiel picks up the earlier gospel themes of righteousness, wickedness, mercy, and judgment which he expounded in 18:21-29. The people were not to forget that they were being judged for their own sins, not those of their fathers. Thus, they could never say that God was not just, even though they were saying just that (33:17). Rather, *they* are the ones who were unjust.

Further, The prophet makes it completely plain that no person who is righteous will be "let off the hook" if they rebel against God. This "righteousness of the righteous" (33:12) is not imputed righteousness in the NT sense. Rather, it is the righteousness of the person who does what is right. This will not save them from the judgment of God if they turn away from God and rebel. Part of the judgment on God's people during this time of attack on Jerusalem was the *silence of the prophet* Ezekiel who could not speak. Such silence is always a sign of God's judgment. It is not until a man who had escaped Jerusalem arrived five months later in Babylon that the mouth of the prophet was opened. The word of the Lord was fulfilled in Jerusalem's destruction which Ezekiel had proclaimed, and thus his silenced tongue was *apropos* during this period. Whereas the news of his word being fulfilled was appropriately followed by the prophet again being given the word from the Lord (33:23), that word was another dire warning against their ongoing sin:

- ⇒ Presuming on the land-promise of God (33:24)
- ⇒ Eating defiled meats (idolatry) (33:25).
- ⇒ Shedding blood with the sword (33:26a).
- ⇒ Adultery (33:26b).
- ⇒ Ignoring the words of the prophet (33:30-31a, 32).
- ⇒ Hypocrisy: greedy hearts, external devotion (33:31b).

### **(2) Nations would fall: Ezek 35; 38-39**

#### ***Ezekiel's prophecy against Edom: Ezek 35:1-15***

➤ See also the ANE backgrounds, p. 608-609, as well as the discussion on Edom in Obadiah, p. 135.

Edom was already addressed in Ezek 25:12-14, Isa 63:1-6, and Jer 49:7-22 (above). The longstanding Jacob/Esau conflict is the background to these prophecies against Edom. Nevertheless, this prophecy should not be considered exclusively against Edom, but representative also of the warnings against all the nations that either attacked Israel/Judah or were indifferent to their oppression.

Cf. Amos 1:11 This is what the LORD says:  
 "For three sins of Edom,  
 even for four, I will not turn back my wrath.  
 Because he pursued his brother with a sword,  
 stifling all compassion,  
 because his anger raged continually  
 and his fury flamed unchecked . . ."



The cycle of this prophecy is structured around the repeated phrase "Then you will know that I am the

Lord” (35:4, 9, 12, 15).

~ Mt Seir will be desolate waste (35:3-4a).  
 You will know that I am the Lord (35:4b).  
 Because of ancient hostility (35:5-6).  
 ~ Mt Seir will be desolate waste (35:7-9a).  
 You will know that I am the Lord (35:9b).  
 Because of present hostility (35:10-11).  
 You will know that I am the Lord (35:12).  
 Because of rejoicing at Israel’s desolation (35:12b-15a).  
 ~ Mt Seir will be desolate (35:15b).  
 You will know that I am the Lord (35:15c).

**Ezekiel’s prophecy against Gog and Magog: Ezek 38:1-39:29**

Gog and Magog: have long puzzled interpreters. Magog was a son of Japheth, as were Meshech and Tubal (below):

Gen 10:2 The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech and Tiras.

Cf. Rev 20:7-8 When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore.



(left) A good example of a far-fetched map: The identification of England as Tarshish is particularly amusing.<sup>650</sup>

The identification of these referents is greatly disputed. Many fanciful theories have been entertained for centuries. The question is, what is their purpose in Ezekiel’s prophecy? The same can be asked of Meshech and Tubal below. It is reasonably proposed that the linking of Gog with other nations known as godless suggests that this coalition represents in part the forces of evil arrayed against God and his people (Gomer, Cush, Persia, Put, Sheba, Tarshish). Regardless of their historical significance, they symbolize the world powers’ opposition to God, and in the Revelation 20 text represent the nations Satan uses to battle God’s people in a last battle. If one takes this imagery literally, then it would

represent an attack on Jerusalem. If taken figuratively, then it would describe symbolically the battle between good and evil, God and Satan.<sup>651</sup>

<sup>650</sup> From [http://www.antipas.org/bible\\_study\\_aids/maps/europe.jpg](http://www.antipas.org/bible_study_aids/maps/europe.jpg)

<sup>651</sup> VanGemeren says “the Gog and Magog motif cannot be restricted to an exclusive historical or eschatological relevance” (*Prophetic Word*, p. 334).

*Meshech and Tubal*: two Anatolian kingdoms conquered by Sargon II and invaded by Cimmerians. Mescheh and Tubal were sons of Japheth, son of Noah. Read Yamauchi right and below.<sup>652</sup> Those of Meshech were pagan traders in slaves and bronze. In Assyrian chronicles, they are referred to as *Muski*, and are attested during the reigns of Tiglath-Pileser I (1115-1102), Shalmaneser III (858-824), and Sargon II (721-705). The clan of Tubal was similar to Meshech and both come under judgment in Isaiah and Ezekiel. Tubal may have been on the coast, but identification is not certain.

Eze 27:13 Greece, Tubal and Meshech traded with you; they exchanged slaves and articles of bronze for your wares.

Ezek 32:26 “Meshech and Tubal are there, with all their hordes around their graves. All of them are uncircumcised, killed by the sword because they spread their terror in the land of the living.

Ps 120:5 Woe to me that I dwell in Meshech, that I live among the tents of Kedar!

As in the previous prophecies, the goal is made explicit: the glory (39:21) and the holiness (39:27) of the Lord will be displayed among the nations and “the house of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God” (39:21-22, 28).

# 1

## A Russian Invasion of Iran?

### Rosh—A Biblical Reference to Russia?

According to certain interpretations focusing on Ezekiel 38:2, current political developments involving the Russians and Iranians have been predicted by the Bible. In the King James Version this verse reads: “Son of man, set thy face against *Gog*, the land of *Magog*, the *chief* prince of *Meshech* and *Tubal*, and prophesy against him” (italics supplied). The Hebrew word for “chief” (*rō’sh*) was transliterated by the Septuagint as a proper name, *Rōs*.

According to *The Late Great Planet Earth*, the phenomenally popular book by Hal Lindsey and C. C. Carlson, *Gog* and *Magog* denote the Scythians (=Russia), *Rosh* is Russia, *Meshech* is Moscow, and *Tubal* is Tobolsk.<sup>1</sup> (See Map 1.) To support these identifications Lindsey appeals to the venerable commentary of C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch on Ezekiel,<sup>2</sup> and to the entries of the great Hebrew scholar, Wilhelm Gesenius.<sup>3</sup>

These identifications were also promulgated by the old

1. *The Late Great Planet Earth* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970), pp. 63–65.

2. *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Ezekiel* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1891), vol. 2, p. 157. Lindsey gives neither the date nor the page reference. I am indebted to Roger Chambers, who provided them for me in a graduate paper.

3. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 20th ed. (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1872), pp. 534, 626, 955, 1121.

<sup>652</sup> Yamauchi, *Foes from the Northern Frontier*, pp. 19-27.

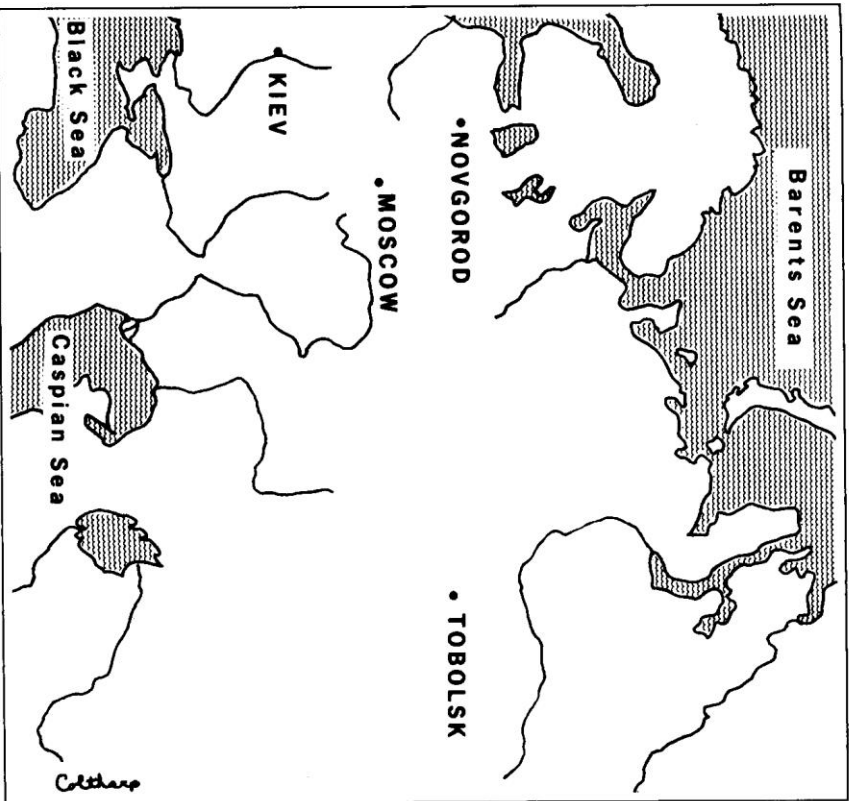
*Scotfield Reference Bible*: "The reference to Meshch and Tubal (Moscow and Tobolsk) is a clear mark of identification [i.e., with Russia]."<sup>4</sup> The *New Scotfield Reference Bible* is not as explicit: "The reference is to the powers in the north of Europe, headed by Russia."<sup>5</sup>

In a more recent work Lindsey interprets Ezekiel 38:5 as a prediction that Russia will soon invade Persia (Iran).<sup>6</sup> The Russians did seize Azerbaijan in Iran after the Second World War,<sup>7</sup> and invaded Afghanistan (ancient Bactria) at the end of 1979.<sup>8</sup> They may very well invade Iran again for geopolitical reasons. Citing several antiquated studies, Lindsey incorrectly concludes that these historical developments were prophesied by Ezekiel.

For one thing, even if one were to transliterate the Hebrew *rōsh* as a proper name (as do the Jerusalem Bible, the New English Bible, and the New American Standard Bible)<sup>9</sup> rather than translate it as 'chief' (as do the King James, Revised Standard, New American Bible, and New International Version), it can have nothing to do with modern "Russia." This would be a gross anachronism, for the modern name is based upon the name *Rus*, which was brought into the region of Kiev, north of the Black Sea, by the Vikings only in the Middle Ages.<sup>10</sup>

4. *The Scotfield Reference Bible*, ed. C. I. Scotfield (New York: Oxford University, 1917), p. 883.  
 5. *New Scotfield Reference Bible*, ed. E. S. English (New York: Oxford University, 1967), p. 881.  
 6. Hal Lindsey, *The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon* (New York: Bantam, 1980), pp. 67-68. For critiques of Lindsey's interpretations, see D. M. Beegle, *Prophecy and Prediction* (Ann Arbor: Pryor-Pettingill, 1978), ch. 16, especially pp. 218-19; T. Boersma, *Is the Bible a Jigsaw Puzzle?* (St. Catharines: Paidola, 1978), ch. 8; C. Vandervoort, *Hal Lindsey and Biblical Prophecy* (St. Catharines: Paidola, 1978), pp. 78-80.  
 7. See Faramarz S. Fatemi, *The USSR in Iran: The Beginning of the Cold War* (San Diego: A. S. Barnes, 1980).  
 8. Shortly before the Russian soldiers invaded Afghanistan, Russian archaeologists uncovered a magnificent gold Kushan (second-first century B.C.) treasure in northern Afghanistan. Cf. V. I. Sarianidi, "The Treasure of the Golden Mound," *Arch* 33.3 (1980): 31-41.  
 9. *The Avrie Study Bible*, ed. C. C. Rytte (Chicago: Moody, 1978), which uses the New American Standard Bible, notes: "The prince of Rosh [better: the chief prince of Meshch and Tubal], the area of modern Turkey" (p. 1285).  
 10. David Wilson, *The Vikings and Their Origins* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1970), pp. 102-04; Magnus Magnusson, *Viking Expansion Westwards* (New York: Henry Z. Walck, 1974), p. 14; H. R. E. Davidson, *The Viking Road to Byzantium* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1976), pp. 58-61; Basil Dmytryshyn, *A History of Russia* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977), pp. 37-41.

Map 1  
Russia: Moscow and Tobolsk



The name *Rus* or *Rhos* first occurs in the writings of the Bishop of Troyes in 839. According to the *Primary Chronicle* (compiled in the years 1037-1116), it was in the year 852 that "the land Rus (around Kiev) was first named." The "Russes" are associated with the Scandinavian Varangians in both the contemporary Russian and Arabic sources.<sup>11</sup>

11. Though Western scholars accept the Scandinavian origins of the Rus, Russian scholars, reacting against the extreme "Normanist" claims regarding the origins of their earliest state, have argued for understandable nationalist reasons that the Rus were indigenous Slavs of the southern steppes. See Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, "The Norman Theory of the Origin of the Russian State," *The Russian Review* 7 (1947): 96-110, reprinted in *Readings in Russian History*,

### Gog and Magog

The baffling nature of the names "Gog and Magog" has led to a variety of identifications down through the centuries.<sup>12</sup> As A. R. Anderson has noted, "The term Gog and Magog has . . . become synonymous with barbarian, especially with the type of barbarian that bursts through the northern frontier of civilization."<sup>13</sup>

According to Josephus (*Antiquities* 1.123), "Magog founded the Magogians, thus named after him, but who by the Greeks are called Scythians" (cf. Jerome, *Commentary on Ezekiel* 38:2). The later Greeks also used the term *Scythian* to designate such groups as the Sarmatians, Alans, and Goths. Moreover, Ambrose identified Gog and Magog with the Goths.

The Goths were one of the major Germanic tribes which overran the Roman Empire at the end of the fourth and during the fifth century A.D. They were subdivided into the Ostrogoths (East Goths) and the Visigoths (West Goths). The latter were responsible for the sack of Rome in 410, which prompted Augustine to write *The City of God*. The Visigoths later dominated Spain until the invasion of the Moors in 711.

Alfonso III (866–c. 910) interpreted Ezekiel's prophecy about Magog as a prediction that Spain would be liberated from the Moors. Medieval writers also interpreted Magog as

ed. S. Harcave (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1962), vol. 1, pp. 128–38. I owe this reference to my colleague in Russian history, Professor Bruce Manning.

12. In Amos 7:1, the Septuagint inserts "Gog" as the name of the king of the locust swarm. The identification of any future fulfillment of the apocalyptic reference to Gog and Magog in Revelation 20:7–9 would require the inspiration of a prophet rather than the insights of an archaeologist or historian. See R. H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), pp. 361–63.

13. *Alexander's Gate, Gog and Magog, and the Inclosed Nations* (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1932), p. 8. See also E. A. Wallis Budge, *The History of Alexander the Great* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1889), pp. 164–200; idem, "Gog and Magog," Syriac Text by Jacob of Serug," ZA 6 (1891): 299–302; E. D. Phillips, "The Scythian Domination in Western Asia," *World Archaeology* 4:2 (1972): 134, comments: "Gog must represent the Scythians and their allies, but the choice of this name has not been satisfactorily explained. Ezekiel in these passages set a long tradition of apocalypse in Hebrew, Christian and Moslem belief. This is the main legacy of these nomad invasions, the first of their kind in western Asia."

### A Russian Invasion of Iran?

Spain. In their view Spain, the Land of the Goths, the Land of the Scyths, and Magog were synonymous.<sup>14</sup>

The Neofti Targum identified the Magog of Genesis 10:2 with *gymy*, that is, Germanicia of Commagene in eastern Turkey.<sup>15</sup> Still other identifications have included the Celts/Galatians, the Parthians, the Huns, the Mongols, the Arabs, the Magyars, and the Turks.

There is no cuneiform attestation for the land of Magog. But Assyrian texts do speak of the king of Lydia in western Turkey as *Gūgu*, that is, the famous Gyges who is credited with the invention of coinage.<sup>16</sup> Magog could possibly be explained then as *mā(t) Gūgu*, that is, "Land of Gyges."<sup>17</sup> Six inscriptions of Ashurbanipal (668–631 B.C.) relate to Gyges, who appealed to the Assyrians for aid in the face of the Cimmerian invasions. One of the texts describes a dream in which the god Ashur revealed to Gyges that his only hope lay in submission to the Assyrian king:

On the (same) day that he saw this dream, he [Gyges] sent his couriers to me to greet me, and the Cimmerians who had been disturbing his land, his hands took alive in battle. Together with his heavy tribute he sent them to Nineveh, my royal city, and kissed my feet.<sup>18</sup>

14. See Diego Saavedra y Rajaroto, in *Biblioteca de autores españoles* (Madrid: La Real Academia Española, 1947), vol. 25, pp. 386–87; J. A. Maravall, *El concepto de España en la Edad Media*, 2nd ed. (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1964), pp. 299–304. I owe these references to Professor Colin Smith. The Muslims themselves refer to Gog and Magog as *Yadūdī wa Madūdī* (Quran 21:96).

15. M. McNamara, *Targum and Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), pp. 194f.

16. See E. Yamamuchi, *Greece and Babylon* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1967), pp. 59, 61, 64. For classical sources on Gyges, see Tom Jones, *Paths to the Ancient Past* (New York: Free Press, 1967), pp. 70–96. Since the earliest extant coins are from the sixth century B.C. and not from Gyges's day (the seventh century), many scholars have questioned the tradition of Gyges's invention of coinage. On the controversy see E. Yamamuchi, "Two Reformers Compared," in *The Bible World*, ed. G. Rendsburg et al. (New York: Knave, 1980), pp. 278–81.

17. So H. L. Ellison, "Gog and Magog," *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. N. Hillier (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1980), vol. 1, pp. 573–74; W. F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968), p. 16, n. 40, maintained that "Gog refers, of course, to the northern barbarians, Amarna Gaggava." The word Gaggava appears in a letter from the pharaoh Amenophis III to the Kassite king Kadashman-Enlil I (Tell Amarna 1.36–40); the letter quotes the Kassite king, who was concerned about the health of his sister at the Egyptian court. His messengers had seen a woman there, but had not been allowed to speak to her: "Perhaps she is the daughter of a beggar: or of a Gagaitan, or the daughter of a Hanagalbatian (in the area of Mitanni)?"

18. D. D. Luckenbill, ed., *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1927), vol. 2, pp. 351–52.

## 24

## Foes from the Northern Frontier

After a while, however, Gyges neglected his obligations to send tribute to the Assyrians and also sent aid to their enemies, the Egyptians. Thereupon Ashurbanipal prayed for Gyges's death, a request which was fulfilled by another attack of the Cimmerians.

The riders which he constantly sent to inquire of my well-being broke off I was informed that he had become unfaithful to the word of Ashur, the god, my begetter, and that he trusted in his own strength; he had become proud. He had sent troops to aid Psammetichus, king of Egypt, who had thrown off my yoke. I prayed to Ashur and Ishtar: "Let his corpse be cast before his enemy; his bones carried off [i.e., scattered about]!" That which I implored of Ashur, came about. Before his enemies his corpse was cast; his bones were carried off. The Cimmerians, whom he had defeated by invoking my name, rose up and swept over his entire land.<sup>19</sup>

Sufficiently impressed by these developments, Gyges's son renewed the submission of the Lydians to the Assyrians.

Inasmuch, however, as the kingdom of Gyges did not extend to the areas of Meshech and Tubal (eastern Anatolia—see below), as is implied by Ezekiel 38:2 with respect to the kingdom of Gog, there is a problem with assuming that Gog is identical with Gyges, the similarity of the names notwithstanding. Thus various attempts to explain the background of Gog and Magog have not won universal consent.<sup>20</sup>

### Meshech and Tubal

Though the identification of Gog and Magog still remains disputed, the identifications of Meshech and Tubal have for a long time not been in doubt. All informed references and

19. M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, "Gyges and Assurbanipal," *Or* 46 (1977): 78.

20. G. Hübner, "Gögu," *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 18 (1915): 299–302; J. L. Myres, "Gog and the Danger from the North in Ezekiel," *Quarterly Statement, Palestine Exploration Fund* (1932): 213–19; J. G. Aalders, *Gog en Magog in Ezechiel* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1951); M. C. Astour, "Ezekiel's Prophecy of Gog and the Cuthene Legend of Naram-Sin," *JBL* 95.4 (1976): 567–79.

## 25 A Russian Invasion of Iran?

25

studies acknowledge that the association with Moscow and Tobolsk is untenable.<sup>21</sup>

The names of Meshech and Tubal were preserved in Greek by Herodotus (7.72) as the Moschoi and Tibarēnoi, tribes who lived in eastern Anatolia. Josephus (*Antiquities* 1.124) was also aware of their location in that region:

Thebel founded the Theobelians, nowadays called Iberians. The Meschenians, founded by Meschos, are today called Cappadocians, but a clear trace of their ancient designation survives; for they still have a city of the name of Mazaca, indicating to the expert that such was formerly the name of the whole race.

Since the late nineteenth century, Assyrian texts have been available which locate Mushku (Meshech) and Tabal (Tubal) in central and eastern Anatolia respectively.<sup>22</sup>

The Mushki first appear after the collapse of the Hittite Empire in the texts of Tiglath-pileser I (1115–1077), who encountered twenty thousand of them in the region of Kadmuhu in the Upper Tigris. The king reports that he dealt with them in the characteristically ferocious Assyrian manner:

21. R. H. Alexander, "A Fresh Look at Ezekiel 38 and 39," *JETS* 17 (1974): 161–62; idem, *Ezekiel* (Chicago: Moody, 1976), p. 122; E. M. Blaiklock, *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Atlas* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969), p. 45; J. J. Davis, *Paradise to Prison* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975), pp. 138–39; C. L. Feinberg, *The Prophecy of Ezekiel* (Chicago: Moody, 1969), p. 220; J. B. Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy: The Complete Guide to Scriptural Predictions and Their Fulfillment* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 367; J. B. Taylor, *Ezekiel* (London: Tynedale, 1969), p. 244; E. Yamauchi, "Meshech, Tubal, and Company," *JETS* 19 (1976): 239–47.

22. M. Jastrow, "Notes on Meshek and Tubal," *American Journal of Semitic Languages* 13 (1896–1897): 217; A. T. Olmstead, "The Assyrians in Asia Minor," in *Anatolian Studies Presented to W. M. Ramsay*, ed. W. H. Buckler (Manchester: Manchester University, 1923), pp. 283–96; idem, *History of Assyria* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1923), pp. 143–44, 221–28, 266–67; A. H. Sayce, "The Early Geography of South-Eastern Asia Minor," *JHS* 43 (1923): 44–49; G. A. Wainwright, "Tabal, Tibarēni, Tebarani," *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 39 (1936): 479–81; P. Naser, *L'Asie Mineure et l'Assyrie* (Louvain: Bureaux du Muséon, 1938); E. Dhorme, "Les peuples issus de Japhet d'après le chapitre X de la Genèse," *Recueil Edouard Dhorme* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1951), pp. 167–69; E. Cavagnac, "Mushki et Phrygiens," *JA* 241 (1953): 139–43; R. D. Barnett, *Phrygia and the Peoples of Anatolia in the Iron Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1967); cf. the revised *Cambridge Ancient History*, ed. I. E. S. Edwards et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1975), vol. 2, ch. 30, pp. 417–42.



## 26

## Foes from the Northern Frontier

I fought with their twenty thousand men-at-arms and five kings in the land Kadmuhu. I brought about their defeat. Like a storm demon I piled up the corpses of their warriors on the battlefield (and) made their blood flow into the hollows and plains of the mountains. I cut off their heads (and) stacked them like grain piles around their cities.<sup>23</sup>

Ashurnasirpal II (883–859) later received tribute from the Mushki, whose capital was at Mazaca (classical Caesarea, modern Kayseri) in eastern Turkey.<sup>24</sup>

Tabal, the region between Mazaca and the Taurus Mountains to the south, was attacked in 836 by Shalmaneser III.<sup>25</sup> Tiglath-pileser III assaulted Tabal in 732 when its king did not present the expected tribute.<sup>26</sup> An inscription of Tiglath-pileser III discovered by L. D. Levine in Iran in 1967 gives the name of the king of Tabal as Waššurme, a ruler whose own inscriptions have been discovered around Kayseri.<sup>27</sup>

Sargon II boasted of his success in suppressing Tabal in 713, after it had signed a treaty with Urartu, Assyria's enemy.<sup>28</sup> During the reign of Sargon II (721–705) the Mushki of central Anatolia were under Mita, the famous Midas, whose touch according to legend turned everything into gold. His capital was Gordion, which has been excavated by Rodney Young.<sup>30</sup> A huge 50-meter-high tumulus contained

23. A. K. Grayson, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions* (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1976), vol. 2, pp. 6–7.

24. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records*, vol. 1, pp. 138–44; Grayson, *Royal Inscriptions*, vol. 2, p. 123.

25. Naster, *L'Asie Mineure*, pp. 7ff.

26. D. J. Wiseman, "A Fragmentary Inscription of Tiglath-pileser III from Nimrud," *Iraq* 18 (1956): 122.

27. L. D. Levine, *Two Neo-Assyrian Stele from Iran* (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1972), pp. 11ff. 19; M. Weipert, "Menahem von Israel und seine Zeitgenossen in einer Steleinschrift des assyrischen Königs Tiglath-pileser III. aus dem Iran," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 89 (1973): 30; for the location of Tabal, see the map on p. 41; for inscriptions of the king of Tabal, see pp. 48–49.

28. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records*, vol. 2, pp. 12, 21–23, 46–48; cf. Cogan and Tadmor, "Cyges," pp. 80–81. The Tugarnah of Ezekiel 38:6 was Til-garinnu, the capital of Kammanu, on the border of Tabal. It was attacked by Sennacherb in 695.

29. The name Mita also occurs earlier in a Hittite text of the late thirteenth century as the name of a vassal in Armenia. Cf. O. R. Gurney, "Mita of Pahhuwa," *Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology* 28 (1954): 32ff.

30. M. J. Mellink, "The City of Midas," *Scientific American* 201 (July, 1959): 100–04; R. S. Young, "Early Mosses at Gordion," *Exped* 7 (Spring, 1965): 4–13; idem, "Phrygian Furniture from Gordion," *Exped* 16 (Spring, 1974): 2–13.

## A Russian Invasion of Iran?

27

the remains of an elderly man, perhaps of Midas himself. (See p. 54.)

A Cimmerian invasion forced the rebellious Mita to seek Assyrian aid in about 710. A text found at Nimrud (ancient Calah) by Max Mallowan, published by H. W. F. Saggs in 1958, and retranslated by J. N. Postgate in 1973, gives the dramatic news that Mita the Mushkaean (*me-ta-a KU/R mus-ka-a-a*) had sent the Assyrian king a messenger, pledging his allegiance as an ally.<sup>31</sup>

The Assyrian army advanced against the Cimmerians in Tabal in 706 and completely defeated them by 679. Sargon himself, however, died in 705, possibly in a battle against the Cimmerians.

The king known to the Assyrians as Mita of Mushku was known to the Greeks as Midas of the Phrygians (Herodotus 1.14). The Phrygians were originally from Thrace in Europe. They are mentioned frequently in Homer's *Iliad* (2.862; 3.183–85; 10.431; 16.719; 18.288–92). Herodotus (7.73) knew that the Phrygians entered Asia Minor from Europe. They probably emigrated after the fall of Troy and the collapse of the Hittite Empire at some time between the twelfth and the tenth century B.C.

In some areas of Anatolia there is an apparent occupational gap between the latest Hittite levels and the earliest Phrygian levels.<sup>32</sup> But in the deep pits at Gordion Hittite and Phrygian pottery have been found together, indicating that the Phrygian influx was gradual and peaceful.<sup>33</sup> We may conclude that the Phrygians who came from the west and the Mushki who came from the east were fused into one kingdom, known to the Greeks as the kingdom of the Phrygians and to the Assyrians as the kingdom of the Mushki.<sup>34</sup>

31. H. W. F. Saggs, "The Nimrud Letters, 1952," *Iraq* 20 (1958): 182–84, 202–07; J. N. Postgate, "Assyrian Texts and Fragments," *Iraq* 35 (1973): 21–34.

32. E. Akurgal, *Ancient Civilizations and Ruins of Turkey*, 2nd ed. (Istanbul: Mobil Ofl Türk A. S., 1970), pp. 12–13.

33. R. S. Young, *Gordion* (Ankara: Archaeological Museum of Ankara, 1968), p. 6.

34. See T. R. Bryce, "Phrygia and Lydia," in *The Encyclopedia of Ancient Civilizations*, ed. A. Cotterell (New York: Mayflower, 1980), p. 145. I am indebted for some of these observations to a graduate paper by William Holcomb.



### Study for The Fall of Gog and Magog lunette, Boston Public Library

c. 1903-1909, John Singer Sargent at Harvard

Oil on canvas affixed to board, 33 1/8 x 66 1/2 in (actual), Framed 34 1/8 x 67 5/8 x 1 1/2 in, Gift of Miss Emily Sargent.<sup>653</sup>

### (3) *Jerusalem restored: Ezek 34; 36-37; 40-48*

Once the judgment on Jerusalem had occurred, Ezekiel turns his attention to the future of the nation of God's people. Back to back with prophecies of doom against the nations (Edom, Gog and Magog and all the preceding prophecies against the nations in Ezek 25-35) the concluding sections of Ezekiel offer a bold contrast of hope for God's people.

#### *Ezekiel indicts false shepherds and promises true Shepherd: Ezek 34:1-30*



Ezekiel is called to invoke the important shepherd motif found so often in the Bible to describe God's relationship to his people. It supremely illustrates the beautiful relationship of God to those he love and calls to himself. In this context he begins with a harsh indictment against the *false shepherds* who were not caring for the sheep (34:2-10). They had neglected their duties to their sheep, indicting them for failing at the both the basic care of the people (34:2-3), but also the care of the disenfranchised (34:4). In light of this, he holds forth the hope of *God's promise* to care for his sheep (34:11-31). The entire remaining verses of this chapter are a beautiful depiction of the love of the Shepherd-God for his sheep. In the process of this prophecy, he also introduces the important messianic theme of the shepherd-king from the line of David (34:23).

*Sheep and goats*: the rams and goats represent those who were oppressing the sheep (the people of God and the disenfranchised). The prophet is decrying the *social injustices* prevalent in the land, for they were a moral indictment against the religious and political leaders.

Cf. Matt 25:32-33 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

*Fat sheep and lean sheep (34:20-24)*: the false leaders of the people of God take warning. They plunder the sheepfold, but there is One coming who will judge between the sheep and will lead and tend his own sheep. It is

<sup>653</sup> From [www.jssgallery.org/Paintings/Study\\_The\\_Fall\\_of\\_Gog.jpg](http://www.jssgallery.org/Paintings/Study_The_Fall_of_Gog.jpg)

most likely that NT Jews would have understood Jesus' claim to be the good shepherd in light of Ezekiel's prophecy:

**John 9:1-20** I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. <sup>2</sup>The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. <sup>3</sup>The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup>But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." <sup>6</sup>Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them. <sup>7</sup>Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup>I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. <sup>10</sup>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. <sup>11</sup>"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup>The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. <sup>13</sup>The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. <sup>14</sup>"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— <sup>15</sup>just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup>I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. <sup>17</sup>The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. <sup>18</sup>No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father." <sup>19</sup>At these words the Jews were again divided. <sup>20</sup>Many of them said, "He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?"

"*Covenant of peace*" (בְּרִית שְׁלוֹמִים): see Malachi 2:4-8, p. 588

Ezek 34:25 I will make a covenant of peace with them and rid the land of wild beasts so that they may live in the desert and sleep in the forests in safety.

This promise of a covenant of peace is given in the context of the messianic Shepherd-King promise (34:24) from the line of David. The messianic hope represents the promise that "I the Lord will be their God . . ." The peace promised will bring about this knowledge, but it depends on the redemptive work of God. This theme is going to peak in Ezek 37, in which the covenant of peace is described as an everlasting covenant in which the dwelling place of God will be among them and the covenant promise will be realized: "I will be their God, and they will be my people" (37:26-28). God's peace is not just absence of hostility, but the fullness of life and God himself. The *peace* of God is the restoration of relations between God and his people, their *redemption*. In this sense, this covenant is the "new covenant" (see p. ).

Num 25:12 Therefore tell him I am making my covenant of peace with him.

Isa 54:10 Though the mountains be shaken  
and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken  
nor my covenant of peace be removed,"  
says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

Mal 2:5 My covenant was with him, a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him; this called for reverence and he revered me and stood in awe of my name.

Job 5:23

Cf. Phil 4:7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

### ***Ezekiel prophesies hope of restoration: Ezek 36:1-37:28***

Central to this chapter regarding the restoration of Israel is the *holy name of YHWH*. This theme was introduced previously, but peaks ch. 36 in terms of emphasis:

Ezek 20:39 As for you, O house of Israel, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: Go and serve your idols, every one of you! But afterward you will surely listen to me and no longer profane my holy name with your gifts and idols.

Eze 36:20 And wherever they went among the nations they profaned my holy name, for it was said of them, 'These are the LORD's people, and yet they had to leave his land.'

Eze 36:21 I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel profaned among the nations where they had gone.

Eze 36:22 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone.

Eze 36:23 I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I show myself holy through you before their eyes

Ezek 39:7 I will make known my holy name among my people Israel. I will no longer let my holy name be profaned, and the nations will know that I the LORD am the Holy One in Israel.

Ezek 39:25 "Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will now bring Jacob back from captivity and will have compassion on all the people of Israel, and I will be zealous for my holy name.

Ezek 43:7 He said: “Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet. This is where I will live among the Israelites forever. The house of Israel will never again defile my holy name—neither they nor their kings—by their prostitution and the lifeless idols of their kings at their high places.

Ezek 43:8 When they placed their threshold next to my threshold and their doorposts beside my doorposts, with only a wall between me and them, they defiled my holy name by their detestable practices. So I destroyed them in my anger.

Judgment brought *hope* to Israel, contrary to expectations, for it produced a purging of the nation. That is, before YHWH’s holy presence there could be no rebellious idolatry and apostasy. Holiness is the centerpiece of redemption, the fundamental problem between the glory of God and the sinfulness of humanity. God’s name was profaned through Israel’s rebellion, and they were thus judged. God’s name was also profaned by them among the nations, and they were thus judged (36:19-23). Despite this, the Lord promises to restore them to his holy name, gathering them back to the land. Most importantly, in terms of redemption, Ezekiel expounds the principle of the spirit of the law being written on the heart through the promise of cleansing: removal of their old heart of stone and the reception of a new heart of flesh (36:25-26). This heart is given through the Spirit which will move them to follow his decrees (36:27). The Spirit of God will write the law on their new heart. This theme we have repeatedly noted in this course, for the heart is the heart of redemption. The prophets did not preach the law without the spirit, nor did they negate the law for grace. The spirit is given to enable them to obey the law. But, most important of all is the *purpose* of this promised spirit and heart : “you will be my people, and I will be your God” (36:28).

The eternal, unconditional promise of redemption is followed with the restoration of the temporal, conditional promises of the *land* (36:8, 24, 28, 33-36), *progeny* (36:8a, 10-11a, 37-38), and *prosperity* (36:9, 11b, 29-30). Despite the conditionality of the temporal blessings of the covenant, after all that had happened in exile-judgment, it should have been obvious to all that even the temporal blessings were unwarranted, in the sense that the *conditions* were never adequately met and the restoration of the blessings was entirely God’s prerogative of mercy. The land promise was fulfilled in Joshea and is here reaffirmed.

As in all the other prophecies, Ezekiel concludes with the *purpose* of all that God had done and would do: “Then they will know that I am the Lord” (36:38).

#### ***Ezekiel’s vision of the valley of bones: Ezek 37:1-14***

A pinnacle text in the history of redemption. Two levels of creation/redemption theology are unveiled: the creation of Adam and Eve and the restoration of Israel and Judah both required the *breath of God* (37:8-10). Any portrayal of the latter would have invoked remembrance of the former. (This text particularly correlates with the concluding prophecy in this chapter of the Servant-Shepherd-King of the line of David that will fulfill the everlasting covenant promise in which God’s dwelling will be restored to his people forever [37:24-27]). The redemption of God begins with the restoration of his people in exile, they are as dead men and will become alive again (foreshadows of the resurrection) through God’s redeeming work. The exiles were essentially dead to the promises of God, removed from the presence of God and the blessings of God. Redemption would involve re-creation, renewal, a restoration of the people of God to his presence.

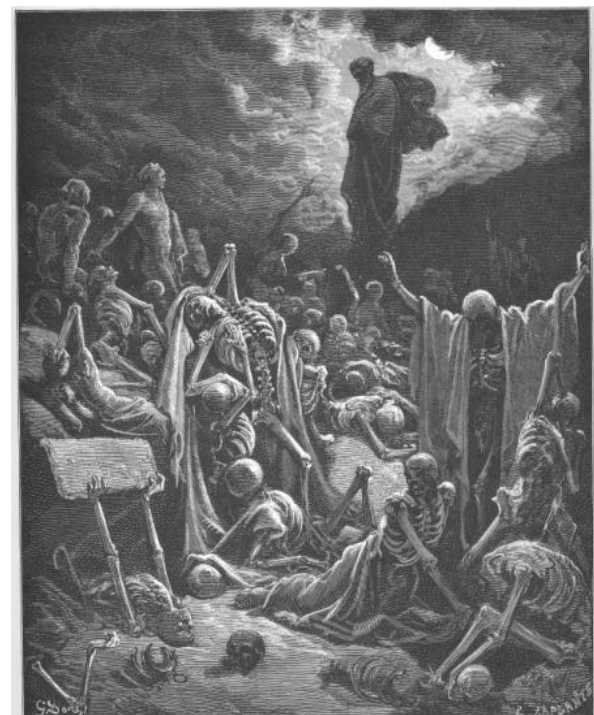
On another level of redemptive-history, bodily resurrection is most clearly presented here as possible, in principle, when it is God’s work. The eschatos of God presented in the resurrection-hope of the OT was discussed at the beginning (see p. 22).

(right) Ezekiel’s vision of bones by Döre

(left) Ezekiel’s vision of bones by Luther<sup>654</sup>



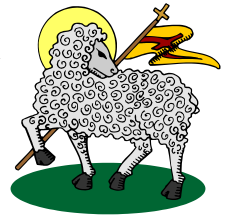
<sup>654</sup> From <http://www.pitts.emory.edu/dia/detail.cfm?ID=16499>



THE VISION OF THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES  
And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. . . . (Ezekiel 37: 3)

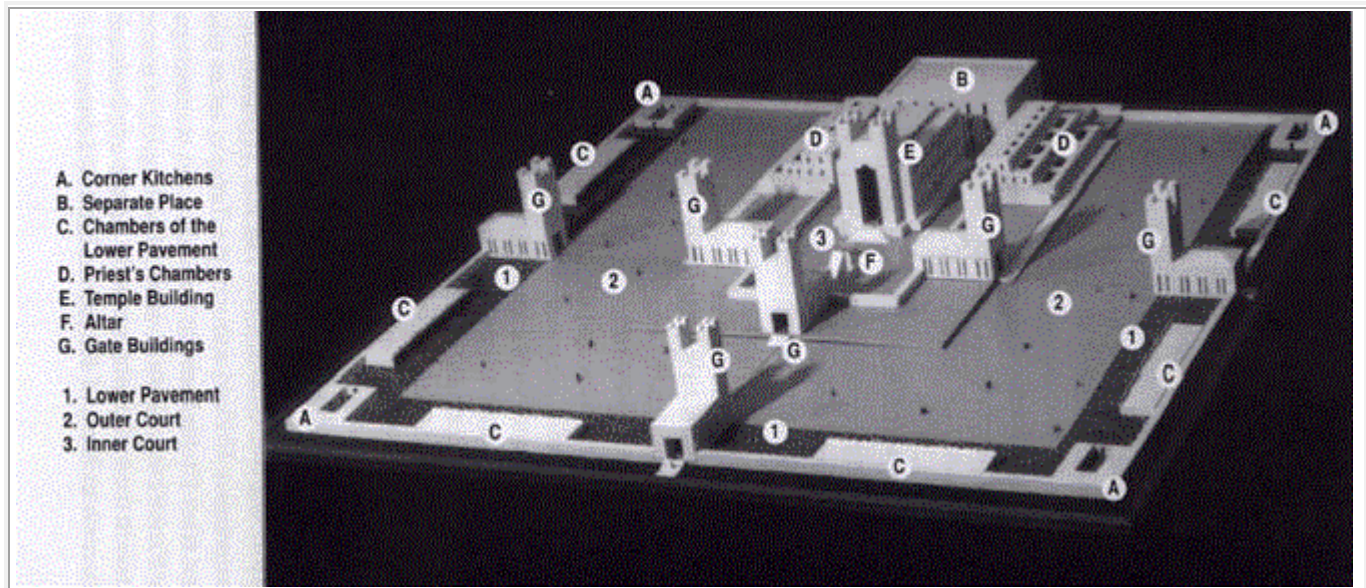
***Ezekiel's prophetic writing enactment and the promise of an everlasting Shepherd-King: Ezek 37:15-27***

Ezekiel is told to write this word of God on two pieces of wood (or sticks), enacting the joining together of the nations once again through their restoration. The peak of a pinnacle text in the history of redemption: the Servant-Shepherd-King of the line of David will fulfill the everlasting covenant promise in which God's dwelling will be restored to his people forever (37:24-27). The entire OT sacrificial system should be considered background to this text, for the holiness of God required atonement. The presence of God was holy and man's unholy rebellion broke that presence relation between God and humankind. Thus, the goal of redemption was to restore that relationship through atonement provided before the ark of the covenant under the atonement-cover. This atonement would open the way for the presence of God to be manifested as abiding and dwelling covenantally. The covenant was the seal of the promise of this redemption, but with the unfolding of revelation it became clear that it could not be complete through the sanctuary and cult-atonement alone. Something far greater must come to pass, and that was Someone pictured in the sanctuary-atonement. That messianic person gradually becomes clearer in the OT, but is remarkably manifest here in Ezek 37:



- ⇒ Servant David – king over them (37:24a).
- ⇒ One shepherd (37:24b).
- ⇒ Laws obeyed (37:24c).
- ⇒ Land restored (37:25a).
- ⇒ Servant David – prince forever (37:25c).
- ⇒ Covenant of peace – everlasting covenant (37:26a) (p. 531).
- ⇒ People restored (37:26b).
- ⇒ God's sanctuary among them – God's dwelling place forever (37:26c).
- ⇒ Covenant promise fulfilled: I will be their God and they will be my people (37:27).

The Servant-King-Shepherd would fulfill the covenant promise, which means he would restore God's people to God's presence. Further, with our NT perspective, the *resurrection context* (37:1-14) should not be overlooked in the conclusion of this peak redemptive-historical prophecy.

***Ezekiel's visions of the new temple and the glory returned: Ezek 40:1-44:31; 45:13-47:12***

This model was built by John W. Schmitt, who has been studying and building models of Ezekiel's temple for over 30 years. The above photos are taken from his book "Messiah's Coming Temple" by John W. Schmitt and J. Carl Laney; Kregel Publications; 1997 (*Messianic Temple Ministries*; 5812 N.E. Alton Portland, OR 97213).<sup>655</sup>

<sup>655</sup> From <http://www.pauljab.net/temple/Johnsmodel.html>

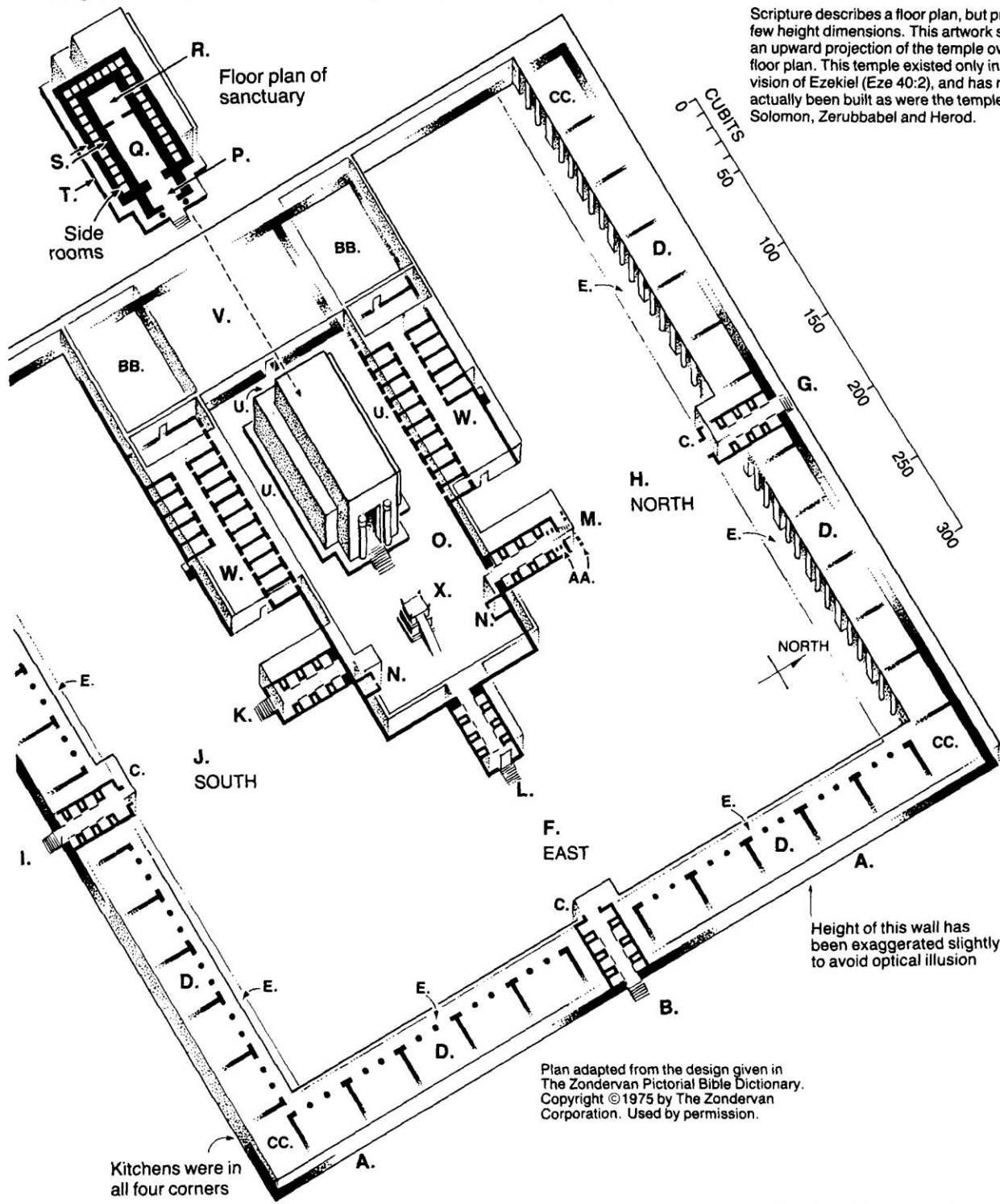
# Ezekiel's Temple

- A. Wall (40:5,16-20)
- B. East gate (40:6-14,16)
- C. Portico (40:8)
- D. Outer court (40:17)
- E. Pavement (40:17)
- F. Inner court (40:19)
- G. North gate (40:20-22)
- H. Inner court (40:23)
- I. South gate (40:24-26)
- J. South inner court (40:27)
- K. Gateway (40:32-34)
- L. Gateway (40:32-34)
- M. Gateway (40:35-38)
- N. Priests' rooms (40:44-45)
- O. Court (40:47)
- P. Temple portico (40:48-49)
- Q. Outer sanctuary (41:1-2)
- R. Most Holy Place (41:3-4)
- S. Temple walls (41:5-7, 9, 11)
- T. Base (41:8)
- U. Open area (41:10)
- V. West building (41:12)
- W. Priests' rooms (42:1-10)
- X. Altar (43:13-17)

- AA. Rooms for preparing sacrifices (40:39-43)
- BB. Ovens (46:19-20)
- CC. Kitchens (46:21-24)

Ezekiel uses a long or "royal" cubit, 20.4 inches or 51.81 cm ("cubit and a handbreadth," Eze 40:5) as opposed to the standard Hebrew cubit of 17.6 inches or 44.7 cm.

Scripture describes a floor plan, but provides few height dimensions. This artwork shows an upward projection of the temple over the floor plan. This temple existed only in a vision of Ezekiel (Eze 40:2), and has never actually been built as were the temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel and Herod.

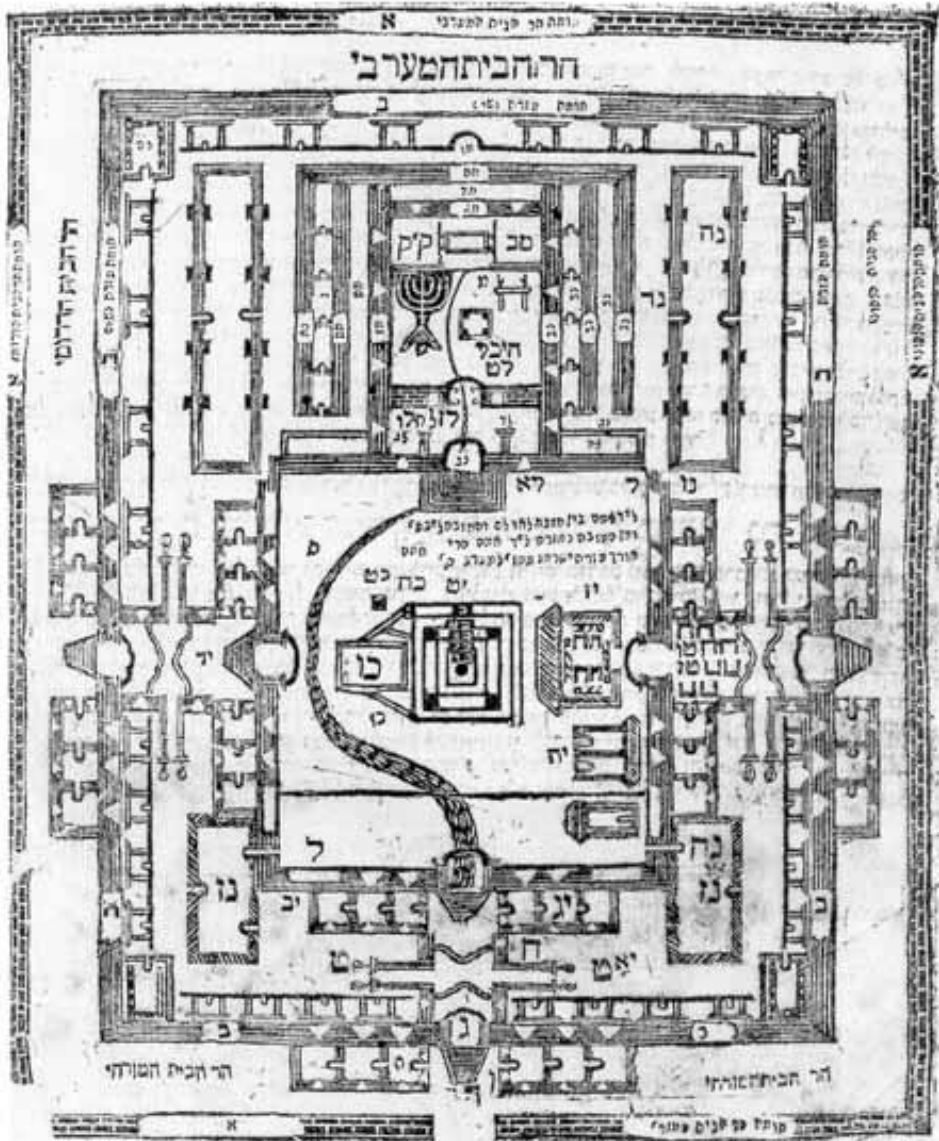


© 1989 by Gospel Light Publications. Permission granted to purchaser to reproduce this Sheet for class purposes only. Bible Visual Resource Book, p. 129.

(above) Ezekiel's Temple.<sup>656</sup>

<sup>656</sup> Bible Visual Resource Book, p. 129.

(below) Jewish rendition of the Ezekiel's vision-temple<sup>657</sup>



lives by his Spirit.

Interpretations of these final two (temple and land restored) visions of Ezekiel have generated an enormous amount of heated debate. Conclusions rely heavily on one's end-times eschatology and whether one follows a symbolic or "literal" interpretation. Many interpreters conclude that due to the extensive and detailed nature of the prophecies that a literal fulfillment is impossible unless it is in a post-parousia millennium. Yet, even in this latter view, there are undoubtedly some details that millenarians would take as symbolic or figurative. Reformed interpreters (amillennialists) traditionally have taken these prophecies as symbolic of the literal (spiritual) conditions arising in the age of the church (begins with incarnation), and particularly reject the notion of the reinstatement of a literal Levitical sacrifice in a rebuilt temple. They stress the *spiritual* nature of the promise and prophecy. There is no high priest or day of atonement in Ezekiel's vision, and the "daily sin offering" sacrifice he does mention is understood as referring to their remembrance and appropriation of Christ's propitiation. Cf. 1 Pet 2:5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Eph 2:21-22 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God

Millenarians call this kind of interpretation an unwarranted allegorization which wrongly equates the church with Israel, whereas they place the literal fulfillment in a literal millennium (using also Isa 2:2-4; 60:1-22; Jer 31:38-40; 33:17-22; Joel 3:18; Hag 2:7-9; Amos 9:11; Mic 4:1-4; Zech 6:9-15; 14:8-21<sup>658</sup>). Other "literal" interpreters hold that fulfillment of these prophecies began with the return of the remnant from exile and the rebuilding of the temple. The nature of the prophetic details would necessarily make the entire picture to be symbolical of the restoration under Zerubbabel, though some hold that it was intended to be literal. Others hold that the vision is entirely future and is fulfilled in the heavenly kingdom consummated:

[T]he prophetic picture does furnish a typical exhibition of the church of Christ in its gradual development, but sets forth the kingdom of God established by Christ in its perfect form, and is partly to be regarded as the Old Testament outline of the New Testament picture of the heavenly Jerusalem in Rev 21 and 22. For the river of the water of life is common to both visions.<sup>659</sup>

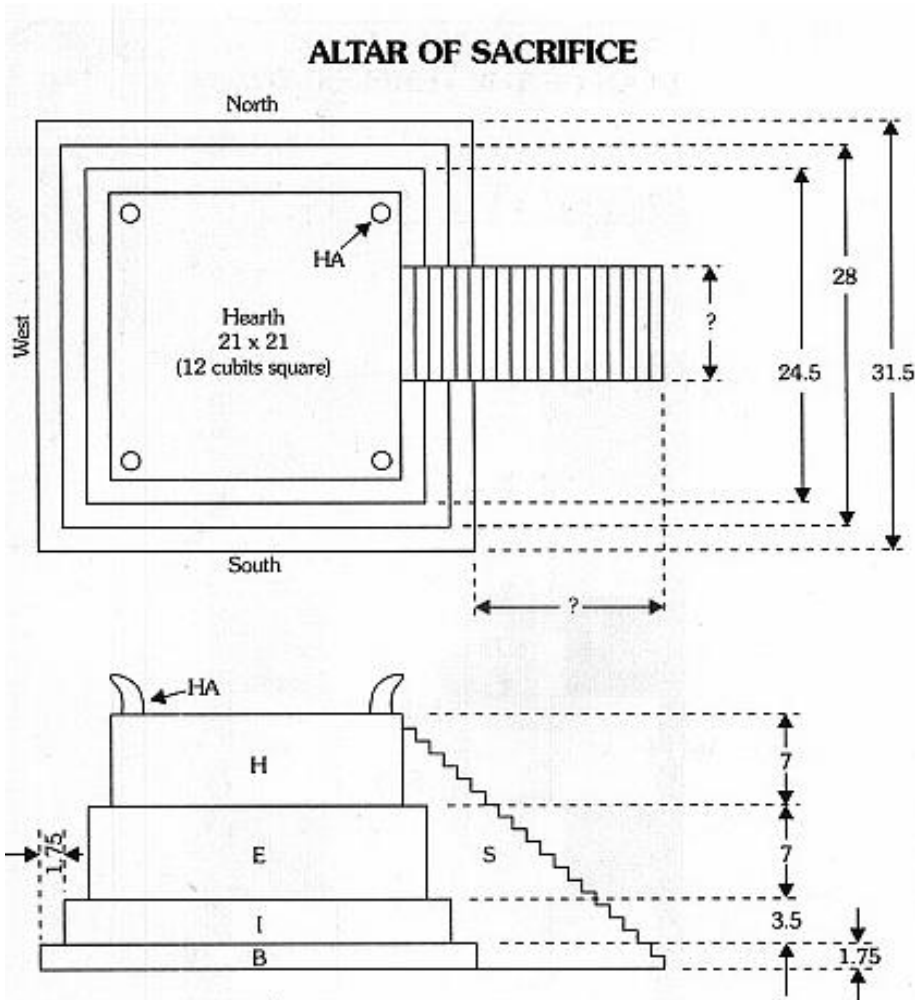
<sup>657</sup> "Yom Tov Lipmann Heller's description of the Temple, 'the future Temple as envisioned by the prophet Ezekiel,' Zurat Beit ha-Mikdash, was first published in Prague, 1702. For this Grodno, 1789 edition, Moses, Ivier added illustrations, notably this architectural map of the 'once and future Temple.' It is similar to, yet different from the depiction by Gentili, (Yom Tov Lipmann Heller, *Zurat Beit ha-Mikdash (The Form of the Temple)*, Grodno, 1789. Hebraic Section, Library of Congress Photo)." From <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/loc/Holy1.html>

<sup>658</sup> As does Freeman, *OT Prophets*, p. 313.

<sup>659</sup> Keil, *Ezekiel*, vol. 9, p. 417. See his extensive discussion, pp. 416-434 of this view and its difficulties.

**The glory of God returns to the temple:** one of the most important aspects of the temple restoration vision is the return of the **Glory of God** to the temple (Ezek 43:1-12), for this is the pinnacle representation of the goal of redemption: God’s presence manifested and abiding with his people. It recalls the initial supernatural glory-guidance of Israel in the wilderness and the filling of both the tabernacle and the temple with God’s glory when being consecrated to YHWH, coming full circle in the plan of redemption which was purely God’s gracious initiative. The holiness of the temple in Ezekiel’s vision highlights the central problem of redemption: how sinful humanity can re-enter God’s presence.

(right) Ezekiel’s altar of sacrifice.<sup>660</sup>



Dimensions are in feet. 1.75 feet = 1 long cubit.

- H Altar hearth (43:15-16)
- E Enclosure, supporting higher ledge (43:14, 17)
- I Interior, supporting lower ledge (43:14)
- B Base (43:13)
- HA Horns of the altar (43:15, 20)
- S Steps (43:17b; cf. 40:47b)

<sup>660</sup> From <http://www.templemount.org/ezektmp.html>



eye has seen, no ear has heard, and which has not entered into the heart of any man (1 Cor. ii. 9) ?

And if the state beyond the grave is transferred to this side, *ie.* depicted in colours and imagery drawn from this side, not only in the Old Testament prophecy, but in that of the New Testament also, we must not seek the reason for this prophetic mode of describing the circumstances of the everlasting life, or the world to come, in the fact that the Old Testament knows nothing of a blessed state beyond the grave, is ignorant of a heaven with men that are saved. The reason is rather to be found in the fact, that heavenly things and circumstances lie beyond our idea and comprehension ; so that we can only represent to ourselves the kingdom of God after the analogy of earthly circumstances and conditions, just as we are unable to form any other conception of eternal blessedness than as a life without end in heavenly glory and joy, set free from all the imperfections and evils of this earthly world. So long as we are walking here below by faith and not by sight, we must be content with those pictures of the future blessings of eternal life with the Lord in His heavenly kingdom which the Scriptures have borrowed from the divinely ordered form of the Israelitish theocracy, presenting Jerusalem with its temple, and Canaan the abode of the covenant people of the Old Testament as types of the kingdom of heaven, and picturing the glory of the world to come as a city of God coming down from heaven upon the new earth, built of gold, precious stones, and pearls, and illumined with the light of the glory of the Lord.—To this there must no doubt be added, in the case of the Old Testament prophets, the fact that the division of the kingdom of the Messiah into a period of development on this side, and one of full completion on the other, had not yet been so clearly revealed to them as it has been to us by Christ in the New Testament ; so that Isaiah is the only prophet who prophesies of the destruction of the present world and the creation of a new heaven and new earth. If we leave out of

Keil, Ezekiel, vol. 9, pp. 422-423.

sight this culminating point of the Old Testament prophecy, all the prophets depict the glorification and completion of the kingdom of God established in Israel by the Messiah, on the one hand, as a continuous extension of His dominion on Zion from Jerusalem outwards over all the earth, through the execution of the judgment upon the heathen nations of the world ; and, on the other hand, as a bursting of the land of Canaan into miraculous fruitfulness for the increase of His people's prosperity, and as a glorification of Jerusalem, to which all nations will go on pilgrimage to the house of the Lord on Zion, to worship the Lord and present their treasures to Him as offerings. Thus also in Ezekiel the bringing back of the people of Israel, who have been scattered by the Lord among the heathen on account of their apostasy, to the promised land, the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple, which have been destroyed, and the future blessing of Israel with the most abundant supply of earthly good from the land which has been glorified into paradisaical fruitfulness, form a continuity, in which the small beginnings of the return of the people from Babylon and the deliverance and blessing which are still in the future, lie folded in one another, and the present state and that beyond are blended together. And accordingly he depicts the glory and completion of the restored and renovated kingdom of God under the figure of a new division of Canaan among the twelve tribes of all Israel, united under the sceptre of the second David forever, and forming one single nation, by which all the incongruities of the former times are removed, and also of a new sanctuary built upon a very high mountain in the centre of Canaan, in which the people walking in the commandments and rights of their God offer sacrifice, and come to worship before the Lord in His courts on the Sabbaths, new moons, and yearly feasts. This blessedness of Israel also is not permanently disturbed through the invasion of the restored land by Gog and his hordes, but rather perfected and everlastingly established by the fact that the Lord God destroys this last enemy,

and causes him to perish by self-immolation. But however strongly the Old Testament drapery of the Messianic prophecy stands out even in Ezekiel, there are traits to be met with even in this form, by which we may recognise the fact that the Israelitish theocratical form simply constitutes the clothing in which the New Testament constitution of the kingdom of God is veiled.<sup>1</sup> Among these traits we reckon not only the description given in ch. xl-xlviii., which can only be interpreted in a typical sense, but also the vision of the raising to life of the dry bones in ch. xxxvii. 1-14, the ultimate fulfilment of which will not take place till the general resurrection, and more especially the prophecy of the restoration not only of Jerusalem, but also of Samaria and Sodom, to their original condition (ch. xvi. 53 sqq.), which, as we have already shown, will not be perfectly fulfilled till the *παλιγγενεσία*, *ie.* the general renovation of the world after the last judgment. From this last-named

prophecy, to which the healing of the waters of the Dead Sea in ch. xlvii. 9 sqq. supplies a parallel, pointing as it does to the renewal of the earth after the destruction of the present world, it clearly follows that the tribes of Israel which receive Canaan for a perpetual possession are not the Jewish people converted to Christ, but the Israel of God, *ie.* the people of God of the new covenant gathered from among both Jews and Gentiles; and that Canaan, in which they are to dwell, is not the earthly Canaan or Palestine between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea, but the New Testament Canaan, *ie.* the territory of the kingdom of God, whose boundaries reach from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. And the temple upon a very high mountain in the midst of this Canaan, in which the Lord is enthroned, and causes the river of the water of life to flow down from His throne over His kingdom, so that the earth produces the tree of life with leaves as medicine for men, and the Dead Sea is filled with fishes and living creatures, is a figurative representation and type of the gracious presence of the Lord in His church, which is realized in the present period of the earthly development of the kingdom of heaven in the form of the Christian church in a spiritual and invisible manner in the indwelling of the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers, and in a spiritual and invisible operation in the church, but which will eventually manifest itself when our Lord shall appear in the glory of the Father, to translate His church into the kingdom of glory, in such a manner that we shall see the almighty God and the Lamb with the eyes of our glorified body, and worship before His throne.

This worship is described in our vision (ch. xliii. 13-xlvi. 24) as the offering of sacrifice according to the Israelitish form of divine worship under the Old Testament; and in accordance with the mode peculiar to Ezekiel of carrying out all the pictures in detail, the leading instructions concerning the Levitical sacrifices are repeated and modified in harmony with the

<sup>1</sup> Of all such pictures it may certainly be said that we "cannot see how an Old Testament prophet, when speaking of Canaan, Jerusalem, Zion, and their future glorification, can have thought of anything else than the earthly sites of the Old Testament kingdom of God" (Volk); but this objection proves nothing against their typical explanation, as we know that the prophets of the Old Testament, who prophesied of the grace that was to come to us, inquired and searched diligently what, and what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ that was in them did signify (1 Pet. i. 10, 11). Even, therefore, if the prophets in their uninspired meditation upon that which they had prophesied, when moved by the Holy Ghost, did not discern the typical meaning of their own utterances, we, who are living in the times of the fulfilment, and are acquainted not only with the commencement of the fulfilment in the coming of our Lord, in His life, sufferings, and death, and His resurrection and ascension to heaven, as well as in His utterances concerning His second coming, but also with a long course of fulfilment in the extension for eighteen hundred years of the kingdom of heaven established by Him on earth, have not so much to inquire what the Old Testament prophets thought in their searching into the prophecies which they were inspired to utter by the Spirit of Christ, even if it were possible to discover what their thoughts really were, but rather, in the light of the fulfilment that has already taken place, to inquire what the Spirit of Christ, which enabled the prophets to see and to predict the coming of His kingdom in pictures drawn from the Old Testament kingdom of God, has foretold and revealed to us through the medium of these figures.

Keil, Ezekiel, vol. 9, pp. 424-425.

**Ezekiel's prophecy concerning the division of the city and land: Ezek 45:1-11; 47:13-48:35**

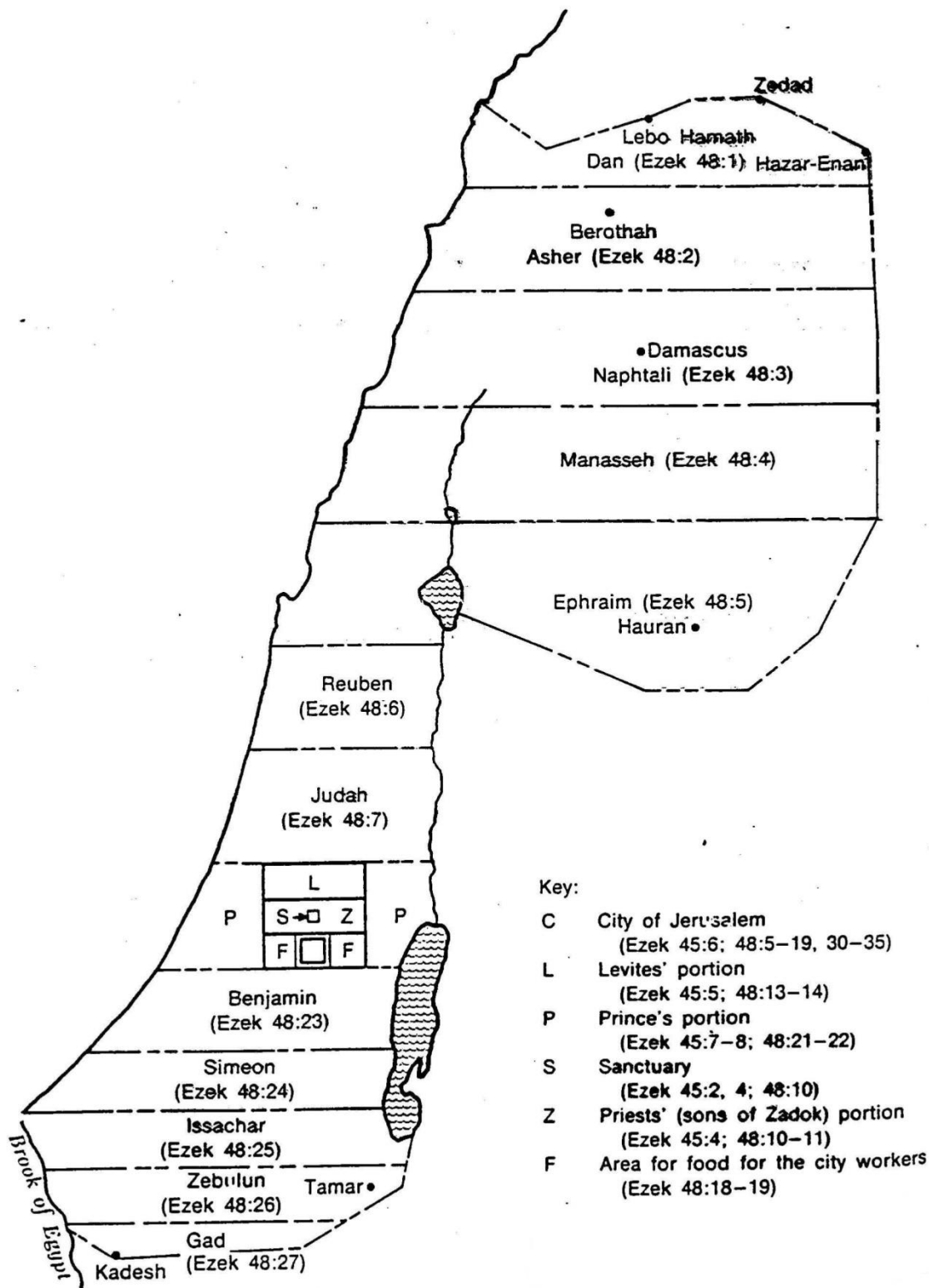
The restoration of the city and land vision involves debate along the same lines as those expounded regarding the vision of the restoration of the temple. In essence it affirms the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants in light of the ultimate goal of redemption: the kingdom of God will be established for God's people. Its blessings are real (spiritual and material)

and everlasting in heaven, though introduced in redemption here and now. Importantly, the fulfillment of the covenant promise is expressed in the last line of Ezekiel's prophecy: **THE LORD IS THERE** (48:35).

The visionary allotments of land have little correspondence in size or geography to the historical allotments of land to the tribes.

(right) Land allotment in Ezekiel's vision<sup>662</sup>

**Land Allotment in Ezekiel**  
(Ezek 45:1-8; 47:13-48:35) [source unknown]



<sup>662</sup> From *Expositor's Bible Commentary*. "Figure 5 Land Allotment in the Millennium"

## **8. History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling**

### **f) Revelation and redemption from YHWH**

#### **(1) Who God is**

A *personal*, covenanting God. Many times in Ezekiel “I am the Lord” is stated, reiterating the covenant-promise to Abraham and Israel. God intends for the nations to know that he is the Lord. “Then they will know” precedes many of the “I am the Lord” expressions. The mission of God to the nations takes dramatic form in the presence of Ezekiel in Babylonian exile.

God is transcendent from his creation; he is not in any way bound to it, his sanctuary, or his people. This is a hard-won lesson for Israel/Judah, since they had too often (as in NT times) lost sight of their mission to *bless the nations*. God is radically free of his creation, while he is eternally bound to his covenant of redemption. God transcendent, as revealed in extraordinary visions to Ezekiel, is the imminent, covenanting Lord YHWH. The one *above* all is revealed as the one *involved* in all. This is the context of most of the OT prophets: they speak for a God who personally communicates, yet all the while showing him as the One before whom all things will tremble and bow. The prophets that have visions of YHWH, as Ezekiel, are nearly finished off by the experience. God shows his grace to them to enable them to proclaim his words to the nations.

Even in exile, God sends his word, showing that he is compassionate, showing his love to a thousand generations (Ex 20:5).

#### **(2) What God has done**

The scope of Ezekiel’s prophecies shows God’s intrinsic concern for the nations. That scope includes most of the Middle East as far out as the Black Sea in the north, the Caspian Sea on the east, and as far south as upper Egypt.

Judgment at this stage is irrevocable. God fulfilled the word of the prophets that Jerusalem would be besieged by Babylon and taken captive into exile. Ezekiel was carried off at that time in 597. He prophesied in Babylon that Jerusalem would be destroyed, and it was in 586.

#### **(3) What God has promised**

- Jerusalem would fall and it fell seven years later.
- Nations would fall: Amon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon, Egypt (ruled by foreign princes).
- The nations, esp. Egypt, would know the Lord.
- Hope for the captives in exile. Remnant, restoration, redemption, RETURN. *Purging* of impurities would result.
- Restoration of Jerusalem and glory-presence would return.
- Loss of the temple did not mean loss of the covenant (11:16; cf. Jn 2:19-21)
- Messianic, TRUE Shepherd-King would come and fulfill the Davidic promise
- Resurrected valley of dry bones

### **b) Humankind and redemption**

#### **(1) Worship of redeemed**

Cultic, sanctuary ritual is not presented as the means of sanctification, but rather the holy living of the truly repentant people of God. God’s absence was felt keenly with the loss of the sanctuary, but in exile they could still worship the Living God. He was not bound to Jerusalem or the temple. Though this theme was always present in Israel’s sanctuary-theology, it is most pronounced once in exile from the sanctuary. Indeed, this is one of the main teaching-points of the exile-judgment!

Vision of a heavenly temple prepare the people of God of all ages for the eternal presence of YHWH in the glorious eternal new creation.

False prophets must be rejected.

Idols and necromancers must be destroyed. As Babylon's gods/idols will be powerless before YHWH's wrath, so also were Israel's idols just futility.

### (2) *Work of redeemed*

The demonstration of godly lives in obedience to God's law would serve as a testimony to the nations. The corruption that led to the exile is the work of death, repentance is the work of life. Work is an essential component of Israel's testimony to the world to God their redeemer. Work in the community of God must be characterized by holiness – wholeness of person – integrity of person – character that is aligned internally with the law and character of God will flow out into the world in fruits of righteousness. The internalization of the law – the law written on the heart – is vital to external witness to the nations.

### (3) *Ethics of redeemed]*

Ezekiel, like the other prophets, pointed back to the conditional aspects of the covenant-promise, and the necessity of moral/godly living in the land in order to retain the land. Realpolitik, alliances with foreign nations in rebellion against YHWH, will lead only to destruction. Following the Vox Populi will lead only to death. The voice of the prophet is the only voice God's people are to follow.

Moral judgment on murder, abuses of power, oppression of foreigners, dishonoring of women, bribes, extortion, usury, conspiracy, etc. These were rampant, and were a total breach of covenant with God and testimony before the nations.

Ezekiel's vision of the temple and Jerusalem, Woodcut from *Zurich Bible* <sup>663</sup>



<sup>663</sup> From Emory university at <http://www.pitts.emory.edu/dia/booklist5.cfm?ID=131>.

# IV. PERSIAN PERIOD PROPHETS: POSTEXILIC (538-400 B.C.)

Ezra

93

## Chronology: Ezra-Nehemiah

Dates below are given according to a Nisan-to-Nisan Jewish calendar (see chart on "Hebrew Calendar," p. 102).

Roman numerals represent months; Arabic numerals represent days.

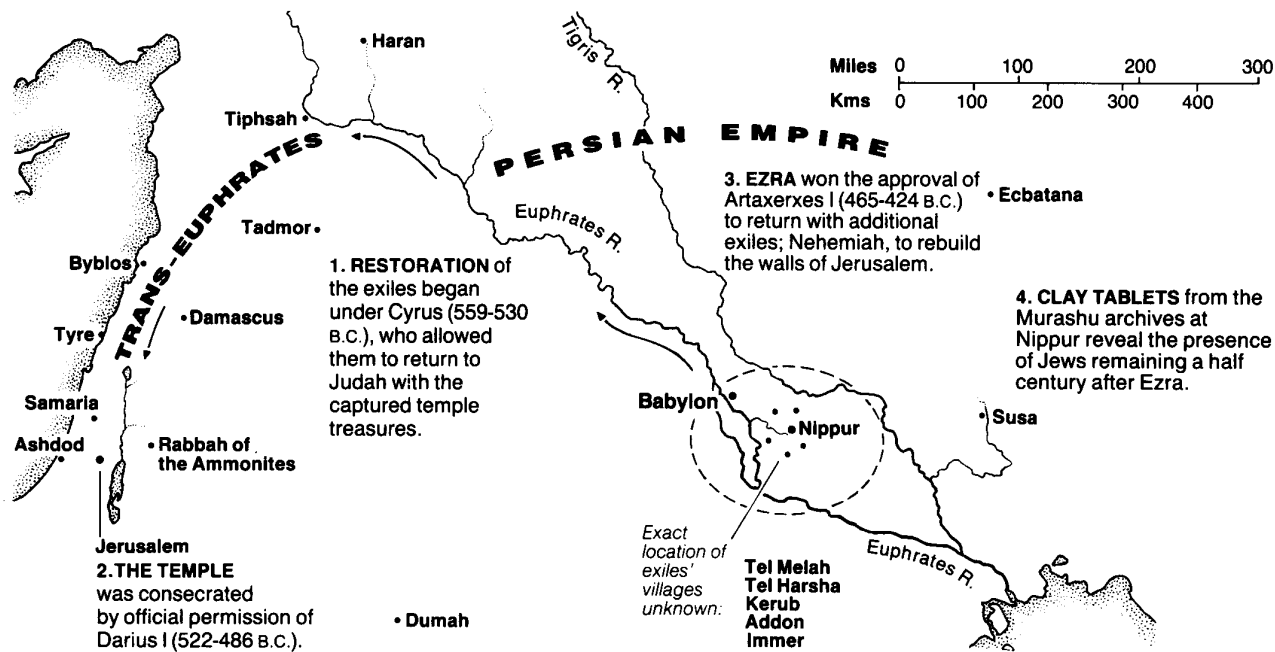
540 B.C.

	YEAR	MONTH	DAY	EVENT	REFERENCE
530	539 B.C.	Oct.	12	Capture of Babylon	Da 5:30
	538 to 537	Mar. to Mar.	24 11	Cyrus's first year	Ezr 1:1-4
520	537(?)			Return under Sheshbazzar	Ezr 1:11
	537	VII		Building of altar	Ezr 3:1
510	536	II		Work on temple begun	Ezr 3:8
	536-530			Opposition during Cyrus's reign	Ezr 4:1-5
	530-520			Work on temple ceased	Ezr 4:24
500	520	VI =Sept.	24 21	Work on temple renewed under Darius	Ezr 5:2; Hag 1:14
	516	XII =Mar.	3 12	Temple completed	Ezr 6:15
490					
480	458	I =Apr.	1 8	Ezra departs from Babylon	Ezr 7:6-9
		V =Aug.	1 4	Ezra arrives in Jerusalem	Ezr 7:8-9
	457	IX =Dec.	20 19	People assemble	Ezr 10:9
		X =Dec.	1 29	Committee begins investigation	Ezr 10:16
470	457	I =Mar.	1 27	Committee ends investigation	Ezr 10:17
460	445	Apr.	13	20th year of Artaxerxes I	Ne 1:1
	444	to Apr.	2		
450	445	I =Mar.-Apr.		Nehemiah approaches king	Ne 2:1
		Aug.(?)		Nehemiah arrives in Jerusalem	Ne 2:11
	VI =Oct.	25 2	Completion of wall	Ne 6:15	
440	VII =Oct. to Nov.	8 5	Public assembly	Ne 7:73-8:1	
		VII =Oct.	15-22 22-28	Feast of Tabernacles	Ne 8:14
	VII =Oct.	24 30	Fast	Ne 9:1	
430 B.C.	433	Apr.	1	32nd year of Artaxerxes;	Ne 5:14; 13:6
	432	to Apr.	19	Nehemiah's recall and return	

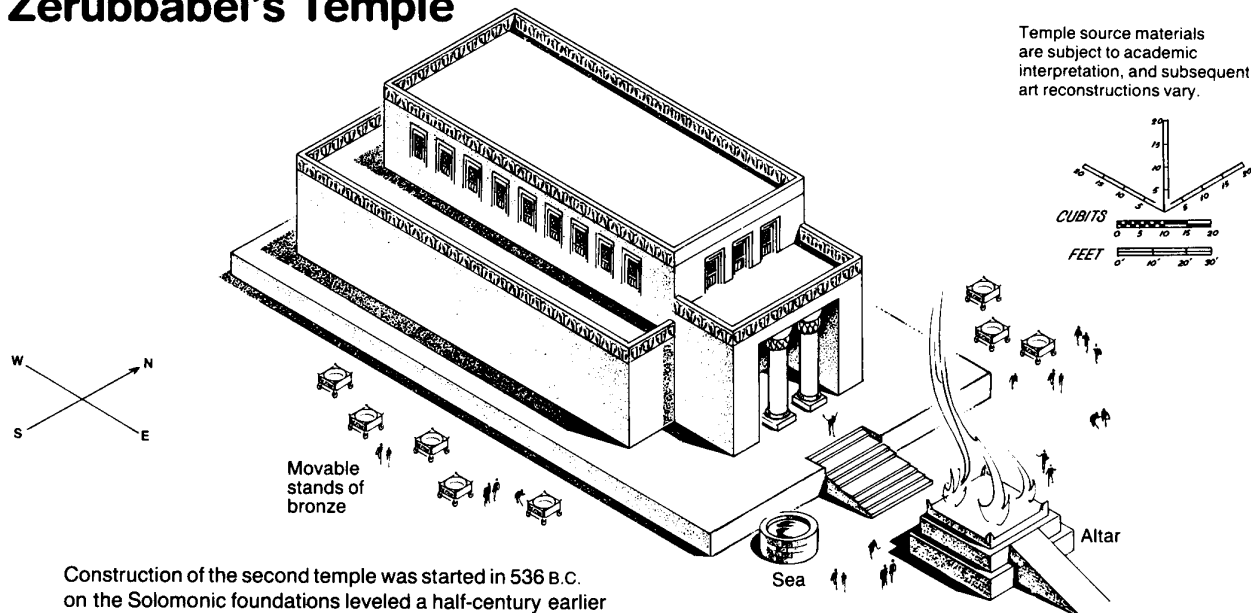
Bible Resource Book, Regal Books, p. 85.

© 1989 by Gospel Light Publications. Permission granted to purchaser to reproduce this Sheet for class purposes only.

# Return from Exile



# Zerubbabel's Temple



Construction of the second temple was started in 536 B.C. on the Solomonic foundations leveled a half-century earlier by the Babylonians. People who remembered the earlier temple wept at the comparison (Ezr 3:12). Not until 516 B.C., the 6th year of the Persian emperor Darius I (522-486), was the temple finally completed at the urging of Haggai and Zechariah (Ezr 6:13-15).

Archaeological evidence confirms that the Persian period in Palestine was a comparatively impoverished one in terms of material culture. Later Aramaic documents from Elephantine in Upper Egypt illustrate the official process of gaining permission to construct a Jewish place of worship, and the opposition engendered by the presence of various foes during this period.

Of the temple and its construction, little is known. Among the few contemporary buildings, the Persian palace at Lachish and the Tobiad monument at Iraq el-Amir may be compared in terms of technique.

Unlike the more famous structures razed in 586 B.C. and A.D. 70, the temple begun by Zerubbabel suffered no major hostile destruction, but was gradually repaired and reconstructed over a long period. Eventually it was replaced entirely by Herod's magnificent edifice.

**Historical background** from Judges-Esther syllabus: Babylon fell to Cyrus in 539 BC.

➤ See Persia/Persians in ANE section, p.

- ~ The initial repatriation in Ezra 2 (538 B.C.) under Zerubbabel (civil leader, Ezr 3:1) (Haggai and Zechariah returned then), Sheshbazzar (prince of Judah, Ezr 1:8), and Jeshua (High Priest, Ezr 2:36): an apx total of 30-50,000 returnees (or more).
- ~ The repatriation some sixty years later (458/457 B.C.) under Ezra (a teacher/scribe) (Ezra 7-8): over 1,496 men, plus the women and children, 40 Levites, 220 temple servants, bringing the total number over 5,000 returnees.
- ~ Malachi prophesied during the reign of Artaxerxes I (who sent both Ezra [458] and Nehemiah to Jerusalem).

The meaning of what transpired in the restoration:

Ezr 1:1, "In order to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah" . . . "The Lord moved the heart of Cyrus . . ."

The words of the pre-exilic prophets find remarkable, and unmistakable, fulfillment in this restoration. The confirmations are so explicit that critics have long posited that those pre-exilic prophets are post-exilic.

## A. *Haggai* חַגַּי (Judah ~ 520)

(left) Haggai.<sup>666</sup>



### 1. *Title, author, and dates*

1. Haggai ("festal") was possibly born in Judah and taken into exile, based speculatively on the suggestion that he may have seen the destruction of the temple of Solomon (2:3). This would place him in his seventies or eighties when he ministered. We do not know with certainty any details of his earlier life.

2. Haggai had four messages addressed respectively to the governor Zerubbabel (1:1), Joshua and the remnant (2:2), the priests (2:11), and to Zerubbabel (2:21).

3. Darius I (The Great) (521-486) (father of Xerxes I) is the historical context of the prophet's ministry: Hag 1:1, 15; 2:10. A new capital was built in Persepolis, peak of Persian empire; he expanded the empire. Darius reaffirmed Cyrus' decree to rebuild the Jerusalem temple, which had been suspended (536-520) by opposition from the Samaritans.<sup>667</sup> See Persia/Persians in ANE section, p. 621.

4. Haggai and Zechariah exhorted the apathetic nation to finish rebuilding the temple (520 BC). After the twenty year lapse in the rebuilding

of the sanctuary, under Darius I in 520 BC, these two prophets began to prophesy, motivate, and exhort the people to rebuild the temple, warning them of the consequences of disobedience. Both have considerable Messianic emphasis, particularly Zechariah who also gives a strong eschatological message.

Hag 1:2-3 This is what the Lord Almighty says, These people say, "The time has not yet come for the Lord's house to be built." 3. Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses while this house remains in ruins?"

5. *Renewal of rebuilding the temple* (Ezr 5): The renewed effort was led by Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel of the Davidic line, and the high priest Jeshua (Ezr 5:1-2).

Ezra 5:1 Now Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the prophet, a descendant of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them.

Ezra 6:14 So the elders of the Jews continued to build and prosper under the preaching of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah, a descendant of Iddo. They finished building the temple according to the command of the God of Israel and the decrees of Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia.

6. *Temple completed and rededicated* (Ezra 6.15-18): in 516 under Zerubbabel

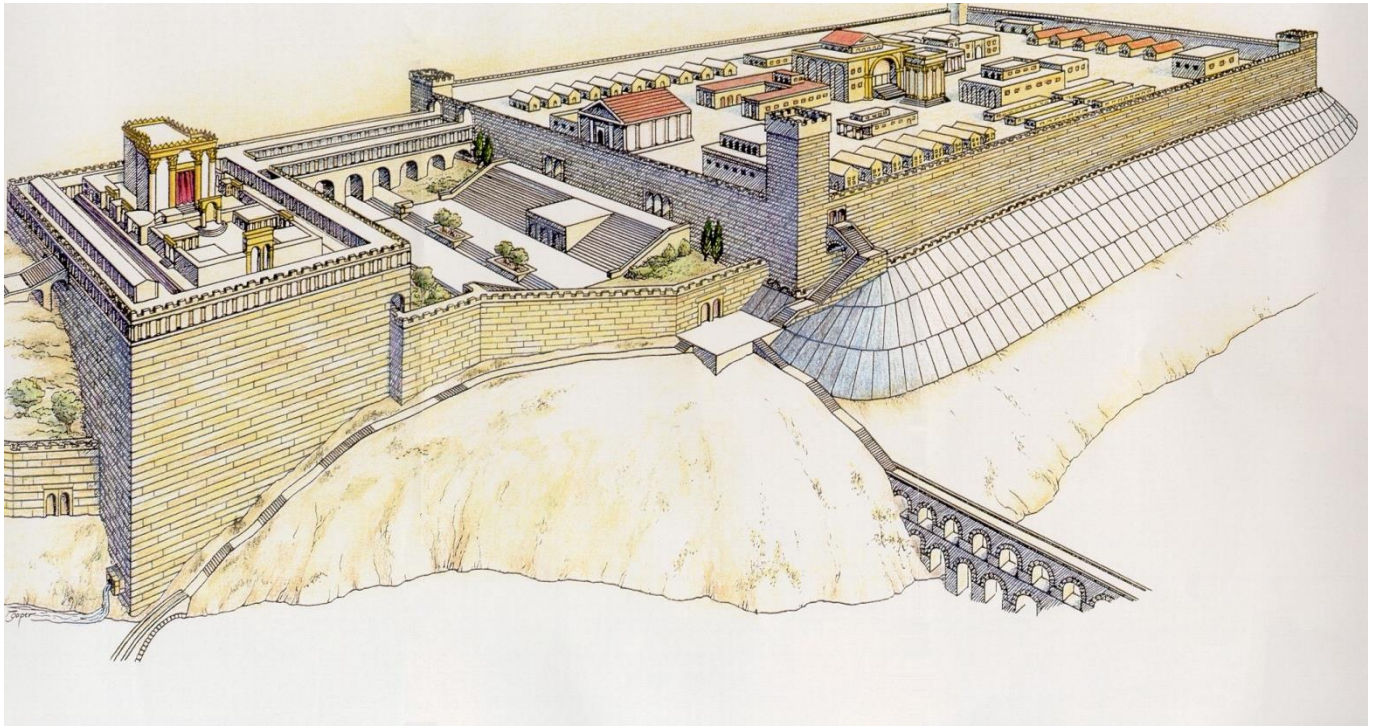
<sup>666</sup> GIOVANNI PISANO from <http://www.lib-art.com/artgallery/19385-haggai-giovanni-pisano.html>

<sup>667</sup> Genetically mixed race of descendants of Israelites and colonists from Assyria that Sargon II had introduced in 722 B.C. (2 Ki 17:24-41).



## 2. *Critical matters*

1. Critics assume disunity due to a point of view expressed in 2:10-19 that supposedly diverges from the rest of the prophecy. As in all such critical assumptions, it wrongly supposes that subject and tone indicate composite authorship and later interpolations.
2. Haggai 2:20-23 is said to present the doctrine of the *ideal king* (messianic) who is to be identified as Zerubbabel, thus making him erroneously connect the shaking of the nations (2:6-8) with the messianic kingdom being established by Zerubbabel. This false assertion rests on the inability to understand the truly Messianic nature of Haggai's prophecy. If Haggai assumed Zerubbabel was a messianic figure, why then does Zechariah consider him only a man (4:6-10), and he is not even crowned, but rather the high priest Joshua (6:9-14)?



(above) Second temple by Ernest Martin<sup>668</sup>



(left) Second temple model.<sup>669</sup>

## 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

### a) *“Give careful thought”*

Hag 1:5 Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: “Give careful thought to your ways.

Hag 1:7 This is what the LORD Almighty says: “Give careful thought to your ways.

Hag 2:15 Now give careful thought to this from this day on—consider how things were before one stone was laid on another in the LORD's temple.

Hag 2:18 From this day on, from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, give careful thought to the day when the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid. Give careful thought:

Cf. 1 Cor 11:28 A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.

2 Cor 13:5 Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?

### b) *“I am with you”*

<sup>668</sup> From <http://askelm.com/detail.htm>. See the mouse-over illustration there, but especially see Leen Ritmeyer's rebuttal of Martin's location of the Temple. Ernest Martin, *Bible and Spade*, Volume: 14:4 (Fall 2001).

<sup>669</sup> From

Hag 1:13 Then Haggai, the LORD’s messenger, gave this message of the LORD to the people: “I am with you,” declares the LORD.  
 Hag 2:4 But now be strong, O Zerubbabel,’ declares the LORD. ‘Be strong, O Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land,’ declares the LORD, ‘and work. For I am with you,’ declares the LORD Almighty.

**c) “I will shake the heavens and the earth”**

Hag 2:6 This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land.  
 Hag 2:7 I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,’ says the LORD Almighty.  
 Hag 2:21 “Tell Zerubbabel governor of Judah that I will shake the heavens and the earth.

**d) “Lord Almighty (of Hosts)”**

Hag 1:2 This is what the LORD Almighty says: “These people say, ‘The  
 Hag 1:5 Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: “Give careful thought  
 Hag 1:7 This is what the LORD Almighty says: “Give careful thought  
 Hag 1:9 Why?”’ declares the LORD Almighty. “Because of my house, which  
 Hag 1:14 work on the house of the LORD Almighty, their God, 15 on the  
 Hag 2:4 with you,’ declares the LORD Almighty. 5 ‘This is what I covenant  
 Hag 2:6 This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘In a little while I will  
 Hag 2:7 with glory,’ says the LORD Almighty. 8 ‘The silver is mine and  
 Hag 2:8 is mine,’ declares the LORD Almighty. 9 ‘The glory of this  
 Hag 2:9 former house,’ says the LORD Almighty. ‘And in this place I will  
 Hag 2:9 peace,’ declares the LORD Almighty.”  
 Hag 2:11 This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Ask the priests what t  
 Hag 2:23 that day,’ declares the LORD Almighty, ‘I will take you, my servant  
 Hag 2:23 chosen you,’ declares the LORD Almighty.”

**4. Major themes**

1. God has spoken: some twenty five times the prophet affirms that God had spoken his word to him.
2. Disobedience (1:6. 11; 2:16-17) and obedience (2:7-9, 19) both have real consequences.
3. Messianic hope of the glory of God restored (Hag 2:6-9) as a harbinger of the final redemption, as also in the promise to Zerubbabel that would foreshadow the coming messianic king in the line of David (Hag 2:23). Compare the glory of God in Ezekiel.
4. The promises of God should not be judged merely by appearances, as well as the judgment of God.
5. Judgment on the nations is coming (post parousia) (2:6-7:, 21-22).

Hag 2:21-22 Tell Zerubbabel governor of Judah that I will shake the heavens and the earth. 22 I will overturn royal thrones and shatter the power of the foreign kingdoms. I will overthrow chariots and their drivers; horses and their riders will fall, each by the sword of his brother.

Cf. Heb 12:25-29 See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven? 26 At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” 27 The words “once more” indicate the removing of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, 29 for our “God is a consuming fire.”

(right) Post exilic Judea.<sup>670</sup>



Revel Bible Dictionary, p. 1149.

Compare: exodus imagery and pre-exilic/exilic realities

Hag 1:6 You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.”

<sup>670</sup> Revell Bible Dictionary, p. 1149.

and

Deut 28:38-39 You will sow much seed in the field but you will harvest little, because locusts will devour it. 39 You will plant vineyards and cultivate them but you will not drink the wine or gather the grapes, because worms will eat them.

Compare:

Hag 2:17 “I struck all the work of your hands with blight, mildew and hail, yet you did not turn to me,” declares the LORD.

and

Deut 28:22 The LORD will strike you with wasting disease, with fever and inflammation, with scorching heat and drought, with blight and mildew, which will plague you until you perish.

## 5. Major prophecies

1. The promised hope of someone from the line of David to reign is given to Zerubbabel (Hag 2:23).
2. The heavens and earth will be shaken and foreign powers will be overthrown (2:21-22). Cf. Heb 12:26 At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.”
3. The wealth of the nations would come to restore the temple (2:7).

## 6. Outline, structure/composition

The book of Haggai can be outlined according to the four messages he gives:

- To the governor Zerubbabel (1:1).
- To Joshua and the remnant (2:2).
- To the priests (2:11).
- To Zerubbabel (2:21).

The book contains a linear progression: exhortation/rebuke by Haggai results in the response of the people. We can outline the book according to the themes of *exhortation/rebuke*, *response/obedience*, and *encouragement*. The first three addresses (to Zerubbabel, remnant, and priests) fall under the rebuke section, and the last address (to Zerubbabel) comes under the encouragement section:

**Exhortation** to Judah: Hag 1:2-11  
To governor Zerubbabel, Joshua, priests, and the remnant

**Obedience** of Judah: Hag 1:12-15

**Encouragement** of Judah: Hag 2:1-23  
To governor Zerubbabel

Dorsey places the center of the first two sections (1:2-11; 2:1-9) on the building of the sanctuary in 1:7-8 and 2:5 (the covenant to build a dwelling place for YHWH).

## 7. Exposition and the history of redemption themes

Haggai gave very precise dates for his prophecies given during a four month period of 520 B.C.:

August 29 (day 1)  
September 21 (day 24)  
October 17 (day 21)  
December 18 (day24)<sup>671</sup>

<sup>671</sup> Chart from *Revell Bible Dictionary*, p. 461.

<i>Second Year of Darius II (520 B.C.)</i>				
DAY 1 Hag. 1:1	DAY 24 Hag. 1:15	DAY 21 Hag. 2:1		DAY 24 Hag. 2:10
	<i>Elul (6)</i>	<i>Ethanim (7)</i>	<i>Bul (8)</i>	<i>Kislev (9)</i>
<i>August</i>	<i>September</i>	<i>October</i>	<i>November</i>	<i>December</i>

It is actually Darius the I above!

## a) *Exhortation to faith-faltering Judah: Hag 1:2-11*

### (1) *First word of the Lord*

The first word of the Lord to Haggai was on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 520, and was for the governor Zerubbabel, Joshua, priests, and the remnant (2:1). Zerubbabel is sometimes thought to have been the same as Sheshbazzar:

Ezra 1:8 Cyrus king of Persia had them brought by Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah. Yet, this is not easily supported, and there are reasons to dispute it: 1 Esdras 6:18, no high priest connected with Sheshbazzar, failure to accomplish much rebuilding compared to Zerubbabel.

Establishing lines of descent was critical for the post-exilic continuity of the kingship and the priesthood. Zerubbabel was significantly the heir to the throne in the line of David, being a son of *Shealtiel* the son of Jehoiachin (598-597) who was carried off to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar:

1 Ch 3:17 of Jehoiachin the captive: Shealtiel his son, 18 Malkiram, Peda  
Ezr 3:2 priests and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and his associates began to  
Ezr 3:8 Jerusalem, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Jeshua son of Jozadak and  
Ezr 5:2 Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak set  
Ne 12:1 turned with Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and with Jeshua: Seraiah, Jer  
Hag 1:1 Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to  
Hag 1:12 Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the  
Hag 1:14 spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the  
Hag 2:2 Speak to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, to Joshua  
Hag 2:23 my servant Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel,' declares the LORD,  
Mt 1:12 Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zeru  
Mt 1:12 was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,  
Lk 3:27 son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri,

### *Zerubbabel in the Bible:*

1 Chron 3:19 The sons of Pedaiah: Zerubbabel and Shimei. The sons of Zerubbabel: Meshullam and Hananiah.  
Ezr 2:2 in company with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah,  
Ezr 3:2 and his fellow priests and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and his  
Ezr 3:8 the house of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Jeshua son  
Ezr 4:2 of Israel, 2 they came to Zerubbabel and to the heads of the families  
Ezr 4:3 But Zerubbabel, Jeshua and the rest of the  
Ezr 5:2 who was over them. 2 Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua  
Neh 7:7 in company with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah,  
Neh 12:1 and Levites who returned with Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and with  
Neh 12:47 So in the days of Zerubbabel and of Nehemiah, all Israel  
Hag 1:1 through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor  
Hag 1:12 Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son  
Hag 1:14 LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of  
Hag 2:2 prophet Haggai: 2 "Speak to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of  
Hag 2:4 But now be strong, O Zerubbabel,' declares the LORD. 'Be strong  
Hag 2:21 day of the month: 21 "Tell Zerubbabel governor of Judah that I will  
Hag 2:23 'I will take you, my servant Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel,' declares  
Zech 4:6 the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power,  
Zech 4:7 O mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground.  
Zech 4:9 "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of  
Zech 4:10 the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.  
Mtt 1:12, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, 13 Zerubbabel the father  
Mtt 1:13 father of Zerubbabel, 13 Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, Abiud

Lk 3:27 the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the

Joshua, the high priest, was the son of Jehozadak (Jozadak) and grandson of Seraiah who was executed by Nebuchadnezzar after Jerusalem fell:

1 Chron 6:14 and Seraiah the father of Jehozadak. 15 Jehozadak was deported  
 1 Chron 6:15 the father of Jehozadak. 15 Jehozadak was deported when the LORD  
 Hag 1:1 and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest:  
 Hag 1:12 son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the who  
 Hag 1:14 the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the  
 Hag 2:2 or of Judah, to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the  
 Hag 2:4 Be strong, O Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong,  
 Zech 6:11 the high priest, Joshua son of Jehozadak. 12 Tell him this is what

2 Ki 25:18-21 The commander of the guard took as prisoners Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the priest next in rank and the three doorkeepers. 19 Of those still in the city, he took the officer in charge of the fighting men and five royal advisers. He also took the secretary who was chief officer in charge of conscripting the people of the land and sixty of his men who were found in the city. 20 Nebuzaradan the commander took them all and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 21 There at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, the king had them executed. So Judah went into captivity, away from her land.  
 1 Chron 6:15 Jehozadak was deported when the LORD sent Judah and Jerusalem into exile by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

The prophetic exhortation to the returned exiles provides a closed case against their laxity, lack of faith, lack of courage, complacency, and comfort-seeking:

The word of the Lord Almighty (see p. 546):  
 False assumptions about building the temple (1:2).  
 The word of the Lord:  
 Seeking comfortable homes while temple was in ruins (1:3-4)  
 The word of the Lord Almighty:  
 Seeking unsuccessfully to be self-satisfied and comfortable (1:5).  
 The word of the Lord Almighty:  
 Rebuild the temple of God (1:7-8), instead of seeking to be self-satisfied and comfortable (1:9).  
*Because judgment (drought) was upon them (1:10-11).*

- ❖ The Lord Almighty (or of Hosts) reveals his word to his prophet, a sure sign of hope to post-exilic Judah.
- ❖ The loss of rain was a sure sign of the covenant curse.
- ❖ The covenant to build and maintain the house of the Lord was not kept by Judah. The house of the Lord was central to the promises of God and the history of redemption, for it represented his very presence with them and the place of atonement-mediation to enter that presence. They had forsaken the very heart of their faith.
- ❖ They had built homes for themselves, while neglecting the Lord's temple. Their "paneled houses" (1:4) suggests *completion* and comfort, not necessarily costs.
- ❖ The Judahite laxity contrasts ironically with the pagan Persians' encouragement and enablement of Judah to rebuild the Jerusalem temple.

### **b) Obedience of Judah in rebuilding: Hag 1:12-15**

The response of the people to the prophet of the Lord is a real glimmer of hope and light in an otherwise dismal history of rebellion.

They obeyed the voice of the Lord their God (2:12b).  
 The people began to work on the house of the Lord Almighty (2:14b).  
 Because the Lord had sent Haggai (2:12c).  
 Thus, the Lord promised his presence: "I am with you" (2:13b).

This text conveys the centrality of the sanctuary-presence promise of the Mosaic covenant being reaffirmed by God's declaration and Judah's enactment of rebuilding. The covenant promise to "be their God" was summarized in the declaration: "I am with you" (אֲנִי אֶתְּכֶם) (1:13). The work of the Spirit of God is evident here, as well. VanGemeren suggests that the work of God's Spirit is central to their godly response, renewal, reconciliation, and spiritual transformation.<sup>672</sup> Their yearning to do the work of God was a sign of real hope for the people of God, and a sign of real hope for the eschatological future of redemption. The Word of God and the Spirit of God enervated

<sup>672</sup> VanGemeren, *Prophetic Word*, p. 190.

the people of God to renewed covenant faithfulness. Despite their initial failings after returning to the land, the Lord was still faithful to send his prophet, the people respond faithfully, and thus we are given hope that the future continuity of redemption was positively in progress. Purged in exile, they would see a new era of the *eschaton* of God's work. All subsequent generations should take note of the unmistakable fulfillment of countless pre-exilic prophecies that the remnant *would return* and be reestablished in the land! This confirms with overwhelming evidence that *He is there and he is not silent*. Further, the prophetic ministry persistently shows us that God works redemption through his Word and Spirit, both of which represent his Messiah who would accomplish redemption.

### c) **Encouragement of Judah: Hag 2:1-23**

#### (1) **Second word of the Lord**

The second word of the Lord to Haggai was on October 17<sup>th</sup>, 520 and was addressed to Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the remnant (2:1-2).

The older returnees would have remembered the former temple (2:3). The *appearance* of the temple would have discouraged them greatly, both the ruins and the new foundations (and eventually the finished product).

Ezra 3:12 But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy.

But the Lord tells them three times to “be strong” or “take courage” (2:4a), “for I am with you” (2:4b). For each expression of “take courage” he addresses a different person: Zerubbabel, Joshua, the people (2:4), stressing the *personal* and individual concern of God. This kind of individuation is seen often in the OT:

Ex 3:6 Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

The theme of walking by sight or faith is explicitly conveyed in the story, for the important thing was not either the former glory of the temple or the present state of the temple, but rather that they remembered the Lord and were faithful to him. Even more to the point, they could take courage and work *because* the Lord was with them. The Lord encouraged the people to be strong, for “I AM WITH YOU” (2:4).

**The word of God remained with them (2:1).**  
**The covenant of God remained intact (2:5a).**  
**The Spirit of God remained with them (2:5b).**  
**The glory of God would be with them (2:6).**

The promises of God in this section are backed by this tripartite nature of God: Word, Spirit, Glory.

The Deliverer, who brought them out of Egypt (2:5a), was the Covenanter with them. The prophet conveys this fundamental truth about their history of redemption: God the one is Creator by Word and Spirit covenanted with them in Egypt and showed them his glory in the wilderness. There is an interlocking tapestry of judgment on Egypt by the Creator God in the process of redeeming his chosen people. In light of this, he reminds them that their exile, preservation in exile, and their miraculous return to the land paralleled their earlier history, except for the fact that the judgment was upon *them* and not just Egypt. They had been reduced to the level of the nations by their own rebellion, but now God had once again delivered them and would show them his glory. The idolatrous dross had been burned away, and a new era of peace between God and his people had been enacted through the words of the prophets and the Spirit of God.

“The desired of the nations will come” (וּבָאוּ תְּמַנְתָּ כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם) has traditionally been considered messianic. The problem is that the verb “to come” (בּוֹא) is plural. (וְ) particle conjunction with בּוֹא verb qal waw consec perfect 3rd person common plural).<sup>673</sup> The traditional interpretation assumes that a genitive relationship of the verb and the noun “nations” resolves the agreement between the subject and verb. The common contemporary interpretation takes the singular “desired” as a collective noun for “wealth.” That wealth would refurbish the rebuilt temple of Zerubbabel, and is referred to in the next phrase: “The silver is mine and the gold is mine, declares the Lord” (2:8).

תִּמְנַח - desire, take pleasure in  
 תִּמְנָחָה - pleasant things, precious

Gen 2:9 And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>673</sup>Walter Kaiser states that often in the Hebrew, when a verb is controlled by two nouns (e.g., “desire” and “nations” in this case), “the verb agrees with the second noun even if the verb actually belongs with the former substantive” (*Hard Sayings of the Old Testament*, p. 237). Source: <https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/1129-haggai-2-7-the-desire-of-the-nations>

Gen 3:6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Exodus 20:17 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

Prov 6:25 Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes,

Isa 53:2 He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground.  
He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

The glory restored to the temple (see Ezekiel) that would surpass the previous glory (2:9) seems to contain messianic import, for it is unlikely a reference to the material glory of the second temple, especially considering that he has already said that many will see that the second temple would not compare to Solomon’s temple (2:3; Eze 3:12; see Zech 2:5). The glory of God would be present there, and thus it has greater redemptive historical, eschatological meaning, and points towards the Messiah who would bring the fullness of God’s glory (glory used in NT over 130x):

Lu 2:13-14 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”

Lu 2:27-32 Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, 28 Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: 29 “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. 30 For my eyes have seen your salvation, 31 which you have prepared in the sight of all people, 32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

Jn 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Heb 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

God is the Judge (as conveyed overwhelmingly in the pre-exilic prophets), Creator, and Redeemer:

*Judgment theology:* the sanctuary is in ruins due to rebellion (2:3).  
*Creation theology:* the Lord Almighty will *shake* the heavens and the earth (2:6, 21).  
*Redemption theology:* the Lord Almighty will give his glory and his peace to his house and people (2:7-9).

It is understandable that traditionally “the desired of the nations” has been understood messianically, considering the context, for the “shaking” of the heavens and the earth is understood in the NT as referring to the Messiah’s return:

Heb 12:26-27 At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” 27 The words “once more” indicate the removing of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain.

*Be holy as I am holy* (Ex 22:3; 29:37; 30:29; Lev 11:44-45 ;19:2; 20:7, 26; 21:6; Nu 6:5; 1 Cor 1:2; Eph; 1:4; Heb 12:14; 1 Pe 1:15-16; 2:5; Re 22:11).

Further notes:

It is interesting though that in several of the English translations the phrases regarding “treasures” or “wealth” concepts, etc., could also be understood in a Messianic sense, since Messiah *is* that treasure and wealth. It is not so with (ESV, Holman, NET, WEB) translations that take it as plural object of the verb “and the treasures of all nations.” It is a plural verb with a singular noun, nevertheless, of <sup>674</sup> הַמְּדָה

I would like to take some further time later to explore whether it could be taken in a dative sense of “to”, since the plural verb could be “they will come” *to the one desired of the nations.* (I see Young renders it like this.) It should also be noted that the verb is a Qal and not a Hiphil, which might have some importance in whether we understand the “desired” *coming* (active) not *being brought* (passive or causative).

Along with the matter of the agreement between the verb and object, the question remains whether it refers first and foremost to the immediate future context of Israel’s return from exile or to the distant future of Messiah’s

<sup>674</sup> **Hol 2613** הַמְּדָה הַמְּדָה: cs. הַמְּדָה, sf. הַמְּדָה: s.thg desirable, precious: ḥemdat yiśrā’ēl 1S 9<sub>20</sub>; = excellent: ships Is 2<sub>16</sub>, houses Ez 26<sub>12</sub>; ḥemdat nāšīm beloved of women = Tammuz-Adonis Dn 11<sub>37</sub>. (pg 108).

coming, or both in some prefigurative or foreshadowing (or echos) sense? There may also be a “telescoping” of judgment prophecies here that refer to the coming fall of Persia as a foretaste of the coming future judgment on the nations (also reminiscent of the past judgment on Egypt at the Exodus; see Heb 12:26-27 below). There can be little doubt that it is *predictive* prophecy, in either case, since the phrase “says the Lord” typically accompanies such: אָמַר יְהוָה (Hag 2:7 WTT). Similarly, in Mal 3:1, a Messianic and covenantal sentiment is found of One coming in the future who is “desired” or “delighted in” (though the verb “to come” is the same, it is a different Heb noun there, אֲשֶׁר-אַתֶּם חֲפֻצִים (Mal 3:1 WTT).

In regards to whether it has predictive, Messianic aspects, it is peculiar that TWOT states that 2.7 is not Messianic but 2.9 is: “When Haggai therefore predicts that ‘the desire of all nations shall come’ (Hag 2:7), he probably is not referring to the Messiah (as in v. 9b) but rather to the contributions of precious things (ASV; *µemda*) for refurbishing Zerubbabel's temple (the same noun, 2Chr 36:10).”<sup>675</sup>

Interestingly, the LXX renders הַמְדָּה it with *ἐκλεκτός*.

[GING] *ἐκλεκτός ἡ, ὃν chosen, select* Mt 22:14; 24:22, 24, 31; Lk 18:7; 23:35; Col 3:12; 1 Ti 5:21; 2 Ti 2:10; 1 Pt 2:9; 2 J 1, 13. *Choice* 1 Pt 2:4, 6; ὁ ἐ. ἐν κυρίῳ *the outstanding Christian* Ro 16:13. [pg 60].

## (2) *The third word of the Lord*

The third (2:10-19) and fourth (2:20-23) words of the Lord to Haggai were on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 520. These final two messages of encouragement are addressed first to the priests and then to the governor Zerubbabel. These final words are intended to give further instruction and encouragement.

*The importance of holiness:* one of the many false assumptions of the people had to do with holiness. They had to be reminded that uncleanness was a great threat to the nation, and that it was much more easily transmitted than holiness. The prophet is told to “quiz” the priests about the subject of what makes sacrificial meat consecrated, in light of Levitical law:

Lev 6:27 Whatever touches any of the flesh will become holy, and if any of the blood is spattered on a garment, you must wash it in a holy place.

The idea that holiness could have a *secondary* transmission point is rejected. The garment does not become a vehicle for holiness simply because it carried consecrated meat (Hag 2:11-12). Whereas, on the other hand, the person defiled by contact with a dead body becomes defiled and a transmitter of uncleanness (Hag 2:13).

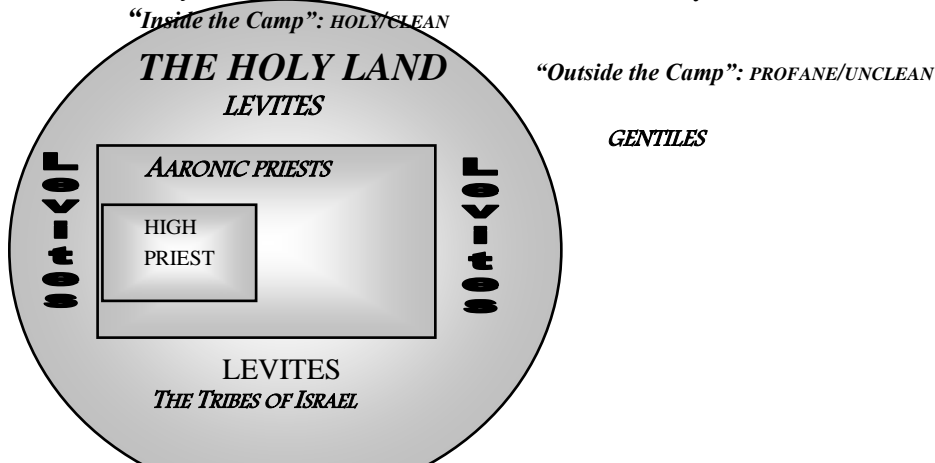
Num 19:11-13 “Whoever touches the dead body of anyone will be unclean for seven days. <sup>12</sup> He must purify himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day; then he will be clean. But if he does not purify himself on the third and seventh days, he will not be clean. <sup>13</sup> Whoever touches the dead body of anyone and fails to purify himself defiles the LORD’s tabernacle. That person must be cut off from Israel. Because the water of cleansing has not been sprinkled on him, he is unclean; his uncleanness remains on him.

The purpose of this lesson to the priests was to make plain to the them that the nation was *defiled* and a transmitter of uncleanness (Hag 2:14), and that their presence in the “holy” land and their dwelling near the “holy” place of the sanctuary did not make them holy. This is gospel theology. The priests were the one’s to instruct the people and model this vital truth. The foundation stone for the temple (Hag 2:18), laid in 536 B.C., was a vital sign that the Lord was going to hold them accountable to the standards of the law. Haggai exhorted the priests to “Give careful thought” to the reasons behind the exile-judgment. The holiness theme, as it relates to the sanctuary, was central to

<sup>675</sup> **BDB 3146** הַמְדָּה [3147] (Hebrew) (page 326) (Strong 2532 ) † הַמְדָּה n.f. id.—’ח Ho 13:15 + 8 t.; cstr. הַמְדָּה 1 S 9:20 + 3 t.; sf. הַמְדָּה Je 12:10; הַמְדָּה Ez 26:12; הַמְדָּה Dn 11:8; —*desire* of Israel 1 S 9:20 sq. לְ before obj. of desire; ח’ בְּלֹא = *without desire* 2 Ch 21:20 (i.e. he lived as no one desired), v. &O;t LXX (not LXXL) Vulgate; concrete: ח’ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּלֹא ח’ 1 S 9:20 and for whom is *all that is desirable in Isr.?* so LXX Vulgate RV Dr; (>AV and on whom is *all the desire of Isr.?*); cf. ח’ בְּלִי-גוֹיִם Hg 2:7 (i.e. the desirable, precious things of all nations); elsewh. after cstr. as חֲמֹד; esp. ח’ כָּלִי ח’ Ho 13:15, Na 2:10, Je 25:34, 2 Ch 32:27, 36:10, Dn 11:8; ח’ שְׂכִיזוֹת Is 2:16; ח’ אֶרֶץ ח’ Psalm 106:24, Je 3:19, Zc 7:14, cf. ח’ הַלְקֵתָהּ Je 12:10; ח’ בְּתֵי ח’ Ez 26:12; ח’ נָשִׁים ח’ Dn 11:37, appar. ref. to some obj. of idolatrous worship, perhaps *Adonis = Tammuz* Ew Bev (*Astarte, Meinh*).



the requisite need for atonement to enter YHWH’s holy presence. His *graded holiness* consecrated the entire sanctuary precinct, and the nation, yet each person must be properly *sanctified* before approaching the sanctuary. Each person must also *be holy to be included* in the covenant community.



Rebuilding the temple.<sup>676</sup>



Rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.

### (3) *The fourth word of the Lord*

The final and fourth (Hagg 2:20-23) word of the Lord to Haggai was on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 520, and was addressed to Zerubbabel. Similarly to Hagg 2:6-7, Haggai is given another combined expression of judgment, creation, and redemption theology:

*Judgment theology:* the nations will be overturned in judgment (Hagg 2:21-22).  
*Creation theology:* the Lord will *shake* the heavens and the earth (Hagg 2:6, 21) cf. Heb 12:26-27 above.  
*Redemption theology:* the Lord Almighty will give his “signet ring” promise of lineage (messianic line of David) (Hagg 2:7-9).

Mtt 1:12, 17 After the exile to Babylon: Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel . . . <sup>17</sup> Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Christ.

There is a similar pattern at the end of the prophecy that we saw at the beginning of Haggai (1:2-11):

The word of the Lord (2:21):  
 The heavens and earth will be shaken (2:21).  
 The royal thrones of foreign kingdoms will be overthrown (2:22).  
 The word of the Lord Almighty (2:23a).

<sup>676</sup> Woodcuts by Julius Schnoor von Carolsfeld (originally printed in “Das Buch der Bücher in Bildern”).

Promise of blessing on the line of Zerubbabel (2:23b).  
 Declaration that God had chosen Zerubbabel (2:23c).  
 The word of the Lord Almighty (2:23d).

- ❖ The Lord Almighty (or of Hosts) reveals his word again to his prophet, a sure sign of hope to post-exilic Judah.
- ❖ The word of judgment on the nations was a sure sign of hope to the returned exiles. The big reversal.
- ❖ The promise of eschatological/cosmic works of God gave hope of final redemption (Messiah implicit).
- ❖ The promise to preserve the line of David through Zerubbabel remarkably confirmed the promises of God to David, the promises of the pre-exilic and exilic prophets, as well as the many promises of redemption.

## **8. *History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling***

### **a) *Revelation and redemption from YHWH***

#### **(1) *Who God is***

Haggai presents God as *present* with Israel, thus presenting his prophecy in the broad redemptive-historical context of the divine presence as confirmation of the covenant of redemption. From the outset, this prophet represents the remarkable and irrefutable faithfulness of the Living, covenanting Lord. Thus, this prophecy also demonstrates the *contrast* between Israel's ongoing faithlessness and YHWH's faithfulness. The temple-presence is central to the covenant-promises, and Israel was neglecting the offer to restore sanctuary-relations with YHWH's presence there. This is in the context of the vital promise that the (Messianic) glory of the Lord would come to the house of Israel (2:6).

The fact that God is still revealing his word through his prophets is further proof of his character of love, mercy, long-suffering, grace, faithfulness. Haggai claims some 25x that God had spoken to him.

#### **(2) *What God has done***

God speaks!

God has restored them despite their faithless disobedience and disregard for the things of God's house. This fulfilled his many promises through the pre-exilic and exilic prophets to bring back a remnant to the land to rebuild the city and the temple.

God has given them many further proofs of his lovingkindness.

#### **(3) *What God has promised***

- To judge them for their disobedience.
- To preserve a remnant: "I am with you" (1:13)
- To be honored by the rebuilt temple.
- To bless their obedience.
- To send the "desired" Messiah *for all the nations*.
- To shake the heavens and the earth.
- To fill his temple with his glory and his peace.

### **b) *Humankind and redemption***

#### **(1) *Worship of redeemed***

Worship is central to Haggai's prophecy, since he focuses entirely on the rebuilding of the temple and what that signified. Their coldness towards the things of God is a striking reminder that God's people are inclined to forgetfulness and fear that lead to faithlessness. Even after all that they had seen of the Lord's work in exile-judgment and remnant-return, they still lacked confidence and hearts to serve the Lord: they were busy building their fine houses while neglecting the temple rebuilding.

#### **(2) *Work of redeemed***

In this case of the post-exilic remnant, work was wrongly focused on self-interest for their own houses and properties. It does not seem, however, that Haggai simply condemns the rebuilding of houses, since they must live

somewhere. Rather, he condemns the total disregard for the temple of YHWH that indicates their spiritually sterile condition.

The prophet declares the word of the Lord that they must *work* because “I am with you.” (2:4)

Haggai 1:14 (KJV) And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God,<sup>677</sup>

Haggai 2:4 Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I *am* with you, saith the LORD of hosts: Haggai 2:14 Then answered Haggai, and said, So *is* this people, and so *is* this nation before me, saith the LORD; and so *is* every work of their hands; and that which they offer there *is* unclean.

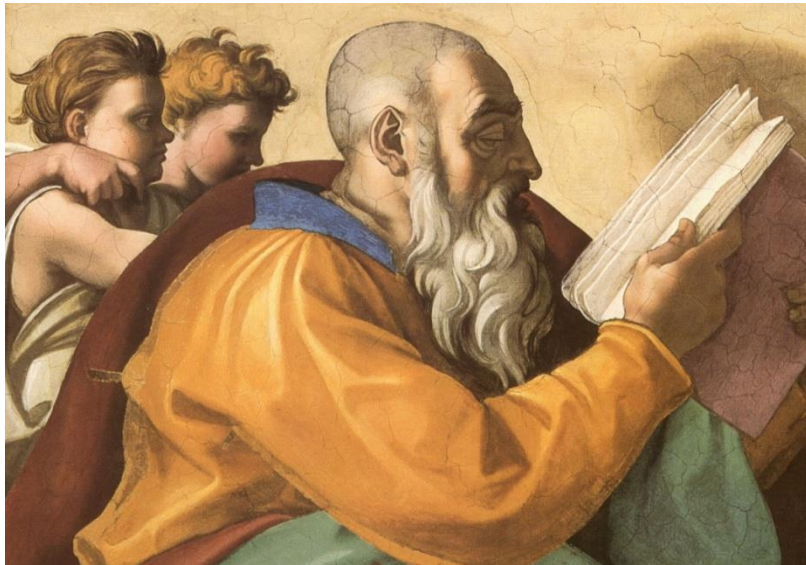
Haggai 2:17 I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labours of your hands; yet ye *turned* not to me, saith the LORD.

### (3) *Ethics of redeemed*

The foundation of biblical ethics, and the blessings that follow, is spiritual and related to the revelation of God. Ethical obedience leads to holiness, disobedience leads to unholiness. As in the motivation for work, so also for ethics: “For I am with you.” This is another example of Israel’s testimony to the nations as part of God’s mission to redeem the world.

## B. *Zechariah זְכַרְיָהּ (Judah ~ 520)*

“This is what the Lord says: ‘I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem.’” Zech 8:3



(left) Zechariah in Sistine Chapel by Michelangelo

### 1. *Title, author, and dates*

1. Zechariah (“YHWH remembers”), prophesied in Jerusalem from August 29 until Dec. 18, 520 B.C. (Ezra 5:1), and Zechariah, grandson of Iddo the priest, joined him two months after Haggai’s first speech (Zech 1:1). Zech 1:7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berekiah, the son of Iddo. (cf. 1 Chron 9:16, a Berekiah is the son of Asa)

Neh 12:16 of Iddo’s, Zechariah; of Ginnethon’s, Meshullam;

Ezra 5:1; 6:14 / Now Haggai the prophet and Zechariah

the prophet, a descendant of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them. 14 So the elders of the Jews continued to build and prosper under the preaching of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah, a descendant of Iddo. They finished building the temple according to the command of the God of Israel and the decrees of Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia.

2. Zechariah was both prophet and priest (Neh 12:4, 10-16) (as Jeremiah and Ezekiel). Born in Babylon he returned in 538 with Zerubbabel and Joshua, the high priest.
3. Zechariah prophesied alongside Haggai, and both produced the completion of the Jerusalem temple (516) after a twenty year rebuilding lapse due to the opposition from the Samaritans. Zechariah began his ministry in the reign of Darius I (521-586), and possibly ministered through Xerxes’s reign (485-465) and into the reign of Artaxerxes I (465-424). Artaxerxes sent Ezra and Nehemiah to Jerusalem. See Artaxerxes’ Background in Malachi notes, p. 582.
4. Zechariah is the longest of the so-called “minor prophets.” Often considered an obscure book, yet Zechariah 9-14 is the most frequently quoted portion of the OT in the NT Passion narrative, and greatly

<sup>677</sup> *The Holy Bible : King James Version*. electronic ed. of the 1769 edition of the 1611 Authorized Version. Bellingham WA : Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1995

influenced the book of Revelation: for example, Zech 9:9-10 (Mtt 21:4-5; Jn 12:14-15); Zech 13:7 (Mtt 26:31; 9:36; Jn 10:11); Zech 12:10 (Jn 19:37; Rev 1:7); Zech 11:12-13 (Mtt 27:9); Zech 14:20-21 (Rev 21:16-18).

5. Do not confuse this Zechariah with the priest that was killed by King Joash (835-796) (2 Chron 24:20-22) or with the Zechariah Jesus mentions in Luke 11:51 and Mtt 23:35.



**Dates** (NIV Study Bible, p. 1405)

The dates of Zechariah’s recorded messages are best correlated with those of Haggai and with other historical events as follows:

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. Haggai’s first message (Hag 1:1-11; Ezr 5:1)  | Aug. 29, 520 B.C. |
| 2. Resumption of the building of the temple (Hag 1:12-15; Ezr 5:2)<br>(The rebuilding seems to have been hindered from 536 to c. 530 [Ezr 4:1-5], and the work ceased altogether from c. 530 to 520 [Ezr 4:24].) | Sept. 21, 520     |
| 3. Haggai’s second message (Hag 2:1-9)   | Oct. 17, 520      |
| 4. Beginning of Zechariah’s preaching (1:1-6)  | Oct./Nov., 520    |
| 5. Haggai’s third message (Hag 2:10-19)  | Dec. 18, 520      |
| 6. Haggai’s fourth message (Hag 2:20-23)   | Dec. 18, 520      |
| 7. Tattenai’s letter to Darius concerning the rebuilding of the temple (Ezr 5:3-6:14)<br>(There must have been a lapse of time between the resumption of the building and Tattenai’s appearance.)                | 519-518           |
| 8. Zechariah’s eight night visions (1:7-6:8)   | Feb. 15, 519      |
| 9. Joshua crowned (6:9-15)   | Feb. 16 (?), 519  |
| 10. Repentance urged, blessings promised (chs. 7-8)  | Dec. 7, 518       |
| 11. Dedication of the temple (Ezr 6:15-18)   | Mar. 12, 516      |
| 12. Zechariah’s final prophecy (chs. 9-14)   | After 480 (?)     |

678

**2. Critical matters**

1. The core of his message is in eight “visions of the night” and oracles (chs. 1-8). The message: assurance to exiles of a return, to overthrow their enemies, to cleanse them, and to dwell with them in Jerusalem again (echoes of Ezekiel). Critical interest has centered on the form of the visions and their relation to the oracles and genre of Zech 1-8: is it prophecy or some form of apocalyptic. Due to similarities, some have concluded that Haggai and Zechariah 1-8 are closely parallel (some say they were compiled as one work, by Zechariah or someone close to him). Zechariah 9-14 (“Deutero-Zechariah) has for long been believed to be from another, later author (due to difference in second part: no building of temple, no reference to Darius I, and only one first-person address, different subject matter and style). Some place this section after Alexander the Great’s conquest of Palestine (332 B.C.), due in part to the assumption that “apocalyptic” literature is attested only late. There are no compelling reasons to deny Zechariah’s authorship of the entire book (cf. arguments for and against Isaiah’s authorship of Isaiah and critical arguments regarding Haggai).
2. *Enthronement festival as background:* Many critics interpret 9-11 cultically: the claim is that the language and symbolism of Zechariah echoes an enthronement festival in pre-exilic Jerusalem, associated with the Feast of Tabernacles (or Booths), and involved the king representing God and people in a ritual combat with the forces of darkness (9:1-10). His victory led to celebration and affirmation of the kingship of God, securing another year of rain (14:17). Such an interpretation greatly impacts the meaning of the prophet’s book, and thus should not be accepted without serious re-evaluation. (This widespread theory is evaluated in my Judges-Esther syllabus, as well as in the Wisdom/poets syllabus.)



**3. Distinctive words/phrases**

**a) “Lord Almighty”**

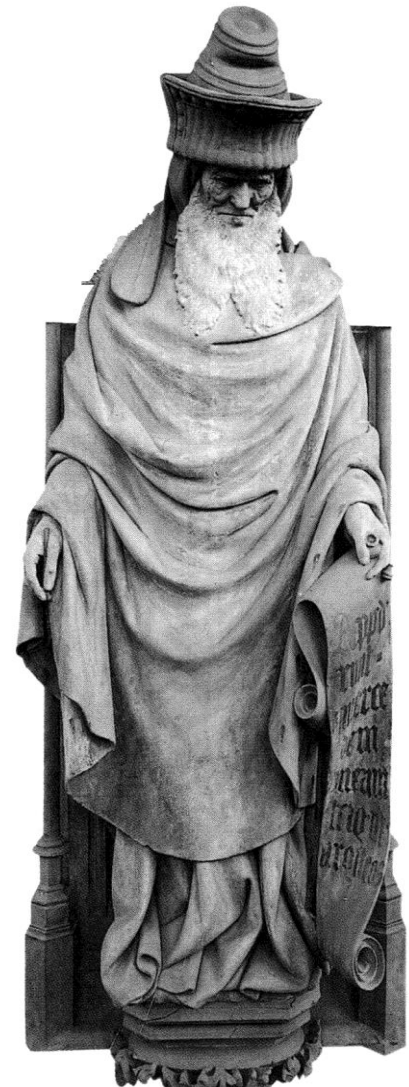
Zec 1:3 the people: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Return to me,' declare  
 Zec 1:3 'Return to me,' declares the LORD Almighty, 'and I will return to you,'  
 Zec 1:3 will return to you,' says the LORD Almighty. 4 Do not be like your for  
 Zec 1:4 proclaimed: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Turn from your evil  
 Zec 1:6 they repented and said, 'The LORD Almighty has done to us what our ways  
 Zec 1:12 the angel of the LORD said, "LORD Almighty, how long will you withhold  
 Zec 1:14 this word: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'I am very jealous for  
 Zec 1:16 over Jerusalem,' declares the LORD Almighty.  
 Zec 1:17 proclaim further: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'My towns will again  
 Zec 2:8 For this is what the LORD Almighty says: "After he has honored  
 Zec 2:9 Then you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me.  
 Zec 2:11 you and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you.  
 Zec 3:7 "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'If you will walk in my  
 Zec 3:9 inscription on it,' says the LORD Almighty, 'and I will remove the sin  
 Zec 3:10 and fig tree,' declares the LORD Almighty."  
 Zec 4:6 but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty. 7 "What are you, O  
 Zec 4:9 Then you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you.  
 Zec 5:4 will be banished. 4 The LORD Almighty declares, 'I will send it out  
 Zec 6:12 Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Here is the man whose  
 Zec 6:15 and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you. This  
 Zec 7:3 priests of the house of the LORD Almighty and the prophets, "Should I  
 Zec 7:4 Then the word of the LORD Almighty came to me: 5 "Ask all the  
 Zec 7:9 "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Administer true justice  
 Zec 7:12 law or to the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit  
 Zec 7:12 the earlier prophets. So the LORD Almighty was very angry.  
 Zec 7:13 I would not listen,' says the LORD Almighty. 14 'I scattered them with

(right)Zechariah.<sup>679</sup>

Zec 8:1 Again the word of the LORD Almighty came to me. 2 This is what  
 Zec 8:2 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "I am very jealous for  
 Zec 8:3 and the mountain of the LORD Almighty will be called the Holy Mount  
 Zec 8:4 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Once again men and women  
 Zec 8:6 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "It may seem marvelous  
 Zec 8:6 Marvelous to me?" declares the LORD Almighty.  
 Zec 8:7 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "I will save my people  
 Zec 8:9 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "You who now hear these  
 Zec 8:9 laid for the house of the LORD Almighty, let your hands be strong so  
 Zec 8:11 in the past," declares the LORD Almighty.  
 Zec 8:14 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Just as I had determined  
 Zec 8:14 fathers angered me," says the LORD Almighty, 15 "so now I have  
 Zec 8:18 Again the word of the LORD Almighty came to me. 19 This is wha  
 Zec 8:19 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "The fasts of the fourth  
 Zec 8:20 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Many peoples and the  
 Zec 8:21 entreat the LORD and seek the LORD Almighty. I myself am going.'  
 Zec 8:22 come to Jerusalem to seek the LORD Almighty and to entreat him."  
 Zec 8:23 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "In those days ten men  
 Zec 9:15 of the south, 15 and the LORD Almighty will shield them.  
 Zec 10:3 for the LORD Almighty will care for his flock, the  
 Zec 12:5 are strong, because the LORD Almighty is their God.'  
 Zec 13:2 remembered no more," declares the LORD Almighty. "I will remove  
 Zec 13:7 close to me!" declares the LORD Almighty. "Strike the shepherd, and  
 Zec 14:16 year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Feast  
 Zec 14:17 Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, they will have no rain.  
 Zec 14:21 and Judah will be holy to the LORD Almighty, and all who come to sacrific  
 Zec 14:21 in the house of the LORD Almighty.

## b) "The Branch"

Zec 3:8 'Listen, O high priest Joshua and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch.  
 Zec 6:12 Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD.  
 Isa 4:2 In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel.  
 Jer 1:11 The word of the LORD came to me: "What do you see, Jeremiah?"  
 "I see the branch of an almond tree," I replied.  
 Eze 8:17 He said to me, "Have you seen this, son of man? Is it a trivial matter for the house of Judah to do the detestable things they are doing here? Must they also fill the land with violence and continually provoke me to anger? Look at them putting the branch to their nose!"



*Zechariah  
 is carved in  
 limestone  
 in this  
 depiction of  
 the prophet  
 from the  
 15th-century  
 Abbey of  
 Champmol  
 near Dijon,  
 France.*

<sup>679</sup> From *The Bible Through the Ages*, p.77.

## 4. Major themes

1. Prophetic call *to return* (שׁוּבוּ) to the Lord (1:2). And, the *return of the Lord* (1:3).  
 Zech 1:3 (NASB95) “Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, “Return to Me,” declares the Lord of hosts, “that I may return to you,” says the Lord of hosts.  
 Zech 1:16 ‘Therefore thus says the Lord, “I will return to Jerusalem with compassion; My house will be built in it,” declares the Lord of hosts, “and a measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem.”’  
 Zech 4:1 Then the angel who was speaking with me returned and roused me, as a man who is awakened from his sleep  
 Zech 7:14 (NET) ‘Rather, I will sweep them away in a storm into all the nations they are not familiar with.’ Thus the land had become desolate because of them, with no one crossing through or returning, for they had made the fruitful<sup>10</sup> land a waste.”  
 Zech 8:3 The Lord says, ‘I have returned to Zion and will live within Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> Now Jerusalem will be called “truthful city,” “mountain of the Lord who rules over all,” “holy mountain.”’  
 Zech 9:12 Return to the stronghold, you prisoners, with hope; today I declare that I will return double what was taken from you.  
 Zech 10:9 Though I scatter<sup>11</sup> them among the nations, they will remember in far-off places – they and their children will sprout forth and return.
2. Even in the post-exilic situation, greatly purged, they still greatly needed the prophetic revelation from God to challenge them to faithful obedience to God. Particularly important was the rebuilding of the temple, but also *true religion* of justice, mercy, and compassion (7:8-10).  
 Zec 4:9 laid the foundation of this temple; his hands will also complete  
 Zech 6:12 from his place and build the temple of the LORD.  
 Zech 6:13 It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be  
 Zech 6:14 Zephaniah as a memorial in the temple of the LORD.  
 Zech 6:15 come and help to build the temple of the LORD, and you will know  
 Zech 8:9 hands be strong so that the temple may be built.
3. Prophetic declarations that the nations which oppressed Israel will be destroyed.
4. Messiah would eventually come and fulfill the promises of God. God remembers his covenant and promises to his people.



## 5. Major prophecies

Zechariah is a marvel of Messianic prophecy.

1. A future siege of Jerusalem (12:1-3; 14:1-2), God’s defense of Jerusalem (14:2-4) and his judgment on the nations (12:9; 14:3), some specifically named (9:1-13).
2. Messiah will come, lowly human, rejected. Betrayed (for silver, Zech 11:12), struck, pierced (12:10; 13:7) He would be a priest and king reigning in glory and establishing peace (9:9-10; 14:1-20), involving his first and second advents.
3. The Gentile nations will worship the king (universal gospel) (14:16-19).

<sup>a</sup> Is 31:6; 44:22; Mal 3:7

<sup>10</sup> <sup>10</sup> **tn** Or “desirable”; traditionally “pleasant” (so many English versions; cf. TEV “This good land”).

<sup>2</sup> <sup>2</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>11</sup> <sup>11</sup> **tn** Or “sow” (so KJV, ASV). The imagery is taken from the sowing of seed by hand.

## 6. Outline, structure/composition

Although Dorsey notes that “No overall structural scheme (such as symmetry) clearly ties the two parts of Zechariah together,”<sup>680</sup> we can propose that the overall structure of the book can be topically outlined, and as in other prophets it follows a negative exhortation-rebuke message followed by a positive, hopeful promise of restoration:

The rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple ~ Zech 1-8.  
 The future (Messianic) restoration of Israel ~ 9-14.

The first section (1:7-6:8) contains eight prophetic visions which follow a similar pattern:

1. Introduction to the vision
2. Description of the vision
3. Zechariah questions the angel for the meaning of the vision
4. Angel explains the meaning of the vision

Zechariah’s eight visions may also be said to break down into two broadly overlapping categories: political/spiritual

*Political visions:*

- 1. Four horses (deliverance from enemy nations)
- 2. Four horns (enemy nations will be destroyed) and four craftsmen (Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, Greece)
- 3. Measuring Jerusalem (restoration of Jerusalem)
- 4. Conclude with vision of Joshua’s reinstatement as high priest: (spiritual importance of priesthood).
- ❖ 5. Gold lampstand and two olive trees: political/spiritual – priest and king represent Messianic hope.

*Spiritual visions:*

- 6. Flying scroll (sin will be judged)
- 7. Woman in basket (wickedness would be removed)
- 8. Four chariots, horses, and messengers of judgment (deliverance from sin and enemies)
- Conclude with the crowning narrative of Joshua as the priest-king: (political importance of priesthood).

~ The initial five visions deal primarily with the return from exile, ending on the *reinstatement* of the high priest.  
 ~ The latter three visions and crowning narrative deal primarily with removal of sin, ending on the *crowning* of the high priest.

The following *connecting section* (Zech 7-8) bridges themes from the rebuilding of the temple (judgment) in the first sections to the second section themes of restoration-hope, and introduce the alternating themes of judgment and restoration in Zech 9-14:

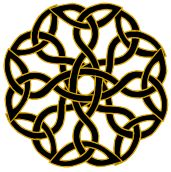
God’s judgment on Israel’s false religion: 7:1-13  
 God’s promise of restoration to Israel of *true* temple-religion: 8:1-23

The *final sections* of Zechariah (9-14) prophetically outline the future restoration of the nation of Israel through the return of the dispersion, the worship of YHWH, judgment on Israel’s enemies, and the coming of a Good Shepherd. These remaining chapters of Zechariah are a complex combination of oracles of judgment, oracles of salvation, liturgy, taunts, narrative, and eschatological promises.

These sections focus on the judging and eschatological-redemptive *work* of God. Central to this work is the developing theme of the messianic Shepherd-King. The progress of that messianic theme, *alternatively* with the motif of *judgment*, is suggested below through his *appearing, shepherding, death, return, and universal worship of:*

God’s judgment on the nations: 9:1-8  
 God’s Messiah appears: 9:9-13

<sup>680</sup> Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, p. 317. Dorsey places the rebuilding of the temple at the center of the book (8:1-13) as the most prominent theme of the entire book.



God' judgment on the nations: 9:14-17  
     God's shepherding his people and universal rule: 10:1-12  
 God's judgment on the false shepherds: 11:4-17  
 God's judgment on the world: 12:1-9  
     God's Messiah is pierced: 12:10-14  
 God's purging of his people: 13:1-5  
     God's Shepherd-Messiah struck: 13:7-9  
     God's King-Messiah returns (to Jerusalem): 14:1-11  
 God's judgment on the nations: 14:12-15  
     God's King-Messiah worshipped by all (in Jerusalem): 14:16-21



## 7. *Exposition and the history of redemption themes*

### a) *The rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple: Zech 1-8*

#### *Zechariah's introductory call to God's people to return: Zech 1:1-6*

As in the later connecting section (Zech 7-8), the prophet of the Lord sets the stage for his prophetic word of judgment and hope. He naturally brings them to reflect on the recent past of rebellion and refusal to heed the words of the prophets (1:4). They would not heed the prophets before him (Zechariah), and thus God brought judgment upon them in exile (1:5-6). This is given in the context of Zechariah's coming prophetic visions, for he prepares them to hear again the word of the Lord now in a post-exilic situation. As in numerous previous prophetic texts, the Lord makes it very plain that they suffered exile on account of their own sins, not the Lord's failing them. Indeed, even though he temporarily removed their temporal blessings of the covenant and cult, he had not forsaken them in exile. God makes it clear to them that he is not at all culpable for their sin, and that their forefathers came to acknowledge that they deserved their exile-judgment (1:6b).

#### Compare:

Dan 9:1-11 In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom— 2 in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. 3 So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. 4 I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed: "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with all who love him and obey his commands, 5 we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws. 6 We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. 7 "Lord, you are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame—the men of Judah and people of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries where you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to you. 8 O LORD, we and our kings, our princes and our fathers are covered with shame because we have sinned against you. 9 The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him; 10 we have not obeyed the LORD our God or kept the laws he gave us through his servants the prophets. 11 All Israel has transgressed your law and turned away, refusing to obey you.

Lam 2:17 The LORD has done what he planned;  
 he has fulfilled his word,  
 which he decreed long ago.  
 He has overthrown you without pity,  
 he has let the enemy gloat over you,  
 he has exalted the horn  
 of your foes.



Ezra 9:6-15 and prayed: "O my God, I am too ashamed and disgraced to lift up my face to you, my God, because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens. 7 From the days of our forefathers until now, our guilt has been great. Because of our sins, we and our kings and our priests have been subjected to the sword and captivity, to pillage and humiliation at the hand of foreign kings, as it is today. 8 "But now, for a brief moment, the LORD our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in his sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage. 9 Though we are slaves, our God has not deserted us in our bondage. He has shown us kindness in the sight of the kings of Persia: He has granted us new life to rebuild the house of our God and repair its ruins, and he has given us a wall of protection in Judah and Jerusalem. 10 "But now, O our God, what can we say after this? For we have disregarded the commands 11 you gave through your servants the prophets when you said: 'The land you are entering to possess is a land polluted by the corruption of its peoples. By their detestable practices they have filled it with their impurity from one end to the other. 12 Therefore, do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them at any time, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it to your children as an everlasting inheritance.' 13 "What has happened to us is a result of our evil deeds and our great guilt, and yet, our God, you have punished us less than our sins have deserved and have given us a remnant like this.





14 Shall we again break your commands and intermarry with the peoples who commit such detestable practices? Would you not be angry enough with us to destroy us, leaving us no remnant or survivor? 15 O LORD, God of Israel, you are righteous! We are left this day as a remnant. Here we are before you in our guilt, though because of it not one of us can stand in your presence.”

### **Zechariah's eight visions: Zech 1:7-6:15**

Zechariah's visions occurred during the same night of February 15, 519. Compare this vision with 6:1-8, p. 566.

#### **Vision 1 of the man and four horses: Zech 1:7-17**

The colors of the four horses (cf. Isa 63:1-6) most likely signify:

**Red/scarlet:** war and bloodshed (judgment of enemies). Red also has royal significance.

**Brown:** combination of red and white suggests an intermediate state of unrest (in the earth?).

**White:** victory in war. White can connote redemption from the wrath of God, as well as purity.

#### **Zechariah's vision of the horses and chariots: Zech 6:1-8**

**Red [?]**

**Black** going north

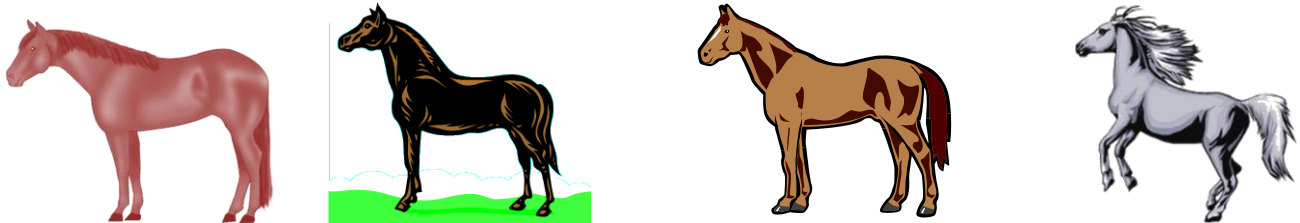
**White** going west

**Dappled** going south

Compare:

Rev 6:4 Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make men slay each other. To him was given a large sword.

Rev 6:2 I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.



The angel that Zechariah sees standing among the myrtle trees is the same one riding the red horse, and is not the one who interprets the visions. Although, the angel of the Lord is the first one to provide an explanation to Zechariah that the horses were “sent to go throughout all the earth” (1:11). In v. 13 the interpreting angel is distinguished from the angel of the Lord riding the horse:

Zech 1:13 So the LORD spoke kind and comforting words to the angel who talked with me.

The significance of the angel of the Lord appearing in post-exilic Israel should not be understated. In the history of redemption the appearance of angels and the angel of the Lord has obviously great redemptive import. Not only does it confirm the word of God to the prophet, it confirms the word of the prophet to the people, as well as shows the covenant-presence of God with his people. In the history of the presence of God with his people, this begins the pre-exilic and exilic prophetic words that God would again return his people to the land and dwell with them (Ezek 37:27; 45:1-5). These revelations of the angel re-inaugurate the eschatological-redemptive hopes of God's people. Indeed, they give assurance that the promises of God will be realized.

*Myrtle trees* grow on the hills and along the streams of Palestine, producing fragrant leaves and white flowers that are used to make perfume. They are suggestive of the significance of trees in the Bible, particularly when mentioned in relation to the angel of the Lord: *peace*, the life-giving power of God, Eden, the blessings of God, life itself, God himself:

Isa 41:19 I will put in the desert  
the cedar and the acacia, the myrtle and the olive.  
I will set pines in the wasteland,  
the fir and the cypress together,  
Isa 55:13 Instead of the thornbush will grow the pine tree,  
and instead of briars the myrtle will grow.  
This will be for the LORD's renown,  
for an everlasting sign,  
which will not be destroyed.”



The theme of the first vision centers on the *mercy of God*: though there is peace in the land, as reported by the horses, but the land cried out for God's mercy to allow Israel to be reestablished in the land. To the request of the

angel to the Lord Almighty to tell him “how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and from the towns of Judah . . . ?” (1:12), the Lord “spoke kind and comforting words” (1:13) to the angel. The words included an affirmation that the Lord was “jealous for Jerusalem and Zion” (1:14) and “angry with the nations” (1:15). The background to this vision and prophecy is God’s jealous love for Israel (Zech 1:14): he did not want them worshipping the false gods of the nations, but he was grieved over their oppression by the foreign nations.

Ex 20:5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,

Ex 20:5 I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for  
Ex 34:14 whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. 15 “Be careful not to make  
Deut 4:24 our God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. 25 After you have had  
Deut 5:9 or I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for  
Deut 6:15 God, who is among you, is a jealous God and his anger will burn again  
Josh 24:19 He is a holy God; he is a jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion



The Lord then promised that he would *return* (שָׁבְתִי לִירוּשָׁלַם) to Jerusalem (1:3). This is promised in the context of the initial exhortation to the nation to *return* (שׁוּבוּ) to the Lord (*and rebuild* [Zech 4:9; 6:12, 13, 14, 15; 8:9]). Thus, the promise of God included the obedience of the people to finish the work of the temple.

### ***Vision 2 of four horns and four craftsmen: Zech 1:18-21***

Horns symbolize the strength of *all* the nations that had oppressed Israel (possibly, in particular, Assyria, Babylonia, Medo-Persia). Horns typically depicted power and social status, whether temporal or spiritual:

1 Sam 2:1 Then Hannah prayed and said:  
“My heart rejoices in the LORD;  
in the LORD my horn is lifted high.  
My mouth boasts over my enemies,  
for I delight in your deliverance.”  
Ps 92:10 You have exalted my horn  
like that of a wild ox;  
fine oils have been poured upon me.  
Ps 18:2 The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer;  
my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge.  
He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

The four craftsmen are matched to the horns’ strength, and represent *all* those who will overcome the enemies of Israel (poss. Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, Greece).

“The vision does not show what powers God will use for this purpose. It is simply designed to show to the people of God, that every hostile power of the world which has risen up against it, or shall rise up, is to be judged and destroyed by the Lord.”<sup>681</sup>

### ***Vision 3 of the man measuring Jerusalem: Zech 2:1-13***

An architect from God is sent to draw a plan (blueprint) for Jerusalem. Such a plan portrayed hope for Jerusalem. The



angel of the Lord left him to meet another angel who told the first angel to go tell the man that the glory of the Lord would be in Jerusalem. Importantly, the picture of the glory *outside the sanctuary precinct* has redemptive historical significance: the Lord is not bound to the sanctuary, even if they rebuild it. God’s glory is freely given and entirely unbound. In the Exodus the Lord had revealed his glory and protected them in guidance by *fire* (Ex 13:12; Zech 2:5). In the promised land he had assured them of his glory-presence many times. Yet, the exile had decisively proven to them that God’s glory is far greater than any temporal sanctuary, the return and rebuilding should ever remind them that God’s glory is his own and can not be contained, manipulated, or contradicted without consequence.

The people of God are exhorted to *shout and be glad* (2:10a), for the Lord is present with them. The covenant promise is thus the background to Zechariah’s prophecy, and particularly when the Lord proclaims,

<sup>681</sup> Keil, *Minor Prophets*, vol. 10, p. 241.

“I am coming, and I will live among you (*dwelt in your midst*, וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכְךָ, (2:10).

The gospel to the nations is proclaimed by the angel in conjunction with the **covenant promise** to God’s people Israel:

Zech 2:11 Many nations will be joined with the LORD in that day and will become my people. I will live among you (*dwelt in your midst*, וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכְךָ) and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you.

This declaration is given in the most sobering tones of promise and judgment: whoever touches Judah will pay the price of seeking to steal the Lord’s inheritance (2:7-9, 12). Thus, the nations are exhorted to *be still before the Lord* (2:13a) – for he has *roused himself from his holy dwelling* (וַיִּעָוֶר מִמְּעוֹן קֹדְשׁוֹ, 2:13b). The dwelling-presence of God has been at the center of the remnant’s fears and hopes. Absence of God’s presence is judgment, whereas the return of God’s presence is blessing.

**Measuring line: the Lord will restore his people and promises**

Jer 31:38-40 “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when this city will be rebuilt for me from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. 39 The measuring line will stretch from there straight to the hill of Gareb and then turn to Goah. 40 The whole valley where dead bodies and ashes are thrown, and all the terraces out to the Kidron Valley on the east as far as the corner of the Horse Gate, will be holy to the LORD. The city will never again be uprooted or demolished.”

2 Ki 21:13 stretch out over Jerusalem the measuring line used against Samaria and the

Job 38:5 you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it?

Isa 28:17 I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plumb

Isa 34:11 stretch out over Edom the measuring line of chaos and the plumb line

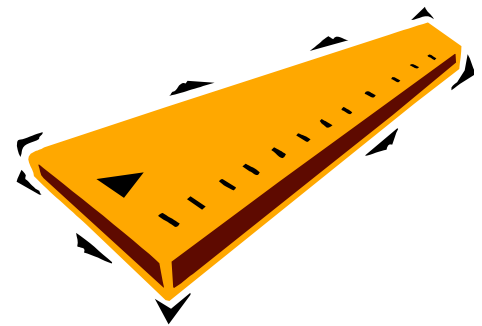
Jer 31:39 to the Corner Gate. 39 The measuring line will stretch from there straight

Lam 2:8 of Zion. He stretched out a measuring line and did not withhold his hand

Ezek 47:3 the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off

Zech 1:16 house will be rebuilt. And the measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem

Zech 2:1 before me was a man with a measuring line in his hand! 2 I asked,



**Vision 4 of garments for high priest: Zech 3:1-10**

The reinstatement of the high priest and the promise of the glory returned to Jerusalem. The *gospel* of Zechariah is further revealed in the imagery of priestly purification, forgiveness of sin, and deliverance from Satan. The removal of the priest’s dirty clothes, as removal of sin, and his being clothed with clean clothes and clean turban, picture the free justification of the repentant believer (3:3-5). This vision is set in the context of a real spiritual battle in which Satan the accuser stands to condemn the high priest Joshua, but the Lord himself rebukes Satan (3:1-2) and has Joshua clothed. Note: Satan’s appearance here is very similar to that in Job where he tried to bring God’s judgment against upright Job.

This vision, as an event in the history of redemption, conveys the restoration of the sanctuary priesthood by God himself. It also shows God’s blessing on the restored priesthood, *if* the priests walk in his ways (3:7). The *conditionality* of the covenant blessings continues (from pre-exilic Israel), yet the prophetic context here raises the redemptive historical imagery to a messianic level, proclaiming that the priests (and priesthood) are *symbolic* (וּמִשְׁתֵּי אֶת-עוֹן הָאָרֶץ הַזֶּה בְּיוֹם אֶחָד: (3:10). That is, the priests served as a *sign* of things to come, and that eventually there would be removal of sin. Not only was this to be meaningful to the immediate exiles, but it had eschatological and redemptive meaning for all believers subsequently, for the hope of complete forgiveness was, and is, the gospel hope.



Zechariah is also shown a stone with *seven eyes* (עֵינַיִם)<sup>682</sup> and an inscription engraved on it by the Lord (3:9).

Zech 3:9 See, the stone I have set in front of Joshua! There are seven eyes on that one stone, and I will engrave an inscription on it,’ says the LORD Almighty, ‘and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day.

Zech 4:10b (These seven are the eyes of the LORD, which range throughout the earth.)”

Cf. Rev 5:6 Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living

creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Zech 4:10b appears to be a parenthetical statement referring back to the seven eyes in 3:9, suggestive of the omnipresent and omniscient range of God through all the earth (indicating that his judgment is near for the wicked, while his promises are near for his remnant?). Despite how puzzling this image is, we can suggest a connection with the tablets of the law which were inscribed by the hand of God at Sinai, possibly connected with the motif of stones of remembrance or *testimony* used in the OT. That is, a correlation with the law would be appropriate in a priestly context promising forgiveness of sin, while being inscribed by God’s hand suggests a promise-testimony to the *certainty* of that forgiveness. If this is accurate, then there may naturally be messianic connotations in the

<sup>682</sup> Or being watched by seven eyes, “upon the stone” וְעַל-אֶבֶן. Compare Zech 5:10b “these seven are the eyes of the Lord, which range throughout the earth.”

imagery of the stone. Traditionally, interpreters have associated the stone in Zechariah with that in Isaiah and Ps 118:

Isa 28:16 So this is what the Sovereign LORD says:  
 “See, I lay a stone in Zion,  
 a tested stone,  
 a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation;  
 the one who trusts will never be dismayed.”  
 Ps 118:22 The stone the builders rejected  
 has become the capstone;

Nevertheless, this is not universally accepted. Keil proposes that the stone in Zechariah does not represent the Messiah, but rather the kingdom of God laid by Jehovah before the high priest Joshua.<sup>683</sup> Nevertheless, he does conclude that the final imagery of the Branch and the removal of sin is messianic, predicting the death of the Messiah one day on Golgotha.

#### **Vision 5 of lampstand and olive trees: Zech 4:1-14**

Olive trees represent the two offices of priest (Joshua) and king (Zerubbabel), whereas the oil supply represents God’s spiritual provision and sustenance. This vision includes an explicit exhortation to finish building the temple of God.

The imagery of holiness and presence: Light ~ Candles ~ Gold ~ Olive oil

The importance of *light* and *oil* in correlation to the sanctuary of God:

The significance of light in the portrayal of God’s presence should be noted, for it provides a significant reciprocity to the whole cult. That is, in the original sanctuary and temple light was associated with the incense, the sacrifices, the theophany-fire (also burning-bush), glory manifestations, the candles of the golden candlesticks (and gold itself<sup>684</sup>), the oil lamps, the ephod, and jewels. The light of *perpetual* lamps *images*, along with these other diverse symbols, an aspectual-dimensional quality that overlaps numerous elements of the sanctuary-cult. These symbols have the cumulative impact of creating a multilinear portrayal that employs spatial and temporal categories to describe transspatial and transtemporal realities of presence.<sup>685</sup> Imagery of light is suggestive of YHWH’s presence and consequently of his glory.<sup>686</sup> Further, *oil* for the sanctuary lamps was to be *pure*. That is, oil pounded out by hand which burns brightly with little smoke. Such light pictures the presence of God and thus must be maintained by sanctified priests of God. This light was to burn before YHWH continually and for the generations to come, portraying YHWH’s *abiding*, gracious presence as well as a context for the meeting presence in the sacred space of the holy place. Meeting and dwelling are complementary, in a context of holiness. Within the space-time continuum, YHWH’s priests must *bring* the oil and *keep* the lamps burning every evening for the generations to come. This picture envisions the transcendent and holy God, who dwells, meets, and speaks, approached with perpetuity in the immanence of creation in sanctified space by sanctified priests.<sup>687</sup>



Gold represented purity and permanence, and had royal connotations of power. In this vision of a lampstand it has definite religious significance corresponding to the sanctuary. Yet, further, in this prophecy, the imagery presents a profound Messianic picture in the combination (of the two olive trees beside the gold lampstand) of the *priestly* and *kingly* offices sanctified by the Lord (4:14). The Messiah is presented as both King and Priest by God’s Spirit.

Zech 6:13 It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.’

<sup>683</sup> Keil, *Minor Prophets*, vol. 10., p. 261.

<sup>684</sup> There are six terms for gold in the OT: זָהָב (Ar. ذَهَب), כֶּהָן, כֶּהָן, כֶּהָן, כֶּהָן, כֶּהָן. זָהָב is by far the most frequent (apx. 390x), and along with the other words apparently indicated degrees of purity. Although some could stand alone for *pure* gold, זָהָב appears in Exodus with טָהוֹר, and in combination with the other words for differentiation. The adj. טָהוֹר itself can appear alone to indicate pure gold. The cultic use of gold may also be seen in the idolatrous golden-calf which Aaron used to lead Israel into rebellion while Moses was on the mountain (ch. 32). Indeed, in the narrative context, this idolatrous gold stands as a contrasting foil to the gold rendered in obedience to the Lord, and it also comes to its deserved end: burned, ground into powder, cast on the water to be drunk by Israel, showing the utter powerlessness of the idol to which they had apostatized before.

<sup>685</sup> The centrality of light in the Exodus portrayals of God’s immanence and transcendence, abiding and dwelling, could also hold interest for contemporary discussions of the relation of time and light, and *vice versa* (though altogether beyond my reach), for we now know that relationship to be one of the most remarkable wonders and mysteries in the known universe.

For extensive bibliography on God and time, see John C. Yates, *The Timelessness of God* (MD: University Press of America, Inc., 1990).

<sup>686</sup> Although it is speculative (at least suggestive), there may be hints or echoes of creation imagery here, considering the close relationship between the word of YHWH and the light and the presence of YHWH.

<sup>687</sup> Adapted from Stephen T. Hague, *His Glorious Presence: Covenantal and Cultic Presence in Exodus 25-40*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, UK: British Library, 2000.

Cf. Rev 11:4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.

The future fulfillment of the word of God to Zechariah, that the temple would be completed, was promised as proof that the Lord Almighty had sent the angel to him (4:8-9). A remarkable aspect of the story is the apparent *complacency* of the people in the history of redemption: they could not see the great significance of their moment in history and had failed to obeyed their present call to fulfill God's word. They despised "the day of small things" (4:10). In light of all that had happened in exile, it is sobering to see the people still so complacently floundering with the things of God.

### Vision 6 of a flying scroll: Zech 5:1-4



The scroll represents the purification of the land purged of sin. This, and the last two visions of the woman in a basket (5:5-11) and the four chariots (6:1-8), deal with sin. Thus, to sinners it the scroll is a *curse* (5:3-4), while to the remnant of believers it is an eschatological sign of hope. The scroll image correlates with the torah, the tablets of the law, and the scrolls of the temple. In essence, it is a legal motif representing God's law and the "case" against all sin that it establishes. In relation to this, and concerning the large size of this scroll, it should be recalled that the temple holy place dimensions were 30 x 15 ft (where the law was read): 1 Ki 6:3 The portico at the front of the main hall of the temple extended the width of the temple, that is twenty cubits (30 feet), and projected ten cubits (15 feet) from the front of the temple.

This scroll was "flying" (מְגִלָּה צֹפָה) indicating that it was *unsealed* (as scrolls were often sealed) and open to read (5:1), and probably that its message would *swiftly* be enacted.

Imagery of the law naturally correlates with the previous imagery of the priesthood and the sanctuary. Scrolls typically were not written on both sides (but the tablets of the law were,

Ex 32:15), suggesting here the *completeness* of the message given (see Ezek 2:8-3:2; Rev 5:1-5). The proclamation of the law means that sin is taken seriously before a holy God. The fifth command about swearing falsely concerned duties towards God, and the eighth command against stealing concerned duties towards man, thus comprising the full scope of the law's demands (Zech 5:3). The obstacle to purity was *internal*.

### Compare:

Ezek 2:9-10 Then I looked, and I saw a hand stretched out to me. In it was a scroll, 10 which he unrolled before me. On both sides of it were written words of lament and mourning and woe.

Rev 10:2 He was holding a little scroll, which lay open in his hand. He planted his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land,

Cf. also Isa 34:4 All the stars of the heavens will be dissolved  
and the sky rolled up like a scroll;  
all the starry host will fall  
like withered leaves from the vine,  
like shriveled figs from the fig tree.

Rev 6:14 The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

The vision of sin being removed also has eschatological and redemptive significance, and thus has messianic connotations. This is further confirmed in the following and final two visions of Zechariah.



### Vision 7 of the woman in a basket (ephah, הָאֵפָה): Zech 5:5-11

Corresponding to the previous curse-vision of the destruction of all sinners, this vision personifying wickedness represents the transfer of sin (idolatry) and its consequences far from Israel to Babylon (Shinar<sup>688</sup>). An ephah contained approximately a bushel and was the *largest measure* used in ancient Israel (a cubic foot). Central to the exile was the problem of sin, and here the Lord is shown as avenged regarding sin (wickedness) for he removes it from his people. The exile was the initial stage in the history of redemption in the purging of sin. That is, he would remove wickedness and the wicked from among his people in the progress of redemption, for he was creating a holy people. Wickedness (הַרְשָׁעָה) describes the broad sweep of moral, political, and religious evils:

<sup>688</sup> *Shinar* in Hebrew should not be taken narrowly as the geographic region of Babylon: "This name is not to be identified with *Babel*, so as to support the conclusion that it refers to a fresh removal of the people into exile; but according to Gen x.10 and xi 2, *Shinar* is the land in which Nimrod founded the first empire, and where the human race built the tower of Babel which was to reach to the sky. The name is not to be taken geographically here as an epithet applied to Mesopotamia, but is a notional or real definition, which affirms that the ungodliness carried away out of the sphere of the people of God will have its permanent settlement in the sphere of the imperial power that is hostile to God" (Keil, *Minor Prophets*, vol. 10, p. 285).

Ezek 33:12 “Therefore, son of man, say to your countrymen, ‘The righteousness of the righteous man will not save him when he disobeys, and the wickedness of the wicked man will not cause him to fall when he turns from it. The righteous man, if he sins, will not be allowed to live because of his former righteousness.’

Prov 13:6 Righteousness guards the man of integrity,  
but wickedness overthrows the sinner.

God’s initiative is prominent here, as well as his carrying out his work: indeed it presents a picture of human powerlessness to overcome the problem of wickedness and the necessity of God enacting his redemptive purge. Wickedness personified as a woman is pushed down into the basket by the angel (5:7), and two other angels (women?) were commissioned to carry wickedness in the basket away to Babylon (5:9). This removal of wickedness is like the wind, very swift and divinely appointed.

In the progress of redemption, it should not be concluded that removal of all sin was promised for post-exilic Israel, but rather that the Lord was remaining faithful to his promise to redeem his people. Indeed, not to stretch the imagery too far, but there is no suggestion that the basket was entirely full. As the removal of idolatry was the result of the exilic purge, and the purges of post-exilic Ezra, so also the Lord was going to ultimately purge his remnant people as the goal of redemption. The implicit message is that in the end, wickedness will be removed forever. Similarly the NT presents the forgiven sinner, who still sins, yet is given the foretaste of perfection through the Messiah by way of the progressive sanctification of all true believers. Thus, this seventh vision has great eschatological and messianic significance which was begun in exile, was enacted in full force with the coming of the Messiah, and continues now until the end of the ages and its final fulfillment.

Some compare the personification of wickedness in Zech with the “man of sin” in 2 Thess 2:3 ~

Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.

#### Vision 8 of four chariots: Zech 6:1-15



Compare the first vision of horses (1:8, p. 561): the meaning of the colors would be the same as in the first vision, but here we are introduced to a black horse. The first vision had red, brown, and white horses. The last vision had red, black, white, and dappled (brown) (6:2) horses. Vision 8 also differs in that the horses are teams pulling chariots, whereas in vision 1 they are single horses without chariots. The black horse indicates grief or sorrow. The color black is used only some 16x in the Bible, and frequently conveys the darkness of God’s judgment upon sin, as it pictures the clouds of gloom:

Zeph 1:15 That day will be a day of wrath,  
a day of distress and anguish,  
a day of trouble and ruin,  
a day of darkness and gloom,  
a day of clouds and blackness,

Cf. Rev 6:5-6 When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. 6 Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, “A quart of wheat for a day’s wages, and three quarts of barley for a day’s wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!”

In Zechariah’s last vision, the chariots are described as the “four winds (or spirits) of heaven” (6:5), and are an appropriate image for the vehicle of God’s Spirit (6:8). Chariots represent the final and complete judgment of God to the “four corners” of the earth. As in several of the other prophets we are presented a comprehensive *north, east, south, west* axis of judgment, so also these chariots are going out “from standing in the presence of the Lord” to the four distances of the earth (6:5-6). They picture the *completeness* of that judgment. Chariots naturally depict battle and conquest and are strictly speaking a *royal image*. Chariots also connote swiftness in battle, for the foot-soldier had little chance against the charioteers. Chariots suggest to many interpreters the idea of God as the *Divine Warrior*. Chariots do have angelic connotations in the former prophets in the incidents of Elijah being taken up into heaven by a “chariot of fire” (2 Ki 2:11-12), as well as the time Elijah’s servant’s eyes are opened to see “horses and chariots of fire” the mountains of Dothan (2 Ki 6:17).

Cf. Ezekiel’s vision of the throne of God supported by chariot wheels (Ezek 1:5-15).

Ps 104:3 and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters.  
He makes the clouds his chariot  
and rides on the wings of the wind.

Ps 18:7-14 The earth trembled and quaked,  
and the foundations of the mountains shook;  
they trembled because he was angry.  
8 Smoke rose from his nostrils;  
consuming fire came from his mouth,  
burning coals blazed out of it.  
9 He parted the heavens and came down;  
dark clouds were under his feet.  
10 He mounted the cherubim and flew;  
he soared on the wings of the wind.  
11 He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him—  
the dark rain clouds of the sky.  
12 Out of the brightness of his presence clouds advanced,  
with hailstones and bolts of lightning.  
13 The LORD thundered from heaven;  
the voice of the Most High resounded.  
14 He shot his arrows and scattered the enemies,  
great bolts of lightning and routed them.



Rev 9:9 They had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the thundering of many horses and chariots rushing into battle.

### ***Prophetic enactment of the crowning of the high priest Joshua: Zech 6:9-15***

- See the Branch, p. 557.
- See also Jer 23:5; 33:15; Isa 4:2; 11:1

Combination of the royal and priestly office pictures a messianic person who is called the Branch (6:12). The Branch had already been introduced in Zech 6:3:8. The man whose name is the Branch will build the temple of the Lord!

Zec 6:12-13 Tell him this is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the Lord. 13 It is he who will build the temple of the Lord, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.’

The Branch of the Lord is a particularly eschatological expression, for it corresponds to the remnant seed of the promise that will produce the Messiah.<sup>689</sup> The imagery surrounding the crowning of this priestly king is very beautiful, evoking grandeur, glory, majesty, royalty. Zechariah is given a development in this history of revelation and redemption in this remarkable portrayal of the priestly and kingly aspects of the Messiah:

Psalm 110:4 The LORD has sworn  
and will not change his mind:  
“You are a priest forever,  
in the order of Melchizedek.”

Heb 7:1-3 This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, 2 and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, his name means “king of righteousness”; then also, “king of Salem” means “king of peace.” 3 Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God he remains a priest forever.

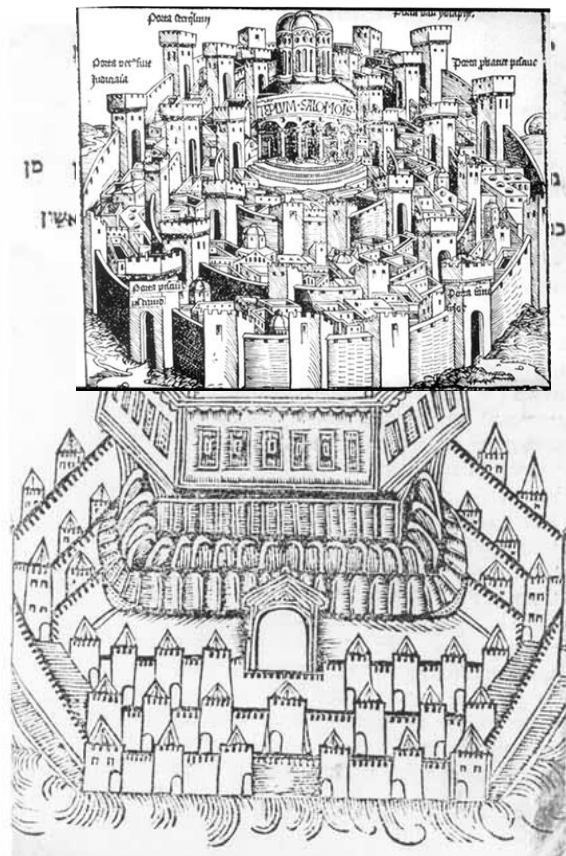
The temple prophecy in the prophets:

Cf. Isaiah 2:2-3 In the last days  
the mountain of the LORD’s temple will be established  
as chief among the mountains;  
it will be raised above the hills,  
and all nations will stream to it.

3 Many peoples will come and say,  
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
to the house of the God of Jacob.  
He will teach us his ways,  
so that we may walk in his paths.”

The law will go out from Zion,  
the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Hag 2:6-9 “This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. 7 I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,’ says the LORD Almighty. 8 ‘The silver is mine and the gold is mine,’



<sup>689</sup> Jewish interpretation long considered this Branch (6:12) as messianic.

declares the LORD Almighty. 9 ‘The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,’ says the LORD Almighty. ‘And in this place I will grant peace,’ declares the LORD Almighty.”

(right) Jerusalem Temple.<sup>690</sup>

The centrality of the temple in the history of redemption hardly needs mentioning, for it depicts throughout that history the covenant promise and the presence promise which convey the hope of restoration to God’s presence. Such a hope, is the hope of redemption. The King-Priest Messiah would have the means and power to build the Temple of God. Thus, even though he is addressing Joshua the high priest, the prophet is prophesying the future role of the Messiah in working redemption, the temple being the natural symbol of this spiritual reality. When Jesus claimed he could rebuild the temple in response to the demand of some Jews for “a sign” that he was the Messiah he told them to tear the temple down and he would rebuild it in three days. Later, he was accused of this claim being taken literally:

Mtt 26:60-64 Finally two came forward <sup>61</sup> and declared, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’” <sup>62</sup> Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?” <sup>63</sup> But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.” <sup>64</sup> “Yes, it is as you say,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

After Jesus made the claim that he was the Messiah and that they would see the Son of Man (him) sitting at the right hand of God, the high priest accused him of blasphemy (Mtt 26:65). Importantly, Jesus interpreted his own words here about rebuilding the temple in eschatological terms, while he initially stressed the correlation with the resurrection of his body (cf. Mk 14:57-65):

Jn 2:18-22 Then the Jews demanded of him, “What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?” 19 Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” 20 The Jews replied, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?” 21 But the temple he had spoken of was his body. 22 After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

All of the NT messianic imagery of priesthood and kingship and temple corresponds to this text in Zechariah. The promised Branch would be a descendent of the line of David, according to the Davidic promise, and would fulfill the OT typological offices of priest and king. He would be “clothed with majesty” (Zech 6:13). This can only refer to the divine Messiah (not Joshua, the high priest).

(right) Jerusalem temple<sup>691</sup>

The crown was to serve as a memorial in the temple of the Lord (6:14), a sign of the promises to come. The prophet ends with a prediction regarding the immediate rebuilding project and a reaffirmation of the covenant promise that they *would know* when his word was fulfilled:

Zech 6:15 Those who are far away will come and help to build the temple of the LORD, and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you. This will happen if you diligently obey the LORD your God.”

His predictive word of their near future would confirm his predictive word of the distant messianic future (note that the word confirms the angel as the one ‘sent’ by the Lord Almighty). Thus, the exiles, and those succeeding them, would take hope in the messianic promise when they saw the fulfillment of Zechariah’s word, from the Lord, of hope about the remnant.

Zechariah’s ending on a conditional note may lead us to suppose these promises themselves are conditional. It is better to assume that the condition relates to their faith, and its enabling them to come to a knowledge of the Messiah, rather than to the coming of the Messiah. Further, the immediate concern of rebuilding the temple *was* connected to the temporal conditions of obedience facing them in the post-exilic project. That is, they should not presume that the temple would be rebuilt if they did not obey the Lord (6:15).

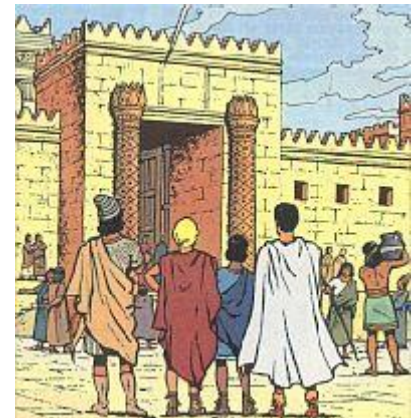
In the final sections (Zech 7-14), alternatively with the motif of *judgment*, is the prophetic outline of God’s messianic *appearing, shepherding, death, return, and universal worship of*. The first two parts, as suggested, serve as a bridge to the first sections of the book with the themes of judgment and restoration: rebuilding the temple (judgment) and restoration-hope introduce the alternating themes of judgment and restoration in Zech 9-14:

### **God’s judgment on Israel’s false religion: Zech 7:1-13**

Prophecy given in 518, two years after his visions of the night.

<sup>690</sup> From library of Congress (<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/loc/Holy1.html>)

<sup>691</sup> From [raphael.free.fr/orient.htm](http://raphael.free.fr/orient.htm)





False fasting *versus* true faith. Compare the previous exhortations based on the pre-exilic situation of rebellion and refusal to listen to the prophets in Zech 1:1-6 which set the stage for the book itself. This section which ends the eight visions of Zechariah correlates with the introduction to the visions in 1:2-6, where the prophet upbraids the people's forefathers for their faithlessness. Zechariah is also told that to ask the people to consider how their forefathers turned their backs on the Lord, and to remember that this was the reason the Lord turned his back on them in exile.

This latter section corresponds immediately with the false religion described in the previous sections: true fasting emanating from true faith contrasts with hypocritical fasting (religiosity). True justice, true mercy, true compassion contrast with the nation's previous injustice and cruelty and oppression. Suggestions that teaching on "true religion" are either late or just "prophetic" do not account for the fact that these themes are at the heart of biblical faith from the earliest times. Many of the pre-exilic prophets consistently prophesied the same themes about hypocritical religion. Indeed, the prophets were the spokesmen of God to call the people back to the *true spirit of the law*:

Ex 22:22 Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan.

Deut 10:18 He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, giving him food and clothing.

James 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Cf. 1 John 3:16-18 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. 17 If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?

18 Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

### ***God's promise of restoration to Israel of true temple-religion: Zech 8:1-23***

The word of the Lord is the revelation of God's redemption, and in this section, rebuilding the temple is central in that work (8:9). Most importantly, the spirit of true religion is foundational to this project. As in Zech 7:3-4, their fasting was to have an entirely new character.

*The fasts in 8:19:*

**Fourth month:** King Zedekiah fled from Jerusalem, walls breached (2 Ki 25:3-4).

**Fifth month:** Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of the temple (2 Ki 25:8). See Zech 7:3.

**Seventh month:** Assassination of Gedaliah after fall of Jerusalem (Jer 41). See Zech 7:4.

**Tenth month:** the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem (2 Ki 25:1).

The time reference of the Jerusalem prophecies in Zech 8 appear to be focused on the post-exilic situation, but they may also correspond in some way with those eschatological prophecies in Zech 14. Restoration promises illustrate redemption promises. The background to the entire picture is the covenant promise of God that he would be with them as their God (8:8, 23). This covenant promise extended to peoples of all nations that would come to seek God (8:22-23). This has great eschatological significance.

Cf. Isa 2:2 In the last days

the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established

as chief among the mountains;

it will be raised above the hills,

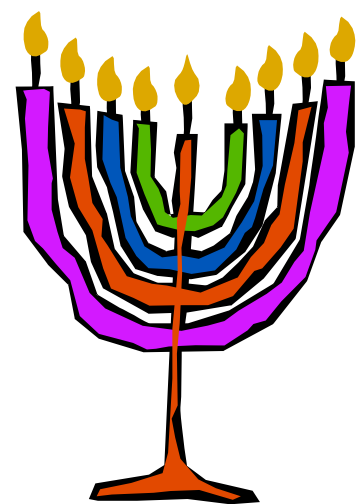
and all nations will stream to it.

(right) Topographical Map  
(Major Mountains).<sup>692</sup>



*The word of the Lord Almighty:*  
the “ten blessing” promises of this  
section each begin with “This is what the Lord Almighty says.

- Word of the Lord Almighty (8:1).
- Word of the Lord Almighty (8:2).  
Jealous for Zion.  
Burning Jealousy for Zion .
- Word of the Lord (8:3).  
Lord will return to Zion.  
Lord will dwell in Zion.  
Jerusalem called City of Truth.  
Mountain of the Lord Almighty the holy mountain.
- Word of the Lord (8:4-5).  
Young and old will fill Jerusalem again.
- Word of the Lord Almighty (8:6).  
Marvelous to the remnant [the return and restoration].
- Word of the Lord Almighty.
- Word of the Lord Almighty (8:7-8).  
God’s people returned to Jerusalem. “I will be your God . . .”  
God’s covenant promise realized. “I will be your God . . .”
- Word of the Lord Almighty (8:8-13).  
Be strong people to rebuild the temple (8:9).  
Safety and provision will be known (8:10-13).
- Word of the Lord Almighty (8:14).  
As forefathers angered the Lord.
- Word of the Lord Almighty (8:15).  
So now the Lord will do good to them.
- [IF] They speak the truth (8:16).  
Render true and sound judgment.  
Do not plot evil (8:17).



<sup>692</sup> Source of graphic: ILS International Map copyright, 1999.

Do not swear falsely.  
 Word of the Lord Almighty (8:18).  
 Word of the Lord Almighty (8:19).  
 The fasts (from the exile) will become joyous.  
 Therefore love truth and peace,  
 Word of the Lord Almighty (8:20-22).  
 Many nations[Gentiles] will come to Jerusalem to seek the Lord Almighty (8:20b-22).  
 Word of the Lord Almighty (8:23).  
 Many nations will come to Jerusalem,  
 Because they heard GOD IS WITH YOU (covenant promise)

*Mission of God:* The nations heard that God was with Israel – through Israel’s miraculous deliverances, God’s dealings with Israel and the surrounding nations, and Israel’s high standards of ethical monotheism were their testimony to the nations to the living and true God they had come to know in YHWH. The nations would be attracted to Jerusalem because of that testimony to I AM who delivers and sustains his people. The expression, “God is with you” also echos the covenant-promise to be their God, as they would be his people.

### ***God’s judgment on the nations: Zech 9:1-8***

An *oracle* against the nations in the same tenor as the pre-exilic prophets.

The destruction of Israel’s enemies is the beginning of the restoration of Israel.

The focus of this oracle is on the northern Hadrach/Damascus, along the upper Orontes River. (Hadrach was known as the district of Hatarikka.<sup>693</sup> Tyre (Isa 23:4; Ezek 26:3), Ashkelon (Jer 25:20; 47:5, 7; Am 1:8; Zeph 2:4, 7), Gaza (Jer 25:20; 47:1, 5; Am 1:6, 7; Zeph 2:4), Ekron (Jer 25:20; Am 1:8; Zeph 2:4), Ashdod (Isa 20:1; Jer 25:20; Am 1:8; Am 3:9; Zeph 2:4) also come under the judgment of God (9:3-7). That is, Syria, Tyre, and Philistia comprise the sequence of regions coming under the judgment of God (i.e., Alexander the Great, 330’s B.C.). The Philistines would actually become more integrated into the faith of Israel (9:7) (Josephus reports that this occurred).

In contrast, the temple of God would be protected (Alexander the Great left it undisturbed) (9:8).

### ***b) The future (Messianic) restoration of Israel: Zech 9-14.***

#### ***God’s Messiah appears: Zech 9:9-13***

In the context of judgment on foreign nations, the Messiah-King is presented as a contrast to both their kings and their peoples. In particular contrast to Alexander the Great (9:8), the humble Messiah-King comes riding a donkey, although he rules the world (9:9-10). Most importantly, this king is *righteous* and brings salvation:

<p><b>Gentle</b>  <b>Righteous</b>  <b>Has salvation</b>  <b>Proclaims peace</b>  <b>Rules the entire world</b></p>
---

Isa 45:21 Declare what is to be, present it—  
 let them take counsel together.  
 Who foretold this long ago,  
 who declared it from the distant past?  
 Was it not I, the LORD?  
 And there is no God apart from me,  
 a righteous God and a Savior;  
 there is none but me.

Jer 23:5-6 “The days are coming,” declares the LORD,  
 “when I will raise up to David  
 a righteous Branch,  
 a King who will reign wisely  
 and do what is just and right in the land.  
 6 In his days Judah will be saved  
 and Israel will live in safety.  
 This is the name by which he will be called:



<sup>693</sup> Walton, Mathews, Chavalas, *Bible Background Commentary: OT*, p. 804.

The LORD Our Righteousness.

Mal 3:2 But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap.

Matt 21:5 “Say to the Daughter of Zion,  
‘See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”

Messiah is by contrast, at every point, the antithesis of all ANE kings. He is righteous and brings peace! Further, he is the fulfillment of the hopes of *redemption*. He does not need to divide and conquer, for he is the reigning king of the world. Indeed, with NT hindsight we know He did bring salvation as *peace* between God and his people, and brings peace *between* his people, as well. Cf. Isa 9:1-7.

**God’ judgment on the nations: Zech 9:14-17**

The conclusion of this section includes the promise that the sons of Zion (Maccabees) would overcome the sons of Greece (Seleucids of Syria who follow Alexander’s demise) (9:13-17). Thus, a preliminary victory for Israel, in the victory of God over their enemies, would be the promised victory by the Maccabeans over remaining Greek control over their lands (see also Dan 11:32; 8:9-14). Even though this is a shift in focus back to pre-Messianic Israel (from vv. 9-13), it confirms, as all such predictions of immediate fulfillments, that the longer prophetic view is still

certain. As the nations will be subdued before Israel, the Messiah will come and bring salvation.



Judas Maccabaeus<sup>694</sup>



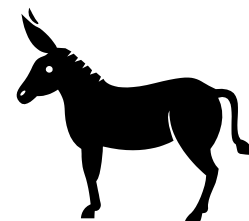
**God’s shepherding his people and universal rule: Zech 10:1-12**

- The destruction of the false leaders is certain (10:1-5)
- The restoration of the people to the land is central (10:6-12).

These twin themes have been seen through all the prophets, but with the long-standing restoration-promise being fulfilled as Zechariah spoke,

the renewed warnings against false leaders was especially poignant. Creation, judgment, and redemption theology forms the framework of this section:

- The Lord is the Creator-Provider (10:1).
- Idols are nothing (10:2).
- The Lord will punish the false shepherds (10:3).
- The Cornerstone/Ruler will come from Judah (10:4).
- The Lord will restore and redeem his people (10:4-6).
- The Lord will be with them (10:5).
- The Lord will keep his covenant-promise (10:6d).



(right) A Cornerstone in Palestine.<sup>695</sup>



The Rock Illustration.<sup>696</sup>

<sup>694</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Juda-Maccabaeus.jpg>

<sup>695</sup> From [www.bible-prophecy.com/temple.htm](http://www.bible-prophecy.com/temple.htm)

<sup>696</sup> From <http://www.infgen.com/cornerstone.gif>

**The Cornerstone from Judah:**

Gen 49:10 The scepter will not depart from Judah,  
nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,  
until he comes to whom it belongs  
and the obedience of the nations is his.

Isa 28:16 So this is what the Sovereign LORD says:

“See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed.

Eph 2:20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

**Creation/redemption motifs (10:10-12):**

**Exodus** imagery: sea of trouble, Nile dried up, Egypt's scepter will pass away. Ephraim “will be as numerous as before” (10:8).

**Exilic** imagery: Assyria's pride will be brought down. As the captives were delivered from Egypt, so also the exiled remnant was delivered from Assyria. The OT remnant was a sign to all ages that God's people would be redeemed.

**God's judgment, rejection of Good Shepherd, and rise of false shepherd(s): Zech 11:1-17**

In a dramatic shift of tone, the prophet goes from the hope of redemption to prophesying future judgment on the nation of Israel. We assume it is future from Zechariah's vantage point, because the things he describes (and apparently *enacts* prophetically) were not realized in post-exilic Israel. The future prophetic orientation makes interpretation of some details rather difficult, even though much of what he speaks of here prophesied events related to the coming of the Messiah.

The contrasting scenario now introduced speaks of judgment coming again on the nation, but in this case it corresponds with their reception of a good shepherd (11:4-14) and the tyranny of a bad shepherd (11:15-17). This Good Shepherd undoubtedly refers to the Messiah, whereas the bad shepherd may refer to some false leader or to the antichrist. The destruction and judgment coming in this prophesy was the consequence of their rejection of the Good Shepherd.

- **Destruction of Jerusalem** (11:1-3) ~ Roman destruction in 70A.D. from the north through the forests of Lebanon, destroying the pasture land unto the Jordan river.
- **Good Shepherd** is responsible to pasture those destined for slaughter (11:4-7) ~ the nation which rejected the shepherd.
- **Two staffs** are favor (grace) and union (unity of nation?) (11:7-8). ~ Shepherd's care for his flock.
- **Good Shepherd** is detested by the flock (11:8b-9) ~ Shepherd rejected.
- **Good Shepherd** broke the staff of favor/grace (11:10) ~ Shepherd abrogates the covenant.
- **Flock** that is afflicted believe this is the word of God (11:11) ~ the remnant of believers in the Good Shepherd.
- **Good Shepherd** is sold for thirty pieces of silver (11:12-13) ~ Shepherd is betrayed. (see Mtt 27:7-10)
- **Good Shepherd** broke the staff of unity (11:14) ~ disunified Jewish nation before Roman conquest in 70.
- Jn 11:48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.”
- **Worthless shepherd** arises who deserts the flock (11:17) ~ Jewish leader (Simeon bar Kosiba? Antichrist?).

Zechariah's prophecy concerning the shepherds provides a precise outline of post-exilic history, possibly all the way up to the end-times eschatology. It does not provide all the details, however, and despite our NT hindsight we do not fully understand every point. Nevertheless, in terms of all NT believers seeing this supernatural revelation of God fulfilled in Jesus the Messiah, we should take great encouragement. The progressive development of the messianic theme in Zechariah is in itself a tremendous revelation (see below, p. 578).

Jn 10:11 “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

Jn 10:14 “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—

➤ See the struck Shepherd, p. 575

**God's judgment on the world: Zech 12:1-9**

Some call Zech 12:1-13:6 *eschatological oracles*, but we have also seen eschatological aspects in the previous oracle. It is reasonable to suggest that a development in the distant future orientation is evident in the remaining oracle which probably goes all the way to the end of the book 14:21. Thus, the development of the themes of judgment complement those in the preceding section of chapters 9-11.

God is initially presented as the:

**Creator** of the heavens, the earth, and humankind (12:1).

**Judge** of all the earth (12:2).

**Redeemer/Deliverer** of his people (12:2-9).

Jerusalem will be delivered, yet all of the enemies of God will be destroyed. From Zechariah's vantage point this must have had a near future fulfillment, for they were in the early stages of its realization. Although, certain aspects could be understood as referring to the progress of judgment on Jerusalem in which they are protected against the nations for some time but eventually are overthrown. (Nevertheless, it is difficult to determine precisely *which* times of attack(s) are in view.) Otherwise, we would have to presently consider the prophecy as still future, for there is no other time that we could confidently propose as fulfilling the prediction. The best I can propose is that the *content* is clear, but the *time reference* is not:

- Jerusalem is attacked.
- The Lord protects and delivers Jerusalem.
- The Judahites are insurmountable to their enemies.
- The enemies of Judah are overthrown by the Lord.
- Jerusalem and Judah are re-established.



### **God's Messiah is pierced: Zech 12:10-14**

➤ Cf. with the Shepherd being struck in 13:7-9.

This prophecy is clearly messianic and predicts the death of the Messiah who brings, *by the Spirit*, grace and supplication (12:10). Grace and supplication apparently are the result of the Spirit's convicting them of their sin, for those who turn to the Messiah. The nation will look *to* (וְלֹאֲ) the one they have pierced, suggesting the faith of some in Messiah.

Jn 3:14-15 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, 15 that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

Jn 19:34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.

Jn 19:37 and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."

### **Mourning Messiah's death:**

Many will weep on account of the death of the one pierced (12:10b-12). Indeed, the emphasis here is on the weeping of each of the tribes of the nation.<sup>697</sup> Such a complex picture of One who brings grace and supplication being pierced and them mourned *only fits* the NT revelation of Jesus as promised Messiah and fulfiller of these prophecies.

Cf. Jer 6:26 O my people, put on sackcloth and roll in ashes; mourn with bitter wailing as for an only son, for suddenly the destroyer will come upon us.

Lu 23:47-49 The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, "Surely this was a righteous man." 48 When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. 49 But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

### **God's purging of his people: Zech 13:1-5**

The gospel of Zechariah is made even more explicit:

- A fountain that will cleanse from sin and impurity (13:1).
- The inhabitants of Judah will have access to it.
- Idols will be banished from the land (13:2).
- False prophets will be removed from the land (13:1-6).

<sup>697</sup> Note: *clan of David, clan of Nathan, clan of Levi, and the clan of Shimei*: all relate to Zerubbabel, from the line of David through Nathan and Levi. Shimei was his brother (1 Chron 3:19).

**Cleansing from sin was promised in the prophets:**

Jer 31:34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor,  
or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,'  
because they will all know me,  
from the least of them to the greatest,"  
declares the LORD.

"For I will forgive their wickedness  
and will remember their sins no more."

Ezek 36:25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols.

The fountain of cleansing (13:1) must be understood in its context as connected intrinsically with the preceding "one they have pierced" (12:10) and the following Shepherd who is "struck" (13:7-9). It speaks of true restoration for those in Israel who believe. This cleansing is moral and not just ceremonial: it involves justification (judicial cleansing from sin) and sanctification (moral impurity is removed in practice). Israel's accommodation to the nations was primarily one of moral and spiritual idolatry. Recall that idolatry is generally called *unclean* in the prophets.<sup>698</sup> Thus, the abolition of idols follows naturally from the cleansing experience of both justification and sanctification. Related to the removal of the idols is the removal of false prophecy. The latter is a paramount concern of the Lord's prophets, for the hope of true revelation from God is the *only* hope of redemption being accomplished. Without a true word from God, all hope is lost.

The offer of moral cleansing was available to all, as seen in the prophets elsewhere.

Isa 33:24 No one living in Zion will say, "I am ill";  
and the sins of those who dwell there will be forgiven.

Ezek 36:25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols.

Cf. Rom 11:26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:

"The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.

**God's Shepherd-Messiah struck: Zech 13:7-9**

In the context of mourning for the One pierced (12:10-13), and the resultant cleansing from sin (13:1-6), the threefold prophesy (piercing, cleansing, struck) concludes with an elaboration on the death of the Shepherd (13:7-9) – thus, the sequence is:

- Redeemer is pierced.
- Redeemer is mourned.
- Redeemer provides cleansing.
- Redeemer-Shepherd is killed.
- Redeemer's flock is scattered.
- Redeemer's remnant will know covenant promise fulfilled.

Previously the false and foolish shepherd was struck (11:17). Here the struck Shepherd links with both the "one they have pierced" (12:10) and the Good Shepherd who was "detested" (11:4-14). The developing theme of the messianic Shepherd has been unfolding in the prophets, but reaches its apogee in this section of Zechariah.

- God raises a sword against his Shepherd (13:7a).
- True Shepherd is struck (13:7b).
- Sheep of the fold are scattered (13:7c).
- Sheep will be struck down (13:8a).
- Sheep remnant will be preserved (13:8b).
- Sheep remnant will be refined and tested (13:9a).
- Sheep remnant will call on the Lord (13:9b).
- The Lord will answer them in faithfulness to his covenant promise (13:9c):

**I will say, 'They are my people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is our God.'**

Matt 26:31-32 Then Jesus told them, "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: "'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'" 32 But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."



<sup>698</sup> The "unclean spirit" ("spirit of impurity," NIV) appears only here in the OT, but must refer to the activating Satanic force in the false prophets in contrast to the spirit of grace the Messiah would bring.

The unity of the history of redemption is evident throughout the Bible, but there are points at which it is particularly evident that the revelation of the Bible is indeed a supernatural work of the Spirit of God. That work of redemption is beautifully enacted in the Word of God and in the Work of God as illustrated by the perfect unity of motifs found in the developing Messianic portrait in the prophets, and especially demonstrated by Zechariah's prophecy, and their fulfillment in Jesus the Messiah. As noted at the beginning of this syllabus, Jesus is the center, the culmination, the focus, the apex, the goal, the hope of the entire OT corpus. All the historical books, the Former prophets, the Latter prophets, and the wisdom books all point to the Messiah, for they all prepare for the redemption of God's people. A close study of the OT theme of the Messiah presents overwhelming evidence of God's supernatural Work and Word (see Van Groningen, *Messianic Revelation*). It is enough to persuade the most hardened doubter with an open heart, but most importantly it can provide great encouragement to believers in all ages.

### ***God's King-Messiah returns (to Jerusalem): Zech 14:1-11***

The cycle of hope and judgment prevalent in the prophets, and repeated in Zechariah, reaches its peak at the end of Zechariah's book. As noted by way of the outline I have followed, the twin themes of the restoration of the temple and the future (Messianic) restoration of Israel are interspersed with words of judgment and hope. Nevertheless, the impression of hope is indeed greater in this case than that of doom. Both promises of restoration (post-exilic and future) are underscored throughout by the developing Messianic hope of true spiritual restoration and redemption. Judgment in Zechariah is still a real possibility for Israel, but the emphasis is on the judgment on the nations in revolt against God. Thus even in this concluding section the Lord's coming sandwiches (14:1-11 and 14:16-21) the judgment on the nations (14:12-15).

The "day of the Lord" has been discussed repeatedly as the eschatological marker that God's work of judgment and redemption is going to be completed. Although it has a variety of connotations, the day in this case seems to point towards end-times eschatology in contrast to the many times it describes the broad sweep of God's day coming. This day will involve an attack on Jerusalem, but it was not a prediction of the Roman destruction in 70 A.D. The victory envisioned here over the city was only partial. Although, many interpreters understand this as the Roman conquest and its subsequent decline. In that case, the events described in the following verses (14:1-21) would be figurative of the spiritual realities of the Christian church from the fall of Jerusalem until the present. This would make even the description of the city of glorified Jerusalem a depiction of the Church triumphant in the world.

Considered in its context, this section correlates with Zech 12:1-9, and has similar interpretive challenges regarding the time period being described. It also correlates with the other Zechariah prophecies concerning Jerusalem (8:1-23), in that the promise was to *restore* and protect Jerusalem, but within the context of the broader concern of spiritual redemption. Regardless of what we conclude about the time reference, we can confidently say that all promises of temporal deliverance and restoration are assurances of the final deliverance and restoration brought by Messiah. All such prophecies concerning the land of Israel, correlate with the promise of land and the temporal blessings of the covenant which typologically foretell the consummated kingdom of God coming.

In sum, many interpret all the geographic details literally, while others understand them figuratively of the spiritual realities known either after the ascension of Christ, or at the return of Christ.

➤ See Keil's commentary below, p. 580.

### ***God's judgment on the nations: Zech 14:12-15***

As in all the previous prophecies of Zechariah, judgment on Israel's enemies is juxtaposed as blessing upon Israel. The deliverance and restoration of Jerusalem depends upon the subjection of all enemies of the covenant people, while that deliverance illustrates the greater redemption-hope found exclusively in the Priest-Shepherd-King Messiah who was yet to come.

### ***God's King-Messiah worshipped by all (in Jerusalem): Zech 14:16-21***

The Messianic prophecies of Zechariah reach the peak in this prediction of the King being presented as the Lord Almighty, the one who has been giving this revelation to Zechariah! Such an association of the messianic King with the Lord himself is a tremendous advance in the revelation of the Messiah. Thus, Jesus' claims of divinity are not nearly as surprising as the widespread hostile reaction he generated with such claims in fulfilling the OT Law and Prophets.

### ***The Feast of Tabernacles:***

This important festival is also called the "festival of ingathering" (Ex. 23:16; 34:22; see Num 29 for details). This seven day festival in the seventh month (15<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> day) was a pilgrimage festival that occurred at the end of the year



to celebrate the Exodus from Egypt at the ingathering of the harvest. It was a living history memorial of their wilderness wanderings where they dwelt in tents:

Lev 23:43 so your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.”

They offered sacrifices during the seven days of rejoicing (thirteen bulls and other animals on the first day and reduced by one bull each day until the seventh day when seven bullocks were offered). On the last day one bull, one rams and seven lambs were offered

Num 29:35-36 On the eighth day hold an assembly and do no regular work. 36 Present an offering made by fire as an aroma pleasing to the LORD, a burnt offering of one bull, one ram and seven male lambs a year old, all without defect.

This last day is probably the day John refers to as the “greatest day of the Feast”:

Jn 7:37 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.

Lev 23:34 “Say to the Israelites: ‘On the fifteenth day of the seventh month the LORD’s Feast of Tabernacles begins, and it lasts for seven days.

Num 29:12 On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work. Celebrate a festival to the LORD for seven days.

Deut 16:13 Celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days after you have gathered the produce of your threshing floor and your winepress.

Deut 16:16 Three times a year all your men must appear before the LORD your God at the place he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Tabernacles. No man should appear before the LORD empty-handed:

Deut 31:10 Then Moses commanded them: “At the end of every seven years, in the year for canceling debts, during the Feast of Tabernacles,

2 Chron 8:13 according to the daily requirement for offerings commanded by Moses for Sabbaths, New Moons and the three annual feasts—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Tabernacles.

Ezr 3:4 Then in accordance with what is written, they celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles with the required number of burnt offerings prescribed for each day.

Jn 7:2 But when the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was near,

Keil says the significance of the feast in Zechariah is “in its historical allusion as a feast of thanksgiving for the gracious protection of Israel in its wanderings through the desert, and its introduction into the promised land with its abundance of glorious blessings, whereby it foreshadowed the blessedness to be enjoyed in the kingdom of God.”<sup>699</sup>

(right) Holidays of God.<sup>700</sup>

The Feast of Tabernacles from the time of Ezra and Nehemiah involved extensive reading and teaching from the law of God. Such a memorial was *apropos* in Zechariah’s eschatological vision, for it represented the pinnacle celebration of the year, as it also illustrates the Great Banquet Feast promised:

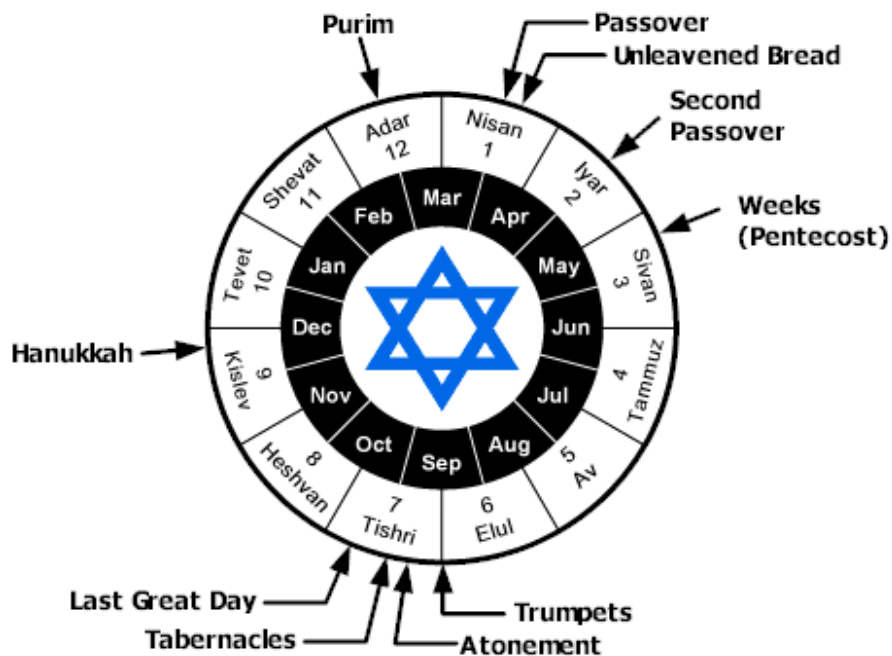
Isa 25:6 On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines.

Matt 8:11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

Rev 19:7-9 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.” (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

9 Then the angel said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’” And he added, “These are the true words of God.”



<sup>699</sup> Keil, *Minor Prophets*, vol. 10, p. 412.

<sup>700</sup> From <http://www3.telus.net/public/kstam/en/temple/details/calendar.htm>



Literal interpretations of this Feast place it in a post second Advent millennium, or in some sense in the eternal kingdom consummated. Figurative interpretations resolve the difficulties of details of some people coming to Jerusalem and some not coming by considering them an illustration of the age of the Christian church which will culminate in the gradual and final removal of unbelievers (described as Canaanites who represent the epitome of paganism) from the kingdom of God. See Keil's commentary below, p. 580.

Zech14:20 On that day HOLY TO THE LORD will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, and the cooking pots in the LORD's house will be like the sacred bowls in front of the altar.

This final prophecy concerning the abolishment of the sacred/secular (holy/profane) distinctions has redemptive historical significance in the final goal of redemption in the eschatos<sup>701</sup>: the redemption of the creation and God's people from sin. This is not presented as happening all at once, but rather progressively until perfection in the end. A telescoping perspective outlines in broad strokes the progress of redemption in which the completion only comes when "there is no longer a Canaanite in the house of the Lord Almighty" (14:21). That is, those who were ungodly (not actual Canaanites) would have no place in the kingdom of God. Holiness would prevail universally, and not just in the temple or among a remnant of people.

Cf. Rev 21:22,27 I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 27 Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Rev 22:15 Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

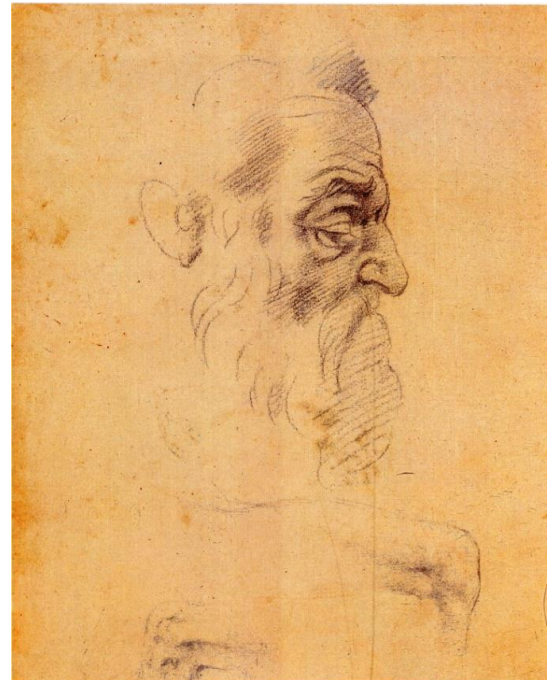
In conclusion, considering the difficulties of interpreting the time-reference of this chapter, it is good to keep the substance of the chapter in mind, as well as the broader context.:

- Jerusalem is attacked.
- The Lord delivers Jerusalem.
- The enemies of Israel will be overcome.
- The nations will worship the Lord.

*The broader context of Zechariah 14:* it should be understood within the thematic context of chapters 9-13 ~

- Jerusalem (Judah) is faced by enemies.
- Judah will turn to the Lord and national repentance will occur.
- A promise of the removal of sin is given.
- A Messianic Branch Priest-King will build the temple, clothed in majesty.
- The Temple will be rebuilt.
- True religion will be practiced.
- Messiah will bring cleansing of sin.
- Messiah King will bring salvation.
- The Good Shepherd will be struck.
- The pierced one will be mourned.
- God's people will be delivered.
- God's enemies will be subjugated.
- The covenant promise will be fulfilled.

(right) Zechariah drawing by Michelangelo



*Highlights in Zechariah of the coming Messiah:*

- Angel of the Lord appears and gives revelation-visions (1:7-6:8).
- The Lord himself will live with them (2:10-11).

<sup>701</sup> In NT terms, this expresses the principle of the "priesthood of all believers" (1 Pet 2:5-9), the Lordship of Christ over all of life (see D. Keyes *Labri Lecture*), and the liberation of all righteous work as honoring to God. These are some of the basic principles we believe were resurrected in the Reformation and what should characterize biblical faith now as a foretaste of, and preparation for, the eternal kingdom of God.

- The priests will be given clean garments (3:1-7).
- The Servant, the Branch, is coming (3:8).
- The Stone is set before the priests (3:9).
- Messiah will be a Royal Priest (4:1-7).
- Messiah, the Branch, will be a Royal-Priest (6:9-15).
- The King Messiah will bring and reign in righteousness, salvation, peace (9:9-10).
- Messiah is the cornerstone (10:4).
- Messiah is the Good Shepherd (11:4-14).
- Messiah will be pierced and mourned (12:10-14).
- Messiah-Shepherd will be struck and the sheep scattered (13:7-9).
- Messiah will stand on the Mount of Olives (14:4).
- Messiah will be king over the earth (14:9).
- Messiah is the Lord Almighty and will be honored by all the nations (14:16-21).

Keil's final comments on Zechariah are given here in full for your reference:

Our prophecy treats in both parts—ch. xii. 1—xiii. 6 and ch. xiii. 7-xiv. 21—of Israel, the people of God, and indeed the people of the new covenant, which has grown out of the Israel that believed in Christ, and believers of the heathen nations incorporated into it, and refers not merely to the church of the new covenant in the last times, when all the old Israel will be liberated by the grace of God from the hardening inflicted upon it, and will be received again into the kingdom of God, and form a central point thereof (Vitranga, C. B. Mich., etc.), but to the whole development of the church of Christ from its first beginning till its completion at the second coming of the Lord, as Hengstenberg has in the main discovered and observed. As the Israel of the heading (ch. xii. 1) denotes the people of God in contradistinction to the peoples of the world, the inhabitants of Jerusalem with the house of David, and Judah with its princes, as the representatives of Israel, are typical epithets applied to the representatives and members of the new covenant people, viz, the Christian church; and Jerusalem and Judah, as the inheritance of Israel, are types of the seats and territories of Christendom. The development of the new covenant nation, however in conflict with the heathen world, and through the help of the Lord and His Spirit, until its glorious completion, is predicted in our oracle, not according to its successive historical course, but in such a manner that the first half announces how the church of the Lord victoriously defeats the attacks of the heathen world through the miraculous help of the Lord, and how in consequence of this victory it is increased by the fact that the hardened Israel comes more and more to the acknowledgment of its sin and to belief in the Messiah, whom it has put to death, and is incorporated into the church; whilst the second half, on the other hand, announces how, in consequence of the slaying of the Messiah, there falls upon the covenant nation a judgment through which two-thirds are exterminated, and the remainder is tested and refined by the Lord, so that, although many do indeed fall and perish in the conflicts with the nations of the world, the remnant is preserved, and in the last conflict will be miraculously delivered through the coming of the Lord, who will come with His saints to complete His kingdom in glory by the destruction of the enemies of His kingdom, and by the transformation and renewal of the earth. As the believing penitential look at the pierced One (xii. 10) will not take place for the first time at the ultimate conversion of Israel at the end of the days, but began on the day of Golgotha, and continues through all the centuries of the Christian church, so did the siege of Jerusalem by all nations (ch. xii. 1—9), *i.e.* the attack of the heathen nations upon the church of God, commence even in the days of the apostles (cf. Acts iv. 25 sqq.), and continues through the whole history of the Christian church to the last great conflict which will immediately precede the return of our Lord to judgment. And again, just as the dispersion of the flock after the slaying of the shepherd commenced at the arrest and death of Christ, and the bringing back of the hand of the Lord upon the small ones at the resurrection of Christ, so have they both been repeated in every age of the Christian church, inasmuch as with every fresh and powerful exaltation of antichristian heathenism above the church of Christ, those who are weak in faith flee and are scattered; but as soon as the Lord shows Himself alive in His church again, they let Him gather them together once more. And this will continue, according to the word of the Lord in Matt. xxiv. 10 sqq., till the end of the days, when Satan will go out to deceive the nations in the four quarters of the earth, and to gather together Gog and Magog to battle against the camp of the saints and the holy city; whereupon the Lord from heaven will destroy the enemy, and perfect His kingdom in the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. xx.—xxii.).

So far as the relation between ch. xii. 2—9 and ch. xiv. 1-5 is concerned, it is evident from the text of both these passages that they do not treat of two different attacks upon the church of God by the imperial power, occurring at different times; but that, whilst ch. xii. depicts the constantly repeated attack in the light of its successful overthrow, ch. xiv. describes the hostile attack according to its partial success and final issue in the destruction of the powers that are hostile to God. This issue takes place, no doubt, only at the end of the course of this world, with the return of Christ to the last judgment; but the fact that Jerusalem is conquered and plundered, and the half of its population led away into captivity, proves indisputably that the siege of Jerusalem predicted in ch. xiv. must not be restricted to the last attack of Antichrist upon the church of the Lord, but that all the hostile attacks of the heathen world upon the city of God are embraced in the one picture of a siege of Jerusalem. In the attack made upon Jerusalem by Gog and Magog, the city is not conquered and plundered, either according to Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix., or according to Rev. xx. 7—9; but the enemy is destroyed by the immediate interposition of the Lord, without having got possession of the holy city. But to this ideal summary of the conflicts and victories of the nations of the world there is appended directly the picture of the final destruction of the ungodly power of the world, and the glorification of the kingdom of God; so that in ch. xiv. (from vers.

6 to 21) there is predicted in Old Testament form the completion of the kingdom of God, which the Apostle John saw and described in Rev. xx.—xxii. in New Testament mode under the figure of the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>702</sup>

## 8. *History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling*

(right) Zechariah Woodcut from *Zurich Bible*.<sup>703</sup>



### a) *Revelation and redemption from YHWH*

#### (1) *Who God is*

Zechariah presents God as holy and loving (merciful). God had a jealous love for Israel (Zech 1:14), and would not let them go their own way, even if he must judge them he wants to purify them. God had a mission to save the nations. His love for Israel was to be a paradigm for his love of all his people from all the nations. He keeps his covenant-promise to redeem, to make a people for himself and to be their God (2:11-12). He is holy-Judge, merciful Savior, and their loving Shepherd. He will *return* to his people in spite of their failings!

#### (2) *What God has done*

Zechariah records that God will/has returned. He will not abandon his people. This is central to the redemption-promise of the restoration of God's presence to God's people. This return of YHWH was related to his mercy, but also to Israel's reformation. God keeps his covenant-promise to be their God. See rebuilding of the temple in what God has promised below (and Zech 6:11-15).

#### (3) *What God has promised*

- God's judgment on Judah: a future siege of Jerusalem (12:1-3; 14:1-2)
- God's mercy on Judah: God's defense of Jerusalem (14:2-4)
- God's glory will again fill Jerusalem (2:5). God will be present, living among his people (8:1-3). God fulfills the promise of his dwelling-Presence and the covenant-promise "I will bring them back to live in Jerusalem; they will be my people, and I will be faithful and righteous to them as their God" (8:7). See presence in Mission of God to the nations below.
- God's judgment on the nations (9:1-13; 12:9; 14:3).
- Redemption: the Shepherd-Messiah will come, lowly human, rejected: riding on a donkey (11:9), betrayed (for silver, Zech 11:12), struck, pierced (12:10; 13:7), followers would be scattered (13:7). He would be a Shepherd-Priest-King, reigning in glory and establishing peace (9:9-10; 14:1-20), involving his first and second advents.
- Mission of God: the Gentile nations will worship the king (universal gospel) (14:16-19). "Many nations" (2:11): Many nations[Gentiles] will come to Jerusalem to seek the Lord Almighty (8:20b-22) – Because they heard **GOD IS WITH YOU** (covenant promise)!!
- God will rebuild his temple: the centrality of the temple in the history of redemption hardly needs mentioning, for it depicts throughout that history the covenant promise and the presence promise which convey the hope of restoration to God's presence. Such a hope, is the hope of redemption. The King-Priest Messiah would have the means and power to build the Temple of God. Zechariah prophesied the future role of the Messiah in working redemption, the temple being the natural symbol of this spiritual reality. When Jesus claimed he could rebuild the temple in response to the demand of some Jews for "a sign" that he was the Messiah he told them to tear the temple down and he would rebuild it in three days. Later, he was accused of this claim being taken literally:
  - Mtt 26:60-64 Finally two came forward <sup>61</sup> and declared, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.'" <sup>62</sup> Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" <sup>63</sup> But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." <sup>64</sup> "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied. "But I say to all

<sup>702</sup> Keil, *Minor Prophets*, vol. 10, pp. 419-421.

<sup>703</sup> From Emory university at <http://www.pitts.emory.edu/dia/booklist5.cfm?ID=131>.

of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

- After Jesus made the claim that he was the Messiah and that they would see the Son of Man (him) sitting at the right hand of God, the high priest accused him of blasphemy (Mtt 26:65). Importantly, Jesus interpreted his own words here about rebuilding the temple in eschatological terms, while he initially stressed the correlation with the resurrection of his body (cf. Mk 14:57-65):
  - Jn 2:18-22 Then the Jews demanded of him, “What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?” 19 Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” 20 The Jews replied, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?” 21 But the temple he had spoken of was his body. 22 After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

## **b) Humankind and redemption**

### **(1) Worship of redeemed**

Worship in Zechariah centers on the restoration of the temple and presence of YHWH. The lessons of the exile should include the fact that God was not bound, controlled, or limited by the sanctuary-temple. Temples built by human hands could not contain the living Lord. All the same, they were to re-build his temple for his presence. Ultimately, however, the house of God could only be built by “the man whose name is the Branch” (6:12-13). This one will be Priest-King on his throne and clothed in *majesty*. Worship must entail such a comprehensive picture of God. The prophecy of Zechariah is one of the pinnacles of revelation in that it so plainly centers on the One who is the center, apex, goals, and culmination of all scripture: the Messiah, the Christ. Most importantly, worship will be from all the nations of the earth (14:16) of the King, the Lord Almighty.

Also, the priest(s) must worship according to the covenant and law of God (3:1-7).

### **(2) Work of redeemed**

Work-theology in Zechariah focuses on the restoration of the temple (like Haggai). All work must be governed by the law of God. The priests must do God’s work of rebuilding:

Zech 3:7 (NET) “The Lord who rules over all says, ‘If you live<sup>8</sup> and work according to my requirements, you will be able to preside over my temple<sup>9</sup> and attend to my courtyards, and I will allow you to come and go among these others who are standing by you.’

### **(3) Ethics of redeemed**

Holiness is the hallmark of ethics in Zechariah. *Returning* to YHWH means *turning from their evil ways* to obey God’s law and words. This turning was their *repentance* before God (1:2-6).

Zech 1:4 (NET) “Do not be like your ancestors, to whom the former prophets called out, saying, ‘The Lord who rules over all says, “Turn now from your evil wickedness,”’ but they would by no means obey me,” says the Lord. Zech 7:10 You must not oppress the widow, the orphan, the foreigner, or the poor, nor should anyone secretly plot evil against his fellow human being.’

Zech 8:17 Do not plan evil in your hearts against one another. Do not favor a false oath – these are all things that I hate,’ says the Lord.”

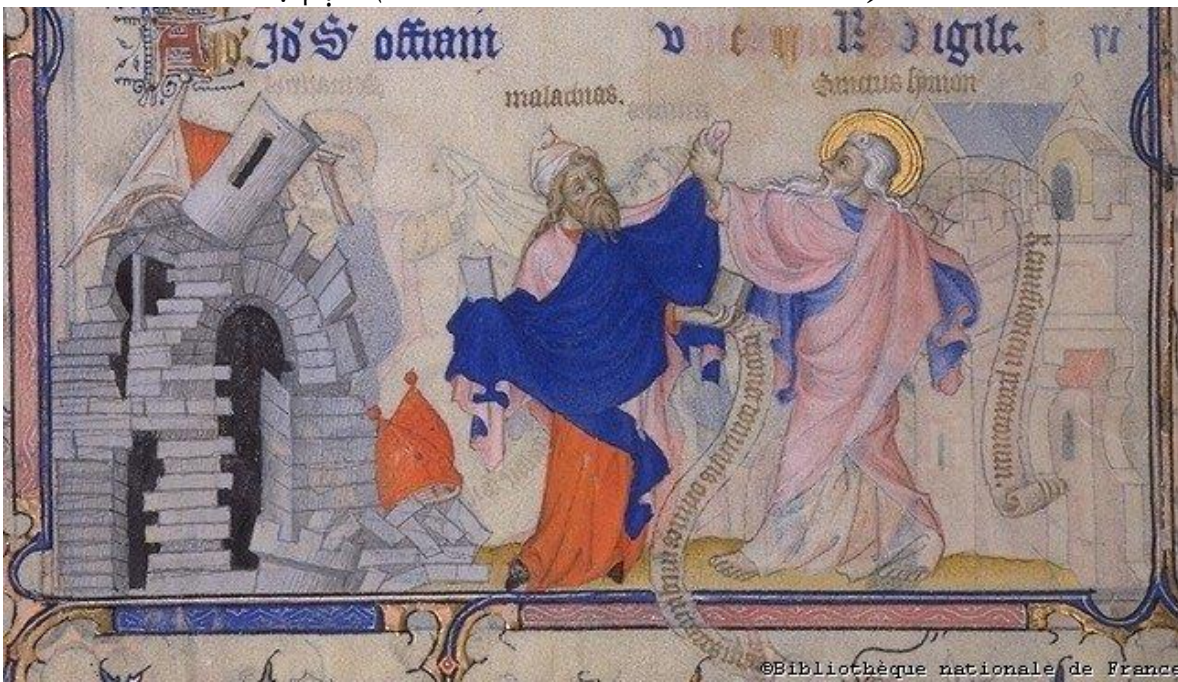
The ethics of God’s people were their witness/testimony to the nations that God had spoken to them, that God was with them, that God alone is the True God. As in all the prophets, the law and the covenant were the grounds for their message to repent and return to God through ceasing evil – but most importantly, and *doing* good and *doing* righteousness.

---

<sup>8</sup> <sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “walk,” a frequent biblical metaphor for lifestyle or conduct; TEV “If you [+ truly CEV] obey.” To “walk” in the ways of the LORD is to live life as he intends (cf. Deut 8:6; 10:12–22; 28:9).

<sup>9</sup> <sup>9</sup> **sn** The statement *you will be able to preside over my temple* (*Heb* “house,” a reference to the Jerusalem temple) is a hint of the increasingly important role the high priest played in the postexilic Jewish community, especially in the absence of a monarchy. It also suggests the messianic character of the eschatological priesthood in which the priest would have royal prerogatives.

## C. Malachi מְלֹאֲכִי (Judah ~ ca. 475-450 or 433)



St. Simon and the Prophet Malachi from Duke of Berry's *Petites Heures*.

### 1. Title, author, and dates

1. Malachi (“my messenger” or “my angel”), the last OT prophet, may have prophesied after Nehemiah left Jerusalem to return to Persia in 433 BC. Or, he may have preached closer to, or before, Ezra’s time, ca. 475-450.<sup>704</sup> The Jews of the restored community in Jerusalem were losing hope and perspective, and God sent his prophet Malachi to rebuke them for their doubt and to warn them of the dreadful day of the Lord.
2. Persian period (see Persia, p. 621): sixty years after the temple was completed, Ezra journeyed to Jerusalem on April 8, 458 BC (Ezr 7:1-8) with some 1,496 men and their families. There were also the women and children, 40 Levites, 220 temple servants, bringing the total number over 5,000 returnees. Under the authority of **Artaxerxes I** (*Longimanus*) (464-424), Ezra was commissioned to inquire about the state of

the Jerusalem sanctuary and the law, and to supply the needs of the sanctuary, as well as to impose God’s law on all the people of the Trans-Euphrates (Ezra 7:12-26). Nehemiah served as cupbearer to Artaxerxes I (Neh 1:1; 2:1), and was also sent by Artaxerxes to Jerusalem thirteen years after Ezra (in 445) to rebuild the city. After returning to Artaxerxes I in 433, Nehemiah again returned to Jerusalem some years later (Neh 13:7-31) (ca. before 407 when the Elephantine papyri lists Bagothi as the governor?). See chart and map, p. 543f. Nehemiah at this time condemned the same sins that Malachi condemned against the Sabbath (Mal 2:8-9; 4:4 and Neh 13:15-22), tithing (Mal 3:8-10 and Neh 13:23-27), priesthood (Mal 1:6-2:9 and Neh 13:7-9), and marriage (intermarriage with pagans) (Mal 2:11-15 and Neh 13:23-27).

3. Malachi prophesied during the reign of Artaxerxes I, after the temple was rebuilt (516), but before the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah (ca. 444), ca. 475-450. As noted (#1), it is thus very possible that Malachi prophesied during the years of Nehemiah’s absence from Jerusalem (from 433-?).

4. Note the thematic similarities between Malachi and Zechariah 9-14, and the eschatological similarities between Amos and Zephaniah.

➤ See Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible*. (esp. Artaxerxes I,” *Persia and the Bible*, pp. 241-278.)

(left) Tomb of Artaxerxes I.<sup>705</sup>



<sup>704</sup> See Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, NAC, p. 52.

<sup>705</sup> From [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Tomb\\_of\\_Artaxerxes\\_I.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Tomb_of_Artaxerxes_I.jpg)

## 2. *Critical matters*

1. Because the LXX takes the name Malachi to mean “my messenger,” a common noun not a personal name, many think the book to be anonymous.
2. Similarities between Malachi and Zech 9-14 cause some to propose that Malachi 1-3 is an anonymous prophecy added to two other anonymous prophecies in Zech 9-12; 12-14 (for each section begins with “oracle,” נְבִיאָה). Such a theory ignores the necessary and obvious unity of each of these prophetic books. Further, the historical and theological details of Zech 9-14 and Malachi are different: their contents suggest a date ca. 440 for Malachi and ca. 500 for Zechariah. Malachi was written during a time when sacrifices had been offered for some time in the temple (1:7-10; 3:8), indicating that the rebuilt temple had been in use, and that the priests had even become weary of the sacrifices at this point (offering imperfect, unacceptable sacrifices).



## 3. *Distinctive words/phrases*

### a) *“Lord Almighty (of hosts)”*

Mal 1:4 But this is what the LORD Almighty says: “They may build, but I Mal 1:6 the respect due me?” says the LORD Almighty. “It is you, O priests, who Mal 1:8 should he accept you?” says the LORD Almighty. 9 “Now implore God to be Mal 1:9 will he accept you?”—says the LORD Almighty. 10 “Oh, that one of you Mal 1:10 pleased with you,” says the LORD Almighty, “and I will accept no offerings Mal 1:11 among the nations,” says the LORD Almighty. 12 “But you profane it by Mal 1:13 it contemptuously,” says the LORD Almighty. “When you bring injured, Mal 1:14 I am a great king,” says the LORD Almighty, “and my name is to be feared Mal 2:2 to honor my name,” says the LORD Almighty, “I will send a curse upon Mal 2:4 Levi may continue,” says the LORD Almighty. 5 “My covenant was with Mal 2:7 he is the messenger of the LORD Almighty. 8 But you have turned from Mal 2:8 covenant with Levi,” says the LORD Almighty. 9 “So I have caused you Mal 2:12 he brings offerings to the LORD Almighty. 13 Another thing you do: Mal 2:16 with his garment,” says the LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your Mal 3:1 desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty. 2 But who can endure the Mal 3:5 but do not fear me,” says the LORD Almighty. Mal 3:7 will return to you,” says the LORD Almighty. “But you ask, ‘How are we Mal 3:10 Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw Mal 3:11 cast their fruit,” says the LORD Almighty. 12 “Then all the nations Mal 3:12 a delightful land,” says the LORD Almighty. 13 “You have said harsh things Mal 3:14 about like mourners before the LORD Almighty? 15 But now we call the Mal 3:17 “They will be mine,” says the LORD Almighty, “in the day when I make up m Mal 4:1 I set them on fire,” says the LORD Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will Mal 4:3 I do these things,” says the LORD Almighty. 4 “Remember the law of my

### b) *Covenant*

➤ See covenant and prophets, pp. 50, 226.

Three covenants: the fathers, marriage, Levi.

Mal 2:4 And you will know that I have sent you this admonition so that my covenant with Levi may continue,” says the LORD Almighty.

Mal 2:5 My covenant was with him, a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him; this called for reverence and he revered me and stood in awe of my name.

Mal 2:8 But you have turned from the way and by your teaching have caused many to stumble; you have violated the covenant with Levi,” says the LORD Almighty.

Mal 2:10 Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our fathers by breaking faith with one another?

Mal 2:14 You ask, “Why?” It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

Mal 3:1 “See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty.

### c) *“Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated” (Mal 1:2-3)*

- d) **“My messenger” (Mal 2:7; 3:1)**
- e) **“Guard yourself in your spirit” (Mal 2:16b)**
- f) **“A refiner’s fire” (Mal 3:2b)**
- g) **“The sun of righteousness” (Mal 4:2)**
- h) **“The prophet Elijah” (Mal 4:5)**
- i) **Rhetorical questions and rhetorical answers**



Human speech comes under close scrutiny in Malachi: the ideal is honest, God-honoring speech. That is, God takes their words seriously, even though they do not take his words seriously. This is demonstrated in the numerous *reported questions and comments* that serve as a contact point for the prophet’s message to the people. For all the questions that the people asked, the Lord had an answer.

Mal 1:2 “I have loved you,” says the LORD. “But you ask, ‘How have you loved us?’ “Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?” the

LORD says. “Yet I have loved Jacob,

Mal 1:4 Edom may say, “Though we have been crushed, we will rebuild the ruins.” But . . .

Mal 1:6b “But you ask, ‘How have we shown contempt for your name?’

Mal 1:7 “But you ask, ‘How have we defiled you?’ “By saying that the LORD’s table is contemptible.

Mal 1:12 “But you profane it by saying of the Lord’s table, ‘It is defiled,’ and of its food, ‘It is contemptible.’

Mal 1:13 And you say, ‘What a burden!’ and you sniff at it contemptuously,” says the LORD Almighty.

Mal 2:7 “For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, and from his mouth men should seek instruction—because he is the messenger of the LORD Almighty.

Mal 2:10 Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our fathers by breaking faith with one another?

Mal 2:14 You ask, “Why?” It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

Mal 2:17 You have wearied the LORD with your words. “How have we wearied him?” you ask. By saying, “All who do evil are good in the eyes of the LORD, and he is pleased with them” or “Where is the God of justice?”

Mal 3:7b Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD Almighty. “But you ask, ‘How are we to return?’

Mal 3:8 “Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How do we rob you?’ “In tithes and offerings.

Mal 3:13 “You have said harsh things against me,” says the LORD.

“Yet you ask, ‘What have we said against you?’

Mal 3:14 “You have said, ‘It is futile to serve God. What did we gain by carrying out his requirements and going about like mourners before the LORD Almighty?’

The questions touch on a variety of themes (seeming to progress in degeneration?):

- **Love of God is doubted.**
- **Arrogance/pride of Edom is expressed.**
- **Name of God is held in contempt.**
- **Lord’s altar is defiled (repeated 3x).**
- **Lord’s covenant is profaned.**
- **Illegitimate marriage and divorce practiced.**
- **Lord’s justice is questioned.**
- **Repentance is refused.**
- **Lord’s tithes are robbed.**
- **God is blasphemed by bad theology.**
- **Serving God is spurned as futile.**

God also asks a question:

Mal 3:2 But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap.

#### 4. Major themes

1. The populace had become indifferent, possibly due to their perception that the prophetic promises (see Haggai and Zechariah) of a glorious future were still only future. Their doubt of God’s word of covenantal faithfulness & love (1:2) led to doubting God’s justice (2:17).
2. Ongoing sin: Intermarriage with pagan women was a serious problem. Indulgence in sin, paganism, and oppression of the poor. Priests were complacent in their work (unworthy offerings) (1:6-2:16).



3. Judgment would come for the wicked and deliverance for the righteous on the great day of the Lord. The Refiner (the Lord himself) would come and purify his people, and remove the wicked from his presence (3:2-5; 4:5[3:23]).
4. The twin overarching themes are the faithlessness of God's people *versus* the faithfulness of God to his people. Faithlessness would be judged, while faithfulness would be rewarded.
5. The end of Malachi begins a period of *silence from God* in terms of revelation until John the Baptist appears at the Jordan River to baptize for repentance and preparation for the coming of the Lord (4:5). Malachi most significantly ends on the high notes of the *law of Moses* the *prophet* (on the law,<sup>706</sup> see pp. 53, 60, 226) and Elijah coming (John the Baptist), and on the low note of the threat of the covenant *curse* (4:4-6[3:22-24]) (וְהִכִּיתִי אֶת־הָאָרֶץ חָרָם):
 

NEB: "a decree of utter destruction"  
 NIV: "strike the land with a curse"  
 KJV, RSV, NASB: "smite the land with a curse."<sup>707</sup>
6. Chronologically, this ends the OT, while Chronicles ends the OT text. Destruction is probably a better translation here, but it means the covenant curse will be invoked again if they are rebellious.

Intertestamental awareness of the cessation of prophetic revelation:

1 Macc 9:27 Thus there was great distress in Israel, such as had not been since the time that prophets ceased to appear among them.

## 5. Major prophecies

The exilic/post-exilic period of Ezra-Nehemiah is both fascinating and complex. It is one of the most exciting times in Israel's history, for we see the profound fulfillment's of God's prophets that, though the temporal covenant-blessing of the land would be revoked if they were disobedient and idolatrous, the Lord would preserve a remnant and return them to the land.

1. Edomites will be decimated (1:4-5). Cf. Obad 5.
2. God's name would be exalted and feared in the nations (1:11-14).
3. God will judge the wicked and purify his people (3:2-5, 17).
4. God's messenger will come (Elijah), preparing for the Lord (Messiah) (3:1; 4:5[3:23]).

Matt 3:3 This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

"A voice of one calling in the desert,

'Prepare the way for the Lord,  
 make straight paths for him.'"

Lu 1:16-17 Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. <sup>17</sup> And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Matt 17:12 But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands."

5. The Lord (Messiah) will come as a Refiner's fire (3:2).
6. The day of the Lord (second coming of Messiah) will be dreadful for the wicked, but a blessing for believers (3:2-3; 4:5-6[3:23-24]).
7. The sun of righteousness will come with healing: *redemption* (4:2[3:20]).

Lu 1:78-79 because of the tender mercy of our God,  
 by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven  
<sup>79</sup>to shine on those living in darkness  
 and in the shadow of death,  
 to guide our feet into the path of peace."

## 6. Outline, structure/composition

As noted, the book centers on a sequence of *reported questions* that illustrate the prophet's message. These questions are in the form of six *disputations* that raise a point already made by someone and then contradicting it

<sup>706</sup> Mal 4:4[3:22] ~ "Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel." The law has been a central feature in all of the prophets, and their high view of the law corresponds with the redemption-promise that the law would be written on the heart. There was no polarization between the law and the prophets, as the prophets were often given to prophesy that the gospel of redemption would include the internal conformity of the heart to the spirit of the law. The goal of preserving the Mosaic law was at the heart of the prophetic word, and had also been revived in the reformations of Ezra the scribe (Ezra 7:10; Neh 8:1-9).

<sup>707</sup> The word for curse (חָרָם, nom for חָרָם) is the word used for *the ban* that Israel was to execute on the Canaanites upon entry into the land. Failure to carry out this command remained one of their perennial problems. The idea that the land would be *struck* was the essence of the covenant curse which had previously reversed the temporal covenant promise of land (the basis of progeny and prosperity).

(point – counterpoint).<sup>708</sup> Dorsey notes two patterns for these introductory exchanges between God and his people, most ending with “Lord Almighty (of hosts).” As in many other prophets, the expression the “Lord Almighty” features as a central term defining the key subject of the prophecy.

*Shorter* (Mal 1:2-3; 2:17; 3:13-15):

- a Yahweh’s introductory statement
- b people’s objection
- a’ Yahweh’s second statement

*Longer* (Mal 1:6-8; 3:7-8):

- a Yahweh’s introductory statement
- b people’s objection
- a’ Yahweh’s second statement
- b’ people’s objection to second statement
- a” Yahweh’s third statement<sup>709</sup>

The remarkable aspect of the longer (as well as the shorter) is that the people take to arguing with God’s word. They do not accept his answers, so they dig a deeper hole for themselves with further skeptical objections. These are not what we might call “honest questions.” Dillard and Longman outline this well with the following:

(right) Dillard and Longman outline<sup>710</sup>

1. 1:2-5 illustrates the common pattern.
  2. Dispute about the contempt the priests show God (1:6-2:9)
    - a. Introduction: God is father and master, deserving of honor.
    - b. Question: “How have we defiled you?”
    - c. Answer: “You have placed defiled food on my altar.”
  3. Dispute about Israel’s covenant breaking (2:10-16)
    - a. Introduction: God is the father and creator of all.
    - b. Question: “How do we profane the covenant of our fathers by breaking faith with one another?”
    - c. Answer: By divorcing the “wife of your youth.”
  4. Dispute about God’s justice (2:17-3:5)
    - a. Introduction: The Lord is weary of the words of his people.
    - b. Question: “How have we wearied him?”
    - c. Answer: By accusing God of honoring or ignoring evil.
  5. Dispute concerning repentance (3:6-12)
    - a. Introduction: God does not change, but you must.
    - b. Question: “How are we to return?”
    - c. Answer: By not robbing God of the tithe.
  6. Dispute about harsh words against the Lord (3:13-4:3 [MT 3:13-21])
    - a. Introduction: The Lord accuses the people of harsh words.
    - b. Question: “What have we said against you?”
    - c. Answer: You have said, “Serving God is pointless.”
- Dillard, Longman, OT Intro, p. 440.

Malachi’s message is called an oracle (אִשְׁרָא), “or burden.” The messages can be outlined in five of six sections that may each be an oracle or part of the whole oracle. Dorsey considers the exhortation to stop being faithless as the center of the prophetic oracle. That is, it is a call to repentance. Up to the center (2:10-16), the prophet is largely negative, yet following the call to repentance the prophet becomes increasingly positive. Thus, the doom/hope pattern indicates that the book was written to encourage the post-exilic remnant.

A six-part outline, showing a break after the call to repentance (problem/solution):

An oracle:

*God loves Israel, yet rejects the wicked ~ Mal 1:2-5*  
*God rebukes unfaithful priests ~ Mal 1:6-2:9*  
*God judges unfaithful Judah ~ Mal 2:10-16*  


---

  
*God sends his messenger before the Lord: repent! ~ Mal 2:17-3:12*  
*God judges the unfaithful and vindicates the faithful ~ Mal 3:13-4:3 [3:19-21]*  
*God sends the prophet Elijah before the Lord: repent! ~ Mal 4:4-6 [3:22-24]*

## 7. *Exposition and the history of redemption themes*

### a) *God loves Israel, yet rejects the wicked ~ Mal 1:2-5*

*The importance of love:* אהבה (hb)<sup>711</sup> ~ God is love (1 Jn 4:8, 16) ~ and election

The basis of the Lord’s covenant with Israel is his love and their love returned. Their love is not an optional component of the covenant, for his love has certain conditions:

<sup>708</sup> Bullock, *OT Prophetic Books*, pp. 336-337. He suggests the six *disputations* cover love (1:2-5), honor (1:6-2:9), faithlessness (2:10-16), divine justice (2:17-3:5), repentance (3:6-12), serving God (3:13-4:3).

<sup>709</sup> Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, p. 321.

<sup>710</sup> Dillard & Longman, *Intro to the OT*, p. 440.

<sup>711</sup> Compare Hosea, where this word defines the love between God and his people (Hos 3:1; 9:5, 15; 11:1, 4; 14:4[5]). See also אהבה, loyalty and covenant-love, which often appears with אהבה in relation to the covenant of God (see P.J.J.S. Els, “אהבה,” *NIDOTTE*, pp. 277-299).

Deut 7:12-13 **If** you pay attention to these laws and are careful to follow them, **then** the LORD your God will keep his covenant of love with you, as he swore to your forefathers. 13 He will love you and bless you and increase your numbers. He will bless the fruit of your womb, the crops of your land—your grain, new wine and oil—the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks in the land that he swore to your forefathers to give you.

Nevertheless, though his love may be withdrawn in terms of certain conditions of the covenant, he does not cease loving his people. God's love is expressed in terms of his choosing his people: he loved Jacob (Israel) and rejected Esau (Edom) (Mal 1:2-3). His love for his people is especially highlighted by the contrast it shows with his rejection of the wicked. The message of the prophets has been largely about God's love for his people that had been, in the main, rejected by his people. Their hearts had grown so callous that they could ask "How have you loved us?" (1:2). When God's love is doubted, it leads to rebellion against God's law. This doubt is not the kind of sincere uncertainty believers have at moments, nor is it about having great struggles of faith and belief. It is rather the kind of *questioning* of God's justice, goodness, and his essential character. It is to doubt God himself. Needless to say, the first questions posed against God's truthfulness occurred in the Garden. The striking contrast is between the wavering and weak love of Israel and that love of the unchanging Lord. His love is expressed in his promised works of redemption. The Lord's response is to remind them of the covenant promises by illustrating the futility of Edom's self-reliance, for it would never cancel out the promises to Jacob. Edom's doom was certain, whereas Israel's hope was certain. The Esau and Jacob controversy ("love" and "hate") played a longstanding role in their mutual histories, but the prophets' overwhelming testimony was Edom's demise. It also illustrates the sovereign choice of God in the line of the promise:

Rom 9:10-13 Not only that, but Rebekah's children had one and the same father, our father Isaac. 11 Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand: 12 not by works but by him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger." 13 Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

Deuteronomy links the אהב love of God with his covenant of *choosing* his people:

Deut 4:37 Because he loved your forefathers and chose their descendants after them, he brought you out of Egypt by his Presence and his great strength,

Deut 7:7-8 The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Deut 10:14-15 To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. 15 Yet the LORD set his affection on your forefathers and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations, as it is today.

God's love is *personal, exclusive, undeserved, and freely given*, antithetical to the pagan gods Israel was so often attracted to and bowed down to.

#### Love in the prophets with God as subject:

Jeremiah, although as much admonishing in character as Hosea, has but one occurrence of *hb* with Yahweh as subject (Jer 31:2-3, as in Deut in relation to the establishment of the covenant). Isa 1-39 has none, and in Isa 40-66 are five such instances (i.e., Isa 41:8; 43:4; 48:14; 61:7-8; 63:9; all in association with the divine-human covenant). Such statistics seem to confirm the widely held view that Hos and proto-Deut both originated in northern Israel. Elsewhere *hb* expresses Yahweh's attitude to Zion within a promise of restoration (Zeph 3:16-17). Twice in Malachi (1:1-2; 2:10-11) *'hb* occurs in terms of the Sinaitic and Davidic-Zion covenant, and there expresses a definite act of election in sovereign grace, but not apart from a secondary semantic component of a feeling of affection.

The exilic prophet Ezekiel does not mention *'hb* with Yahweh as subject. As for other hooks of the OT, *'hb* expresses Yahweh's love (in the sense of his electing grace and covenantal faithfulness) in three instances that concern King Solomon and that are clearly influenced by Deut. theology; i.e., 2 Sam 12:24 (Yahweh's love for Solomon); 1 Kgs 10:9 (Yahweh's love for Israel in connection with Solomon's enthronement; i.e., his covenantal association with Israel); and Neh 13:26 (expressing Yahweh's establishing and maintaining a personal royal-theocratic covenantal relationship with Solomon, granting him authority to rule, with a secondary semantic component of Yahweh's feeling/attitude of personal affection for Solomon).

Sometimes an individual is mentioned as the object of Yahweh's love. The OT, of course, as has been stated above, speaks mostly of God's love for Israel; not much is said directly of his love for individuals, though it is implied (as remarked before) that the individual shares, as a member of the people, in God's love for Israel (Richardson, 133). Some of the Psalms unmistakably imply it, though due allowance must certainly be made for a collective meaning of the 1st pers. sg. in many Psalms.

The only other instances where a royal person is a recipient of divine love is in Isa 48:14, namely, Cyrus the Persian; Jenni (*THAT* 1:70) notes that there is a trace of ANE royal ideology reflected in this use of *hb* to describe God's attitude to and relationship with this ruler. The only other individual who is mentioned by name as recipient of Yahweh's *'ah<sup>a</sup>ba* is Jacob in Ps 47:4[5] (which, however, could also be taken here as an epithet for the people of Israel as a whole). There are, however, various categories of individuals who, on account of their state or behavior, became the object of Yahweh's *'ah<sup>a</sup>ba*, i.e., the stranger (*gēr*) in Deut 10:18; "he who hates evil" (Ps 97:10, when this text is emended); the righteous

person (146:8); the one whom Yahweh disciplines and loves (Prov 3:12); “those who pursue justice” (15:9); the one who has a pure heart (22:11).

In the rest of the Writings besides Nehemiah, *’hb* with Yahweh as subject occurs only in Prov (2x: 3:11, 12; 15:9) and in the Psalms (numerous occurrences). The term expresses Yahweh’s love (semantic domain of emotive attitudinal event) for the person whom he chastises (Prov 3:11-12) and for the one who pursues righteousness (15:9).<sup>712</sup>

In the canon, and in the history of redemption, it is significant that the last of the twelve prophets begins his message on this high note of the covenantal love of God for his (rebellious) people. After their many years of history and seeing the promises of God being fulfilled, in both judgment and deliverance, the Lord appropriately reminds them of his love and the consequences of their faithlessness. It also sets the stage for many years of prophetic silence in the nation of Israel before the Messiah.

Malachi 1:5 ~ God is great – “above” or “over” the territory of Israel (יִגְדַל יְהוָה מֵעַל לְגְבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל), or is this “outside Israel”? (see “Israel and the Mission of God to the Nations,” p. 143; see universalism/nationalism, p. 55)

KJV ~ “The LORD will be magnified from the border of Israel.”

NASB ~ “The LORD be magnified beyond the border of Israel!”

NIV ~ “Great is the LORD—even beyond the borders of Israel!”

RSV ~ “Great is the LORD, beyond the border of Israel!”

ESV ~ “Great is the LORD beyond the border of Israel!”

The majority of translations render this as *beyond*, suggesting that the testimony of God’s work goes not only to Israel but to the nations. In light of the covenant promises of God’s love for his chosen people, the work of God will be evident, and the final desolation of Edom would be evidence that YHWH is king and sovereign over all nations. Keil renders this “over the border of Israel,” showing that YHWH is great above Israel and protects their borders.<sup>713</sup> It does seem to be a more accurate translation of מֵעַל, but what was said already of the Lord’s work would be the same.<sup>714</sup> In either case, the principle of the land-promise is upheld and guarded by God alone. In this covenantal context, the land-promise is the backdrop to all that is transpiring in the prophecy (especially considering the recent exile from the land and return of the remnant).

### b) God rebukes unfaithful priests ~ Mal 1:6-2:9

Mal 1:7, 12 ~ The table of the Lord (שֻׁלְחַן יְהוָה): the altar from where the priests got their food. In relation to the promise of the land, the sanctuary of God’s presence was the central feature of their faith. The presence of YHWH was conditioned upon a holy people and a holy place. This was at the heart of the exilic judgment-saga, for the meeting-presence was removed from Israel. Revelation at the ark ceased. The table of the Lord was the altar for sacrifice, and the priests had reduced it to false externalism, forsaking the spirit of purity and holiness.

Ezek 44:16 They alone are to enter my sanctuary; they alone are to come near my table to minister before me and perform my service.

The offering of imperfect sacrifices was a bold rebellion against the explicit conditions of the law:

Deut 15:21 If an animal has a defect, is lame or blind, or has any serious flaw, you must not sacrifice it to the LORD your God.

Mal 1:11 ~ universalism *versus* particularism (nationalism) (see p. 55). In the midst of this rebuke, the Lord proclaims that his name will be great *among* the nations (גָּדוֹל שְׁמִי בְּגוֹיִם). Though Israel had profaned his name by unworthy worship, the Lord would make his name great. In this case, it does seem to point *beyond* the borders of Israel. The principle of *replacement*, seen elsewhere in the former and latter prophets, means that Israel could be replaced by sincere worshippers. The nations would honor God. Nevertheless, the focus of the passage is not so much on this possibility of universal blessing as it is on the sin of Israel’s corrupted priests, for they had profaned his name among the nations. Thus, the following warning of judgment upon them if they did not repent sounds much like many pre-exilic prophecies concerning the same.

Mal 2:4-8 ~ covenant of Levi (בְּרִיתִי אֶת-לְוִי). This covenant of life and peace (הַחַיִּים וְהַשְּׁלוֹם) with Levi refers to Phinehas (grandson of Aaron):

Numb 25:10-13 The LORD said to Moses, 11 “Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, has turned my anger away from the Israelites; for he was as zealous as I am for my honor among them, so that in my zeal I did not put an end to them. 12 Therefore tell him I am making my covenant of peace with him. 13 He and his descendants will have a covenant of a lasting priesthood, because he was zealous for the honor of his God and made atonement for the Israelites.”

*The covenant of peace:* see Ezekiel’s covenant of peace, p. 531

Job 5:23 For you will have a covenant with the stones of the field, the wild animals will be at peace with you.

<sup>712</sup> P.J.J.S. Els, “אהב,” *NIDOTTE*, p. 282.

<sup>713</sup> Keil, *Minor Prophets*, vol. 10, p. 432.

<sup>714</sup> See מֵעַל, *BDB*, 5920, IV, 2, p. 758.

Isa 54:10 will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed, says the LORD,  
 Ezek 34:25 I will make a covenant of peace with them and rid the land  
 Ezek 37:26 I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting. I will establish them  
 Heb 13:20 May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead

The covenant of peace (שְׁלוֹמִים) corresponds to salvation, not just a “state of peace” or lack of conflict. It has redemptive significance. This peace also correlates with *uprightness* (מִישׁוֹר, see יִשְׁרָאֵל). There is in this walking with God an evangelistic zeal, as well, for he “turned many from sin” (וַיִּבְרָא הַיָּבִיב מִמֶּנּוּ). The sin (wickedness) noted here contrasts starkly with his own uprightness.

Levi engaged in “true instruction” (תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת), or the “instruction/law of truth” (2:6). KJV ~ “The law of truth”; NASB, RSV, ESV, NIV ~ “True instruction.” This links with the prophet’s final exhortation to “remember the law of my servant Moses . . .” (4:4). In this context of exodus allusions, the prophet exhorts the post-exilic priests to *preserve knowledge* (of God) and to *seek instruction* (of God). The prophet is calling the priests to be faithful to the law of Moses (see temple and prophets and law and prophets, p.224, 226). Here is a tension between unfaithful priests and a faithful prophet, but the tension rests not with the law of Moses but with the *rejection* of the law of Moses. The priests were the *messengers<sup>715</sup> of the Lord Almighty*, but they had *turned away* and caused *many to stumble* (2:7-8). To know God is to obey his law. To know God is to know peace and life. Levi *walked with God* (2:6), representing redemption and true fellowship with God. The covenant-law and life are thus intrinsically related:

*The covenant and life:*

Gen 9:11 I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters  
 Gen 9:15 I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living  
 Gen 9:17 This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.

2 Cor 3:6 competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit. The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. The OT hope of life is the eschatological hope of redemption and resurrection (see p. 22), fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

The rejection of the law is further illustrated in the following prophecy about marriage and foreign gods in Mal 2:10-16.

### c) *God judges unfaithful Judah ~ Mal 2:10-16*

Mal 2:14 ~ covenant of your wife (וְאִשְׁתְּ בְרִיתְךָ). The second serious sin in Israel was the forsaking the marriage standard of the law forbidding the marriage to pagan women and their gods, while also forsaking their own wives of Israel (2:12-14):

Ex 34:15-16 Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the land; for when they prostitute themselves to their gods and sacrifice to them, they will invite you and you will eat their sacrifices. 16 And when you choose some of their daughters as wives for your sons and those daughters prostitute themselves to their gods, they will lead your sons to do the same.

Ezra 9:1-2 After these things had been done, the leaders came to me and said, “The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites. 2 They have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with the peoples around them. And the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness.”

The prophet makes this charge in light of the Creator God who had also made them a nation. Creation and redemption theology (2:10, 15) are the backdrop to the *judgment* (2:13-14) of God upon them for these sins. This is all reminiscent of the exile and its causes. Analogous with their broken marriage covenant with God were these broken marriage covenants with their own wives. As God had created man and woman as one, he had also created his people as one with one father (2:10, 15). The Creator was their Redeemer, but they had forsaken him again. Their unrighteous intermarriages and divorces pictured their shattered communion with God, for it shows they had forsaken the law of God.

For all generations, and none more than ours, for the record God has said:

Mal 2:16 “I hate divorce” (כִּי-שֹׂנֵא שִׁלּוּחַ) says the LORD God of Israel,

Mal 2:15b, 16b ~ “so guard yourself in your spirit” (וּשְׁמֹר רִיחֶךָ לֹד)



<sup>715</sup> מַלְאָכִים often refers to the angels of God, and is applied here to the priests of God, and is applied to the prophets of God in Hag 1:13 “Then Haggai, the LORD’s messenger, gave this message of the LORD to the people: “I am with you,” declares the LORD.”

## d) **God sends his messenger before the Lord: repent! ~ Mal 2:17-3:12**

Their sins are simple but serious (2:17):

- Calling good evil and evil good.
- Questioning the justice of God.

Isa 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good  
and good evil,  
who put darkness for light  
and light for darkness,  
who put bitter for sweet  
and sweet for bitter.



The initial questioning of God has moved from the logical deduction of doubting God's love to doubting his justice, and even calling evil good. The overwhelming testimony of their history and revelation attested to the fact that God is *faithful* and *just*, yet they had forsaken him and lost their confidence. Their false religion had blinded them to its reproach before God. They had the folly to ask "Where is the God of justice?" as if he was not present and keeping account.

Deut 32:4 He is the Rock, his works are perfect,  
and all his ways are just.  
A faithful God who does no wrong,  
upright and just is he.

Mal 3: 1a ~ "my messenger" (מַלְאָכִי). As so often in the prophets, the woe of judgment is followed immediately by hope. This *messenger* of God will come to prepare the way before Him, in striking contrast to the false messengers of the priests already described (2:7). John the Baptist is said to have fulfilled this:

Matthew 11:10 This is the one about whom it is written:  
'I will send my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.'

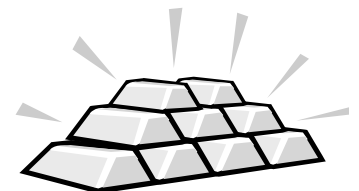
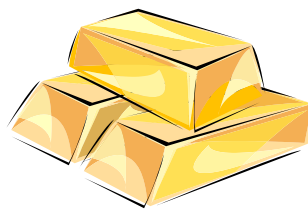
This second messenger described here would be a faithful messenger of the covenant of God (Mal 3:1b ~ "messenger of the covenant" [וּמְלַאֲךְ הַבְּרִית]). Only the Messiah could fulfill this qualification, in light of the ceaseless failing of Israel to carry out the mandate to bring the word of God to bear on their life and witness to the world. This messenger is importantly described as coming "to his temple," picturing the fulfillment of the covenant promise of his redemption presence with his people. The sanctuary being the center of Israel's hope, it is most significant that the Messenger will be there as a Refiner.

The question here is the timing of the next verse (Mal 3:2 ~ "Who can endure the day of his coming" [אֵת-יְוֹם בּוֹאֹוֹ]). This would be a day when impurity would be fully purged and they would be refined as in a fire. The prophecy appears to speak of the second coming of the Messiah (see Handel's Messiah), although it could refer to his first.

Cf. Psalm 15:1 LORD, who may dwell in your sanctuary?  
Who may live on your holy hill?

Cf. Isa 1:25 I will turn my hand against you;  
I will thoroughly purge away your dross  
and remove all your impurities.

Zechariah 13:8-9 In the whole land," declares the LORD,  
"two-thirds will be struck down and perish;  
yet one-third will be left in it.  
9 This third I will bring into the fire;  
I will refine them like silver  
and test them like gold.  
They will call on my name  
and I will answer them;  
I will say, 'They are my people,'  
and they will say, 'The LORD is our God.'"



Mal 3: 8-10 ~ In light of their other sins, the next one concerning the tithes and offerings is no surprise. The tithes and offerings (הַמַּעֲשֹׂר וְהַתְּרוּמָה; 1/10<sup>th</sup> and offerings). The "offerings" included all the offerings and contributions for the sanctuary (not the altar), consisting of every kind of possession, originally provided for the construction and

maintenance of the tabernacle, then the temple, and particularly provided for the priests.<sup>716</sup> That the tithe and the offerings were intrinsically related raises the question of its normativity for the NT era.

*Tithes and offerings*— applicable today?

“The question now arises whether it would be feasible to isolate the tithing as one form of contribution within the context of the whole system and apply that to the Christian Church, with the deliberate exclusion of the other elements, such as the *tʿrāmāh*?” Would this be a valid and justified hermeneutical approach to Scripture?<sup>717</sup>

Not only were the priests offering blemished sacrifices, the people were failing to maintain the temple with their inadequate offerings. The temporal promises of the covenant were conditioned upon their obedience to the law of God.

Deut 28:12 The LORD will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none.

Their disobedience had resulted in the exile from the land and its blessings, and presently threatened their place in the land once again. The promise of purging Israel was not complete! Thus, combined with his promise of a messenger, is the exhortation and offer of repentance. Indeed, in light of the Messenger’s approach, they should turn back to God.

### ***e) God judges the unfaithful and vindicates the faithful ~ Mal 3:13-4:3[3:19-21]***

The prophet returns explicitly to the theme of judgment again. In light of the spiritual and moral confusion rampant among the people, a believing remnant came together and wrote a “scroll of remembrance” (Mal 3:16 ~ “scroll of remembrance” [סֵפֶר זִכְרוֹן] 3:16). The unbelieving in their midst had now come to say “harsh things” against the Lord (3:13). They had persistently spoken untruthfully of God, but now had even resorted to speaking harshly of God. Part of what they were saying was that it is “futile to serve God” (3:14). That is, they were not “getting anything out of it,” sounding rather familiar to us in our times. They also assumed that the arrogant and evildoers prospered because there was no consequence for their rebellion (3:15). The retrogression of sin in this book is outlined through the sequence of questioning God (see p. 585). It is at this final section that the answers are given in full: there is a remnant who *feared the Lord, remembered the Lord, and honored his name* (3:16) (fulfilling the many prophecies of the same).

***The remnant:***

- Belongs to the Lord Almighty (3:17a).
- Is the Lord’s “treasured possession” (תְּשׁוּבָה). (3:17b).
- Will be spared by the Lord in compassion (3:17c).
- Will be made distinct as righteous from the wicked (3:18).
  - The righteous serve God (3:18b).

Mal 3:17 ~ “treasured possession” (תְּשׁוּבָה). This affirms God’s great love for his people that the prophet initiated his prophecy with (1:2). The Lord’s personal love for his people is exemplified in his choosing, preserving, purging, and protecting them. It is especially evident in his *promises* to them. The people of God can live in hope. Hope is the qualitative distinctive of God’s people.

This claim on God’s people leads directly into a proclamation of judgment that “the day that is coming” upon “every evildoer” (4:1; cf. 3:2). The hope of the wicked is only judgment: to be burned to stubble in the furnace. In contrast to this judgment, the prophet then proclaims the hope of the righteous:

- The sun of righteousness will arise with healing (4:2a).
- They will leap like calves (4:2b).
- They will trample the wicked (4:3).
- They will remember the law of Moses (4:4).
- The prophet Elijah will come before the day of the Lord (4:5).

<sup>716</sup> See Verhoef, “Tithing,” p. 124.

<sup>717</sup> Verhoef, “Tithing,” p. 124-125.

## **f) God sends the prophet Elijah before the Lord: repent! ~ Mal 4:4-6[3:22-24]**

Mal 4:4[3:22] ~ “remember the law of Moses” (זְכֹרֶנּוּ תוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה). Malachi ends on the high notes of the *law of Moses* the prophet and Elijah coming (John the Baptist), and on the low note of the threat of the covenant *curse* (4:4-6[3:22-24]) (וְהִכִּיתִי אֶת-הָאָרֶץ חָרָם). See the curse, p. 585. All of these promises of judgment and redemption are in the context in which the prophet is calling the nation to repent, to turn back to God from their complacency. As before the exile, so also again they were not to presume that their divine election guaranteed God’s toleration of their sin. The remnant was the sure sign of hope that God was present and working, but the situation overall appeared bleak to them. They needed encouragement, regardless of how many they were in number (we do not know). Thus, the Lord gave them very real encouragement for their immediate situation, importantly sending his prophet and word, and promising the Messenger and the day of the Lord. This promise spoke of redemption for the remnant, whereas terror for the wicked. It is also a hope for the remnant that the wicked will be destroyed, for there could be no hope if injustice and evil were ultimately tolerated in God’s kingdom. Yet, the emphasis in Malachi is on the positive hope of redemption for the people of God. We can confidently say that the weight of the scale goes towards this hope of redemption for God’s people as weighed against the warnings of judgment for the wicked.

As noted, the end of Malachi begins a period of *silence from God*. The next prophet to appear is John the Baptist who baptizes at the Jordan River for the new covenant of repentance in preparation for the coming of the Lord himself (4:5). The entire symphony of OT prophetic voices points to this One who would redeem, the anointed one, the true prophet, priest, king, shepherd, warrior, and wise man. This One, from the line of David, would be the hope of the world, the branch, the shoot, suffering servant, King of Kings, and Lord of lords. Indeed, this hope was God himself, Creator and Redeemer. Through this One God would restore his people to Eden, to his presence, to his image and his glory. This One would establish God’s kingdom of redemption. This One would fulfill the hope of the nations: *eternal life*. He would usher in the resurrection of the body from the grave, initiating the final stages of redemption.

### **Christ is the Eschatos – the goal of redemption.**

## **8. History of redemption themes for teaching, preaching, counseling**

### **a) Revelation and redemption from YHWH**

#### **(1) Who God is**

God is holy and his people must be holy. He is faithful to his own, even though they are often faithless to him. God *loves* his people even though they fail to love him. God the Creator is God the Judge.

#### **(2) What God has done**

God sent his prophet to show them his holiness and his love. To exhort them to faithfulness and obedience. Forgiven them and preserved a remnant.

#### **(3) What God has promised**

The mission of God: His name would be great to all the nations!

Mal 1:5 “You will see it with your own eyes and say, ‘Great is the Lord – even beyond the borders of Israel!’”

Mal 1:11 My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations,” says the Lord Almighty.

The “Messenger” will come (3:1) to prepare for the Messiah to return to his temple. This messenger is a messenger of the *covenant* and. The coming of the Messenger and the Messiah will result in the refining/purging of God’s people.

### **b) Humankind and redemption**

#### **(1) Worship of redeemed**



Proper *sacrifice* required true repentance and true faith. It also required *thankfulness* (which the priests lacked). Proper worship was governed by proper sacrifice (not diseased animals). Despite such sins of God's people, he mercifully offered them grace (1:9). The altar must be honored and kept pure before God. Sabbath-rest.

They doubted God's promises justice. *Faith* in God should lead to *trust* in God.

The Lord "will come to his temple" (3:1) – highlights the central theme of redemption in the restoration of God's people to God's presence.

### (2) *Work of redeemed*

The Sabbath features prominently in the rest-work cycle required by God for the benefit of his people. The people may build but the Lord may overthrow it (1:4). Thus, their work must honor him. The mission of God to the nations required Israel's faithfulness to the covenant and the law of God.

### (3) *Ethics of redeemed*

The catalog of ways God's people had failed to obey God's covenant-law greatly hindering their *testimony* to the nations:

- Love of God is doubted.
- Arrogance/pride of Edom is expressed.
- Name of God is held in contempt.
- Lord's altar is defiled (repeated 3x).
- Lord's covenant is profaned.
- Illegitimate marriage and divorce practiced.
- Lord's justice is questioned.
- Repentance is refused.
- Lord's tithes are robbed.
- God is blasphemed by bad theology.
- Serving God is spurned as futile.

Malachi thus condemned their sins against failure to honor the Sabbath, tithing, the priesthood, and marriage.

Mal 1:4 (NET) Edom<sup>7</sup> says, "Though we are devastated, we will once again build the ruined places." So the Lord who rules over all<sup>8</sup> responds, "They indeed may build, but I will overthrow. They will be known as<sup>9</sup> the land of evil, the people with whom the Lord is permanently displeased.

Mal 2:17 (NET) You have wearied the Lord with your words. But you say, "How have we wearied him?" Because you say, "Everyone who does evil is good in the Lord's opinion,<sup>26</sup> and he delights in them," or "Where is the God of justice?"

Mali 3:15 So now we consider the arrogant to be happy; indeed, those who practice evil are successful.<sup>26</sup> In fact, those who challenge<sup>27</sup> God escape!"

Remarkably, and importantly, Malachi ends the OT prophetic witness with an exhortation to *remember the law of Moses* (4:5) and a promise of (Elijah) Messiah. The prophetic words/revelations of the prophets were essentially a *revealed exposition of the law and the covenant* of God. The prophetic word from God through the prophets would cease for hundreds of years after this. See discussion of law and the prophets, p.



<sup>7</sup> <sup>7</sup> **sn** Edom, a "brother" nation to Israel, became almost paradigmatic of hostility toward Israel and God (see Num 20:14–21; Deut 2:8; Jer 49:7–22; Ezek 25:12–14; Amos 1:11–12; Obad 10–12).

<sup>8</sup> <sup>8</sup> **sn** The epithet *LORD who rules over all* occurs frequently as a divine title throughout Malachi (24 times total). This name (יהוה יְבָרַח), *yéhvah tséva'ot*), traditionally translated "LORD of hosts" (so KJV, NAB, NASB; cf. NIV NLT "Lord Almighty"; NCV, CEV "Lord All-Powerful"), emphasizes the majestic sovereignty of the Lord, an especially important concept in the postexilic world of great human empires and rulers. For a thorough study of the divine title, see T. N. D. Mettinger, *In Search of God*, 123–57.

<sup>9</sup> <sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and they will call them." The third person plural subject is indefinite; one could translate, "and people will call them."

<sup>26</sup> <sup>26</sup> **tn** *Heb* "in the eyes of the LORD."

<sup>26</sup> <sup>26</sup> **tn** *Heb* "built up" (so NASB); NIV, NRSV "prosper"; NLT "get rich."

<sup>27</sup> <sup>27</sup> **tn** Or "test"; NRSV, CEV "put God to the test."

## V. ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN BACKGROUNDS TO THE OT<sup>718</sup>

### A. *Summary highlights of A.N.E. peoples*

Some relevant works:

- Howard, David M., Jr. and Michael A. Grisanti. *Giving the Sense: Understanding and Using Old Testament historical Texts*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2013.
- Chavalas, Mark W. and Lawson Younger, Jr. editors. *Mesopotamia and the Bible: Comparative Explorations* Sheffield : Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.
- Hoffmeier, James K. and Alan Millard. Editors. *The Future of Biblical Archaeology*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004.
- Neihaus, Jeffrey J. *Ancient Near Eastern Themes in Biblical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic and Professional, 2008. See handout inserted below, pp. “A Symphony of Parallels.”

*[From Biblical Hermeneutics Syllabus-notes:*

It is vital to our study of the Bible to have some knowledge, understanding, and reference tools regarding the ancient backgrounds to the Bible. This is an area often overlooked by pastors and teachers of the Bible, but it leaves a enormous gap in their students’ understanding!

*The big question: what was Israel’s relationship to the A/N.E. world? And thus, what is the Bible’s relationship to that world.*

Sometimes this debate has been called the “Babel and Bible debate,” as it relates to the world of Mesopotamia and its relationship to the Bible. This expression comes from a lecture given by Friedrich Delitzsch in 1902 which he proposed that Babylonian literature was the source of much OT literature (e.g. the creation and flood stories). The claims and principles related to this carry over to the other related A.N.E. local cultures, as well.

*The significance of the A.N.E. background:*

1. It *illuminates* the times, and illustrates the times of the A.N.E. context of the Bible (political, historical, geographical, cultural, religious, familial, social, etc. ).
2. It *clarifies* some difficulties of the history and text.
3. It *confirms* the biblical records and evidences the Bible’s place in its ancient context, as well as the Bible’s trustworthiness. Although, it is limited by the interpreters’ limitations, lack of comprehension, and the limited data presently excavated.
4. It *provides* fascinating material for use our teaching, preaching, counseling ministries.

**Cultural dependence versus cultural adaptation<sup>719</sup>:** “Babel and Bible” debate

1. Pan-Babylonian School - cuneiform study led them to view Hebrew thought, culture dependent on Babylonia
2. Pan-Egyptian School - viewed Hebrew thought, culture dependent on Egypt.
3. Pan Canaanite School - Ugaritic discovery led to view that Hebrew thought, culture dependent on Canaanite

**Cultural similarities<sup>720</sup>:**

*Cultural diffusion:* posits that the similarities we observe are due to the transfer of ideas or practices from one culture to another, either directly or indirectly. The assumption is that the burden of proof is on the researcher to provide a reasonable explanation for where, when, how, and in what direction the influence may have occurred.

Four types:

1. *Direct connection* (A is dependent upon B)
2. *Mediated connection* (A knows about B from source C)
3. *Common source* (A and B utilized a common source, C)

<sup>718</sup> All of the cross references to the original class lecture, Judges-Esther have been removed here.

<sup>719</sup> Livingston, *The Pentateuch*, pp. 183-184.

<sup>720</sup> Kenton L. Sparks, *Ancient Texts for the Study of the Hebrew Bible: a guide to the background literature* (Peabody Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers), 2005, p. 16.

4. *Common tradition* ( A and B have no immediate connections but participate in a common tradition)

*Intercultural similarity*: presupposes a common phenomenon in different human contexts, often referred to as *phenomenological* similarity or *typological*. Good comparison necessitates good classifications.

**Cultural adaptation**<sup>721</sup>:

1. *Spiritual personalization*: names of God, covenant structures, etc. transformed in Hebrew context
2. *Radical displacement*: rejection of all pagan religious practice
3. *Theological displacement*: all things taken from Semitic culture were rid of pagan meanings (e. g. tabernacle)
4. *Historical displacement*: Passover replaces all pagan spring festivals and the Feast of Tabernacles replaces all pagan fall festivals. Some critics say *historicization* occurred making ancient myths into history.
5. *Secularization*: of names of gods and goddesses and numerous common words
6. *Depersonalization*: of all natural objects of any divine person or character
7. *Vocational reorientation*: Priests, rulers, prophets all subject to God's law not pagan practice
8. *Legal moralization*: humane laws, positive regulations adapted to pure worship, and case law allowed for preventative aspects to avoid obsolete customs becoming sacred law

There has been increasing controversy in Evangelical circles about the relationship of the biblical text to its A.N.E. religious and literary contexts, often affirming some variation of the above themes of dependence and adaptation.

In sum, I suggest some conclusions:

- In revelation and redemption God sinlessly accommodated (condescended) himself to sinful humans, limited human language, and the concepts familiar to the people of the various contexts of biblical history. Wherever we see similarities between A.N.E. texts, concepts, and language and the Bible, we observe the polemical nature of God's revelation of transforming those things to conform to his character.
- There are, nevertheless, interpretative assertions sometimes made about a particular biblical text that are based on unwarranted impositions of A.N.E. language or ideas.
- There are instances of parallel traditions found between the ANE literature and the Bible, and these are the result of the dynamic relationship of religious beings (made in God's image) seeking to make sense of their universe and create religions and traditions that reflect that universal spiritual need (within the same, or similar cultural, milieu, thus often expressing comparable traditions): the influences of biblical revelation itself on ANE literature; the influence of real events (mutual traditions drawing on the same events, such as the creation and the flood); as well as the influences of demonic forces behind ancient religions to produce *counterfeit* parallel traditions to biblical revelation (whether they *precede* or *follow* revelational events/motifs chronologically) (see esp. Niehaus below on the latter).
- For discussion of this question, see *Giving the Sense, Mesopotamia and the Bible*, and *The Future of Biblical Archaeology* .

Further,

<sup>721</sup> Livingston, *The Pentateuch*, pp. 184-188.

*A.N.E. Themes in Biblical Theology*  
*Jeffrey I. Niehaus*

## Conclusion

# A Symphony of Parallels

At the outset of this work, we noted three possible sources of parallels between the Old Testament (and Bible as a whole) and the ancient Near East: the mutual recollection of major events that actually did occur (e.g., Creation, the Flood), the use by biblical writers of literary and legal forms already current in the ancient Near East (e.g., poetic parallelism with its stock word pairs, the second millennium B.C. international treaty/covenant form), and, finally, the activity of deceiving, demonic spirits (producing parallels between supposed acts of pagan gods and the acts of God as they appear in the Bible). Primarily we have explored the third of these grounds of parallelism. Our exploration not only has shown that the pagan cultures of the ancient Near East had certain fundamentally important concepts in common with the biblical authors, but it also has shown that those pagan cultures shared a theological structure of thought with that of the biblical writers. We have endeavored to summarize and outline that structure.

It may be a modern irony that theology often is practiced more as an academic discipline than as a spiritual one. But the spiritual dimension of theology is paramount, whether or not it receives paramount attention at the hands of many theologians. In the cases of parallelism that we have considered in this book, there are almost always two ways of looking at the data. The first way is to consider them to be part of an ancient Near Eastern worldview. In that case, the biblical authors are just couching things in terms familiar to them from their contemporary thought world. The

second way is to consider the parallels as rooted in truth: revealed truth in the Old Testament and the Bible, and distorted truth in the ancient Near East. We prefer the second approach because it is consistent with the claims made by the biblical writers and speakers themselves.

For example, we are told that David gave Solomon “the plans of all that the Spirit had put in his mind for the courts of the temple of the LORD and all the surrounding rooms, for the treasuries of the temple of God and for the treasuries for the dedicated things” (1 Chron. 28:12). Those plans included the weight of gold and silver for the lamp stands and their lamps and for the tables and the weight of gold for the forks, sprinkling bowls, pitchers, and dishes, as well as for the altar of incense (1 Chron. 28:14–18). “All this,” David said, “I have in writing from the hand of the LORD upon me, and he gave me understanding in all the details of the plan” (1 Chron. 28:19).

Thutmose III (1490–1436 B.C.) erected a holy of holies for Amun and received divine guidance, not only for the temple construction, but also for fashioning the temple’s liturgical equipment:

... a great vase of electrum... [..] silver, gold, bronze, and copper... the Two Lands were flooded with their brightness, like the stars in the body of Nut [i.e., the sky goddess], while my statue followed. Offering tables of electrum... I made it for him out of the conceptions of my heart, by the guidance of the god himself.<sup>1</sup>

When a pagan king makes the same claim that a biblical king does, and when that claim is a spiritual one and involves divine guidance, an evaluation that says the biblical king is just understanding these things the way any ancient Near Eastern monarch would understand them does not do justice to the data. David either got guidance from God by “the hand of the LORD” upon him, or he did not. If he did not, then his statement to the contrary makes him either a liar or a deceived, and perhaps a self-deceived man. Since nothing elsewhere in the Bible gives us any reason to think that David’s statement was in error, we can only conclude that it was true. If it was true, then David’s experience of inspiration, or divine guidance, was a genuine experience that produced the results

that God wanted. But how are we then to understand the similar claims of divine guidance made by Thutmose III? It would be most bizarre if an Egyptian who predated David by centuries made an almost identical claim to divine guidance for making temple furnishings for his god and made that claim by coincidence. Or, to put it another way, the true God just happened to do to David what Thutmose claimed his god did for him a few centuries earlier.

The parallels we have explored in this book are of this sort. We have concluded that they cannot be explained as cases of biblical dependence on ancient Near Eastern theology. We also conclude that they cannot be explained as coincidences, if only because the accumulation of such coincidences sooner or later strains credibility. Our belief need not be strained, however, because the Bible itself gives us the reason for such parallels. Passages such as Deuteronomy 32:16–19; 1 Corinthians 10:20; and 1 Timothy 4:1 tell us clearly enough that demonic powers and intelligences are behind false religion, and even behind false theology in the church. The activities of Satan and demons are not given much press between the covers of Scripture and deservedly so, since the Bible is primarily about God and his acts and his kingdom and not about the other side. On the other hand, Paul can write that he and the early church were not ignorant of the Devil’s schemes (2 Cor. 2:11). God in his wisdom has not left his people ignorant of those matters. At least, he has given his church the wherewithal, in the Bible and by his Spirit, to understand certain fundamental things about the Enemy and his ways. Demonic inspiration of false religion (which produces the sort of parallels we have considered, including the major paradigm in its pagan articulations) is one of the things that the Bible teaches quite clearly in the passages noted. Of course the church can, unfortunately and in spite of what Paul wrote, be ignorant of such matters, just as believers can be ignorant of any biblical truths that they may choose to ignore or happen not to know.

We said earlier in this work that the topic of the ancient Near Eastern divine assembly would not form a major topic of discussion for us, and it will not. It needs to be noted at this point, however, that in light of what Moses and Paul wrote about false religions, a proper understanding of the pagan pantheons is in order. A broad understanding is presented in the following schema.

1. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, 2:68 (§ 164).

**Mesopotamia**

An (supreme god)  
 Enlil (storm god)  
 Divine assembly  
 Humans

**Canaan**

El (supreme god)  
 Baal (storm god)  
 Divine assembly  
 Humans

**Greece**

Chronos (supreme god)  
 Zeus (storm god)  
 Divine assembly  
 Humans

**Rome**

Saturn (supreme god)  
 Jupiter (storm god)  
 Divine assembly  
 Humans

**Biblical View**

The Father (supreme God)  
 The Son (also God, of course, appearing in storm theophany)  
 Angelic assembly (e.g., Job 1–2)  
 Humans

The biblical view of reality presented above is paralleled by the pagan worldviews, which both predate and postdate the Bible. The ancient world understood that there was a supreme God, with whom all things originated and who held all authority and yet was relatively inactive in human affairs. But they also understood that there was another god, the storm god, who was indeed active among both divine and human affairs. A constitutional monarchy may present an analogy, in which the monarch theoretically holds authority and instructs the prime minister to form a government, but it is the prime minister who is truly active, who “gets things done.” So it was in the ancient world with Enlil, Baal, Zeus, and Jupiter. To carry the analogy further, it may be that the Son is the one who is the more “active” person of the Trinity, the one who “gets things done” by the power of the Spirit working through him and who is associated with storm theophanies (e.g., Matt. 26:64).<sup>2</sup> In any case, the parallel that concerns us now is that which obtains between the pagan divine assemblies and the biblical assembly of angels, or “sons of God” (Job 1–2 RSV). Holy angels refuse human

2. Cf. Niehaus, *God at Sinai*, 333–84. To the extent that this analogy is true, of course, the Father does not hold a merely theoretical authority!

worship (cf. Rev. 19:10), but fallen angels clearly do not, as Moses and Paul have indicated. It seems reasonable to agree with these biblical writers, and such agreement leads us to understand that the common pagan theological structure presented above is a theological counterfeit not only endorsed by all ancient pagan thought, but imposed upon the ancients by the misleading inspiration of fallen angels (or, to use Paul’s words to Timothy, “doctrines of demons,” 1 Tim. 4:1 RSV).<sup>3</sup>

The Bible devotes the lion’s share of its attention not to Satan and his works but to God and his works, and that is where our attention belongs as well. He is the one who, in his providential care for humanity, has allowed such theological parallels as we have explored to become manifest over many centuries in the ancient world so that truth would appear, even in darkened and polytheistic forms. Truth in such forms could have no saving power. But it did prepare a matrix of thought, a background of theological understanding, so that when God truly appeared and did such things as the pagans had claimed for their gods—instituting covenant, giving laws, commanding conquest and extending his kingdom, even by signs and wonders—his revelation would come to a people who had some theological preparation for it. In this way God was glorified even by the distortions of pagan religion, for even in their darkness the pagans had retained or obtained common grace reflections of his truth. It is the fuller revelation of that truth that now makes true life possible, and also makes possible all works of Christian theology. And the fuller revelation of that truth also encourages us to wait patiently until the God of truth does finally, on a day and hour that he knows, come back once and for all to restore all things.

3. Cf. the misleading guidance provided by a “lying spirit” or “spirit of deception,” through the mouths of false prophets in 1 Kings 22.

end of Biblical Hermeneutics notes]

## Ancient Texts Relating to the Old Testament

Major representative examples of ancient Near Eastern non-Biblical documents that provide parallels to or shed light on various OT passages.

### AMARNA LETTERS

**Canaanite Akkadian**—14th century B.C.  
Hundreds of letters, written primarily by Canaanite scribes, illuminate social, political and religious relationships between Canaan and Egypt during the reigns of Amenhotep III and Akhenaten.

### AMENEMOPE'S WISDOM

**Egyptian**—early 1st millennium B.C.  
Thirty chapters of wisdom instruction are similar to Pr 22:17-24:22 and provide the closest external parallels to OT wisdom literature.

### ATRAHASIS EPIC

**Akkadian**—early 2nd millennium B.C.  
A cosmological epic depicts creation and early human history, including the flood (cf. Ge 1-9).

### BABYLONIAN THEODICY

**Akkadian**—early 1st millennium B.C.  
A sufferer and his friend dialogue with each other (cf. Job).

### CYRUS CYLINDER

**Akkadian**—6th century B.C.  
King Cyrus of Persia records the conquest of Babylon (cf. Da 5:30; 6:28) and boasts of his generous policies toward his new subjects and their gods.

### DEAD SEA SCROLLS

**Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek**—3rd century B.C. to 1st century A.D.  
Several hundred scrolls and fragments include the oldest copies of OT books and passages.

### EBLA TABLES

**Sumerian, Eblaite**—mid-3rd millennium B.C.  
Thousands of commercial, legal, literary and epistolary texts describe the cultural vitality and political power of a pre-patriarchal civilization in northern Syria.

### ELEPHANTINE PAPYRI

**Aramaic**—late 5th century B.C.  
Contracts and letters document life among Jews who fled to southern Egypt after Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 B.C.

### ENUMA ELISH

**Akkadian**—early 2nd millennium B.C.  
Marduk, the Babylonian god of cosmic order, is elevated to the supreme position in the pantheon. The 7-tablet epic contains an account of creation (cf. Ge 1-2).

### GEZER CALENDAR

**Hebrew**—10th century B.C.  
A schoolboy from west-central Israel describes the seasons, crops and farming activity of the agricultural year.

### GILGAMESH EPIC

**Akkadian**—early 2nd millennium B.C.  
Gilgamesh, ruler of Uruk, experiences numerous adventures, including a meeting with Utnapishtim, the only survivor of a great deluge (cf. Ge 6-9).

### HAMMURAPI'S CODE

**Akkadian**—18th century B.C.  
Together with similar law codes that preceded and followed it, the Code of Hammurapi exhibits close parallels to numerous passages in the Mosaic legislation of the OT.

### HYMN TO THE ATEN

**Egyptian**—14th century B.C.  
The poem praises the beneficence and universality of the sun in language somewhat similar to that used in Ps 104.

### ISHTAR'S DESCENT

**Akkadian**—1st millennium B.C.  
The goddess Ishtar temporarily descends to the netherworld, which is pictured in terms reminiscent of OT descriptions of Sheol.

### JEHOIACHIN'S RATION DOCKETS

**Akkadian**—early 6th century B.C.  
Brief texts from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II refer to rations allotted to Judah's exiled king Jehoiachin and his sons (cf. 2Ki 25:27-30).

### KING LISTS

**Sumerian**—late 3rd millennium B.C.  
The reigns of Sumerian kings before the flood are described as lasting for thousands of years, reminding us of the longevity of the pre-flood patriarchs in Ge 5.

### LACHISH LETTERS

**Hebrew**—early 6th century B.C.  
Inscriptions on pottery fragments vividly portray the desperate days preceding the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem in 588-586 B.C. (cf. Jer 34:7).

### LAMENTATION OVER THE DESTRUCTION OF UR

**Sumerian**—early 2nd millennium B.C.  
The poem mourns the destruction of the city of Ur at the hands of the Elamites (cf. the OT book of Lamentations).

### LUDLUL BEL NEMEQL

**Akkadian**—late 2nd millennium B.C.  
A suffering Babylonian nobleman describes his distress in terms faintly reminiscent of the experiences of Job.

### MARI TABLES

**Akkadian**—18th century B.C.  
Letters and administrative texts provide detailed information regarding customs, language and personal names that reflect the culture of the OT patriarchs.

### MERNEPTAH STELE

**Egyptian**—13th century B.C.  
Pharaoh Merneptah figuratively describes his victory over various peoples in western Asia, including "Israel."

### MESHA STELE (MOABITE STONE)

**Moabite**—9th century B.C.  
Mesha, king of Moab (see 2Ki 3:4), rebels against a successor of Israel's king Omri.

### MURASHU TABLETS

**Akkadian**—5th century B.C.  
Commercial documents describe financial transactions engaged in by Murashu and Sons, a Babylonian firm that did business with Jews and other exiles.

### MURSILIS'S TREATY WITH DUPPI-TESSUB

**Hittite**—mid-2nd millennium B.C.  
King Mursilis imposes a suzerainty treaty on King Duppi-Tessub. The literary outline of this and other Hittite treaties is strikingly paralleled in OT covenants established by God with his people.

### NABONIDUS CHRONICLE

**Akkadian**—mid-6th century B.C.  
The account describes the absence of King Nabonidus from Babylon. His son Belshazzar is therefore the regent in charge of the kingdom (cf. Da 5:29-30).

### NEBUCHADNEZZAR CHRONICLE

**Akkadian**—early 6th century B.C.  
A chronicle from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II includes the Babylonian account of the siege of Jerusalem in 597 B.C. (see 2Ki 24:10-17).

### NUZI TABLETS

**Akkadian**—mid-2nd millennium B.C.  
Adoption, birthright-sale and other legal documents graphically illustrate OT patriarchal customs current centuries earlier.

### PESSIMISTIC DIALOGUE

**Akkadian**—early 1st millennium B.C.  
A master and his servant discuss the pros and cons of various activities (cf. Ecc 1-2).

### RAS SHAMRA TABLETS

**Ugaritic**—15th century B.C.  
Canaanite deities and rulers experience adventures in epics that enrich our understanding of Canaanite mythology and religion and of OT poetry.

### SARGON LEGEND

**Akkadian**—1st millennium B.C.  
Sargon I (the Great), ruler of Akkad in the late 3rd millennium B.C., claims to have been rescued as an infant from a reed basket found floating in a river (cf. Ex 2).

### SARGON'S DISPLAY INSCRIPTION

**Akkadian**—8th century B.C.  
Sargon II takes credit for the conquest of Samaria in 722/721 B.C. and states that he captured and exiled 27,290 Israelites.

### SENNACHERIB'S PRISM

**Akkadian**—early 7th century B.C.  
Sennacherib vividly describes his siege of Jerusalem in 701 B.C., making Hezekiah a prisoner in his own royal city (but cf. 2Ki 19:35-37).

### SEVEN LEAN YEARS TRADITION

**Egyptian**—2nd century B.C.  
Egypt experiences 7 years of low Niles and famine, which, by a contractual agreement between Pharaoh Djoser (28th century B.C.) and a god, will be followed by prosperity (cf. Ge 41).

### SHALMANESER'S BLACK OBELISK

**Akkadian**—9th century B.C.  
Israel's king Jehu (or his servant) presents tribute to Assyria's king Shalmaneser III. Additional Assyrian and Babylonian texts refer to other kings of Israel and Judah.

### SHISHAK'S GEOGRAPHICAL LIST

**Egyptian**—10th century B.C.  
Pharaoh Shishak lists the cities that he captured or made tributary during his campaign in Judah and Israel (cf. 1Ki 14:25-26).

### SILAM INSCRIPTION

**Hebrew**—late 8th century B.C.  
A Judahite workman describes the construction of an underground conduit to guarantee Jerusalem's water supply during Hezekiah's reign (cf. 2Ki 20:20; 2Ch 32:30).

### SINUHE'S STORY

**Egyptian**—20th-19th centuries B.C.  
An Egyptian official of the 12th dynasty goes into voluntary exile in Syria and Canaan during the OT patriarchal period.

### TALE OF TWO BROTHERS

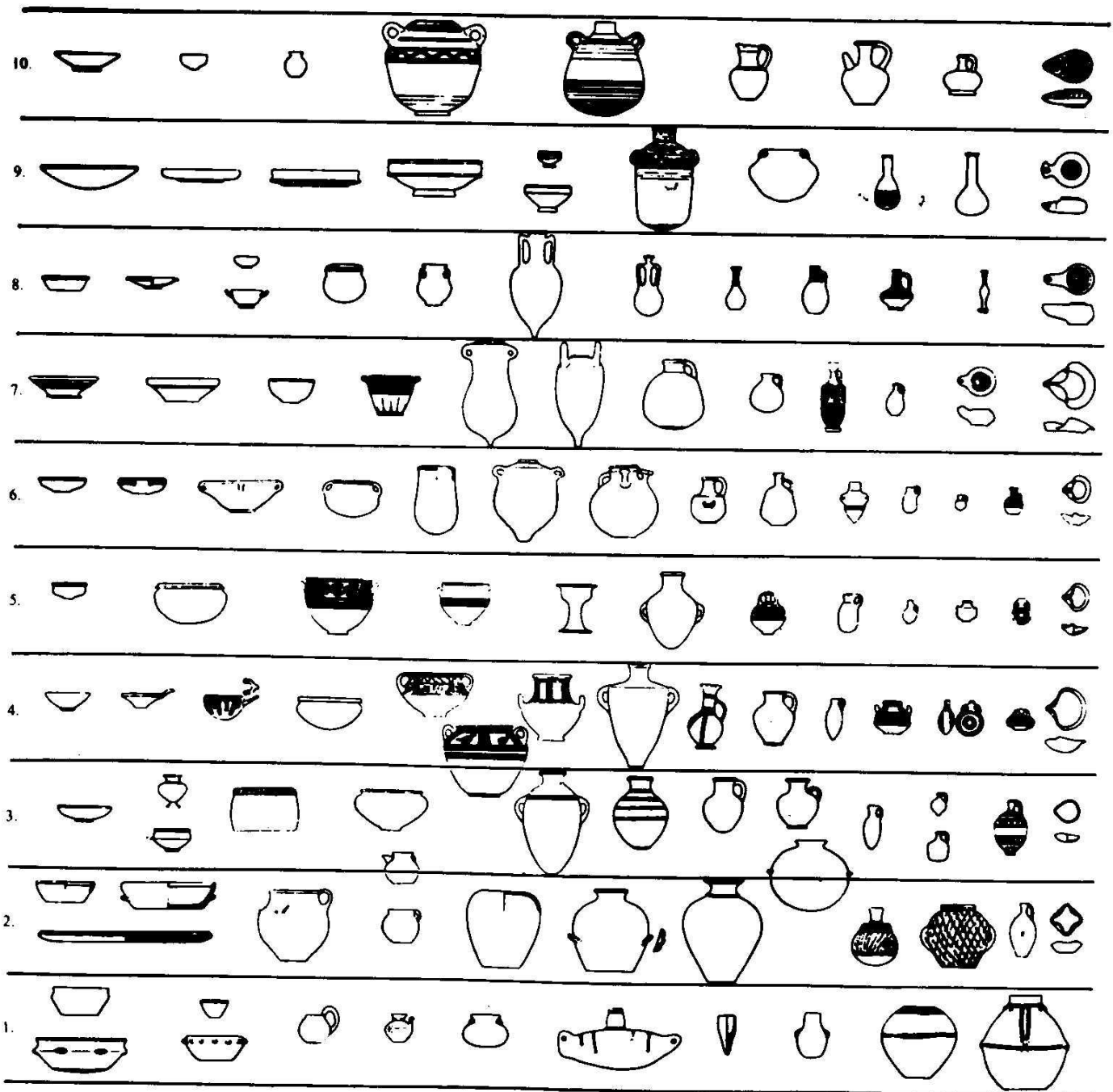
**Egyptian**—13th century B.C.  
A young man rejects the amorous advances of his older brother's wife (cf. Ge 39).

### WENAMUN'S JOURNEY

**Egyptian**—11th century B.C.  
An official of the Temple of Amun at Thebes in Egypt is sent to Byblos in Canaan to buy lumber for the ceremonial barge of his god.

Ancient texts<sup>723</sup>

# Characteristic pottery types from Chalcolithic to the Byzantine periods



- 1. Chalcolithic period
- 2. Early Bronze Age
- 3. Middle Bronze Age
- 4. Late Bronze Age
- 5. Iron Age I
- 6. Iron Age II
- 7. Iron Age III
- 8. Hellenistic period
- 9. Roman period
- 10. Byzantine period

Pottery types.<sup>724</sup>

## 1. Amalekites/Amalek

Amalek was the son of Eliphaz and the grandson of Esau (Gen 36:12, 16). His descendents are called **Amalekites** (Ex 17:8; Nu 24:20; Deut 25:17; Judg 3:13, etc.); Ex 17:8-13; Deut 25:17-18 ~ Israel was met aggressively and fought by the Amalekites at Rephidim in the wilderness of Sinai. Subsequently, the Amalekites came under the ban (Deut 25:19; 1 Sam 15:2-3). In this conflict, Aaron and Hur held Moses' hands up and Israel was victorious. The

<sup>723</sup> NIV Study Bible, p. 5.

<sup>724</sup> Schoville, *Biblical Archaeology*, p. 15. Identifying and dating pottery and shards is the primary means of dating strata in ancient sites.

Keith N. Schoville, *Biblical Archaeology*, Baker Book House, 1991, p. 15



Amalekites later defeated Israel at Hormah when Israel disobeyed Moses' command not to go up into the land (Nu 14:43, 45). In Judges, Amalekites assisted **Eglon**, king of Moab in attacking Israelite territory (Judg 3:13). **Gideon** later drove out the combined forces of Midianites and people of the East who were raiding Israelite crops and flocks (Judg 6:3-5, 33; 7:12; 10:12). Amalekites typically lived in the Negeb, yet at one point gained some territory in Ephraim (Judg 12:15).

**Saul** was instructed by Samuel to destroy the Amalekites (in the ban). Although Saul pursued and captured their king, he kept him alive at the Lord's displeasure. Thus, Saul was rejected as king and Samuel slew Agag (1 Sam 15:26-33). Later, King David fought Amalekites in Ziklag (given to him by Achish, king of Gath) (1 Sam 27:6; 30:1-20), and they eventually decline.

The story of **Esther** may also relate directly to the conflict between the Amalekites and the Jews, for Haman, "the enemy of the Jews" was an Agagite, apparently from the tribe of Agag, king of the Amalekites (1 Sam 15:20). Mordecai would not bow to Haman, and so Haman schemed to have the entire exilic Jewish population annihilated.

- See Esther notes in Judges-Esther syllabus.

## 2. Ammon/Ammonites

- See Younker, Randall W. "Ammonites," in Hoerth, *Peoples of OT World*, pp. 293-316.

Semitic descendents of **Ben-Ammi**, Lot's second son through his younger daughter (Gen 19:38), though enemies to Israel (Gen 19:38). They inhabited the fertile region NE of Moab in the Transjordan (the capital was Rabbah, modern Amman, capital of Jordan). Early occupation was between the Arnon and Jabbok rivers (Deut 2:20-21, 37; 3:11), and later E of the Jabbok (Num 21:24; Deut 2:37; Josh 12:2; 13:10, 25; Judg 11:13, 22). Israel did not take the lands of Ammon in the conquest years (Deut 2:19, 37; Judg 11:15). Ammonites were excluded from the assembly along with the Moabites for hiring Balaam to curse Israel (Deut 23:3-6). During the Judges' period **Jephthah** was raised up to resist the Ammonites (Judg 11:32). King Nahash of the Ammonites later besieged Jabesh-gilead and **Saul** resisted him (1 Sam 11:1-11; 12:12; 14:47). **Nahash** became a friend of David's (2 Sam 10:1-2), but his son Hanun went to war with David in which Joab and Abishai defeated them (2 Sam 10; 1 Chron 19). Ammonites were David's greatest nemesis (after his victory over the Philistines), involving him in battles with Aram, Moab, and Edom (see David in Judge-Esther syllabus). The Israelites captured Rabbah the following year and put the people to work (2 Sam 12:26-31; 1 Chron 20:1-3). (Cf. 2 Sam 17:27, 29; 23:37; 1 Chron 11:39.)

**Solomon** included Ammonite women in his harem, and worshipped Milcom (Molech) their god (1 Ki 11:1, 5, 7, 33). Rehoboam's mother Naamah was an Ammonite (1 Ki 14:21, 31; 2 Chron 12:13). During Jehoshaphat's reign in Judah, Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites raided Judah (2 Chron 20:1-30). An Ammonite conspiracy arose to slay Joash king of Judah (2 Chron 24:26). Ammonites paid tribute to Kings Uzziah and Jotham of Judah (2 Chron 26:8; 27:5). The Ammonite high place made for **Molech** by Solomon was smashed by Josiah (2 Ki 23:13). During king Jehoiakim's reign in Judah, his rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar brought affliction from Aramean, Moabite, and Ammonite raiders (2 Ki 24:2).

Subsequent to Judah's fall (586 BC), Ammonite King Baalis sent Ishmael to kill Gedaliah (2 Ki 25:25; Jer 40:11-14). The prophets considered them enemies (Jer 49:1-6; Ezk 21:20; 25:1-7; Amos 1:13-15; Zeph 2:8-11). Tobiah, the governor of Ammon, opposed Nehemiah's rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls (Neh 2:10, 19; 4:3, 7). Hebrews and Ammonites intermarried, which Ezra/Nehemiah rejected (Ezra 9:1-2; Neh 13:1, 23-31).

Ammonite language was written in Old Canaanite-Phoenician script, similar to Hebrew. They look like Amorites physically, ethnically, and linguistically, and thus may be interrelated somehow.

Their chief god was **Molech** or Milchom (human sacrifice). See, p. .

## 3. Amorites/Canaanites

- See Liverani, M. "The Amorites," in Wiseman, *Peoples of OT Times*, pp. 100-133.
- See Schoville, K. N., "Canaanites and Amorites," in Hoerth, *Peoples of OT World*, pp. 157-182.
- See also Canaan /Canaanites, p. 603.

Listed as descendents of Canaan in Gen 10:16. They are often noted with the Hittites and Perizzites as enemies of Israel (Ex. 33:2). They appear to have been nomads who migrated from the Syrian desert into Mesopotamia and Palestine. They took the city of Mari, upper Euphrates, about 200 BC., Babylon ca. 1830, and Assur ca 1750. King **Hammurabi** of Babylon (1792-1750) was an Amorite who took the city of Mari (see Akkadian Mari tablets) in the

18<sup>th</sup> c. from the Amorite king Zimri-lim. See *Hammurabi's code*. The **Mari Tablets** contain biblical names such as Jacob, Abraham, Levi, Ishmael, Benjamin, Nahor, and Haran.

Amorites in Canaan adopted Canaanite language and culture, and thus became so predominant that the term “Amorite” could refer to the entire population of Canaan (Gen 48:22; Josh 24:15; cf. Ezek 16:3, 45). **Abraham** was dwelling with Amorite brothers, Mamre, Eschol, and Aner (Gen 14:13, 24) when a coalition of kings attacked the territory of the Amalekites and Amorites, and his nephew Lot was captured. He attacked and recovered everything and everyone.

During the conquest of Canaan by Israel, the Amorite kings **Sihon** of Heshbon and **Og** of Bashan ruled over Transjordan (Josh 12:1-6; Judg 1:36). They had been commanded by God to conquer the Amorites

Deut 1:7 Break camp and advance into the hill country of the Amorites; go to all the neighboring peoples in the Arabah, in the mountains, in the western foothills, in the Negev and along the coast, to the land of the Canaanites and to Lebanon, as far as the great river, the Euphrates.

The Amorite land conquered by Israel was given to Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh (Num 32:33). Even Rahab had heard of the great victory, the initial fulfillment of the Land Promise (Josh 2:8-11; see Amos 2:9; Pss 135:11; 136:19). Amorites also occupied or controlled, until **Joshua** overcame them, the cities of Ai, Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon.

Josh10:5 Then the five kings of the Amorites—the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon—joined forces. They moved up with all their troops and took up positions against Gibeon and attacked it.

Jabin, king of Hazor, was given aid against Israel in a coalition including Amorites (Josh 11:1-14). Amorites eventually became slaves under Solomon and were absorbed (1 Ki 9:20).

Amos 2:10 I brought you up out of Egypt,  
and I led you forty years in the desert  
to give you the land of the Amorites.

#### 4. *Aram/Arameans/Syrian/Syrians*

- See *Times Atlas*, pp. 70-71.
- See Judges-Esther chart of three Ben-Hadad's.
- See Pienaar, D. N. “Aram.” *NIDOTE*. Volume 4, pp. 410-412.
- Lipiski, E. *The Arameans: their Ancient History, Culture, Religion*. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters Publishers, 2000.

Aram was a son of Shem (Gen 10:22-23; 1 Chron 1:17). Aram/Aramean is the term for Syria/Syrians in Greek and English. Aram is associated with the north and northeastern regions of the Fertile Crescent.

- See also Gen 22:20, 21 – Aram is descendent of Nahor; Amos 9:7 – from Kir, linked with Elah. [[Pienaar]] says this may refer in Gen 22 to tribes, not individuals, or to different persons.

Arameans spoke a dialect that was related to Hebrew which became the “official” international language of the Middle East. Four periods of Aramaic: See Semitic alphabet, p. . See ANE languages, p. 633.

1. tenth - eighth centuries - Old Aramaic in north Syrian inscriptions
2. 1100-605 BC - Official Aramaic in Assyria (used in OT), Neo-Babylonian (605-539), Persian (539-331)
3. after 721 - Levantine Aramaic in Syrian and Palestine. *after the exile* - Aramaic became Palestinian vernacular at expense of Hebrew which became to be used increasingly for religious purposes
4. New Testament era - Palestinian Jewish Aramaic proper consisting of several dialects

Prominent cities include Damascus which was the most important in relation to biblical history (2 Sam 8:5-12; 1 Ki 23-25). Ammon was a city-state near the Jabbok River.

During **Saul's** reign, he fought with “enemies on every side” which included Ammon (Arameans), as well as Moab, Edom, and the Philistines (1 Sa. 14:47). During David's reign he married Maacah the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur (Aramean kingdom NE of Sea of Galilee, 2 Sam 15:8). They bore Absalom who slew David's firstborn, Amnon, who then fled to his grandfather Talmai for three years (2 Sam 13:23-33; 37-39). Absalom eventually conspired against **David** and was killed by Joab when he got hung up in a tree (2 Sam 18:14). Later in David's reign, he successfully fought against king Hadadezer and the Arameans of Zobah and Damascus. Hadadezer's rule extended to the Euphrates (2 Sam 8:3-12; 10:6-19). Hadadezar dominated Damascus and probably Galilee and northern Transjordan, as well. Hadadezar allied with the Ammonites, who had become enemies to David under king Hanun (2 Sam 10:1-5), when the Ammonites hired 20,000 Aramean soldiers to fight David. In two battles, at Rabbah-Ammon and Helam (Alema) in the Transjordan, David defeated the Ammonites and the Arameans (2 Sam 10:6-11:1). This gave David control of Syria. Solomon, however, had to contend with Rezon, a leader under Hadadezar, whom God raised up to punish Solomon. Rezon managed to regain control of Damascus and became

Solomon's Aramean adversary throughout his kingship (1 Ki 11:23-25), after which Solomon recaptured Hamath-Zobah and controlled the territory north of Damascus to the Euphrates River (1 Ki 4:21, 24). Solomon built store-cities in Hamath-Zobah (2 Ch. 8:3-4).

Subsequently, Hezion (c. 925-915?) founded a lengthy dynasty in Damascus, followed by his son Tabrimmon (c. 915-900?), and grandson **Ben-hadad I** (c. 900-860?, see p. [Judges-Esther]) (1 Ki 15:18). This kingdom in Syria was an ongoing threat to the Omride dynasty (1 Ki 20:34), and during Ahab's reign Aram fought with Israel (1 Ki 22: 22; 2 Ki 6:8, 24; 8:28; 13:22-25; 14:25-28). During Elisha's ministry, Syria posed a real threat, while Jehoram (Joram) reigned in Israel and Jehoshaphat reigned in Judah. The usurper Hazael murdered Ben-Hadad in c. 843, after which Jeroboam II gained control over Aram (2 Ki 14:25-28). Rezin, the last king of Aram, allied with Pekah, king of Israel, against Ahaz, king of Judah, until Tiglath-Pileser III responded to Ahaz's call for help (2 Ki 16:5-9; *ANET*, p. 283), ending the Aramean kingdom (732 BC). TP III deported the Arameans to Kir as Amos prophesied (1:4-5):

<sup>4</sup> I will send fire upon the house of Hazael  
that will consume the fortresses of Ben-Hadad.  
<sup>5</sup> I will break down the gate of Damascus;  
I will destroy the king who is in  
the Valley of Aven  
and the one who holds the scepter in Beth Eden.  
The people of Aram will go into exile to Kir,"  
says the LORD.

The storm-god Hadad (see p. 605) is clearly witnessed to in Aram in the dynastic name of Ben-Hadad.

## 5. Canaan /Canaanites

- See Millard, A. R. "The Canaanites," in Wiseman, *Peoples of OT Times*, pp. 29-52.
- See Canaan, pp. 645, 646.

IA – merchant or tradesman (is 23:8; Zech 14:21; Prov 31:24). Canaanites were designated Amurru (OT Amorites) by Sumerians and Akkadians (Schoville, *Biblical Archaeology*, p. 36). Canaanites came into Palestine ca. 3200 B.C.

Despite the considerable amount of material now available there has been a plethora of theories about the origin and nature of the Canaanites. Even the name of the Canaanites is in dispute. It was once thought to have come from the Semitic root meaning "to be low." Nuzi discoveries later suggested the term "red purple" in reference to purple murex dye (Canaan's most common product). (Crimson dye industry: dark purple called *kinah* by Hurrians and Sidonians.) Yet linguistic grounds for such an assertion are by no means solid, and "the origin of the name remains a mystery."<sup>725</sup>

Canaanite history is complicated, and at times difficult to sort out from the various people groups and names, for the name "Canaanite" could refer to the inhabitants of the land not just to race (see also Amorites). Ancient Canaan (3<sup>rd</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> millenniums) was ruled largely by Egypt, and thus Canaanites were greatly influenced by Egyptian ways. It is thought that the Canaanites also influenced Egypt through its Baalism. Egypt traded with the Canaanite city Byblos, their main seaport. The **Phoenicians**, centered in Tyre and Sidon, inherited the Canaanite culture in the Iron Age. And, Canaanite culture and power gradually decreased into the Israelite monarchy when it was largely restricted to Phoenician territory. "Canaanite" is therefore originally a designation for a descendent of Canaan, but later became a general reference to an inhabitant of the land of Canaan and sometimes a reference to merchants or traders.<sup>726</sup> This is not to say that the term came to have only collective usage, but in fact there were also individual references (eg. Num 21:1, the King of Arad) and distinctions of the Canaanites from other people groups of the region (eg. Genesis 15:21, "And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites"). It can be affirmed that there was genealogical relation between these groups and that they are the diversified descendants of Canaan.<sup>727</sup>

The structure of Canaanite society is by no means easy to simplify, and as expected there is not universal scholarly consensus. There is nonetheless a general agreement with Albright that there were several classes in Canaan: the Khupshu (half free dependents), hereditary nobility (non-Semitic), slaves, and the 'Apiru (semi-nomads).<sup>728</sup> The social structure of their society was comprised of "city-states in which the king had wide powers to

<sup>725</sup> "Canaan, Canaanites," *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 1, Walter A. Elwell ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988, p. 406.

<sup>726</sup> *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, "Canaanites," ed. Harris, Archer, Waltke, Chicago: Moody, 1980, vol 1.

<sup>727</sup> *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 1, M.C. Tenney ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977. Canaan: the "Syro-Palestinian coastland"; Canaan was a son of Ham (Gen 9:18; 10:6) (the sons of Canaan in Gen 10:15-19 include the Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, Hivites); the lands to the west of the Jordan" p. 702.

<sup>728</sup> William F. Albright, *The Biblical Period From Abraham to Ezra: An Historical Survey*. New York: Harper and Row, 1963, pp. 25-26.

appoint and conscript his subjects for military service.”<sup>729</sup> This state of affairs developed in the Bronze Age with steady progress (not without some major disturbances) to a very centralized political structure and economy based on agriculture in the Middle Bronze Age.<sup>730</sup> The Late Bronze Age saw the decline of Canaanite civilization and set the stage for the exodus of Israel from and Egypt, their entry into the land of Canaan, and their eventual conquest.

Nevertheless, the Pentateuchal record leaves little doubt about the origin of the name and the people themselves:

- Ge 9:18 The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.)  
 Ge 9:22 Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father’s nakedness and told his two brothers outside.  
 Ge 9:25 he said, “Cursed be Canaan! The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers.”  
 Ge 9:26 He also said, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem! May Canaan be the slave of Shem.  
 Ge 9:27 May God extend the territory of Japheth; may Japheth live in the tents of Shem, and may Canaan be his slave.”  
 Ge 10:6 The sons of Ham: Cush, Mizraim, Put and Canaan.  
 Ge 10:15 Canaan was the father of Sidon his firstborn, and of the Hittites,  
 Ge 10:19 and the borders of Canaan reached from Sidon toward Gerar as far as Gaza, and then toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha.  
 Ge 11:31 Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. But when they came to Haran, they settled there.  
 Ge 12:5 He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.  
 Ge 13:12 Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom.  
 Ge 16:3 So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian maidservant Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife.  
 Ge 17:8 The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.”  
 Ge 23:2 She died at Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her.  
 Ge 28:1 So Isaac called for Jacob and blessed him and commanded him: “Do not marry a Canaanite woman.  
 Ge 28:6 Now Esau learned that Isaac had blessed Jacob and had sent him to Paddan Aram to take a wife from there, and that when he blessed him he commanded him, “Do not marry a Canaanite woman,”  
 Ge 28:8 Esau then realized how displeasing the Canaanite women were to his father Isaac;  
 Ge 38:2 There Judah met the daughter of a Canaanite man named Shua. He married her and lay with her;  
 Ge 46:10 The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman.  
 Ge 48:3 Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me  
 Ex 6:4 I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, where they lived as aliens.  
 Ex 6:15 The sons of Simeon were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman. These were the clans of Simeon  
 Ex 15:15 The chiefs of Edom will be terrified, the leaders of Moab will be seized with trembling, the people of Canaan will melt away;  
 Ex 16:35 The Israelites ate manna forty years, until they came to a land that was settled; they ate manna until they reached the border of Canaan.  
 Le 14:34 “When you enter the land of Canaan, which I am giving you as your possession, and I put a spreading mildew in a house in that land,  
 Le 18:3 You must not do as they do in Egypt, where you used to live, and you must not do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. Do not follow their practices.  
 Le 25:38 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan and to be your God..  
 Nu 13:2 “Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders.”  
 Nu 13:17 When Moses sent them to explore Canaan, he said, “Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country.  
 Nu 21:1 When the Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that Israel was coming along the road to Atharim, he attacked the Israelites and captured some of them.  
 Nu 33:40 The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev of Canaan, heard that the Israelites were coming.  
 Nu 33:51 “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘When you cross the Jordan into Canaan,  
 Nu 34:2 “Command the Israelites and say to them: ‘When you enter Canaan, the land that will be allotted to you as an inheritance will have these boundaries:  
 Deut 32:48 On that same day the LORD told Moses, <sup>49</sup>“Go up into the Abarim Range to Mount Nebo in Moab, across from Jericho, and view Canaan, the land I am giving the Israelites as their own possession.

The Canaanites featured most prominently in relation to the Israelites of all the ancient peoples, and thus are referred to more than any other.

When Israel entered the land, they were in need of practical knowledge about survival in raising crops, etc., after their nomadic years of wandering and eating *manna*. Agriculture was controlled by the Canaanites, and it was intrinsically related to their pagan ritual and belief. Thus, Israelite reliance on Canaanite know-how would lead to Canaanite religion. Sacral prostitution was the means of securing crop and animal fertility. Israelites also would

<sup>729</sup> Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, vol 1. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977.

<sup>730</sup> Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, p. 706. “All land was owned by the state, the temples and private landowners, although tenant farmers, the hupsi, possessed small areas.” “Since society was basically feudal much of the land was held as a grant from the king. Members of the royal family, state officials, the *maryannu* and others, owed the king specified services and taxation in return for their lands. There was a severe difference in living standards between the upper class patricians and the wide range of lower class people such as half-free serfs, slaves, etc.”

have relied to some extent on Canaanite technology in architecture, metal tools, weapons, and other implements. After the initial *ban* at Jericho forbidding the retention of anything, the Israelites would have kept plunder of diverse kinds, including weaponry. Canaanites were even later employed in building Solomon's temple.

In the Judges period, although Canaanites had been reduced from their former dominance to the coastal regions, Canaanite "culture" greatly influenced the region, and with superior quality craftsmanship.

❖ *Failed conquest of Canaanites:*

Judg 1:21 The Benjamites, however, failed to dislodge the Jebusites, who were living in Jerusalem; to this day the Jebusites live there with the Benjamites.

❖ *Disobeyed YHWH's commands about Canaanites:*

Judg 2:2 and you shall not make a covenant with the people of this land, but you shall break down their altars. ' Yet you have disobeyed me. Why have you done this?

❖ *Worshipped Canaanite idols:*

Judg 2:11 Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baals.

❖ *Intermarried with Canaanites:*

Judg 3:6 They took their daughters in marriage and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods.

**David** captured Jebus (Jerusalem) from the Canaanites, establishing it as the center of Israel's life from then until the present. The Phoenicians (Tyre and Sidon) in the Iron Age **became** Canaan's cultural heirs, and even preferred to be called Canaanites. From this time forward the power of the Canaanites was greatly limited to Phoenecian territory (see Phoenicians in Kings notes).

In time, idolatrous compromise and the "Canaanization" of Israel was the force that eventually propelled Israel into exile.

Canaanite language apparently was included in the range of W. Semitic dialects, including Ugaritic, Eblaite, and Hebrew (see ANE languages, p.). That is, Israel also shared a close linguistic heritage with the Canaanites.

The Canaanite pantheon (see pantheons, p. 642) was headed by El. Baal (Hadad the storm-god, p. 605) and Dagon (p.) had temples in Ugarit, etc. Asherah, Astarte (Ashtaroth) and Anath were goddesses of sex and war.

Consider the faith of a Canaanite woman in NT times:

Matt 15:21 Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. 22 A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession." 23 Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us." 24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." 25 The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said. 26 He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs." 27 "Yes, Lord," she said, "but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." 28 Then Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

## 6. *Edom/Edomites*

➤ See Obadiah, p. 232.

➤ See Kenneth G. Hoglund, "Edomites," *Peoples of the OT World*, ed. Hoerth, Mattingly, Yamauchi, pp. 335-347.

- Edomites were descendents of **Esau**, dwelt in the hill country of Seir (Gen 36:8).
- References: Gen 25:19-26; 29-34; 27: 28, 39; 36:1-43; Nu 20:14-22 (refused passage); Deut 2:2-8; 23:7 (treat as brothers); 2 Sam 8:13-14; 1 K 11:14-25; 2 Chron 20; 1 K 8:20-22; 2 Chron 21:8-10; Ezek 35:5.
- Kings of Israel/Judah who conflicted with Edom: Saul (1 Sam 14:47), David (2 Sam 8:13-14), Solomon (1 Ki 11:14-22), Jehoram (2 Ki 8:20-22); 2 Chron 21:8), Ahaz (2 Chron 28:16).
- In **David's** reign, Edom was nothing but an Israelite colony. Until the fifth century B.C. they lived south of the Dead Sea in a 100 x 50 mi area.
- Chief cities were Teman; Bozrah; Sela (Petra) - virtually impregnable, capitol, built in the pink rock and surrounded by purple cliffs on the main route known as the King's Highway. **Petra** was completely lost for apx. 1000 years until 1812.
- Edomite antagonism continued up through Herod the Great's reign (who traced his ancestry to them). They became known as Idumeans.
- Edomites were dislodged by the **Nabateans** before 312 B.C. and settled in the Negev (southern Judah).
- Edomites were driven out by Judas Maccabeus in 164 B.C. and Judaism was forced on them by John Hyrcanus in 134-104 B.C.

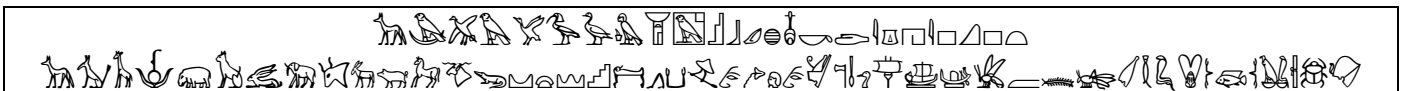
- Edomites became known as **Idumeans** in NT times (Herod the Great's ancestry). And vanished from history after the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. See Jer 49:7-22; Ezek 25:12-14; 35:1-15.

## 7. Egypt/Egyptians

- See Williams, R. J., "The Egyptians," in Wiseman, *Peoples of OT Times*, pp. 79-99.
- See Hoffmeier, J. K. "Egyptians," in Hoerth, *Peoples of OT World*, pp. 251-290.
- See Roul, D. *Pharaohs and Kings, passim*.
- See Currid, John D. "Contacts between Israel and Egypt in the Historical Books." *Ancient Egypt and Old Testament*, pp. 159-202.
- See Walton, J. for conventional dates, *OT Charts*, p. 62.
- See Reference NB, K. A. Kitchen's king list for Egypt, *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, pp. 328-331.
- See Bryant Wood's Chronology of the New Kingdom in Ref. NB.
- See/read Rohl, "Discovering the Israelites: The Sojourn in Egypt and the Conquest of the Promised Land," *Pharaohs and Kings*, pp. 232-368.
- See Egyptian dates below p. and Exodus lecture, p. [Judges-Esther]

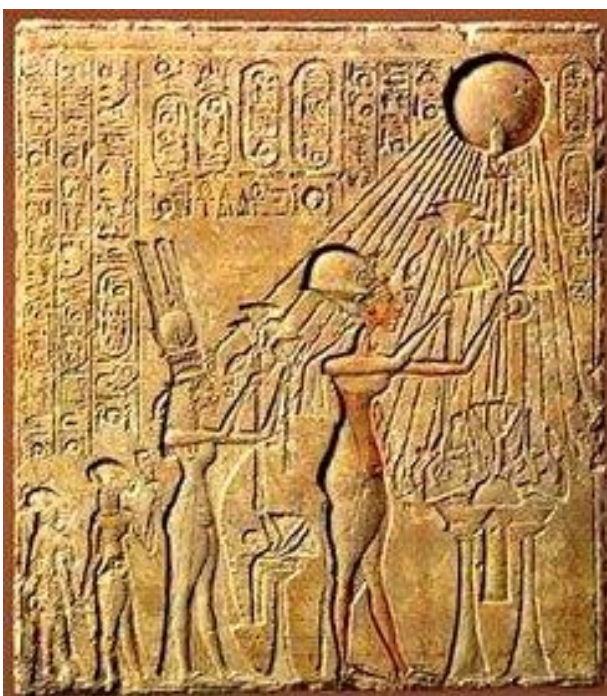
### a) Background to Egypt:

- M. Bietak, "Egypt and Canaan During the Middle Bronze Age," *BASOR* 281 (1991) 27-72.  
 Bietak, M. *Avaris and PirRamesse*. (London, 1979).  
 Currid, John D. *Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1997.  
 Dever, William G. "Relations between Syria-Palestine and Egypt in the 'Hyksos' Period" *Palestine in the Bronze and Iron Ages*. ed. by Jonathan Tubb. London, 1985., pp. 69-87.  
 Frerichs, E.S. *The Egyptian Evidence*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1997.  
 Gardiner, Alan. *Egypt of the Pharaohs* (Oxford, 1961).  
 Holladay, John S. *Cities of the Delta*, Part III. Tell el-Maskhuta. Malibu, 1982.  
 Posener, G. "Syria and Palestine c. 2160-1780 B.C.," *CAH* 2.  
 Ions, V. *Egyptian Mythology*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1968.  
 Montet, P. *Eternal Egypt*. New York: New American Library, 1964.  
 Quirke, Stephen and Jeffrey Spencer, eds. *The British Museum Book of Ancient Egypt*. London: British Museum Press, 1992.  
 Redford, D.B. *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton 1996), pp. 64-122.  
 Wilson, John A. *The Culture of Ancient Egypt*. (Chicago, 1951), pp. 125-165.  
 Yahuda, A.S. *The Language of the Pentateuch in its relation to Egyptian*. volume 1. London: Humphrey Milford; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933.



Manetho (high priest in Heliopolis under Ptolemy II Philadelphus, 285-246) records thirty successive dynasties.

Aten sun-disk worshipped by Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) and Hymn to Aten<sup>731</sup>



Hymn to Aten (RA)  
 How manifold it is, what thou hast made!  
 They are hidden from the face (of man).  
 O sole god, like whom there is no other!  
 Thou didst create the world according to thy desire,  
 Whilst thou wert alone: All men, cattle, and wild beasts,  
 Whatever is on earth, going upon (its) feet,  
 And what is on high, flying with its wings.  
 The countries of Syria and Nubia, the land of Egypt,  
 Thou settest every man in his place,  
 Thou suppliest their necessities:  
 Everyone has his food, and his time of life is reckoned.  
 Their tongues are separate in speech,  
 And their natures as well;  
 Their skins are distinguished,  
 As thou distinguishest the foreign peoples.  
 Thou makest a Nile in the underworld,  
 Thou bringest forth as thou desirest  
 To maintain the people (of Egypt)  
 According as thou madest them for thyself,  
 The lord of all of them, wearying (himself) with them,  
 The lord of every land, rising for them,  
 The Aton of the day, great of majesty.

## PHARAOHS IN THE BIBLE

Reference	Biblical Name	Secular Name	Significance
Gen. 12:14-20	Pharaoh	Likely a ruler of 12th Dynasty	He temporarily added Sarah to his harem.
Gen. 37-50	Pharaoh	Likely a Hyksos king of 15th Dynasty	Joseph was made vizier of Egypt by this pharaoh.
Ex. 1,2	King of Egypt; Pharaoh	Thutmose III (?) (1504-1450 B.C.)	He oppressed the Israelites.
Ex. 5-12	Pharaoh	Amenhotep II (?) (1450-1425 B.C.)	Moses confronted this Pharaoh of the Exodus.
1 Ki. 3:1; 7:8; 9:16,24; 11:1	Pharaoh	(Probably) Siamun (978-959 B.C.)	He attacked the Canaanite city of Gezer and gave it as a dowry when his daughter married Solomon.
1 Ki. 11:18-22	Pharaoh, king of Egypt	Amenemope (or Siamun) (993-984 B.C.)	He gave asylum to young prince Hadad during David's destruction of Edom.
1 Ki. 11:40 (see 14:25,26) 2 Chr. 12:1-12	Shishak	Sheshonq I (945-924 B.C.)	He invaded Judah and sacked the Temple during Rehoboam's reign.
2 Ki. 17:4	So, king of Egypt	Osokorn IV (?) (727-716 B.C.)	Hoshea, last king of Israel, allied with him against Assyria.
2 Ki. 19:9 Isa. 37:9	Tirhakah	Taharqa (690-664 B.C.)	This Cushite king of Egypt fought Sennacherib unsuccessfully.
2 Ki. 23:29 2 Chr. 35:20-24	Pharaoh Neco	Neco II (610-595 B.C.)	He killed Josiah in 609 B.C. and briefly gained control of Judah.
Jer. 44:30 (see 37:5-11); Ezek. 17:11-21; 29:1-16	Pharaoh Hophra	Waibre (589-570 B.C.)	Jeremiah predicted his defeat by Nebuchadnezzar; Ezekiel prophesied against him also.

Pharaohs of the Bible<sup>732</sup>

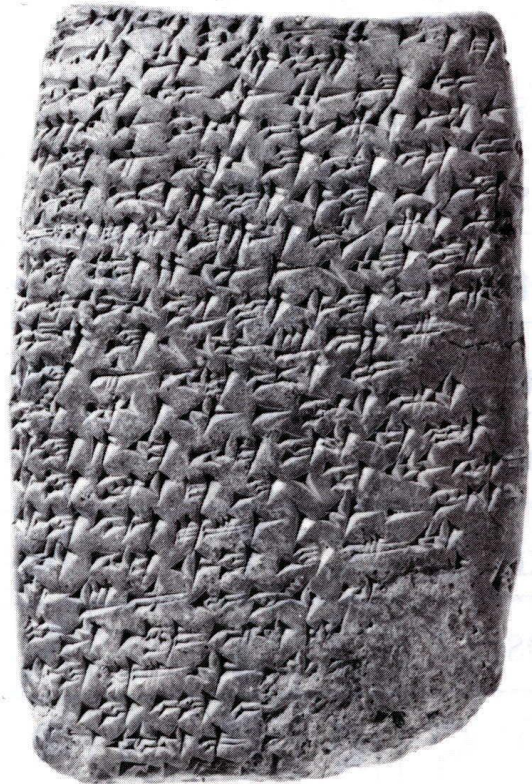
<sup>732</sup> Revell Bible Dictionary, p. 781.

## Amarna Letters:

The text, typical of these letters, runs:

*To the king, my lord, my god, my sun, the sun in the sky. Thus [says] Yapahu, governor of Gezer, your servant, the dust at your feet, the groom of your horses. I surely fall at the feet of the king, my lord, my god, my sun, the sun in the sky, seven times and seven times, on the stomach and on the back. I have surely heard the words of the messenger of the king my lord. May the king, my lord, the sun in the sky, care for his land. Since the Hapiru (SAGAZ) are stronger than us, may the king, my lord, help me to escape from the Hapiru, so that the Hapiru do not destroy us.*

Below Letter from Yapahu ruler of Gezer from el-Amarna, Egypt; 14th century BC. Baked clay; ht 10.8cm. WA E 29832



*Amarna Letters* (ca. 1375-1350 B.C.) diplomatic correspondence in Akkadian cuneiform between city-kings of Canaan, the major powers of Hittites, Assyrians, Mitanni, Kasites, and Cypriotes with Egypt). Some 400 letters were found at Tell el-Amarna in Egypt from the royal archives of Pharaoh Amenhotep III and his son Akhenaten, written sometime close to the earlier date of Israel's conquest. The *Hapiru* are mentioned, but there is no consensus about precisely who they were. Hoerth suggests that the term had come to mean *enemy* or any combative people group, making it possible that the reference is to Israel's conquest of the land.<sup>733</sup> These letters give some interesting background to the Israelite occupation of the land: e.g., Canaan was divided into small city-states with turbulent relations under Egypt's control, names of ruling princes and cities (e.g., Jerusalem, Gezer, Shechem, Megiddo).<sup>734</sup>

<sup>733</sup> Hoerth, *Archeology*, p. 217. Also Schoville, *Biblical Archeology*, pp. 259-260.

<sup>734</sup> From Mitchell, *The Bible in the British Museum*, p. 36.



## The Conventional Chronologies of Egypt and Israel

Late Predynastic Period
Early Dynastic Period
Old Kingdom
First Intermediate Period
Middle Kingdom
Second Intermediate Period
New Kingdom
Third Intermediate Period
Late Period
Ptolemaic Period
Roman Period

2920 BC

2649 BC

2150 BC

1986 BC

1759 BC

1525 BC

1069 BC

664 BC

304 BC

30 BC



1800 BC

1640 BC

1210 BC

1012 BC

930 BC

586 BC

486 BC

Patriarchal Period
Sojourn and Bondage
Wanderings
Conquest
Judges
United Monarchy
Divided Monarchy
Babylonian Exile

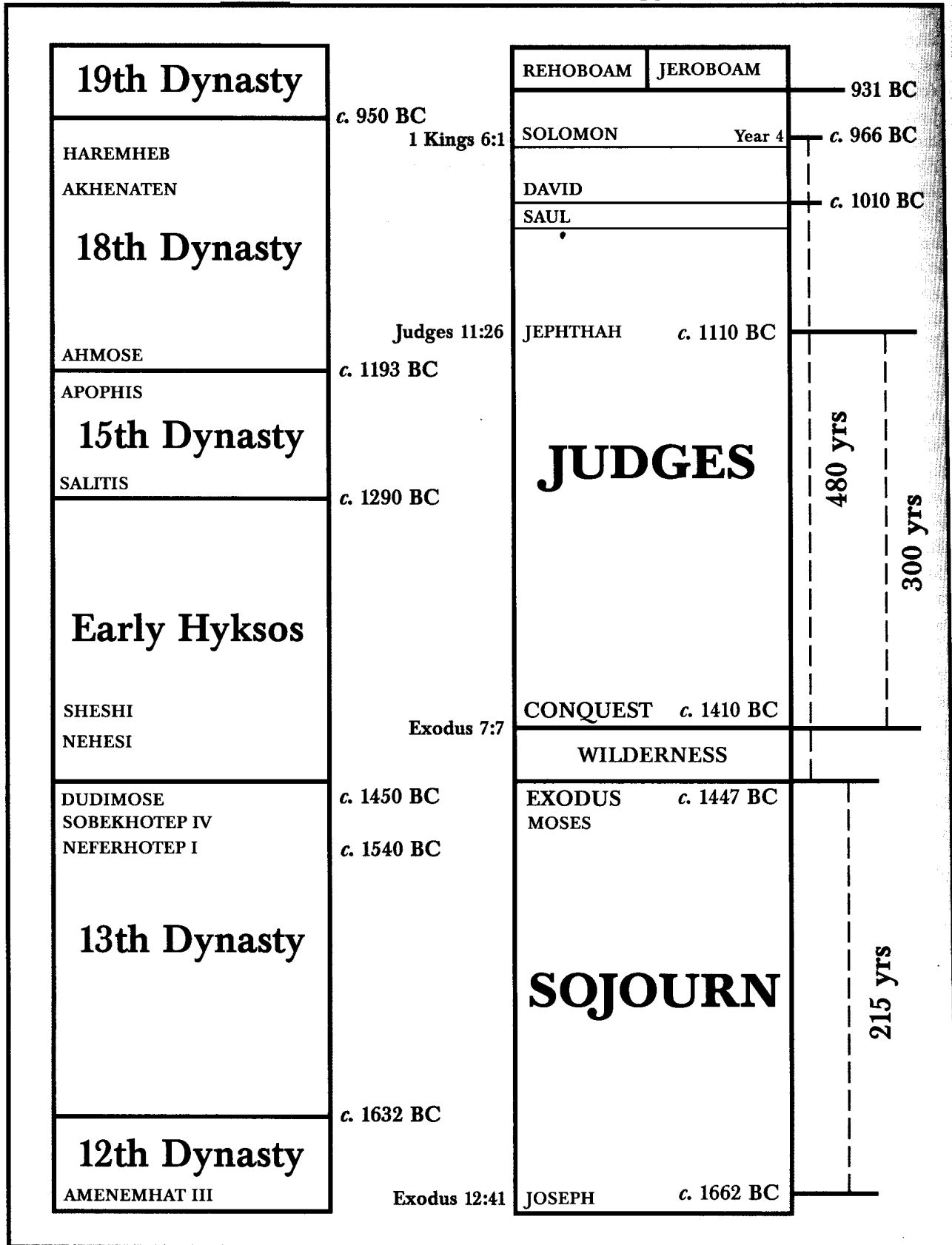


Conventional chronologies of Egypt and Israel.<sup>735</sup>

<sup>735</sup> Rohl, *Pharoahs and Kings*, p. 35.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Rohl, D. *Pharaohs and Kings*, Random House, 1995, p. 330.  
**ROHL'S Revised Chronology**



736

Rohl's extensive treatment of the conventional and revised chronologies has not been widely accepted by the conventional school, but it fits the biblical text fairly well from my cursory look at it: The sphinx is from the 25<sup>th</sup>

<sup>736</sup> Rohl, *Pharaohs and Kings*, p. 330.

dynasty pharaoh named Taharka/Tirhakah (690-664) who according to Rohl is identified in the OT (2 Ki 19:9). The hieroglyphics at the bottom contain the only occurrence of the name “Israel” in an Egyptian document the “Israel Stele.”

**Egyptian Historical data** (from G. H. Livingston, *The Pentateuch*):

*Manetho* (high priest in Heliopolis under Ptolemy II Philadelphus, 285-246) records thirty successive dynasties:

*The first settlements*: ca. 5000 B.C. (some say 8,000), along the Nile, agricultural society.

*Organization*: initially 42 districts (*nomes*, like Sumerian city state), later as two nations: the Upper (S) and Lower (delta) Egypt.

*First ruler*: Menes of Thinis in Upper Egypt, built a capital at Menfe (Memphis) (S. end of Delta)

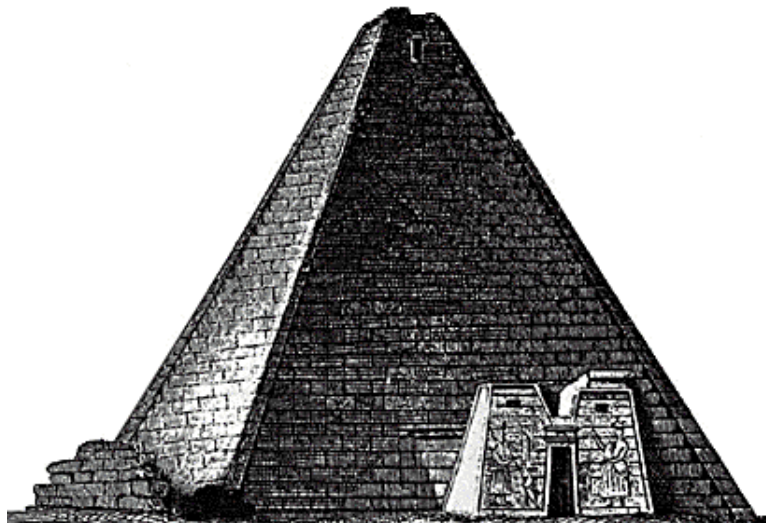
*Old Kingdom*: 2705 – 2213. Pyramids. Followed by 100 years of chaos.

*Middle Kingdom*: 1991 – 1668. Capital in Thebes. Abraham’s visit to Egypt (Gen 12:10-20)? The golden age of classical literature. Middle Kingdom collapses.

*Hyksos invasion*: 1698-1560 B.C. Semitic peoples, possibly with Aryan or Hurrian leaders. Manetho calls them “shepherd kings,” although Egyptian means “rulers of foreign lands.”

*New Kingdom*: 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> dynasties (1570-1070), high point in international power (see map handout from www). The first Pharaoh, “who did not know Joseph” a Hyksos named Khyan (ca. 1668 B.C.). This period sees the famous Queen Hatshepsut, the imperialist Thutmose III (Exodus), and the heretic Amenhotep IV known as Akhnaton.

*Late Period*: 1100-656. Third Intermediate Period. Weakened nation, allowed Israel’s monarchy to temporarily flourish. Solomon (970-920) married a Pharaoh’s daughter (1 Ki 3:1; 7:8; 9:16; 9:24; 11:1-2; 2 Chron 8:11). Possibly Pharaoh Siamun near the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> dynasty, ca. 978-959).<sup>737</sup> Shishak (Shoshenq I) reunited Egypt and invade Palestine. Rehoboam paid him tribute (1 Ki 14:25). He also attacked the northern kingdom. Assyria invaded Egypt during Esarhaddon’s and Ashurbanipal’s reigns. Babylon later attacked Egypt’s Neco II when he was asserting himself in Syria-Palestine. Neco was opposed by King Josiah of Judah, and Josiah died at Megiddo in 609 (2 Ki 23:29-30). Nebuchadnezzar’s conquest of Palestine eventually ended Egyptian control in 605.



<sup>737</sup> See Currid, *Ancient Egypt*, pp. 162ff.

# Figure 1

## Chronology of Egypt and Palestine with a Select List of Kings

<b>Egypt</b>		<b>Palestine</b>	
		<i>Early Bronze Age</i>	3150–2200
<i>Early Dynastic Period</i>	2920–2575	<i>Early Bronze I</i>	3150–2850
<i>Dynasty 1</i>	2920–2770	<i>Early Bronze II</i>	2850–2650
<i>Dynasty 2</i>	2770–2649		
<i>Dynasty 3</i>	2649–2575		
<i>Old Kingdom</i>	2575–2134	<i>Early Bronze III</i>	2650–2350
<i>Dynasty 4</i>	2575–2465		
Snofru			
Cheops			
<i>Dynasty 5</i>	2465–2323		
Userkaf			
Sahoure			
Wenis (Unas)			
<i>Dynasty 6</i>	2323–2150	<i>Early Bronze IV</i>	2350–2200
Teti			
Pepy I			
Merenre			
Pepy II			
<i>Dynasty 7/8</i>	2150–2134	<i>Middle Bronze Age</i>	2200–1550
Ibi			
<i>First Intermediate Period</i>	2134–2040	<i>Middle Bronze I</i>	2200–2000
<i>Dynasty 9/10</i>	2134–2040		
Merikare			
<i>Dynasty 11</i>	2134–2040		
(Thebes)			

John Currid, *Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament*, Baker Books, 1997, p.17-19.

<sup>738</sup> Currid, *Ancient Egypt*, p. 17-19.



## 8. *Horites/Hivites*

- See Hoffner, H. A., "Hittites," in Hoerth, *Peoples of OT World*, pp. 127-155.
- -----, "The Hittites and Hurrians," Wiseman, *Peoples of OT Times*, pp. 197-228.

**Hurrians** (non-Semites)? There has been much debate about the relationship of Hurrians and Horites.

R.K. Harrison's explanation of the relationship of the Hurrians, Hivites, Horites, and Jebusites in *The NIV Dictionary of Biblical Archeology*, p. 245: Hurrians are "alluded to in the OT as Horites, Hivites, and Jebusites."

Many equate the **Hivites** (Heb. Ḥiwwî; Gk. Heuaios) with the \*Horites (Ḥorri[m]), assuming a scribal confusion between the Heb. w and r. In Gen 36:20-30 Zibeon is called a Horite as opposed to a Hivite in v. 2. Similarly, the LXX of Gen 34:2 and Josh 9:7 renders 'Horite' for 'Hivite', and some read 'Hittite' (ḥittî) for 'Hivite' in Josh 11:3; Judg 3:3. The derivation from ḥawwâ, 'tent-village', is uncertain, as is the identification of the Hivites, otherwise unattested. BIBLIOGRAPHY. H. A. Hoffner, *TynB* 20, 1969, pp. 27-37. D. J. Wiseman, *New Bible Dictionary*

*Baker Encyclopedia* concludes its discussion: "It seems best to think of both Hivites and Horites as ethnic groups connected to the Hurrians by language and culture" (p. 999).

**For your "enjoyment," I have included Baker's entire discussion. (And you thought you were already confused):**

Horite, Honim. Cave dwellers of Mt Seir, according to tradition. These pre-Edomites were called the children of Seir (Gen 36:20). In the Bible they were defeated by Chedorlaomer and his allies (14:6). They were governed by chieftains (36:29,30), and eventually destroyed by the descendants of Esau (2:12,22).

The popular and biblical etymology of "Horite" has been disputed since the discovery of the Hurrians (Khurians) as ethnic predecessors of many Near Eastern tribes. The Hurrians were a non-Semitic people from the mountains. About the 2nd millennium BC they migrated into north and northeast Mesopotamia, and later moved into the regions of Syria and Palestine. Since the Hurrian language was prevalent in the west Jordan area and since phonetically "Horite" is the OT Hebrew equivalent of the extrabiblical "Hurrian," several scholars and translators have substituted "Hurrian" for "Horite." Many have equated the Hivites, who were part of the Hurrian language and cultural group, with the Horites. These critics assumed an early textual corruption of the *r(esh)* in Horite to *w(aw)* in Hivite. A certain Zibeon is called a Horite in Genesis 36:20-30, whereas in verse 2 the man is called a Hivite. The Septuagint of Joshua 9:7 and Genesis 34:2 reads "Horite" instead of "Hivite" as in the Masoretic text. Some manuscripts of the Septuagint read "Hittite" for the Masoretic text's "Hivite" (Jos 11:3; Jgs 3:3) In Genesis 36:2, the Hebrew erroneously reads "Hivite" for "Horite." It appears that the OT references do not fit the Hurrians, nor do the personal names of the Horites correspond to Hurrian examples (Gn 36:20-30). They seem instead to be Semitic. The Horites were from Transjordan, and were the predecessors of the Edomites (14:6) Later references to Horites may be to western Horites, who were perhaps Hurrians (Is 17:9) and non-Semitic, but quite distinct from the predecessors of the Edomites, the eastern Horites. The Hebrew of Genesis 34:2 and Joshua 9:7 may be from a different family of manuscripts than those used by the Septuagint translators, preserving its own ethnic traditions. It seems best to think of both Hivites and Horites as ethnic groups connected with the Hurrians by language and culture. See HURRIANS; HIVITES.

In sum, **Horites** were descendants of Seir, one of the sons of Canaan (Gen 10:17; 36:20; 1 Chron 1:15). They inhabited Syria and Palestine, and were known as distinct from the Canaanites, Jebusites, Perizzites, Gergashites and Amorites (Exod 3:8; 23:28; Deut 7:1).

**Hivites** were said to occupy the mountains of Lebanon in Judg 3:3 and the Hermon range (Josh 11:3) as far as Hamath. They were living there still in David's time (2 Sam 24:7), and Solomon used Hivite laborers (1 Ki 9:20; 2 Chron 8:7).

Ge 14:6 and the Horites in the hill country of Seir, as far as El Paran near the desert.

Dt 2:12 Horites used to live in Seir, but the descendants of Esau drove them out. They destroyed the Horites from before them and settled in their place, just as Israel did in the land the LORD gave them as their possession.)

Dt 2:22 The LORD had done the same for the descendants of Esau, who lived in Seir, when he destroyed the Horites from before them. They drove them out and have lived in their place to this day.

Ge 10:17 Hivites, Arkites, Sinites,

Ex 3:8 So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.

Ex 3:17 And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—a land flowing with milk and honey.'

Ex 13:5 When the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites and Jebusites—the land he swore to your forefathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey—you are to observe this ceremony in this month:

Ex 23:23 My angel will go ahead of you and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites, and I will wipe them out.

Ex 23:28 I will send the hornet ahead of you to drive the Hivites, Canaanites and Hittites out of your way.

Ex 33:2 I will send an angel before you and drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.

Ex 34:11 Obey what I command you today. I will drive out before you the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.

Deut 7:1 When the LORD your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations—the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations larger and stronger than you—

Deut 20:17 Completely destroy them—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—as the LORD your God has commanded you.

## 9. *Hittites*

- See Hoffner, H. A., "Hittites," in Hoerth, *Peoples of OT World*, pp. 127-155.
- ----, "The Hittites and Hurrians," Wiseman, *Peoples of OT Times*, pp. 197-228.

Hittites were an ancient tribe that descended from Heth and who were living in Canaan when Israel possessed the land under Joshua. They were supposed to be driven out of the land by Israel. The term Hittite has a diverse history and various interpretations. The term *Hatti* is typically used to refer to those who lived in Central Anatolia in the third millennium B.C. There were Hittite realms in N. Syria that are referenced in Josh 1:4. Are these the same people or related in some way? The answer to this question is not certain.

Wood resolves this in an interesting articles discussing the Hebrew terminology:

We have seen that the singular gentilics<sup>739</sup> הַתִּי (hattî) and הַתִּיָּת (hattîyôt) were used in the OT exclusively for the descendants of the eponymous ancestor הֵת (hēt), who were indigenous residents of Canaan from pre-Abrahamic times. The plural gentilics הַתִּיִּם (hattîm) and הַתִּיָּוֹת (hattîyōt), on the other hand, were used in the OT exclusively for the Indo-Europeans who resided in Anatolia and northern Syria ca. 1670–717 BC.[52] That two different groups were in view also is seen by the use of two different terms in the same chronological-historical context in the books of Joshua, Judges and 1 Kings/2 Chronicles.[53] Early translators failed to distinguish between the two groups and rendered both the singular and plural gentilics by the same anglicized transliteration Hethite(s) or Hittite(s).

The problem is one of semantics and terminology. As the term Hittites for the Indo-Europeans of Anatolia and north Syria is firmly embedded in the scholarly and popular literature, that name cannot be changed.[56] Because the Bible writers distinguished between the two groups, this should be reflected in our English translations. I suggest an ecumenical solution to the problem. Since the demonyms הַתִּיִּם (hattîm) and הַתִּיָּוֹת (hattîyōt) refer to the Indo-Europeans of Anatolia and northern Syria, I propose retaining the Protestant term "Hittites" for those entities. For the ethnonyms הַתִּי (hattî) and הַתִּיָּת (hattîyôt), on the other hand, the Roman Catholic term Hethite(s) is the correct choice, since הַתִּי (hattî) is synonymous with בְּנֵי־הֵת (bēnê hēt) and הַתִּיָּת (hattîyôt) is synonymous with בְּנוֹת־הֵת (bēnōt hēt). If these changes were incorporated into future translations of our English Bibles, it would clearly distinguish the indigenous descendants of הֵת (hēt) from the people of *Hatti* and alleviate present misunderstandings.<sup>740</sup>

Hoffner resolves the problem stating:

Passages referring to the Hittites during the Israelite monarchy almost certainly refer to the Syrian kingdoms earlier controlled by the Hittite Empire during the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries and still referred to the name *Hatti* in the annals of the Neo-Assyrian kings. But Hittites mentioned in the narratives

<sup>739</sup> A personal name derived from a place name.

<sup>740</sup> Bryant Wood, "Hittites and Hethites: A Proposed Solution to an Etymological Conundrum," *Associates for Biblical Research*, <https://www.biblearchaeology.org/post/2011/11/08/Hittites-and-Hethites-A-Proposed-Solution-to-an-Etymological-Conundrum.aspx>, 2011 [http://www.biblearchaeology.org/author/Bryant\\_G.\\_Wood\\_PhD.aspx](http://www.biblearchaeology.org/author/Bryant_G._Wood_PhD.aspx).

of Genesis-Joshua are native Palestinians, members of a group mentioned alongside Canaanites, Jebusites, Amorites, etc. Their personal names are West Semitic and their customs (e.g., the purchase of the cave and field in Ephron in Gen 23) offer no convincing evidence for an Anatolian connection. The tradition preserved in Genesis 10 of their descent from Heth, who with Canaan descent is descended from Ham, places them firmly in Palestine.<sup>741</sup>

Hittite treaty forms have long been understood as the cultural background to early Israelite treaty forms reflected in the Mosaic era covenants, as well as other religious and cultural concepts and practice regarding law and cult.

#### Heth (NASB95)

Gen 10:15 Canaan became the father of Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth  
 Gen 23:3 Then Abraham rose from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of Heth, saying,  
 Gen 23:5 The sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him,  
 Gen 23:7 So Abraham rose and bowed to the people of the land, the sons of Heth.  
 Gen 23:10 Now Ephron was sitting among the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the sons of Heth; even of all who went in at the gate of his city, saying,  
 Gen 23:16 Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham weighed out for Ephron the silver which he had named in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, commercial standard.  
 Gen 23:18 to Abraham for a possession in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all who went in at the gate of his city.  
 Gen 23:20 So the field and the cave that is in it, were deeded over to Abraham for a burial site by the sons of Heth.  
 Gen 25:10 the field which Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth; there Abraham was buried with Sarah his wife.  
 Gen 27:46 Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am tired of living because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife from the daughters of Heth, like these, from the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"  
 Gen 49:32 the field and the cave that is in it, purchased from the sons of Heth."  
 1 Chron 1:13 Canaan became the father of Sidon, his firstborn, Heth,

#### Hittites

Genesis 10:15 Canaan was the father of Sidon his firstborn, and of the Hittites,  
 Genesis 15:20 Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites,  
 Genesis 23:3 Then Abraham rose from beside his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites. He said,  
 Genesis 23:5 The Hittites replied to Abraham,  
 Genesis 23:7 Then Abraham rose and bowed down before the people of the land, the Hittites.  
 Genesis 23:10 Ephron the Hittite was sitting among his people and he replied to Abraham in the hearing of all the Hittites who had come to the gate of his city.  
 Genesis 23:16 Abraham agreed to Ephron's terms and weighed out for him the price he had named in the hearing of the Hittites: four hundred shekels of silver, according to the weight current among the merchants.  
 Genesis 23:18 to Abraham as his property in the presence of all the Hittites who had come to the gate of the city.  
 Genesis 23:20 So the field and the cave in it were deeded to Abraham by the Hittites as a burial site.  
 Genesis 25:9 His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite,  
 Genesis 25:10 the field Abraham had bought from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah.  
 Genesis 26:34 When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and also Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite.  
 Genesis 27:46 Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I'm disgusted with living because of these Hittite women. If Jacob takes a wife from among the women of this land, from Hittite women like these, my life will not be worth living."  
 Genesis 36:2 Esau took his wives from the women of Canaan: Adah daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Oholibamah daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite—  
 Genesis 49:29 Then he gave them these instructions: "I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite,  
 Genesis 49:30 the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre in Canaan, which Abraham bought as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite, along with the field.  
 Genesis 49:32 The field and the cave in it were bought from the Hittites."  
 Genesis 50:13 They carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre, which Abraham had bought as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite, along with the field.  
 Exodus 3:8 So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.  
 Exodus 3:17 And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—a land flowing with milk and honey.'

<sup>741</sup> Hoffner, *Hittites*, p. 152.



Exodus 13:5 When the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites and Jebusites—the land he swore to your forefathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey—you are to observe this ceremony in this month:

Exodus 23:23 My angel will go ahead of you and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites, and I will wipe them out.

Exodus 23:28 I will send the hornet ahead of you to drive the Hivites, Canaanites and Hittites out of your way.

Exodus 33:2 I will send an angel before you and drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.

Exodus 34:11 Obey what I command you today. I will drive out before you the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.

Numbers 13:29 The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan.”

Deuteronomy 7:1 When the Lord your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations—the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations larger and stronger than you—

Deuteronomy 20:17 Completely destroy them—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—as the Lord your God has commanded you.

Joshua 1:4 Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Great Sea on the west.

Joshua 3:10 This is how you will know that the living God is among you and that he will certainly drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites and Jebusites.

Joshua 9:1 Now when all the kings west of the Jordan heard about these things—those in the hill country, in the western foothills, and along the entire coast of the Great Sea as far as Lebanon (the kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites)—

Joshua 11:3 to the Canaanites in the east and west; to the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites and Jebusites in the hill country; and to the Hivites below Hermon in the region of Mizpah.

Joshua 12:8 the hill country, the western foothills, the Arabah, the mountain slopes, the desert and the Negev—the lands of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites):

Joshua 24:11 “ ‘Then you crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho. The citizens of Jericho fought against you, as did also the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites and Jebusites, but I gave them into your hands.

Judges 1:26 He then went to the land of the Hittites, where he built a city and called it Luz, which is its name to this day.

Judges 3:5 The Israelites lived among the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.

1 Samuel 26:6 David then asked Ahimelech the Hittite and Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab’s brother, “Who will go down into the camp with me to Saul?” “I’ll go with you,” said Abishai.

2 Samuel 11:3 and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, “Isn’t this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite?”

2 Samuel 11:6 So David sent this word to Joab: “Send me Uriah the Hittite.” And Joab sent him to David.

2 Samuel 11:17 When the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of the men in David’s army fell; moreover, Uriah the Hittite died.

2 Samuel 11:21 Who killed Abimelech son of Jerub-Besheth? Didn’t a woman throw an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died in Thebez? Why did you get so close to the wall?” If he asks you this, then say to him, ‘Also, your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead.’ ”

2 Samuel 11:24 Then the archers shot arrows at your servants from the wall, and some of the king’s men died. Moreover, your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead.”

2 Samuel 12:9 Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.

2 Samuel 12:10 Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.’

2 Samuel 23:39 and Uriah the Hittite. There were thirty-seven in all.

1 Kings 9:20 All the people left from the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites (these peoples were not Israelites),

1 Kings 10:29 They imported a chariot from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty. They also exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and of the Arameans.

1 Kings 11:1 King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh’s daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites.

1 Kings 15:5 For David had done what was right in the eyes of the Lord and had not failed to keep any of the Lord’s commands all the days of his life—except in the case of Uriah the Hittite.

2 Kings 7:6 for the Lord had caused the Arameans to hear the sound of chariots and horses and a great army, so that they said to one another, “Look, the king of Israel has hired the Hittite and Egyptian kings to attack us!”

1 Chronicles 1:13 Canaan was the father of Sidon his firstborn, and of the Hittites,

1 Chronicles 11:41 Uriah the Hittite, Zabad son of Ahlai,

2 Chronicles 1:17 They imported a chariot from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty. They also exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and of the Arameans.

2 Chronicles 8:7 All the people left from the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites (these peoples were not Israelites),

Ezra 9:1 After these things had been done, the leaders came to me and said, “The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites.

Nehemiah 9:8 You found his heart faithful to you, and you made a covenant with him to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites and Girgashites. You have kept your promise because you are righteous.

Ezekiel 16:3 and say, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says to Jerusalem: Your ancestry and birth were in the land of the Canaanites; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite.

Ezekiel 16:45 You are a true daughter of your mother, who despised her husband and her children; and you are a true sister of your sisters, who despised their husbands and their children. Your mother was a Hittite and your father an Amorite.

## 10. Midian/Midianites

Midianites have often been associated with the Kenites, see, p.

Gen 25:1-2 (NASB) Now Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. 2 And she bore to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah.

**Midianites** were also called Ishmaelites (Gen 37:27). They were the ones who bought **Joseph** out of the cistern. **Moses** married a Midianite, Zipporah, the priest’s daughter (Ex 2:15-21), yet Midian (and Moab) opposed Israel’s passage forty years later (Num 22). Idolatry of Midianite women was used by Balaam as an act of war to undermine Israel (Num 25). God eventually raises up **Gideon** to crush them (Judg 6). The Midianites were engrossed in worship of Baal-peor.

They became nomads living in the desert of northwest Arabia and east of the Sinai peninsula. They are said to have been miners, traders, metalworkers, and herdsmen.

Figure 1: The Mesha Inscription



## 11. Moab/Moabites

- See Mattingly, G. L., “Moabites,” in Hoerth, *Peoples of OT World*, pp. 317-333.
- See Bartlett, “The Moabites and Edomites,” in Wiseman, *Peoples of OT Times*, pp. 119-258.
- See Mesha’s Moabite Stone in relation to later history (2 Ki 3); (from *The Bible in the British Museum*, p. 51). See Moabite Stone illustrations in 1&2 Kings.
- See P. M. Michèle Daviau and Paul-Eugène Dion, “Moab Comes To Life,” *Biblical Archeological Review* (Jan/Feb, 2002): 38-49.

**Moabites** descended from Moab (Gen 19:37), the son of Lot and his oldest daughter.

Gen 19:37

The older daughter had a son, and she named him Moab; he is the father of the Moabites of today.

Nu 22:4 The Moabites said to the elders of Midian,

Dt 2:9 “Do not harass the Moabites or provoke them to war, for I

Dt 2:11 considered Rephaites, but the Moabites called them Emites. 12 Hor

Dt 2:29 who live in Seir, and the Moabites, who live in Ar, did for us—

Num 21:10-20 – narrates Israel’s approach to Moab. After the Israelites defeat Sihon, the Amorite king who was reigning in Heshbon (21:13, 26) and dominated the region (north of Moab), the Moabites feared that they might conquer their land. Thus, King Balak of Moab hired **Balaam** (Mesopotamian diviner) to curse Israel (22:6).

In the Judges’ period, Moab is resisted by **Ehud** who kills **Eglon**, king of Moab (Judg 3:16)

Moab and Israel warred during Saul’s and David’s reigns (1 Sam 14:47; 2 Sam 8:2). Solomon had Moabite women in his harem and built a high place for Chemosh:

See **Chemosh** (Kemosh) the “detestable” god of Moab (and god of the Ammonites in Judg 14:24; Molech was the traditional national god in Ammon).<sup>742</sup> Chemosh was the national god of Moab and involved human sacrifice (see

<sup>742</sup> See Ruth 2:15 where Naomi recommended to Ruth that she go back to Moab with Orpah “and her gods” (p. ).

Mesha, king of Moab, who sacrificed his eldest son to change the outcome of the war against him, see pp. (2 Ki 3:27; cf. Judg 11:24; 1 Ki 11:7):

Nu 21:29 Woe to you, O Moab! You are destroyed, O people of Chemosh! He has given up his sons as fugitives and his daughters as captives to Sihon king of the Amorites.

Judg 11:24 Will you not take what your god Chemosh gives you? Likewise, whatever the LORD our God has given us, we will possess.

1 Ki 11:7 On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites.

1 Ki 11:33 I will do this because they have forsaken me and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Molech the god of the Ammonites, and have not walked in my ways, nor done what is right in my eyes, nor kept my statutes and laws as David, Solomon's father, did.

2 Ki 23:13 The king also desecrated the high places that were east of Jerusalem on the south of the Hill of Corruption—the ones Solomon king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the vile goddess of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the vile god of Moab, and for Molech the detestable god of the people of Ammon.

Jer 48:7 Since you trust in your deeds and riches, you too will be taken captive, and Chemosh will go into exile, together with his priests and officials.

Jer 48:13 Then Moab will be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed when they trusted in Bethel.

Jer 48:46 Woe to you, O Moab! The people of Chemosh are destroyed; your sons are taken into exile and your daughters into captivity.

Moab had independence after the Israelite monarchy divided (930 B.C.), but Omri and Ahab dominated Moab (King Mesha). See the Moabite Stone for the conflict of Mesha with the Omrides). Moab eventually became a vassal of Assyria and was later destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in the 6<sup>th</sup> c. (Ezr 25:8-11) (2 Ki 3; 10:32, 33; 13:20; 24:2), although people of Moabite descent are attested in later OT times (Ezr 9:1; Neh 13:23).

## 12. *Philistia/Philistines/Palestine*

- See Howard, D. M., "Philistines," in Hoerth, *Peoples of OT World*, pp. 231-250.
- See Kitchen, K. A., in Wiseman, *Peoples of OT Times*, pp. 53-78.
- See notes on Levant in file ANE religion and in reference NB.
- See illustrations in Judges.

Derived from Akkadian *palaštu*, *pilištu*, or Egyptian *p-r-st*, thus the name "Philistines."

Gen 10:13-14 And Mizraim became the father of Ludim and Anamim and Lehabim and Naphtuhim. 14 and Pathrusim and Casluhim (from which came the Philistines) and Caphtorim.

Deut 2:23 And as for the Avvites who lived in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorites coming out from Caphtor destroyed them and settled in their place.)

Jer 47:4

For the day has come  
to destroy all the Philistines  
and to cut off all survivors  
who could help Tyre and Sidon.

The LORD is about to destroy the Philistines,  
the remnant from the coasts of Caphtor.

Amos 9:7

"Are not you Israelites  
the same to me as the Cushites?"  
declares the LORD.

"Did I not bring Israel up from Egypt,  
the Philistines from Caphtor  
and the Arameans from Kir?"

Known in Patriarchal times (Gen 26:1, 14). They were a sea-faring people who settled in the region of the Aegean and Crete (Caphtor) (on Sea People, see p. [Judges-Esther]). Driven out of Asia Minor and Crete, they sought to attack Egypt and failed, and finally migrated to Canaan ca. 1175-1200 B.C. along with the so-called "Sea-People." The coastal-plain of the Gaza Strip was their original destination. Later they occupied the coastal plain from Gaza to Mt Carmel. Philistines lived in close proximity to Israel until the last half of the 11<sup>th</sup> c. they began to expand aggressively, perhaps in reaction to Israel's growing presence. Israel is consequently pressured to demand a king. During the period of Judges, **Samson** was raised up to resist the Philistines, but unsuccessfully. During **Saul's** reign, they captured the ark. They show knowledge of Israel's deliverance from Egypt at the Red Sea (1 Sam 6:6; 4:8). **David** effectively eliminated their threat. Azariah (Uzziah) of Judah (792-740) had to contend with them, but warred against them successfully and broke down the walls of Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod (2 Chron 26:6-7). During the divided kingdom the Philistine presence was real but gradually diminished through war and assimilation into Canaanite culture (see Dagon. 1 Chron 10:10). They presented tribute to Jehoshaphat in Judah (872-848) (2 Chron 17:11). During Jehoram's reign (853-841), they invaded the land of Israel (2 Chron 21:16). Uzziah (Azariah, p.) destroyed the walls of Philistine Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod, while he also rebuilt Philistine towns (2 Chron

26:6-7). Hezekiah (715-686) also fought the Philistines (2 Ki 18:8). The prophets infrequently mention the Philistines (see Jer 47:4 above), and it is largely of negative judgment:

Jer 47:4 For the day has come  
to destroy all the Philistines  
and to cut off all survivors  
who could help Tyre and Sidon.  
The LORD is about to destroy the Philistines,  
the remnant from the coasts of Caphtor.

Ezek 25:16 therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am about to stretch out my hand against the Philistines, and I will cut off the Kerethites and destroy those remaining along the coast.

(right) Sea Peoples.<sup>743</sup>

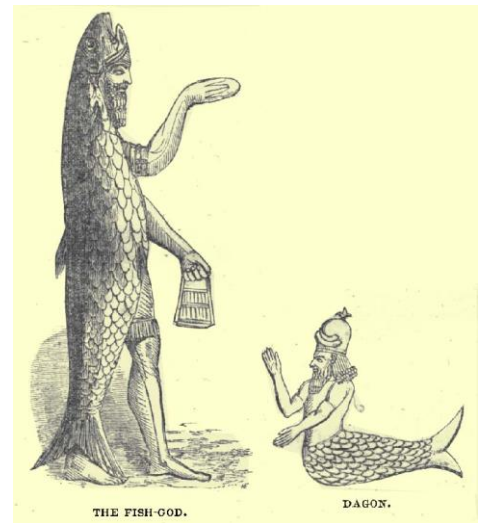
Am 1:8 I will destroy the king of Ashdod  
and the one who holds the scepter in Ashkelon.  
I will turn my hand against Ekron,  
till the last of the Philistines is dead,”  
says the Sovereign LORD.

Am 9:7 “Are not you Israelites  
the same to me as the Cushites?”  
declares the LORD.  
“Did I not bring Israel up from Egypt,  
the Philistines from Caphtor  
and the Arameans from Kir?”

Obad 19 People from the Negev will occupy  
the mountains of Esau,  
and people from the foothills will possess  
the land of the Philistines.  
They will occupy the fields of Ephraim and Samaria,  
and Benjamin will possess Gilead.

Zeph 2:5 Woe to you who live by the sea,  
O Kerethite people; the word of the LORD is against you,  
O Canaan, land of the Philistines.  
“I will destroy you, and none will be left.”

Zec 9:6 Foreigners will occupy Ashdod,  
and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.



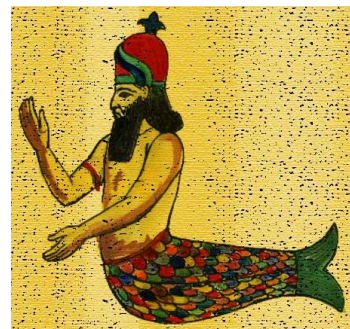
Their pantheon included **Dagon** (left), Ashtoreth, Baal-zebub (Lord of the Flies)  
(right) Dagon by Scott, 1858.<sup>744</sup>

➤ See Dagon, pp. [Judges-Esther]

Philistine material culture was quite sophisticated, creating a distinctive pottery and architecture. They established a confederation of cities: Gaza, Gath, Ashkelon, Ashdod, and Ekron.

They learned iron metallurgy from the Hittites, and during the wane of Hittite power (1200 B.C.) they gained a monopoly over the supply of iron (1 Samuel 13:19-21 [Judges-Esther]).

Roman period: Palestine became name for entire province after AD 135.



NOTE: a digression on iron in light of the Philistine monopoly:

B. Waltke uses the fact that the word *iron* (בַּרְזֶל, *bar<sup>e</sup>zel*) (cf. copper, נְחֹשֶׁת, *nehōšet*) is present in Job as his primary evidence that Job must have been written subsequent to the smelting of iron. He argues that the use of the word may be anachronistic, yet uses it as his evidence that Job must come after 1200 B.C. (he suggests the 7<sup>th</sup> c. for the narrator, though

<sup>743</sup> From [www.museum.upenn.edu/Canaan/Images/philistines.Gif](http://www.museum.upenn.edu/Canaan/Images/philistines.Gif)

<sup>744</sup> From [http://www.blueletterbible.org/images/bible\\_images/Samson/samson\\_fishgod1.cfm](http://www.blueletterbible.org/images/bible_images/Samson/samson_fishgod1.cfm)

the story itself might be patriarchal). Yet, I am puzzled that early pentateuchal literature, etc., is replete with reference to iron. The use of “iron” in Genesis 4:22 is certainly not to be considered anachronistic.<sup>745</sup> Regardless of the debate about the use of iron in early Israel, it seems like weak evidence for the dating of Job.

Smick says that Job 28:3-11 (see p. ) “illustrate ancient man’s technological ability in mining.”<sup>746</sup> “As for iron, it was not used widely in Palestine till shortly before 1200 B.C., but there is evidence of working terrestrial iron (as opposed to meteorite iron) back to about 6000 B.C.”<sup>747</sup> The OT reflects Israel’s lack of technical knowledge in smelting and smithing iron before the time of David. The Philistine monopoly is mentioned in 1 Samuel 13:19-21.<sup>748</sup> Iron mining was developed on the plateau east of the Jordan Valley . . .<sup>749</sup>

בְּרִזָּה (iron) in the OT:

Gen 4:22; Lev 26:19; Num 31:22:35:16 Deut 3:11; 4:20; 8:9; 19:5; 27:5; 28:23; 28:48; 33:25; Josh 6:19; 6:24; 8:31; 17:16; 17:18; 22:8; Judg 1:19; 4:3; 4:13; 1 Sam 17:7; 2 Sam 12:31; 12:31; 2 Sam 23:7; 1 Kings 6:7; 8:51; 22:11; 2 Ki 6:5, 6:6; Isa10:34; 44:12; 45:2; 48:4; 60:17; 60:17; Jer 1:18; 6:28; 11:4; 15:12; 15:12; 17:1; 28:13; 28:14; Ezek 4:3; 4:3; 22:18; 22:20; 27:12; 27:19; Amos 1:3; Ps 2:9; 105:18; 107:10; 107:16; 149:8; Job 19:24; 20:24; 28:2; 40:18; 41:19; Prov 27:17; 27:17; Qoh 10:10; 1Chron 20:3; 22:3; 22:14; 22:16; 29:2; 29:2; 29:7; 2 Chron 2:6; 2 Chron 2:13; 2 Chron 18:10; 2 Chron 24:12; 75 matches

J. Robert Vannoy’s BTS Foundations I lecture notes on this issue:

#### ***Antediluvian technology (Genesis 4)***

The rise of technology

4:2--agriculture and the domestication of animals

4:17--Cain built a city (permanent settlement) and named it for Enoch

4:21--Jubal introduced wind and string musical instruments

4:22--Tubal-cain introduced iron and bronze work

#### ***Criticism and response***

Archaeology and anthropology date the Agricultural Age at around 5000BC, the Copper Age at around 3000BC and the Iron Age at around 1200BC (around the time of Saul and David). None of this seems to allow for a pre-Flood rise in technology. Or does it? As a matter of principle, one should not argue from a lack of extra biblical evidence against Biblical material. In archaeology, anthropology, and paleontology, finding evidence is the exception, not the rule. Most remains of human life and civilization become lost through the course of time.

There is, however, an increasing amount of evidence from archaeology and science that iron may have been around at least a millennium before 1200BC. An iron dagger has been found in a Hittite city dating from 2400-2200BC, and iron beads from 4000-3200BC have been found in Egypt. It is most likely that there was an advanced civilization before the Flood which was lost, along with all its remains, subsequent to the Flood.

### **13. Persia/Persians**

- See *Times Atlas of the Bible*, “Persia Invades the Mediterranean,” pp. 134-135; “In the Days of the Persian Empire,” pp. 136-137.
- See Ezra & Nehemiah notes, Judges-Esther syllabus.

Both groups (Medes/Persians) were related Indo-European Aryan tribes that had moved south from the Urartian plateau from Russia, gradually migrating further south. The Medes were descendants of Japheth, according to Gen 10.<sup>750</sup> The Medes settled south of the Caspian Sea in western Iran. Their capital became Ecbatana (Hamadan), on the major route from Mesopotamia. The Persians settled north of the Persian Gulf in the southeast. The daughter, Mandanna, of the last Median king, Astyages (585-550 BC), married a Persian, Cambyses I, and they bore **Cyrus II**, the Great (see Judges-Esther syllabus). Cyrus successfully revolted against the Medes under Astyages, his

<sup>745</sup> See A. H. Konkel, “בְּרִזָּה,” *NIDOTE*, vol. 1, p. 741.

<sup>746</sup> Smick, “Job,” p. 975.

<sup>747</sup> W. Kaiser Jr., “The Literary Form of Genesis 1-11,” in *New Perspectives on the Old Testament*, ed. J. B. Payne, Waco: Word, 1970, p. 55.

<sup>748</sup> Block notes “It used to be thought that the Philistines were responsible for the introduction of iron to Palestine, but recent research has repudiated this view. (For an exhaustive study of the subject see P. M. McNutt, *The Forging of Israel: Iron Technology, Symbolism, and Tradition in Ancient Society*, JSOTSupp 108 [Sheffield: Almond, 1990]). However, this does not rule out the possibility of Philistine monopoly of the iron industry in the early centuries of the Iron Age (cf. 1 Sam 13:19-23)” (*Judges*, fn. 96, p. 99).

<sup>749</sup> Smick, “Job,” p. 976.

<sup>750</sup> See Isa 13:17; Jer 25:25; 51:11, 28; 2 Ki 17:6; Dan 5:28; 6:8, 12, 15; Darius the Mede in Dan 5:31; 9:1; 11:1; Acts 2:9.

grandfather, and thus the Medes were from then on subjugated by the Persians. The Persians incorporated Median culture (Dan 6:8, 15), and were seen as synonymous in Dan 1:19, 8:20.

The Persian dynasty is called the Achaemenid after its founder, Achaemenes (700-675 BC), called “the eponymous ancestor” of the dynasty by E. Yamauchi.<sup>751</sup>

### a) *Chronology of the Persians*<sup>752</sup>

#### *The Achaemenid Family (700-331 BC)*

Persian Kings:	Facts:	OT texts/history:	Greek history:
Achaemenes <sup>753</sup> (700-675?) (father of Teispes)	his name is given to the dynasty that follows.		
Teispes (675-640?) (father of Ariaramnes and Cyrus I)	divided the kingdom between Ariaramnes (northern) and Cyrus (southern)		
Ariaramnes (640-615?) (second branch of family) (father of Arsames)	called himself "Kings of Kings"		
Cyrus I (640-600) (father of Cambyses I and grandfather of Cyrus II)	called himself "King of Parsumash"		
Cambyses I (600-559) (father of Cyrus II; his Median wife was Mandanna).	through his marriage the royal families of Media and Persia are united		
Cyrus II (The Great) (559-530) <sup>754</sup> (father of Cambyses II)	capital built in Pasargadae	Cyrus captured Babylon (539) Ez 1-3 – Cyrus' proclamation (539); Shebazzar, Zerubbabel, Jeshua return (538); temple foundations laid (536)	Cyrus conquered Armenia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, and Croesus (547), gaining control over Greek cities in Asia Minor.
Arsames (590-550?) (father of Hystaspes)			
Cambyses II (530-522) <sup>755</sup> (son of Cyrus II) [no heir to his throne in this branch of family]	conquered Egypt in 526-25 with the help of the Phoenicians	Ez 4 – Cambyses possibly supported opposition, rebuilding stopped; a "tyrant,"	
Hystaspes (second branch of family) (father of Darius I)			
Darius I (The Great) <sup>756</sup> or Darayarahush (521-486) (father of Xerxes I)	new capital built in Persepolis, peak of Persian empire; expanded empire	Ez 5-6 – Darius invades rebellious Egypt <sup>757</sup> ; Haggai & Zechariah prophesy, temple work renewed Sept 21, 520; temple complete (516)	Greeks defeat Persians at Marathon (490) when Darius invades mainland.
Xerxes I (OT: Ahasuerus – a powerful tyrant) (486-465) <sup>758</sup>	greatly concerned with revolts in empire	<u>Esther</u> 1-9, opposition to rebuilding Jerusalem; Hamon, Mordecai, Esther becomes	Greeks defeat invading Persians at Thermopylae (480) and Salamis <sup>759</sup> ; Herodotus (485-425)

<sup>751</sup> E. Yamauchi, *Persia*, p. 51; see also pp. 31-63; *id.*, "Persians," *Peoples*, p. 107-110; M. Breneman, *Ezra*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>752</sup> Derived from Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible*, pp. 70ff.; Breneman, *Ezra*, pp. 17-25; Walton, *Charts of OT*, p. 70; Kaiser, *A History*, pp. 425-432.

<sup>753</sup> Old Persian: *Hakhamanish*.

<sup>754</sup> See Yamauchi, "Cyrus," *Persia and the Bible*, pp. 65-92.

<sup>755</sup> See Yamauchi, "Cambyses," *Persia and the Bible*, pp. 93-128.

<sup>756</sup> See Yamauchi, "Darius," *Persia and the Bible*, pp. 129-185. See Behistun Inscription, "My father was Hystaspes; Hystaspes' father was Arsames; Arsames' father was Ariaramnes; Ariaramnes' father was Teispes; Teispes' father was Achaemenes" (Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible*, p. 70). On Darius, see p. meaningful patterns or structure. Rather, it highlights the fact of continuity and discontinuity, and the freedom of inspired biblical autho.

<sup>757</sup> Darius brings Persia to its pinnacle of organization and power. See the *Behistun Inscription* (p. rs to stress one aspect over) of his exploits carved into a rock mountain on the route from Mesopotamia to the Iranian Plateau (Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, p. 20). It is written in syllabic cuneiform script in Elamite, Akkadian, and Old Persian, and provides the key for deciphering Akkadian (by H. Rawlinson, E. Hincks, and J. Oppert). See Mitchell, *Bible in the British Museum*, pp. 84-85.

<sup>758</sup> See Yamauchi, "Xerxes," *Persia and the Bible*, pp. 187-239.

<sup>759</sup> See Aeschylus' play *The Persians*.

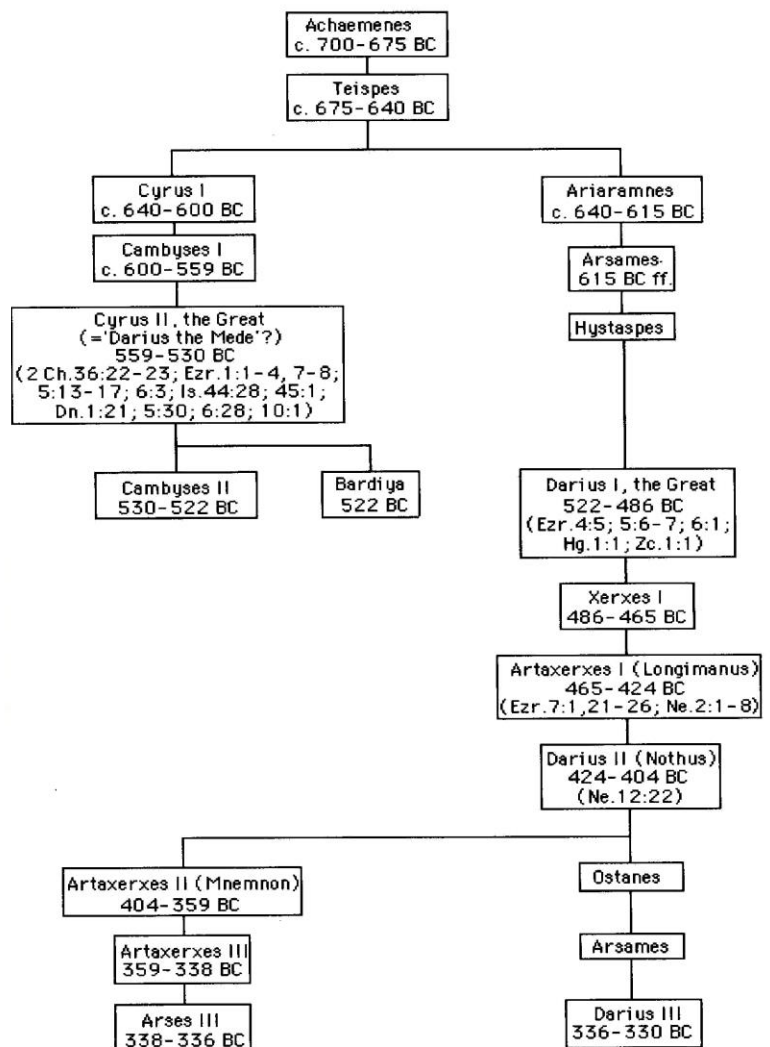
Artaxerxes I (Longimanus) (464-424) <sup>760</sup>	early decline	queen (479); Purim begins Ez 7:7 – Ezra <sup>761</sup> (458) & Neh 2:1 – Nehemiah (445) return to Jerusalem, wall rebuilt; Ezra reads law (445); Malachi prophesies (433-425)	Greek Golden Age (461-431); Pericles helps rebelling Egyptians fight Persians
Darius II (Nothus) (423-404)	taxes, economic decline, revolts	OT silence	Peloponnesian Wars between Greek city-states (431-404) <sup>762</sup>
Artaxerxes II (Mnemon) (403-359)		OT silence	Socrates (470-399); Plato (428-348); Aristotle (384-322)
Artaxerxes III (358-337)		OT silence	Greeks defeated (338) at Chaeronea by Philip II (of Macedon)
Arses (338-335)		OT silence	
Darius III (Codamannus) (335-331)	Persian Empire falls	OT silence	Alexander the Great <sup>763</sup> (336-323) gains control of Greece and conquers Persia
			Greek Empire ----->

After doing the spiffy chart above, I found the nice family tree below for the serious Persia buffs:

Persian rulers of the Achaemenid dynasty, with selected biblical references. (NBD p. 915) New Bible Dictionary, p. 915 from the Logos Library System, level III



Cambyses II, eldest son of Cyrus the Great<sup>764</sup>



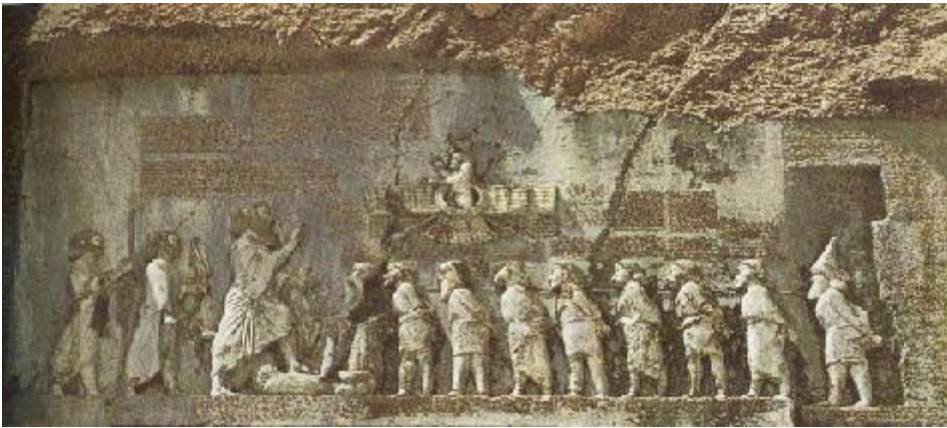
<sup>760</sup> See Yamauchi, "Artaxerxes I," *Persia and the Bible*, pp. 241-278. See **Artaxerxes I** below, p. another. Also, it is worth noting here that the scheme.

<sup>761</sup> Ezra reads the law publicly thirteen years later (Neh 8:1-8), but this does not mean he had not been teaching it previously.

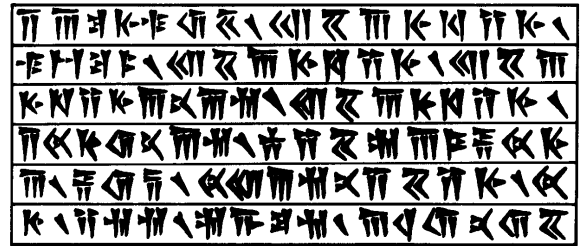
<sup>762</sup> Primarily Athens and Sparta

<sup>763</sup> Son of Philip II of Macedon.

<sup>764</sup> <http://heritage-key.com/world/cambyses-persia>



(above) Behistun Inscription by Darius I, the Great



28 Old Persian: carved above the figure of Darius in the doorways of his palace at Persepolis.

da-a-ra-ya-va-u-ša : xa-ša-a-ya-θa-i-ya :  
 va-za-ra-ka : xa-ša-a-ya-θa-i-ya : xa-ša-a-  
 ya-θa-i-ya-a-na-a-ma : xa-ša-a-ya-θa-i-ya :  
 da-ha-ya-u-na-a-ma : vi-i-ša-ta-a-sa-pa-ha-ya-  
 a : pa-u-ça : ha-xa-a-ma-na-i-ša-i-ya : ha-  
 ya : i-ma-ma : ta-ca-ra-ma : a-ku-u-na-u-ša

Dārayavauš xšāyaθiya vazraka xšāyaθiya xšāyaθiyānām xšāyaθiya dahyunām Vištāspahyā puça Haxāmanišiya hya imam tacaram akunauš  
 Darius, the great king, king of kings, king of countries, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenian, who built this palace.

(right) Cuneiform about Darius I.<sup>765</sup>

Under **Darius I (The Great)** (521-486) the Persians divided the empire into twenty satrapies governed by Persian satraps (essentially kings), and also had imperial troops controlled by the Persian king. They also standardized the money and system of weights.

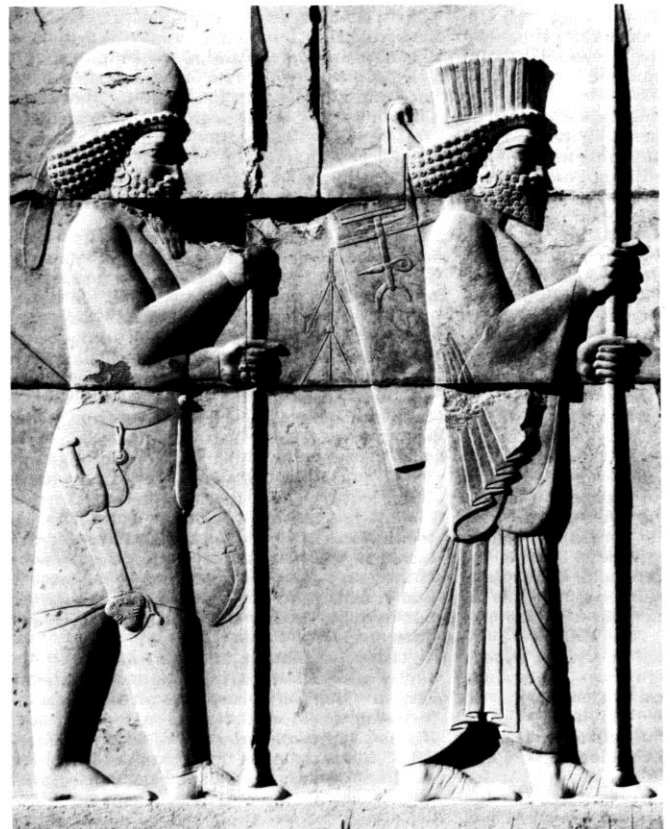
Palestine was the “satrapy beyond the river,” consisting of Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine to the border of Egypt.

➤ See Darius I below, pp. [Judges-Esther]

(right) Median and Persian guards at Persepolis<sup>766</sup>

**Xerxes I** (485-465), king of Persia, succeeded his father Darius I (521-486), inheriting the great Persian empire that Darius had extended from India to Ethiopia. In Esther, the name *Ahasuerus* (אַחַשְׁוֵרֶשֶׁת) is certainly the same person as Xerxes, although the LXX reads “Artaxerxes” and others (e.g., Olmstead) identify Ahasuerus with Artaxerxes II (404-359 BC).

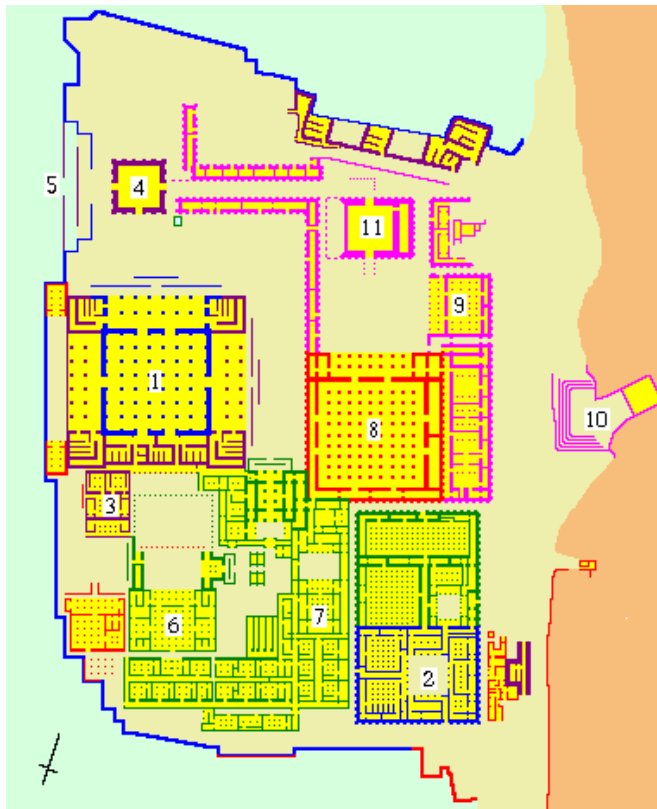
Herodotus tells us that Xerxes conquered Athens in 480 BC, but that the Persian fleet was subsequently destroyed at Salamis.



<sup>765</sup> From C.B.F. Walker, “Cuneiform,” *Reading the Past*, p. 60.

<sup>766</sup> *Baker Encyclopedia*, p.1427.





(left) City-plan and Apadana Palace<sup>767</sup>

Persepolis: buildings

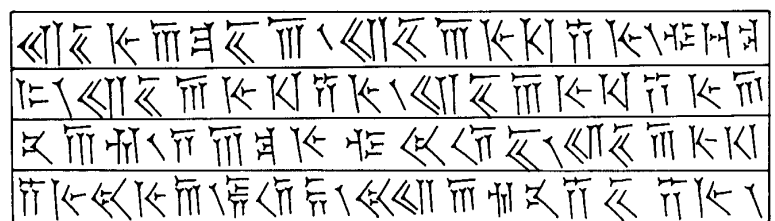
- 1 Apadana
- 2 Treasury
- 3 Darius' palace
- 4 Xerxes' gate
- 5 Stairway
- 6 Xerxes' palace
- 7 Harem
- 8 Hall of hundred columns
- 9 Hall of 32 columns
- 10 Tomb of Artaxerxes III
- 11 Unfinished gate



(right) pillar remains of Audience Hall of Darius at Persepolis , 500 BC. This large palace of Xerxes and Darius sits on a large area cut from the existing rock outcropping.<sup>768</sup>

Xerxes I claimed reliance on the Persian god of creation, *Ahurmazda*, which had a man's head and a winged animal body. This god had close connections with the Persian royal families. Ahurmazda was seen as the creator of all and was above human weakness, having legions of archangels to fight for him against darkness. Zarathustra developed this in his *Zoroastrianism* in which *Ormazd* is the essence of good and light and *Ahriman* is darkness and evil, both engaged in cosmic battle.

➤ See especially Yamauchi's discussion, "Zoroastrianism," in *Persia and the Bible*, pp., 395-466.



27 Old Persian: carved above the figure of Xerxes in the doorways of his palace at Persepolis.

xa-ša-ya-a-ra-ša-a : xa-ša-a-ya-θa-i-ya : va-za-ra-  
 ka : xa-ša-a-ya-θa-i-ya : xa-ša-a-ya-θa-i-ya-a-  
 na-a-ma : da-a-ra-ya-va-ha-u-ša : xa-ša-a-ya-θa-  
 i-ya-ha-ya-a : pa-u-ça : ha-xa-a-ma-na-i-ša-i-ya

Xšayârša xšâyaθiya vazraka xšâyaθiya xšâyaθiyânâm Dârayavahauš xšâyaθiyahyâ puça Haxâmanišiya

Xerxes, the great king, the king of kings, the son of Darius the king, an Achaemenian.

<sup>767</sup> <http://www.livius.org/pen-pg/persepolis/persepolis.html>

<sup>768</sup> [http://www.livius.org/pen-pg/persepolis/persepolis\\_apadana.html](http://www.livius.org/pen-pg/persepolis/persepolis_apadana.html)

(below) Cylinder seal with Darius I in a chariot under the Zoroastrian god, Ahur-Mazda



a

**146 a.** Modern impression of a chalcedony cylinder seal found at Thebes in Egypt before 1835. An Achaemenid Persian king in his chariot drives over the body of one lion and shoots another (see p. 136), beneath the winged disc of the Zoroastrian god Ahura-Mazda and between two palm-trees. The king is named in Old Persian, Elamite and Babylonian as 'Darius, the great king', probably Darius I (r. 521–486 BC). Ht 3.7 cm.

Collon, Dominique, ANE Art, British Museum, p. 183

**Artaxerxes I (Longimanus) (464-424):**

➤ See Artaxerxes I below, p. [Judges-Esther]

**b) Susa**

➤ See Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible*, pp. 279-303.



Assyrian Susa 6th-4th c. B.C.<sup>769</sup>

שֻׁשָׁן, Shushan

The excavated ruins lie on the banks of the Sha'ur affluent on the river Kerkha in SW Persia, some 150 miles N. of the Persian Gulf and E. of Babylon. It was occupied from prehistoric times (ca. 4000) until abandoned by the Seleucids. The Code of Hammurabi (12<sup>th</sup> c.) was found here. Susa was the location of the story

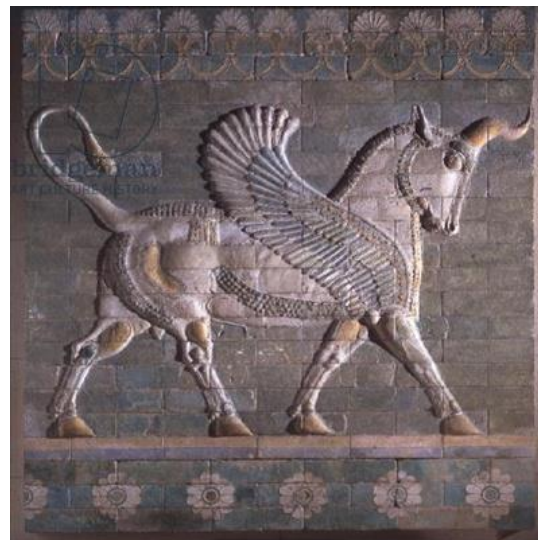
of Esther in the days of Xerxes (Ahasuerus), and served as his capital (Esther 1:1). Darius had built a palace there (518-512), and when Xerxes destroyed Babylon he made this palace in Susa his winter residence. Esther's drama transpired in this palace. There may be attestation of Mordecai's presence as the finance officer under Xerxes, named *Marduka*. Nehemiah was the cupbearer in the palace of Susa (Neh 1:1; 11; 2:1).

Es 1:2 royal throne in the citadel of Susa, 3 and in the third year  
 Es 1:5 who were in the citadel of Susa. 6 The garden had hangings  
 Es 2:3 the harem at the citadel of Susa. Let them be placed under the  
 Es 2:5 there was in the citadel of Susa a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin  
 Es 2:8 were brought to the citadel of Susa and put under the care of Hegai  
 Es 3:15 was issued in the citadel of Susa. The king and Haman sat down  
 Es 3:15 sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was bewildered.  
 Es 4:8 which had been published in Susa, to show to Esther and explain  
 Es 4:16 together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat  
 Es 8:14 also issued in the citadel of Susa. 15 Mordecai left the king  
 Es 8:15 fine linen. And the city of Susa held a joyous celebration.  
 Es 9:6 In the citadel of Susa, the Jews killed and destroyed  
 Es 9:11 those slain in the citadel of Susa was reported to the king that  
 Es 9:12 sons of Haman in the citadel of Susa. What have they done in



<sup>769</sup> Susa from <http://www.iranchamber.com/history/susa/susa.php>

Es 9:13 Esther answered, “give the Jews in Susa permission to carry out  
 Es 9:14 An edict was issued in Susa, and they hanged the ten sons  
 Es 9:15 of Haman. 15 The Jews in Susa came together on the fourteen  
 Es 9:15 and they put to death in Susa three hundred men, but they  
 Es 9:18 The Jews in Susa, however, had assembled on  
 Ezr 4:9 and Babylon, the Elamites of Susa, 10 and the other people w  
 Ne 1:1 while I was in the citadel of Susa, 2 Hanani, one of my broth  
 Da 8:2 saw myself in the citadel of Susa in the province of Elam; in



(right)Winged Bull at Susa.<sup>770</sup>

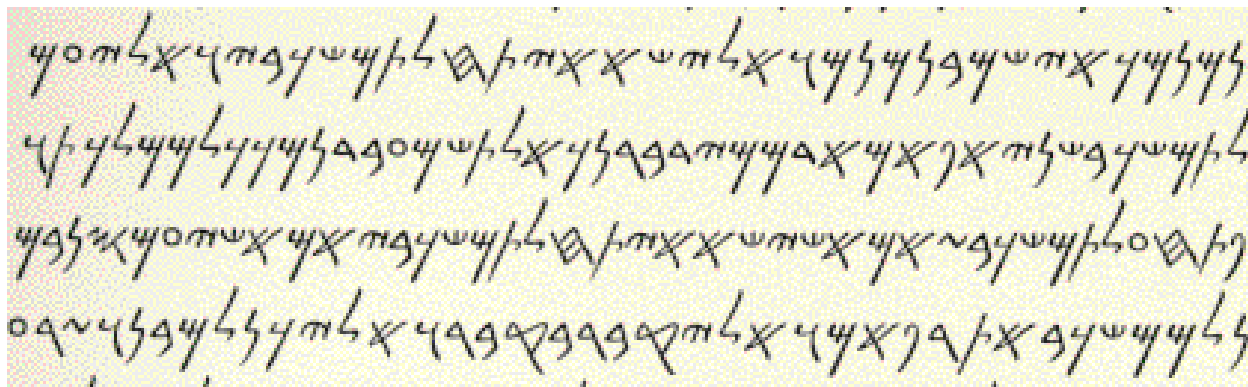
### 14. Phoenecia/Phoenicians

- See Judges-Esther, p.
- See cedars of Lebanon, [Judges-Esther]
- See Egyptian “The Journey of Wen-amon to Phoenicia” (Pritchard, ANET, pp. 25-29).
- See especially *Times Atlas of the Bible*, p 90-91.
- See Thomas, D.R.P., “The Phoenicians,” *Peoples of OT Times*, pp. 259-286.
- See Ward, William A. “Phoenicians.” *Peoples of the OT Testament World*, pp. 183-206.

Phoenicians feature in Kings, particularly in the degenerate life of Ahab and Jezebel. The latter greatly influenced Israel towards idolatry, and eventually affected Judah, as well.

Phoenicians were basically Canaanite in culture, though representing a later stage in the Iron Age. Information on the Phoenicians is presently limited. Some propose that they are related to the Sea Peoples in the 12<sup>th</sup> c. B.C., yet the evidence is uncertain, for the Phoenician cities had a long history of coastal dominance. Perhaps the Sea Peoples and the Phoenicians became allies at some point? As noted (Canaanites, p. 603f.). The Phoenicians, centered in Tyre and Sidon(see p. [Judges-Esther]) (and in Byblos and Aradus), had inherited the Canaanite culture by the Iron Age. Canaanite culture and power gradually decreased into the Israelite monarchy when it was largely restricted to Phoenician territory.

King David allied commercially with Hiram (2 Sa. 5:11; 1 Ki. 5:1) and Hiram later supplied Solomon with wood, stone, and craftsmen for the construction of the Temple and palace (1 Ki 5:1-12; 2 Ch. 2:3-16).<sup>771</sup> King Ahab of Israel later married Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, and greatly increased idolatry in Israel. This was really a decisive turning-point in the history of the nation, and the Lord then sent two important prophets, Elijah and Elisha.



<sup>770</sup> From [www.caravanserai-tours.com/.../ Susa\\_Achaemenian\\_lancer.jpg](http://www.caravanserai-tours.com/.../ Susa_Achaemenian_lancer.jpg)

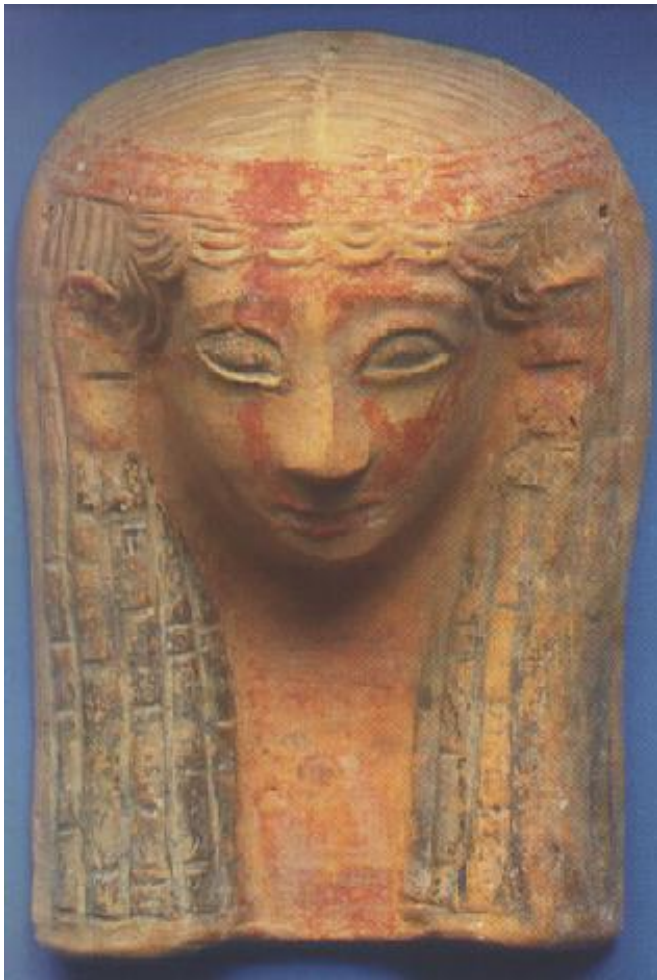
<sup>771</sup> See John Monson, “The New Ain Dara Temple: Closest Solomonic Parallel,” *Biblical Archeological Review*, vol. 26, no. 3, (May/June, 2000): pp. 20-35, 67; Volkmar Fritz, “Temple Architecture: What Can Archeology Tell Us About Solomon’s Temple?” *Biblical Archeological Review*, vol. 13, no. 4 (1987): pp. 38-49.

Ward, W. Phoenicians, Peoples of the OT World, p. 196.



Phoenician nobleman from Dor, 9th–8th century B.C. (height: 4")

Courtesy of Ephraim Stern and the Tel Dor Project; photograph by Ilan Stulman



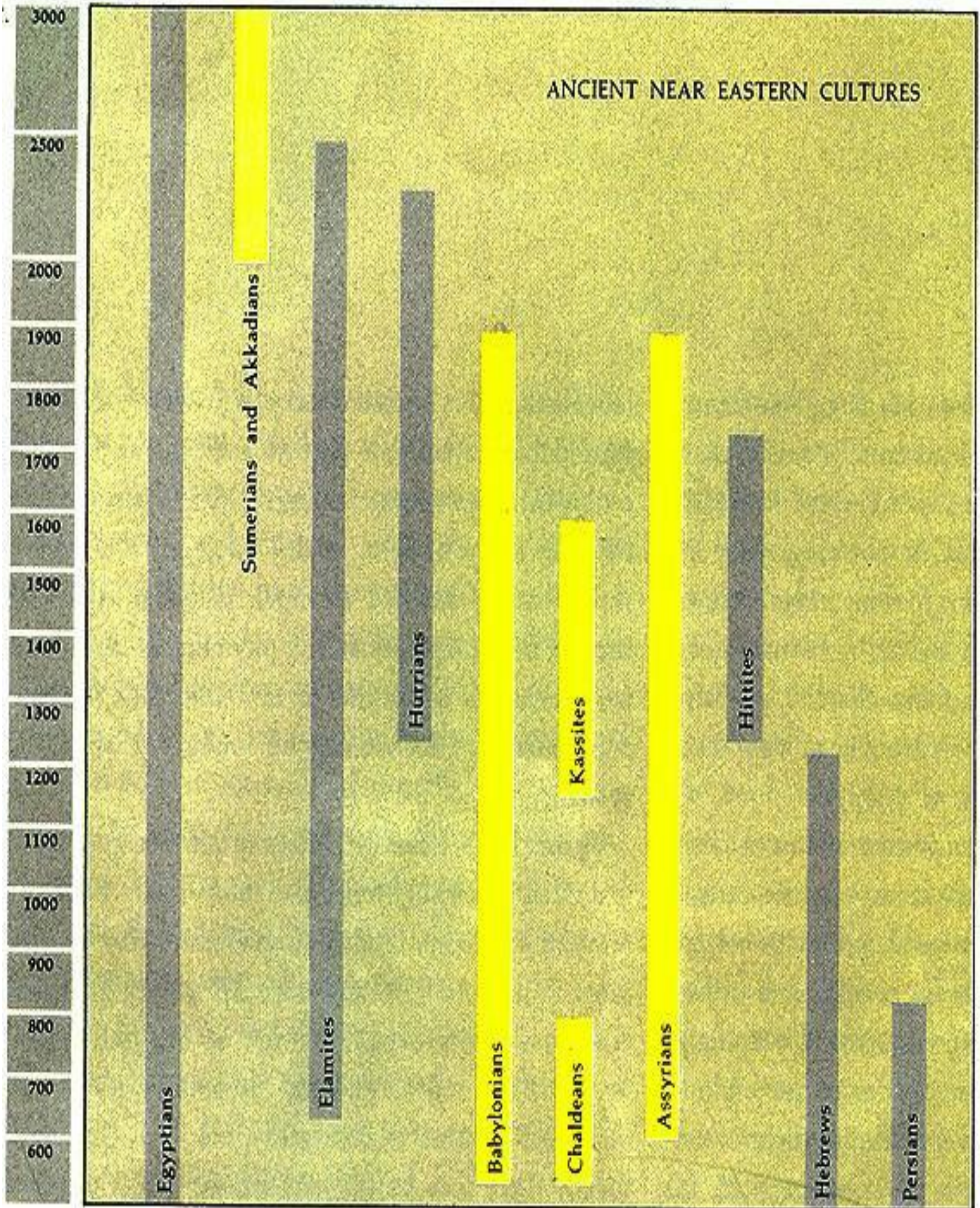
(left) Phoenician woman



(right) Phoenician Ship<sup>772</sup>



<sup>772</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Phoenician\\_ship.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Phoenician_ship.jpg)



Ancient Near Eastern cultures.<sup>773</sup>

<sup>773</sup> Chronological chart of ancient Near Eastern cultures (www.photoloft archive).

## 15. Mesopotamia: Sumerians, Akkadians, Assyrians, and Babylonians

- On Assyria, see pp. [Judges-Esther]
- On Babylonia, see pp. 357.
- See pantheons, p. 645.
- See Kaiser, *A History*, pp. 28-30 (especially his outline chart)
- See *Oxford Bible Atlas*, pp. 54-55.
- See Walton, *OT Charts*, p. 63.

(right) Map of ancient Mesopotamia<sup>774</sup>



### Sumer/Sumerians<sup>775</sup>

“Who were the Sumerians” is one of the most challenging and persistent questions in ancient Mesopotamian history (J. Oates, *Babylon*, p. 19).

1. **Sumer** (3500 BC) → possibly שִׁמְרָא in the OT 8x. In Sumerian it may mean “Summer-Akkad,” the region that included their homeland, Sumer: Lower Mesopotamia from Baghdad to the Persian Gulf.
2. Identification of Heb. *Šhem* (the ancestor of Abram) with Sumer is doubtful.
3. Sumerian influence on Israel is a foregone conclusion because of the pervasive influence of Sumerian culture on all of the ancient Near East . . . ” (Bodine, p. 19).
4. Gen 11:28, 31; 15:7 traces Abraham’s origins to the city of Ur of the Chaldeans (a later gloss).
5. Early achievements and influences on world: writing, city-state, accumulation of wealth, the wheel, potter’s wheel, monumental architecture, the sexagesimal number system (used today with time, circles, angles), legal documents, schools, cylinder seals.
6. **Ebla** - ancient Syrian site contained large Sumerian (and Semitic, i. e., Eblaite) archive.
7. Prominent cities: Eridu, Ur, Larsa, Uruk (Bible: Erech), Bad-tibira, Lagash, Nina, Girsu, Umma, Shuruppak, Isin, Nippur.
8. The city-state was a sacred configuration: the center of the city was the temple, the home of the chief deity of the city, with temples often dedicated to spouses or children of the deities. All were considered servants of these deities (king and people), and all property belonged to the deity. A hierarchical bureaucracy controlled the temple cult, land, industry, and commerce. (Private property was more common in northern Babylonia dominated by Semites.
9. **Nippur**: the capital, home of Enlil (an assembly of gods met there to receive nomination for the king by the deity and to confer kingship upon him).

<sup>774</sup> Mesopotamia from <http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/PROJ/NIP/PUB93/NSC/NSCFIG1.html>

<sup>775</sup> Sources: Walter R. Bodin, “Sumerians,” Hoerth, Alfred J., Mattingly, Gerald L., Yamauchi, Edwin M. eds., *Peoples of the Old Testament World*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994, pp. 19-42. Also see “Ur,” Benjamin Chapman, *The New International Dictionary of Biblical Archeology*, eds. E. M. Blaiklock, R. K. Harrison, Grand Rapids: Regency Reference Library, 1983, pp. 462-463; “Sumer,” Benjamin Chapman, *The New International Dictionary of Biblical Archeology*, eds. E. M. Blaiklock, R. K. Harrison, Grand Rapids: Regency Reference Library, 1983, pp. 425-426; Jack Finegan, *Light From the Ancient Past: Archeological Background of the Hebrew-Christian Religion*, vol 1 Princeton: University Press, 1974; Finegan, Jack *Myth & Mystery: An Introduction to the Pagan Religions of the Biblical World*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991<sup>2</sup>.

Sumerian statue left.<sup>776</sup>



### **Early dynastic period (or Classical Sumerian) (ca. 2800-2400)**

- See the Sumerian king list, p. : 8-10 kings ruled before the Flood at the cities of Eridu, Badtibirra, Larak, Sippar, and Shuruppak.
- See the “Epic of Gilgamesh.”.

**Gilgamesh** - First Dynasty of Uruk, his exploits were written in various compositions. The flood story is contained in one Akkadian tablet (#11) called the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, though Gilgamesh is not mentioned in this text, “suggesting that the flood story was later combined with the Gilgamesh traditions” (Bodin, “Sumerians,” p. 30).

The peak of Sumerian culture is found in the material remains of the royal tombs of **Ur** (see reserve articles on Ur and [Judges-Esther]). Urakagina, the king of Lagash brought about reforms. Lugal-zaggisi (Lugalzaggesi) laid claim to Lagash, Erech, and Ur and ruled from the Lower Sea to the Upper Sea until he was defeated by the Akkadian Sargon of Agade.

### **Akkad/Akkadians period (ca. 2400-2200)**

(right) Akkadian Cylinder Seal<sup>777</sup>



Semites became dominant politically. Founded by **Sargon I** of Agade (Akkad, Accad) (The Great, 2444-2279) who conquered king Lugal-zaggisi. His reign extended into Syria, Asia Minor, and to the Upper Sea. Sumerian culture and religion was readily absorbed by the Akkadians, although they adapted/replaced Sumerian language with Semitic Akkadian (see ANE languages, p. 633).

Sargon’s son Manishtusu (ca. 2306-2292) sailed the Persian Gulf to conquer people hostile to the Akkadians. Naram-Sin (ca. 2291-2255) (son or grandson of Sargon) continued the campaigns against their enemies, greatly expanding the Akkadian sphere. See the **Naram-Sin Victory Stele** which celebrates his victory over the Lullubi who lived in eastern Armenia. **Shar-kali-sharri** succeeded Naram-Sin and spent much of his reign suppressing rebellion of the Lullubi. Akkadia began to collapse after he was overthrown in 2230, and

they were eventually overrun by **Gutians** (from the Caucasus) who ruled until the **Ur III dynasty** revived Sumerian culture (see below). During a period following this revival, Akkadians also regained power until Amorites captured Akkad (ca. 1960), ending the dynasty of Sargon. Not until the rise of the Amorite **Hammurabi** (see below) was Babylonia adequately unified, and then there was a revival of Akkadian culture.

The OT includes Akkad as part of the original kingdom of **Nimrud** in the land of *Shinar* (Babylonia), though clear correlations with early Akkadian history are difficult to establish. Micah associates the “Land of Nimrud” with Assyria.

Gen 10:9-10 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; that is why it is said, “Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD.”

The first centers of his kingdom were Babylon, Erech, Akkad and Calneh, in Shinar.

Micah 5:6

They will rule the land of Assyria with the sword,  
the land of Nimrod with drawn sword.

He will deliver us from the Assyrian when he invades our land  
and marches into our borders.

### **Ur II Dynasty (2112-2004)**

<sup>776</sup> Sumerian statuette 2900-2600.gif

<sup>777</sup> Akkadian cylinder seal.

After a decline in Akkadian power due to barbarian Gutian invasions, there was a Sumerian renaissance and **Gudea** reigned in Lagash (2144?-2124 BC). Gudea had many statues made of himself from dolomite and diorite. He clasps his hands in Sumerian style, yet these sculptures have a distinctive and remarkable naturalism to them.

He was followed by **Ur Nammu** (2064-2046) who made one of the earliest known collections of codified laws, and established the **Ur Dynasty III** (2070-1960). It has been proposed that his son, Shulgi, was the actual composer. He rebuilt Ur's walls, ziggurat (still standing), and palace. Tablet fragments contain his claim to have cleansed his government of corruption and dishonesty, as well as set up a system of just weights and measures.

➤ See legal codes, p. [Pentateuch], p.

➤ See *ANE*, vol 2, pp. 31-34.

(left) Gudea<sup>778</sup>

This Sumerian dynasty eventually came under threat of the **Amorites**, weakening the Ur III empire, and in 2004 Elamites attacked and burned **Ur** and removed Ibbi-Sin (2028-2004), the last ruler of UR III. See Ur, [Pentateuch].

- According to A.Hoerth, Rabbi Jose, J.Usher, B.W.Anderson, and J.Bright, Abraham was born after the destruction of Ur (ca. 2000 or earlier).

- According to W. Kaiser, M.Anstey, M.Unger, S.Schultz, P.Mauro, E. Merrill, and J.Whitcomb, Abraham was born before the destruction of Ur (ca. 2165/6-2117).<sup>779</sup>

#### ***Isin-Larsa period (2000-1750)***

Ur fell to Elam. Sumerian code of laws issued by **Lipit-Ishtar** of Isin.



*The figure of Gudea, an enlightened Sumerian ruler who occupied the throne of Lagash.*

G.Herbert Livingston, *The Pentateuch in Its Cultural Environment*, p.20.

<sup>778</sup> From Livingston, *The Pentateuch*, p. 20.

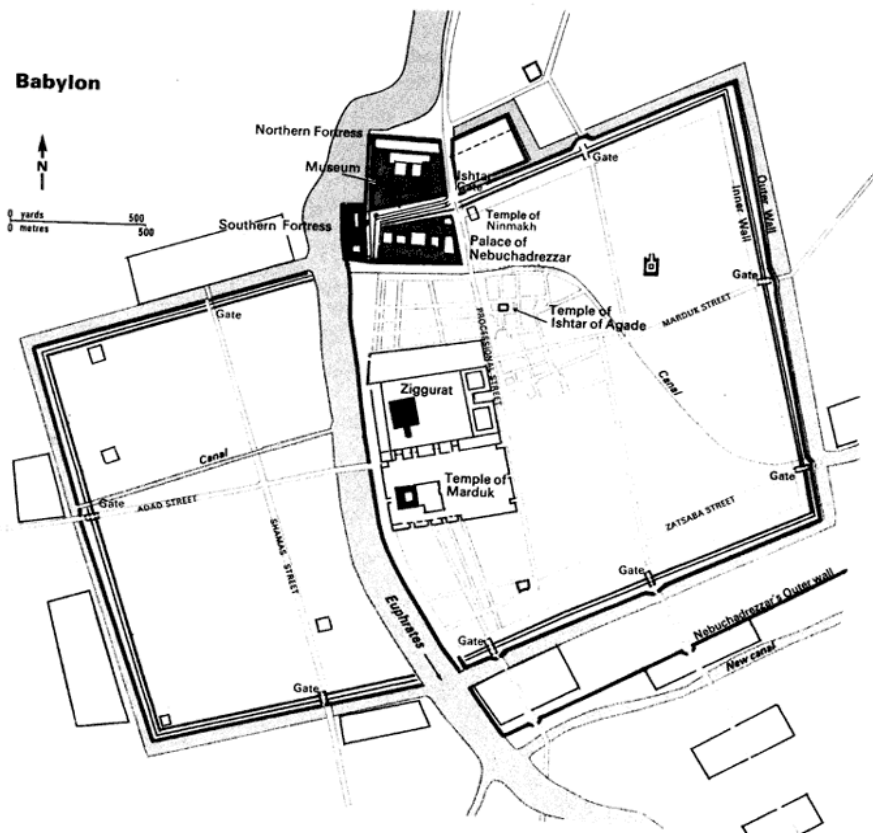
<sup>779</sup> For more comparative OT dating, see fn.. s outlined above have quite a remarkable similarity.



**Mesopotamia:** Gr rendering (Μεσοποταμια) of the Heb “the land between the rivers” – אֶרֶם נְהַרִּים in Gen 24:10. This area originally designated the upper and middle Euphrates and Tigris region (Nahor and Haran), but came to designate the entire Trans-Euphrates region.

(left)ancient Babylon<sup>780</sup>

**Babylonia:** the site of the garden of Eden in the lower SW Mesopotamian region, on the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers (Babylon: modern Hillah on the Euphrates, long. c. 440 30' E, and lat. c. 320 50' N). Modern S. Iraq. Called Shinar in OT (Ge 10:10;11:2; 14:1;14:9; Isa 11:11; Jos 7:21), and also “the land of the Chaldeans” (Jer 24:5; Ezek 12:13). Ancient Semitic Akkad/Akkadians (Gen 10:10) and S. Sumerians, closely associated with Babylonia. <sup>781</sup> Some believe Babylon to be the oldest city in the world. It is the presumed site of the tower of Babel



(Gen 11:1-9). Sargon of Akkad destroyed Babylon’s oldest settlement (from before 3,000).

lb,B; (*bābel*): Nimrod founded Babylon as his capital (Babylonians credit Marduk):

Gen 10:10 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; that is why it is said, “Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD.” <sup>10</sup> The first centers of his kingdom were Babylon, Erech[modern Warka], Akkad and Calneh, in Shinar. <sup>11</sup> From that land he went to Assyria, where he built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah <sup>12</sup> and Resen, which is between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city.

Gen 11:8- 9 So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. <sup>9</sup> That is why it was called Babel—because there the LORD confused (ll'B; *bll*) the language of the whole world. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth. <sup>782</sup>

➤ See Babel below, pp. [Pentateuch lecture-syllabus].

### A.N.E. Languages

**Sumerian** was a living language (agglutinative: combining old words into compounds). After it was superceded (dead) it was studied by scribes of Babylon, Assyria, Elam, Hurrians, Hittites. Over 1/4 million tablets unearthed. Sumerian has nor known linguistic ties to any other languages.

(2000? - ) Third Millennium - Akkadians adapt Sumerian to their own Semitic language Akkadian (2500-2000 B.C.). Old Akkadian is the first known written form of Semitic language. After Sargon the Great, ideograms became less prominent in favor of phonetic expression (syllabic/ideographic cuneiform, not alphabetic). This introduced classical Akkadian (Old Babylonian, 2000-1500 B.C. eg., Hammurabi), and divisions into Assyrian and Babylonian dialects. The *Tell el-Amarna Letters* indicate that *Imperial Akkadian* was the *lingua franca* by the Mosaic era..The widespread use of Akkadian is evidenced by the Amarna tablets written in Akkadian and found in Egypt. Akkadian had many similarities with Hebrew.

<sup>780</sup> Archeological dig map of Babylon ([http://www.ancientimagedatabase.com/babylon\\_city.gif](http://www.ancientimagedatabase.com/babylon_city.gif)). Babylon pictured here was built up as the capital of Babylonia by Nebuchadnezzar.

<sup>781</sup> Akkadians and Sumerians were quite distinct peoples, but they overlap in such a way as to make positive distinctions difficult.

<sup>782</sup> *Paranomasia* (word play) between *bābel* and *bll*.

**Sumerian and Akkadian:** So far the cuneiform script has been discussed only with reference to Sumerian. From the mid-third millennium onwards it was also used to write the Akkadian language in southern Mesopotamia and the Eblaite language at Ebla in Syria (see Chapter 4). So it may be helpful at this point to make some brief remarks on the nature of the Sumerian and Akkadian languages and the way in which the cuneiform script was used to record them.

The Sumerian language first became known from bilingual texts written in Sumerian and Akkadian and found in the seventh-century BC royal libraries at Nineveh. For some time many scholars refused even to believe that it was a language at all and suggested that it was a scribal trick or a form of cryptography. The discovery of vast archives inscribed unilingually in Sumerian put paid to that idea. The early doubters may, however, be forgiven since Sumerian is quite unlike the well-known Indo-European and Semitic language groups.

Linguists describe the language as agglutinative; each fundamental idea, nominal or verbal, is expressed by a single unchanging syllable (or polysyllable) which may be modified by a series of prefixes or postfixes, somewhat as in modern Turkish. Thus 'son' is *dumu*, 'sons' *dumu-mesh*, 'his sons' *dumu-mesh-a-ni*, 'for his sons' *dumu-mesh-a-ni-ir* (for explanation of see p. 22). The verb 'build' is *du*, 'he built' *i-du* or *mu-du*, 'he did not build' *nu-mu-du*. So 'For Ningirsu his god Gudea built his temple' is *Ningirsu dingir-rani-ir Gudea e-a-ni mu-du*. So far so good, but the scribes were hardly consistent in their implementation of the system. In fact in the early periods many of the verbal prefixes and postfixes were not written at all; the sign *du* expressed the idea 'build' and the rest had to be supplied by the reader. In some respects the Sumerian script never quite escapes from the fact that it was originally designed for the purpose of practical book-keeping rather than to express abstract ideas. When we reach the Old Babylonian period (2004—1595 BC), the time when most of the available literary texts were copied, we find that many duplicates of these texts use different groups of prefixes or postfixes. That does not make it easy to write a grammar of Sumerian.

The Sumerian language uses only four vowels: *a*, *e*, *i*, *u*; two half vowels: *w* and *y*; and the following consonants: *b*, *d*, *g*, *k*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *p*, *r*, *s*, *t*, *z*, *h*, *g*, *sh*. The *h* corresponds to a hard *h*, *g* is a nasalised *g*, and *sh* corresponds to English *sh*.

In addition to writing out a text phonetically the Sumerian scribes gave themselves extra clues for their own decipherment by adding certain specific signs to mark different categories of objects. So wooden objects might have the prefix *gish*, stone objects *na<sub>4</sub>*, copper objects *urudu*, cities *uru*; birds have the postfix *mushen*, fish *ku<sub>6</sub>*, cities *ki* (some cities are even *uru-X-ki*).

If all of this seems complicated, matters get worse when one tries to use the Sumerian system for the Akkadian language, for which it was not designed and to which it is not well suited.

Akkadian is one of the Semitic languages, together with Arabic, Hebrew, Aramaic, etc. It has three dialects: Old Akkadian, Babylonian and Assyrian; so by definition anything written in Babylonian or Assyrian can equally be said to be written in Akkadian. Each of these dialects tends to use a slightly variant form of the cuneiform script, although all handbooks to cuneiform take them as one. As in the other Semitic languages, Akkadian words basically have a root of three consonants, e.g. *prs*, which is then modified internally by the doubling of consonants or insertion of vowels, and externally by the addition of prefixes or postfixes, e.g. *iprus*, *purus*, *iparrasuni*. Thus in principle no single cuneiform sign could carry the meaning of an Akkadian word, and the practical solution was to write words out phonetically. To a large extent this happened, but additionally Akkadian-speaking scribes used Sumerian signs to express Akkadian terms, e.g. Sumerian *udu-mesh* for Akkadian *immeru*, 'sheep', or mixed the two, e.g. Sumerian *gal-u* = 'great', but *gal-u* = Akkadian *rabu* 'great'. (For clarity Assyriologists write Sumerian in normal script or capitals and Akkadian in italics.)

The Akkadian language as attested in the cuneiform texts uses the same four vowels as Sumerian: *a*, *e*, *i*, and *u*, having probably lost the vowel *o* under the influence of Sumerian. In addition to the semivowels *w* and *y* it uses the following consonants: *b*, *d*, *g*, *k*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *p*, *q*, *r*, *s*, *t*, *z*, *h*, *s*, *sh*, *t*, and the glottal stop ' . The Sumerian *g* is not used in Akkadian but becomes *g*. The Semitic languages have three *h*-sounds, *h*, *h* and *h*; Arabic has all three, Hebrew uses only *h* and *h*; Akkadian, under the influence of Sumerian, uses only *h*. Akkadian originally had three sibilants *s*, *sh*, and *q*, but after the Old Akkadian period *sh* drops out of use. The three emphatic sounds *s*, *t* and *q*, the glottal stop ' , and the letter *p* which are used in Akkadian, do not occur in Sumerian. Thus the Sumerian script was never ideally suited to writing Akkadian. A new sign was invented for ' , but otherwise several different conventions were used at different times and in different areas to get over the problems. The distinctions between *b* and *p*, between *d*, *t*, and *t*, and between *g*, *k* and *q* are never consistently marked in the script. It is curious that no single agreed solution was ever enforced, such was the strength of the old tradition.

In taking over and adapting the Sumerian syllabary the Akkadian-speaking scribes added to it still further values, increasing the aspects of homophony and polyphony Thus the Sumerian sign a 'hand' corresponds to Akkadian *idu* 'hand'; hence the sign comes to be used for the syllable *id*, and also for *it*, *it*, *ed*, *et* and *et*. The total number of distinct cuneiform signs in use from the late third millennium onwards is about six hundred, and the number of possible values is far higher. The possible variations did not create as many problems as one might suppose, however, since at any given period and for any given class of text a rather more limited repertoire of signs was used, making life easier both for the scribe and the modern reader. Also in most cases the correct reading of a sign is made clear by the context and by the preceding and following signs.

Although Sumerian had dropped out of common use as a spoken language by the eighteenth century BC and was superseded by Akkadian, it continued to be used by the scribes both as a regular form of shorthand (as in writing *udu* for *immeru*), in composing many monumental inscriptions (for the sake of tradition), and in copying and recopying Sumerian word-lists and literary texts. By the first millennium for their own convenience the scribes frequently copied Sumerian literature with each Sumerian line followed by its Akkadian translation. The very latest of all cuneiform texts, astronomical texts of the first century AD, are almost entirely written in Sumerian logograms.<sup>783</sup>

Recent theoretical developments in understanding Sumerian and Akkadian, includes M.Civil who correlates Sumerian and Akkadian in a pre-written, oral, bilingual situation (long time period). That is, there are loan words in both directions, although tracing pre-written oral history is naturally next to impossible. Sumerian died ca. 2000 BC, whereas the oldest written texts are ca 3100. Some believe that there were probably many unwritten languages preceding the period of Sumerian writing, but with the loss of memory of info, writing became a necessity.

(1000? - ) Second Millennium - Horites and Hittites adopt and modify Sumerian

**First Millennium** - Urartians of Armenia adopt Sumerian

Also influenced by Sumerian: Old Persian syllabic and Ras Shamra script (Ugaritic)

900-612 - Aramaic cursive alphabetic script employed in parts of Mesopotamia (see Melqart *stele*)

**Languages of the Middle East<sup>784</sup>**

Non-Semitic	Semitic		
	<i>Northeast Semitic</i>	<i>Northwest Semitic</i>	<i>Southwest Semitic</i>
Sumerian	Akkadian Old Akkadian Babylonian (south) Assyrian (north) (collectively called Assyro-Babylonian)	Canaanite Hebrew Ugaritic Amorite Eblaite (unresolved) Moabite Phoenician Edomite Aramaic Early A. Biblical A. Persian A. Syriac Mandaic Nabataean Samaritan Aramaic Modern Aramaic dialects	Arabic Ethiopic

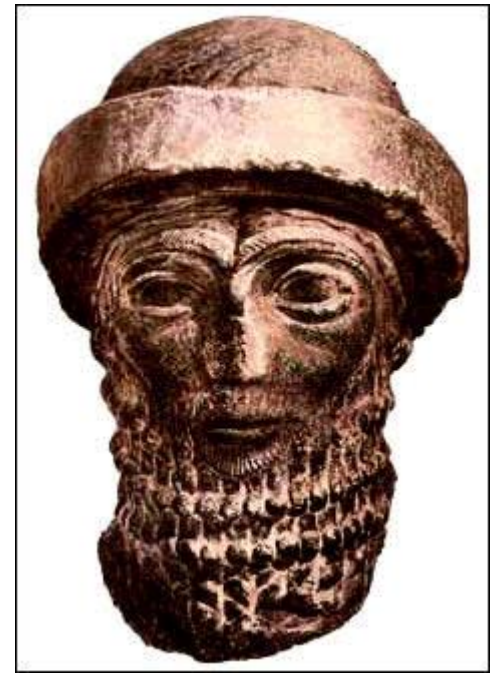
<sup>783</sup> Walker, "Cuneiform," *Reading the Past: Ancient Writing from Cuneiform to the Alphabet*, Bath, UK: British Museum Press, pp. 25-27. Transliterations are not all corrected in this scan.

<sup>784</sup> Jack Finegan, *Myth & Mystery: An Introduction to the Pagan Religions of the Biblical World*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991<sup>2</sup>, p. 21; J. T. Hooker, "The Early Alphabet," *Reading*, p. 205. See my syllabus on OT Introduction.

(left) (Hammurabi's Stele)<sup>785</sup>



Hammurabi



(right) Hammurabi's bust<sup>786</sup>



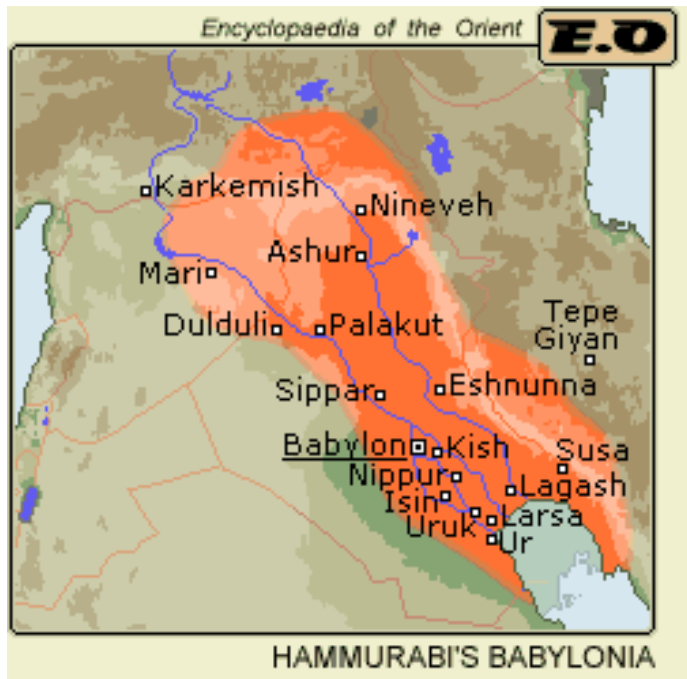
fragment of H.s law<sup>787</sup>

(left) A large stele found in AD 1902 at Susa on which Hammurabi reports to Babylon's national god Marduk that he had been a "king of justice."

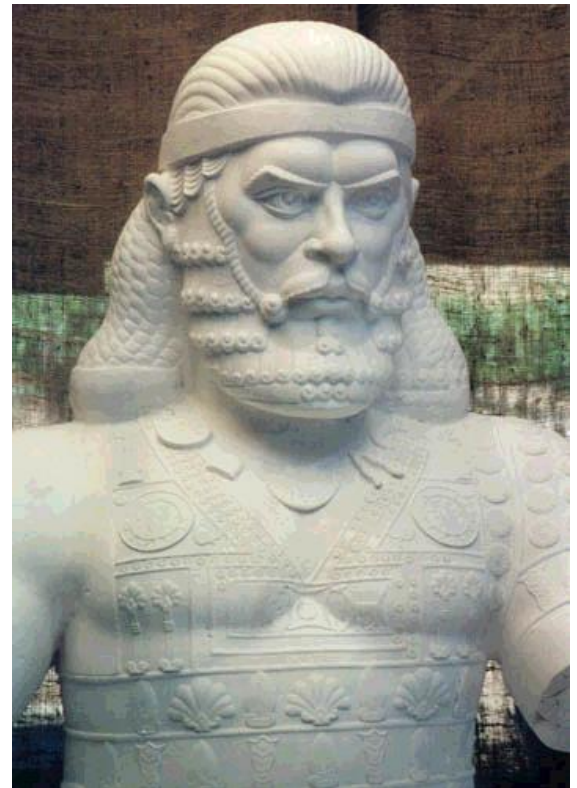
<sup>785</sup> The Code of Hammurabi is found here in cuneiform on a diorite stele over seven feet tall. H. stands before the god Marduk (or Enlil?). From Susa ([http://www.usu.edu/anthro/origins\\_of\\_writing/public\\_texts/optimized/hammurabi.jpg](http://www.usu.edu/anthro/origins_of_writing/public_texts/optimized/hammurabi.jpg)).

<sup>786</sup> Bust of Hammurabi (<http://www.txdirect.net/users/richard/hammur.jpg>).

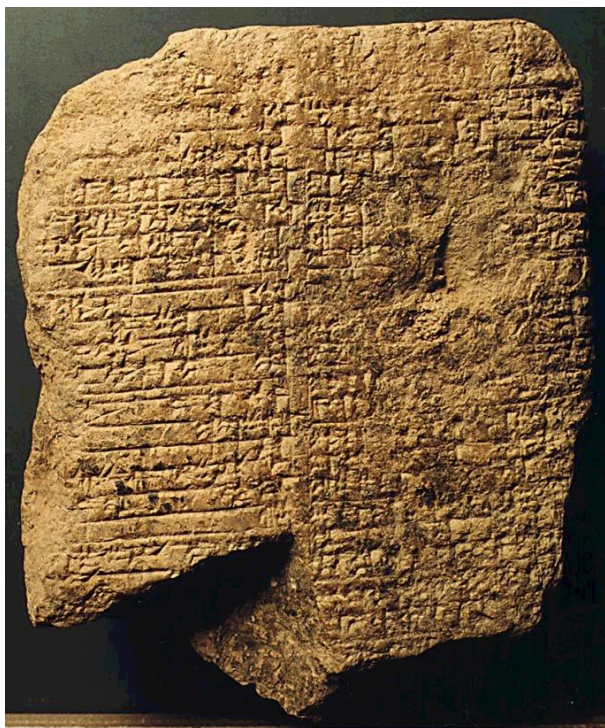
<sup>787</sup> Limestone relief fragment of Hammurabi and his code dedicated to a goddess (<http://www.shunya.net/Text/Herodotus/images/Hammurabi.jpg> in the British Museum).



(above) Map of Hammurabi's Babylon<sup>788</sup>



(above) A plaster bust of Hammurabi.<sup>789</sup>



MS 2813

The Hammurabi Law Code. Babylonia, 1750-1700 BC

In what is called the **Old Babylonian period**, Amorites took the city of Mari (ca. 2000) and made Babylon their capital (ca. 1830). See Canaanites, p. 601. King **Hammurabi** (Hammurapi, Akkadian for “the god Hammu heals”) of Babylon (1792-1750) was an Amorite who took the city of Mari (see Akkadian Mari tablets) in the 18<sup>th</sup> c. from the Amorite king Zimri-lim. See *Hammurabi's code* in readings packet.<sup>790</sup> The **Mari tablets** contain biblical names such as Jacob, Abraham, Levi, Ishmael, Benjamin, Nahor, and Haran. The Old Babylonian period produced a famous educational and literary center for many scribes and scholars. Many tablets of cuneiform were produced on mathematics, astronomy, and astrology.

**Kassites** (ca. 1570-1150) from the mountains of Luristan came to control Babylon and had close relations with Egypt. In 1124-1103 Nebuchadnezzar made his capital at Babylon which initiated a hundred year dynasty (**Middle Assyrian**). Subsequently, Babylon was controlled alternatively by Assyrians and Chaldeans (Babylonians). The Assyrian King Sennacherib destroyed Babylon (698), only to be rebuilt by Ashurbanipal (668-633). Chaldeans under Nabopolassar initiated the **Neo-Babylonian** empire in 626/5 when he

began to reign in Babylon. He was followed by Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562), an expansionist who sought to dominate Egypt, Syria, and Palestine. Babylon defeated Pharaoh Neco at Carchemish in 605, establishing Babylonian supremacy in Syria-Palestine (Jerusalem and temple destroyed). See 1 & 2 Kings for more history and illustrations.<sup>791</sup>

<sup>788</sup> A map of Hammurabi's empire ([http://i-cias.com/e.o/ill/map\\_hammurabi.gif](http://i-cias.com/e.o/ill/map_hammurabi.gif)).

<sup>789</sup> From <http://www.fredparhad.com/images/hammurabi-plaster.jpg>

<sup>790</sup> Hammurabi's 282 laws are arranged as follows: theft and miscellaneous decisions (1-25), property (26-49), commercial law (100-126), marriage (127-161), priestesses (178-184), adoption (185-194), assault (195-240), agricultural (241-267), rates and wages (268-277), and slaves (278-282). See also similar earlier collections of laws in Ur-Nammu, Lipit-Ishtar, Eshnunna. Compare OT laws: on false witnesses, see Hammurabi 1, 3-4 and Ex. 23:1-3; Deut 19:16-20, on kidnapping, see Hammurapi 14 and Ex. 21:1, on loss of animals on deposit, see Hammurapi 266-7, on marriage, divorce, and sexual offences, see Hammurapi 129 and Deut 22:22.

<sup>791</sup> An example of the law code of Hammurabi (<http://www.nb.no/baser/schoyen/5/5.4/ms2813.jpg> MS 2064).



**Assyria:** upper Mesopotamian plain, the Syrian desert is on the west, Babylonia is in the south, the Urartian and Persian hills on the north and east. Asshur (rWVa') was the second son of Shem, and the source of name for Assyria (Asshur being the ancient capital) (note: distinct from the Asshurites, descendants of Abraham and Keturah in Gen 25:3): See also Gen 10:22; 25:1; Nu 24:22; Nu 24:24; 1 Ch 1:17; Eze 27:23

Gen 10:22 The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud and Aram.

Gen 2:14 The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

## B. Summary of A.N.E. gods and their consorts<sup>792</sup>

- Hoerth, Alfred J., Mattingly, Gerald L., Yamauchi, Edwin M. eds. *Peoples of the Old Testament World*.
- Ions, V. *Egyptian Mythology*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1968.
- Livingston, G. Herbert. *The Pentateuch in its Cultural Environment*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988<sup>2</sup>.
- Montet, P. *Eternal Egypt*. New York: New American Library, 1964.
- Pritchard, J. (ed. ), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament or The ANE*, vol. 1.
- Quirke, Stephen and Jeffrey Spencer, eds. *The British Museum Book of Ancient Egypt*. London: British Museum Press, 1992.
- Soden, Wolfram von. *The Ancient Orient: An Introduction to the Study of the Ancient Near East*. Translated by Donald G. Schley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.
- Walton, John H. *Ancient Israelite Literature in its Cultural Context*.
- Wiseman, D. J. ed. *People of Old Testament Times*.
- Black, Jeremy and Anthony Green. *Gods, Demons, and Symbols of Mesopotamia: An Illustrated Dictionary*. London: British Museum Press, 1992.
- Finegan, Jack *Myth & Mystery: An Introduction to the Pagan Religions of the Biblical World*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991<sup>2</sup> pp. 19-38
- See discussion on "Religion and Revelation," p. 139.

The following material is given primarily for a point of reference for contrast with Israelite belief and worship. It is helpful to be reminded that when scholars casually claim direct dependency and religious similarity between Israel's theology and that of the ANE world, that upon closer examination this view is untenable.

Some terminology:

- ⇒ **Cosmogony:** the mythic description of the beginnings of the universe.
- ⇒ **Cosmology:** how the world came into being, how it is ordered, and how supernatural phenomena relate to the world and humanity. It involves a mythic description of the operation of the universe.
- ⇒ **Mythology:** interpretation of human experience and custom
- ⇒ **Divinization/magic:** bridge the natural and supernatural worlds in order to gain insight into, and power over, one's destiny, or the destiny of others. To gain an advantage over others or for oneself. Often involves seeking to know the future through some medium or object. The use of magic was manipulative.<sup>793</sup>

## 1. Sumerian pantheon<sup>794</sup>

- ☞ Mesopotamian religion included the belief that all things in the universe were animate and have a will and personality. All entities live in a kind of cosmic society in which the most powerful rule. The gods of Mesopotamia were immanent.

Sumerian gods came to number in the many hundreds and possibly thousands. "The gods of the Sumerians attained their power primarily because they had at their disposal certain powers of the natural order."<sup>795</sup> The gods do not transcend the universe; there is a prior, primordial realm from which they derive<sup>796</sup>.

Nammu - primeval sea goddess

<sup>792</sup> See Jack Finegan, *Myth & Mystery: An Introduction to the Pagan Religions of the Biblical World*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991<sup>2</sup>, pp. 119-154; William Foxwell Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan: A Historical Analysis of Two Contrasting Faiths*. University of London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1968; repr. ed Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1990<sup>2</sup>; G. H. Livingston, *The Pentateuch in its Cultural Environment*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988<sup>2</sup>, pp. 125-137; Jeremy Black and Anthony Green, *Gods, Demons, and Symbols of Mesopotamia: An Illustrated Dictionary*, London: British Museum Press, 1992.

<sup>793</sup> See VanGemeren's divinination and magic discussion and illustration, *Prophetic Word*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>794</sup> Adapted largely from G. Herbert Livingston, *The Pentateuch in its Cultural Environment*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988<sup>2</sup>. See also Black and Green. *Gods; Finegan, Myth & Mystery*, pp. 19-38.

<sup>795</sup> Von Soden, *Ancient Orient*, p. 177. He notes that the city gods had a princely state with administrators and divine artisans, and that all Mesopotamian gods had a human form (*ibid.* , p. 175).

<sup>796</sup> See Walton, *Ancient Israelite Literature*, p. 236.

An (Anu) - home was Uruk, heaven (sky) god (father of Enlil), the highest god

Ki - earth goddess

who fostered

Enlil (of Nippur) - the actual ruler of the pantheon, the air (atmosphere) god who pushed apart An and Ki, captured and mated with his mother, Ki. ; subsequently known as Ninhursag, Nimmah, and Nintu, and identified as Mother Earth.

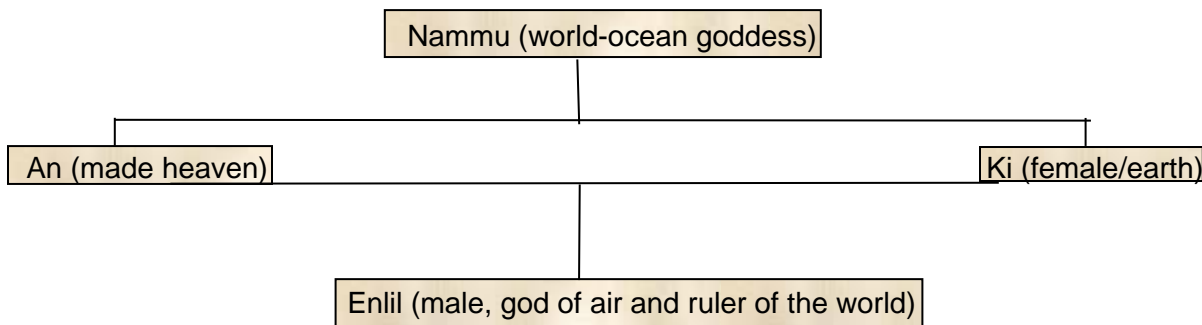
Enlil also mated with Ninlil - the air goddess

who fostered

Nanna (Sin) - home was Ur, the moon god who mated with the sky goddess Ningal

who fostered

Utu - the sun god, home was Larsa and Sippar



### **Hierarchical view of the gods:**

Council of seven members:

the Big Four: Enlil (at Nippur) - leader

Enki - home was Eridu, water god of wisdom

An (Anu) - home was Uruk, heaven god (father of Enlil), the highest god

Ninhursag (Nimmah, Nintu) - Mother Earth, prominence waned

the others: Nanna (Sin) - moon god

Utu - sun god

Inanna (his sister) - home was Uruk, war, fertility, productivity, morning, and evening star goddess (Venus?); Akkadian Ishtar? She became the most important goddess in western Asia.

Ninurta - home in Nippur, Enlil's son, god of victorious warfare, plant and animal fertility

Nansha - home was Uruk, goddess of fish and birds and interpreter of dreams

The Anunnaki - fifty lower rank workers

The Iggi - minor sky gods and goddesses

The gala - the multitudes of evil demons

### **Sanctuaries<sup>797</sup>:**

Sumerian: Eridu - oldest temple found, late fourth mill., 12x15. Enki, the water god worshipped, contained a niche for idol and flat-topped mound of bricks for altar.

### **Ritual:** the early Akkadians, Babylonians, and Assyrians adopted the Sumerian religion. <sup>798</sup>

Idols needed careful, daily care: after a "mouth-washing" ceremony it was put into service and daily washed, dressed, perfumed, and fed, etc. Incense and sprinkling purified the temple of their presence.

## **2. Egyptian pantheon: the four major cosmologies at four main cult centers**

☞ All of the elements of the universe embodied different gods, while the natural order was thought to be

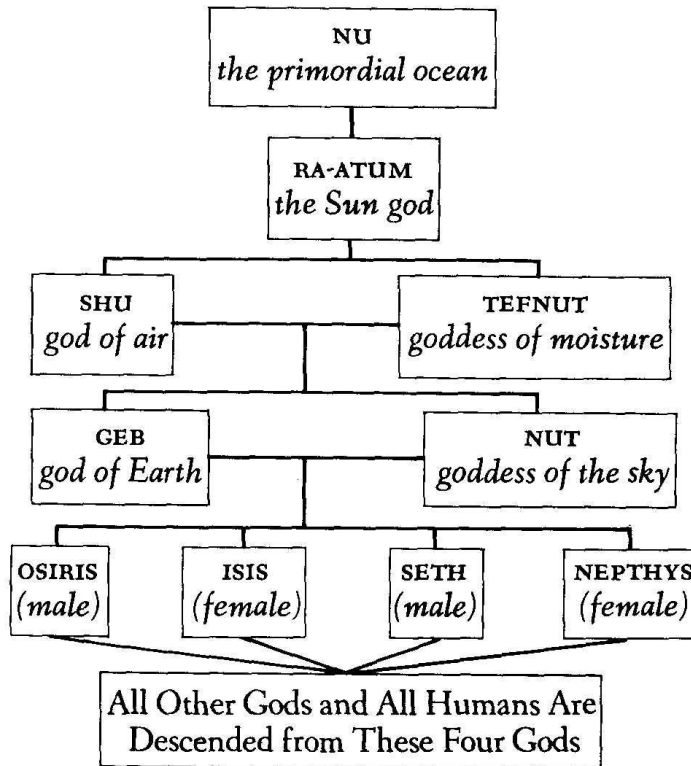
<sup>797</sup> Livingston, *The Pentateuch*, pp. 109-110

<sup>798</sup> The Akkadians - under Sargon I adopted Sumerian pantheon. Eblaite tablets - name some 500 deities, recurrence of Ya(w).

related to a static order in the cosmos. Arranging one's life to find harmony with this cosmic order would enable one to live in this world with greater success, while preparing one for the afterlife (and through mummification).



## THE CHIEF EGYPTIAN GODS



Roy Gallant, *How Life Began: Creation versus Evolution*, NY: Four Winds (left) Egyptian gods.<sup>799</sup>

### a) *Heliopolis*

The central pantheon, the Ennead,

Nun - god of primeval wastes, gave rise to primeval earth hill Atum (later the sun)

Atum - *fathered* from himself

Shu - the air god

Tefnut - dew and moisture goddess

Geb - earth god

Nut - sky goddess

Osiris - vegetation, nether-world god

Isis - fertility and mother goddess

Seth - red desert and war god

Nephthys - mother goddess

Osiris and Isis - *begot*

Horus - falcon, sun-god, and the pharaoh

Ra (Re) - father sun-god, identified with Atum, confused with Horus. (The sun was the dominant factor in every day life for Egypt (in contrast to the Mesopotamian pantheon. )<sup>800</sup>

<sup>799</sup> Paul Gallant, *How Life Began: Creation versus Evolution* (New York: Four Winds Press, 1975), p. 33.

<sup>800</sup> Kingship - Pharaoh was god, Horus, the son of Ra, before birth and after death (p. 123). "The Egyptians understood the essence of the universe as static. The ever-reliable sun punctuated this belief, and, since the pharaoh was the sun in the flesh, he was identified with the cosmos. When the pharaoh was crowned, he did not become a god; he was simply unveiled as a god." In artistic representation - Pharaoh was depicted with animal and human features, he towered above all earthly creatures, but was the same size as the other gods, sacrifices were offered to him. He was the "lord of Upper and Lower Egypt, but he was the single monarch of all Egypt" (p. 125). The pharaoh dominated natural processes of the crops, cattle reproduction, and the flooding of the Nile. He distributed the harvest and kept society operating in order. Amenhotep IV - repudiated throne, renamed Akhnaton or Iknaton, revolted against Amon-Ra and built city in honor of Aton the sun disk declared supreme. Other worship was forbidden.



## b) Memphis

- See the *Shabaka Stone* for Memphite theology in abridged form in Pritchard, vol. 1, *The Ancient Near East*, pp. 1-2.

The high god Ptah was Atum, god of watery wastes and land. All members of pantheon were manifestations (creations of) of Ptah. Not monotheism, monism, or pantheism, but an ordering of the pantheon under one rule.

Ptah can be compared in some aspects with YHWH as the one who is an absolute creator, and who similarly uses speech to create. According to Currid, the Memphite account has closer analogies to Israel than do Mesopotamian accounts of creation.<sup>801</sup>

(Thus) it happened that it was said of Ptah: “He who made all and brought the gods into being” (Shabaka Stone, “Memphite Theology of Creation,” Pritchard, *ANE*, p. 2)

## c) Hermopolis

At the Ogdoad, four pairs of gods, goddesses, represent aspects of chaos, later under Theban influence they died and became deities of the netherworld.

Nun and wife - primeval ocean

Huh and consort - symbolized infinitude

Kuk and mate - the phenomenon of darkness

Amon and wife - the atmosphere or space (?)

## d) Thebes

Capital from middle of sixteenth to early eleventh cent., influenced by Hermopolis.<sup>802</sup>

Amon - transformed into creator of all else, incorporating all other deities in himself, yet the Ogdoad remained as expressions of Amon.

Re - Amon's eye - thus Amon-Re

Thoth - the moon (also Amon)

Horus - falcon sun-god (also Amon)

“To the Egyptians, two opposites must be held in balance in order to have totality. Therefore, the pharaoh was both Horus (Lower Egypt) and Seth (Upper Egypt); he was Ra, the sun, and Osiris, the god of vegetation. The pharaoh was the bond between heaven and earth, between the divine realm and man.”<sup>803</sup>

(above) Horus



### Notes on Egypt:

- pantheism is the *status quo*
- gods were *born* of water
- gods are in human/animal forms
- gods associated with ruling class
- gods distinct from ordinary people

### Note on the OT:

- God is God of a people
- God is “I am who I am”
- God is transcendent/immanent
- God is Creator
- God is merciful/compassionate

<sup>801</sup> See *Ancient Egypt*, pp. 60-73.

<sup>802</sup> Thebes and Memphis were rivals - Thebes claimed the birthplace of Osiris who became the supreme god in Egypt.

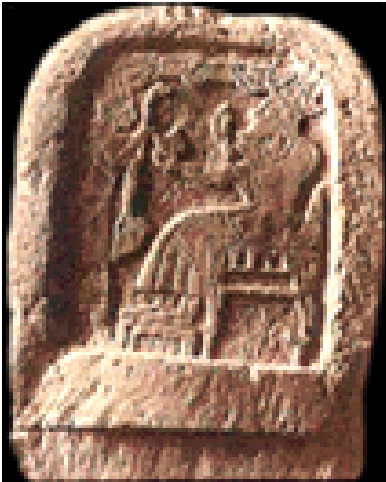
<sup>803</sup> Livingstone, *The Pentateuch*, p. 124.

- God is righteous judge

### 3. *Levant pantheon*

➤ See “Ugartic Myths” (Pritchard, *ANE*, vol. 1, pp. 92-132).

☞ Animal/human sacrifice, prostitution, fertility rites, soothsaying, divination, necromancy: gods, as manifestations of nature, control the universe, thus the cycles of seasons and nature rites of sex/fertility feature prominently in order to invoke the gods’ favor.



El - was supreme, creator, “Lofty One” or “Strong One”

Asherah - wife of El, mother goddess, patroness of diviners

Baal (p.[Pentateuch]) - was more active than El, son of El?, fertility and storm god (struggles with Mot, god of drought), sexual aspects: Baal mates with Ashtoreth to bring rain/fertility, gradually replaced El, King of heaven and earth at Mount Casius of Zaphon. Baal Hadad is also called the son of Dagon. Ahab and Jezebel promote in ninth c. Israel

Melqart – a Phoenician deity introduced into Israel by Jezebel under Ahab

Tanit – a Phoenician goddess requiring child sacrifice

Anath and Astarte (Ishtar) - sisters and wives of Baal

Anath - Queen of Heaven, protectress/destroyer, lover/killer

Astarte - fertility and war, naked girl on stallion with weapons (planet Venus was emblem)

Koshar - god of craftsmanship, magic, and music

Horan - god of war

Resheph - god of war, disease, and nether world, wife Adum

Adum - the red earth, wife of Resheph

Dagon - W. Semitic grain god (principle god to Philistines; known at Mari 2500 B.C.and Ugarit 1,000 years later). (see p. [Judges-Esther])

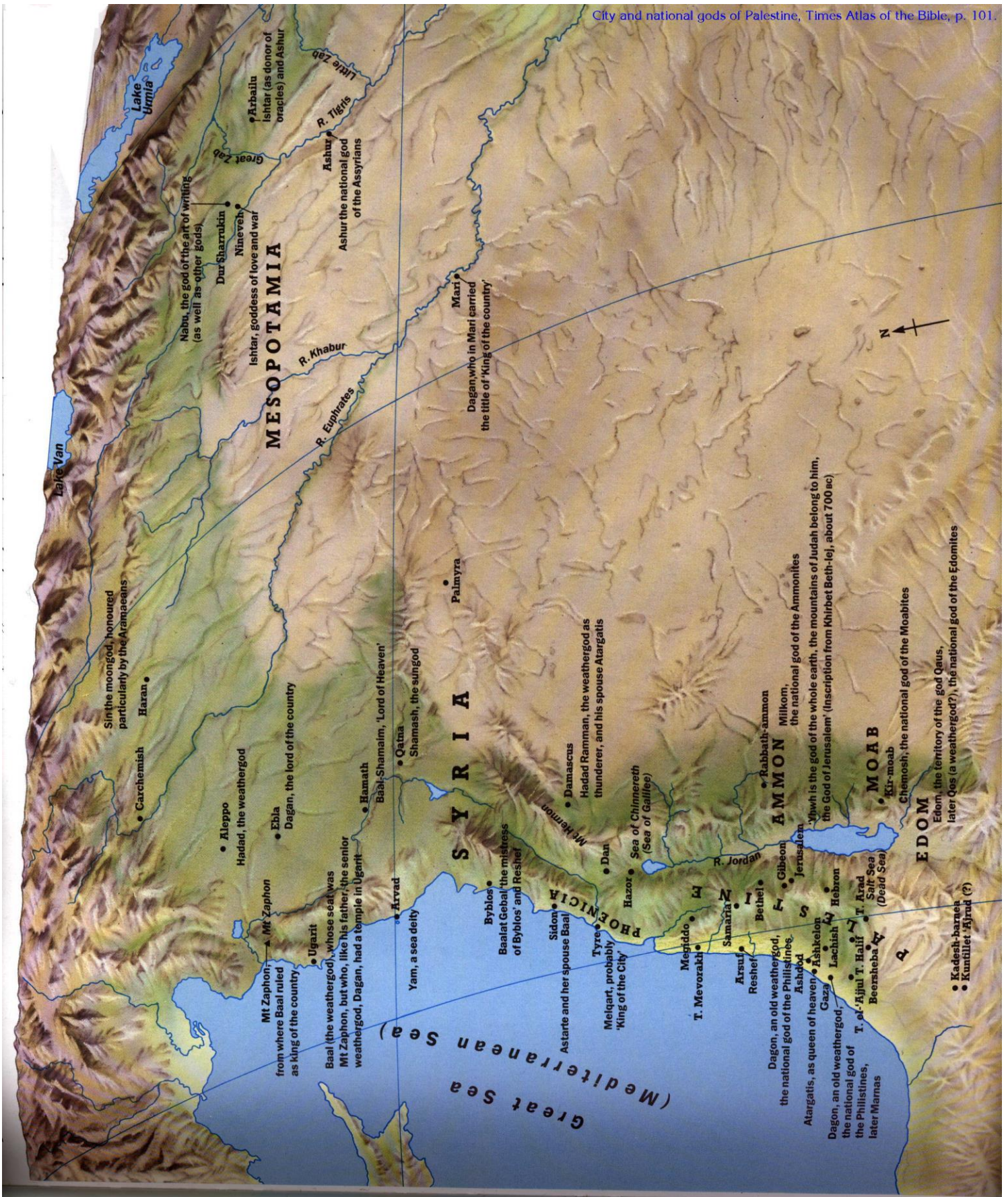
Sin - moon god

Yam - sea goddess

Shamash - sun god



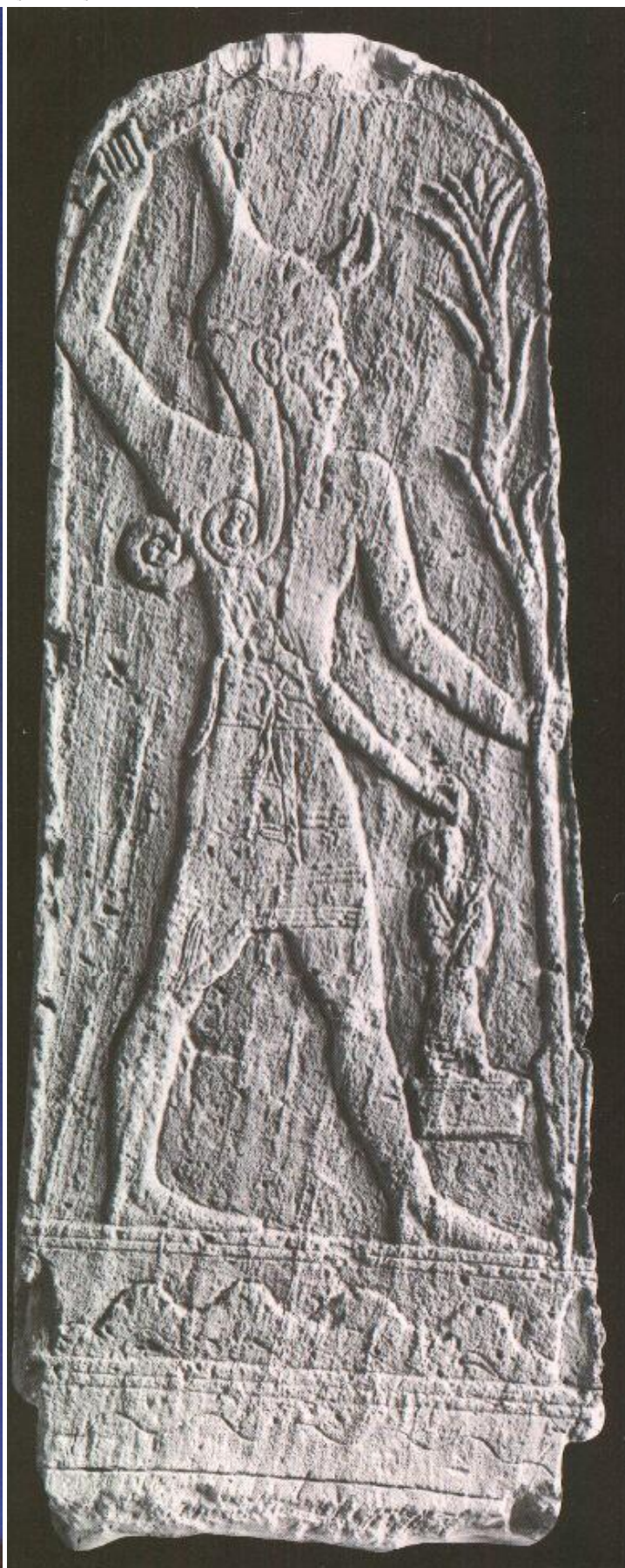
(left) This statuette of a god may have been the cult figure in the Canaanite temple in the ruins of which it was found. Cast in bronze and covered with gold leaf, it is an idol of the type forbidden by the much later Hebrew prophets. The identity of this bearded and enthroned deity is uncertain but is most likely to be El-the chief god of the pantheon and father of the other gods. Palestine: Megiddo, Stratum VII or VI, Late Bronze Age II, ca. 1350-1200 B.C., Gilded bronze, 25.4 cm H, Excavated by the Oriental Institute, 1935-6, OIM A18316



gods of Palestine<sup>804</sup>

<sup>804</sup> Map of City and National Gods of Palestine, 2000 B.C.-500 B.C. from *The Times Atlas of the Bible*, p. 101.

The Baal of Lightning<sup>805</sup>



<sup>805</sup> The "Baal of lightning" from Ras Shamra (1900-1750 B.C.).

## a) *Canaanite religion and temple shrines*

➤ See *Times Atlas of the Bible*, “Temples in Palestine,” pp. 88-89.

### **Characteristics: religious aspects**

The material on Canaan’s religion is both vast and complex, and so all I can attempt is a summation of its highlights. In order to understand the world Israel was entering and the challenge placed before them in establishing worship of Yahweh in the Tabernacle and Temple we must have some understanding of the religion of Canaan. Although Canaan’s religious life is by no means entirely homogeneous or systematic we can understand its broad pattern and many of its particulars. The pantheon of Canaan had the typical perturbations of all pagan religion in the ancient world, but there is a thread of continuity that we can discern. As Albright says:

Canaan developed and organized a priesthood, temple service, and pantheon, and since 1929 we know that the Canaanites had a great many temples and shrines adorned with idols, that they had elaborate priestly institutions, and that their pantheon was no whit less highly organized than the pantheons of Egypt, Babylonia, the Hittites, or the nearly contemporary Homeric Greeks. Cult practice included ritual prostitution of both sexes (rampantly), homosexual guilds were found in the temples, dancing and singing with divination, snake worship, and human sacrifice.<sup>806</sup>

There were certain aspects of Canaanite religion that were universal in the ancient Near East and centered around notions of female deity and fertility. “Apparently one of the oldest religious concepts in the ancient Near East is belief in a great female deity, a universal mother of all life, particularly of human and animal life, who embodied fertility as such in herself. A young god was typically associated with her of the type of the so-called dying and rising gods. . . .” (e. g., Ishtar and Tammuz; Astarte and Asherah).<sup>807</sup> The most popular ‘rising god’ in Canaan was Baal, familiar to all readers of the Old Testament. Baal had a critical role in the life of the Canaanites because of his part in the cycles of the seasons.<sup>808</sup> There was variety in the way these myths and beliefs were expressed throughout the Bronze Age, but the picture of depravity was generally consistent by the very nature of the deities themselves. As Harrison has well said:

The depraved nature of Canaanite religion is indicated by the character of Anat, the sister-spouse of Baal, who was variously identified with Astarte, Asherah, and Ashtoreth in cultic worship. Another equally vicious characteristic was the fiendish savagery of the composite goddess. A fragment of the Baal epic shows her indulging in a massacre of young and old alike:

She smites the people of the seashore  
Destroys mankind of the sunrise. . .  
She piles up heads on her back  
She ties up hands in her bundle. . .  
Anut gluts her liver with laughter  
Her heart is filled with joy.<sup>809</sup>

We also read when Anath found the dead body of Baal:

While Anath walked along, lamenting (?)  
The beauty of her brother -- how fair!  
The charm of her brother -- how seemly!  
She devoured his flesh without a knife  
And drank his blood without a cup.<sup>810</sup>

<sup>806</sup>William F. Albright, *The Biblical Period From Abraham to Ezra: An Historical Survey*. New York: Harper and Row, 1963, p. 16-17.

[Also bestiality in Lev 17:23,24.]

<sup>807</sup>Martin Noth, *The Old Testament World*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964, p. 280. See also, Albright, William F. *The Biblical Period From Abraham to Ezra: An Historical Survey*. New York: Harper and Row, 1963, p. 17. Asherah was the “Creatress of the gods,” a beautiful naked prostitute called “holiness” in Canaan and Egypt. Two other principle goddesses were Anath (who was raped by Baal) and Astarte (Hebrew “Ashteroth”) who conceive but do not give birth.

<sup>808</sup>“Canaanite Deities and Religion,” *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 1, Walter A. Elwell ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988, p. 411. “Baal meets his archenemy Mot (death) and is killed. The god of fertility is dead, and the result is that all creation is affected adversely. Nature become unproductive and infertile. Baal’s sister-consort, Anath, seeks to avenge his death. Having searched out Mot, she kills him in one of the most violent scenes in all mythological writings. After Mot’s demise Baal is “resurrected.” He comes to life and mates with Anath, reviving the drought-stricken land” (ibid., p. 412). This myth accounted for the succession of the seasons. The Canaanites believed that the land regained its fertility because of the annual mating of Baal and Anath.

<sup>809</sup>Harrison, R. K. *Old Testament Times*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970, p. 168-169. A center dedicated to Anat was excavated at Gebal (Byblos), a very important site in ancient Phoenicia, which was notorious for its fertility rites and ceremonial prostitution. Terra-cotta figurines have been unearthed at a great many sites throughout Palestine, and they invariably represented a naked woman with exaggerated sexual features.”

As we see, this sort of religious expression is antithetical to the biblical vision portrayed in the Bible, and that will become even clearer when we look at cultic practice as well.

The deities which governed the mind of the Canaanites composed a web of cosmic and earthy beings that were supposed to rule the fate of man through their manipulation of the material fortunes of man which were determined largely by the weather. It was therefore necessary to properly worship and placate these forces in their own terrain. This involved a close relationship to the ‘natural’ site which was presumed, for various reasons, to suit the supplication of the ‘celestial’ forces.<sup>811</sup> The frequent expression in the Bible of “high place” evidences



something of the heart of the Canaanite cult. It is there that the worship of the god of nature, Baal, would most likely be found: at high places in very natural settings, and probably in groves of trees or at the site of what was considered a sacred tree. The term ‘Asherah’ in Hebrew is translated ‘grove of trees’ in the KJV.<sup>812</sup> But it is not clear that it was definitely related to trees, and in virtually all OT references it is said to have been ‘made.’<sup>813</sup>



Astarte

## b) Canaan and Israel: culture and religion<sup>814</sup>

<sup>810</sup>Albright, William Foxwell. *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan: A Historical: Analysis of Two Contrasting Faiths*. Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1968, pp. 131-132. Also, “The practice of *omophagia*, eating sacrifices raw, is well known. ” “*Anat* is probably an abbreviation of an original ‘*Anat-pane-Baal*, meaning something like ‘Turning of Baal’s Face, that is, ‘Wrath of Baal’” p. 134.

<sup>811</sup> See, Martin Noth, *The Old Testament World*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964. “The great *cosmic gods*, the heavenly and astral gods. . . were worshipped everywhere in the ancient Orient. . . ” These deities were universal and were related to the heavens above. They played a great role alongside the localized deities. The local deities “had a particular significance especially for cultic activity. ” “The OT lumps them together under the concept of the Baals of the Canaanites. They were thought of as living in sacred trees or springs, on mountain tops, or in sacred rocks. ” They were either “beneficial or dread spirits (numina), which in the limited surroundings of their dwellings either provided fertility of the land or wrought sinister, demonic consequences. They were provided with offerings as gifts at their sacred places, which were thought of as their abodes and which did not necessarily require a particular inventory except the sacred tree, rock, or the like, and perhaps at least an implied enclosure of the consecrated precinct” (*ibid.* , pp. 281-282). *City gods* (genii loci) were “accorded urban houses, or temples, just like the city dwellers” p. 283.

<sup>812</sup> The name *Asherah* is a special case. Originally it was a shortened form of the phrase *Atiratu yammi*, “She Who Treads on the (dragon) Sea, ’ or the like. Later it became an ordinary term for a grove of trees which was popularly considered as sacred. This we know from the LXX, which translates it by *alsos*, as well as from the context of the word in various Hebrew passages. Such groves of high trees were rare in ancient Palestine . . . old groves on hill-tops were then attached to saints’ shrines” (William Foxwell Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan: A Historical: Analysis of Two Contrasting Faiths*. Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1968, p. 191).

<sup>813</sup> See Gen 21:33; Deut 12:3; 16:21; Judg 6:25-26,28,30; 1Ki 15:13,16:33; 2 Ki 13:6,17:16,26; 21:3,7,23:4,6-7,15; 2 Ch 15:16; 33:3; 34:4,7; Isa 27:9; Mich 5:13; Jer 17:2. “The Asherah was apparently not a natural object but one that was constructed by man, an artifact. Only once is the verb ‘to plant’ used, Deut 16:33, and here the meaning is implant. The conclusion then is that in the OT Asherah stands for the Canaanite goddess represented by a carved wooden image implanted into the ground, usually adjacent to an altar dedicated to the god Baal and located on a hilltop under a leafy tree (Patai) (Harris, Archer, Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Chicago: Moody, 1980, vol. 1, p. 81). Also, “Canaanite Deities and Religion,” *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 1, Walter A. Elwell ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988. “Canaanite worship centered on a cultic shrine or “high place” where sacrifices were offered. Archeological evidence indicates that animals of all sizes were offered at great temple shrines such as Beth-Shan. ” Also, Ruth Hestrin “Understanding Asherah: Exploring Semitic Iconography,” *BAR* vol. XVII No. 5, September/October, 1991.

<sup>814</sup> Following Bryant Wood’s Chronology wherever possible (who follows K. A. Kitchen in *World Archeology* 23 (1991) and A. Mazar in *Archeology of the Land of the Bible* (1990), and Wentze and Van Siclen in *Studies in Honor of George Hughe* (1977)). The periods: Early Bronze I ca. 3400-3100, Early Bronze II ca. 3100-2700, Early Bronze III ca. 2700-2160, Early Bronze IV ca. 2160-1900, MB I ca. 1900-1750, MB II ca. 1750-1650, MB III ca. 1650-1483, Late Bronze I ca. 1483-1400, Late Bronze IIA ca. 1400-1300, Late Bronze IIB ca. 1300-1175.

Canaan and Israel spoke the same language, Israel owed much to Canaan on the level of material culture, religious practice, and there was some degree of correspondence in poetry and prose (meter and language).<sup>815</sup> Despite these undeniable similarities, the distinctions between Israel and Canaan are notable in scripture, but critical opinion on this is manifold and often consciously contradicts the biblical record.<sup>816</sup>

In light of the cultural parallels with Canaan, Israel clearly thought of itself as separate and was repeatedly commanded to do so (Deut 7). Even if we assume a considerable continuity of culture between Canaan and Israel, it “does not diminish the distinctiveness of Israel. Nor can one trace a direct line of development between the cultures of Canaan and Israel. But the distinctiveness of Israel was built upon a basic commonality that runs through Canaanite culture.”<sup>817</sup> The beginning and grounds for this distinction are found very early in the biblical record:

Genesis 9:25 And he said, Cursed [be] Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

26 And he said, Blessed [be] the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

27 God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

And the fruit of this curse is seen fully in subsequent history in numerous passages:

Joshua 3:10 And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God [is] among you, and [that] he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.

The Israelites were clearly and repeatedly warned to avoid the evils of Canaanite civilization:

Leviticus 18:3 After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances.<sup>818</sup>

Yet, despite all this, we know from Israel’s record that they failed miserably to obey, and thus we have the consequently long history of God’s prophets warning of judgment and the fulfillment of that judgment upon Israel. Israel’s failure led to an ongoing attempt to implement their distinctions from Canaan but naturally led only to oscillations of compromise and condemnation. “The general impression of the relations between Canaanites and Israelites one gets from the OT is one of continuous strife, carried on in a ferocious way for some centuries, and ending with complete subjugation of the Canaanites by the Israelites.”<sup>819</sup>

### ***Canaanite and Israelite religion:***

➤ See discussions on tabernacle in Exodus lecture of Pentateuch

To compare the similarities between Israel and Canaan in terms of religious belief and expression we must always keep in mind that the curse upon Canaan would lead to hostility towards and extermination of Canaan by Israel. In fact the archeological record bears this out abundantly, despite critical attempts to rewrite Israel’s history as a matter of “emergence” within Canaan.<sup>820</sup> The contrast of cult and faith is overwhelming despite the cultural

<sup>815</sup> “Despite the broad diversity of the origins of the people who inhabited Canaan, one can speak of a Canaanite culture. This cultural unity extended generally to language, religion, legal institutions, architecture, and the domestic arts” (*ISBE* vol. 1, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, p. 587). Also see G. Earnest Wright. “How Did Early Israel Differ From Her Neighbors?,” *Bible and Spade* vol. 3 no. 4 (Autumn 1974). Wright says, “The roots of Western culture (Graeco-Roman) lay in the Orient, the mediating influence having been the Canaanites. It is from these remarkable people that Greeks borrowed the alphabet and passed it on to us . . .” (p. 98). The Israelites were “heirs of the Canaanite material culture, continuing to borrow from it throughout the period of the Old Testament.” From the Canaanites the Israelites learned to write, use parallelism in their poetry, and play Canaanite musical instruments (p. 100).

<sup>816</sup> Scripture References to Canaan: Gen 9:18, 22, 25-27; 10:6, 15, 18-19; 11:31; 12:5; 13:12; 15:21; 16:3; 17:8; 23:2, 19; 24:3, 37; 28:1, 6, 8; 31:18; 33:18; 34:30; 35:6; 36:2, 5-6; 37:1; 42:5, 7, 13, 29, 32; 44:8; 45:17, 25; 46:6, 12, 31; 47:1, 4, 13-15; 48:3, 7; 49:30; 50:5, 11, 13; Ex 3:8, 17; 6:4; 13:5, 11; 15:15; 16:35; 23:23; Lev 14:34; 18:3; 25:38; Nu 13:2, 17, 29; 14:25, 43, 45; 21:3; 26:19; 32:30, 32; 33:40; Nu 33:51; 34:2, 29; 35:10, 14; Deut 1:7; 7:1; 11:30; 20:17; 32:49; Jos 3:10; 5:1; 12; 7:9; 12:8; 13:4; 14:1; 16:10; 17:12-13, 16, 18; 21:2; 22:9-11, 32; 24:3, 11; Jud 1:1, 3-5, 9-10, 17, 27-30, 32-33; 3:1, 3, 5; 4:2, 23-24; 5:19, 21:12; 2 Sa 24:7; 1 Ki 9:16; 1 Ch 1:8, 13; 16:18; Ezr 9:1; Ne 9:8, 24; Ps 105:11; 106:38; 135:11; Isa 19:18; Eze 16:3, 29; Ob 1:20; Zep 2:5; Mt 15:22.

<sup>817</sup> That is, in language, literature, cult terminology, monarchy, material culture, architecture, etc. ). “But the distinctiveness of Israel’s conception of God, society, and time are most clearly seen against the backdrop of the Canaanite culture in which they shared” (See *ISBE*, vol. 1, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, p. 587).

<sup>818</sup> Examples of other important prohibitions: intermarriage with Canaan was forbidden (Ex 34:16; Deut 7:3); treaties with Canaan were forbidden (Ex 22:32; 34:12); religious and ethical customs were to be considered abominations (Lev 18:24-30; Deut 7:25, 26; 12:30-31).

<sup>819</sup> A. V. Selms, “The Canaanites in the Book of Genesis,” in *Oudtestamentische Studies* Deel XII, Leiden: Brill, 1958.

<sup>820</sup> See William Foxwell Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan: A Historical Analysis of Two Contrasting Faiths* (Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1968). For example, evidence of hostility towards Canaan and Canaan’s idols is demonstrated at Tell Beit Mirsim: evidence in last Canaanite

continuity between Canaan and Israel. When we compare the mythologies and tales surrounding Canaan's pantheon we begin to see little justified religious continuity with Israel. As Albright has positively affirmed, "It may confidently be stated that there is no true mythology anywhere in the Hebrew Bible."<sup>821</sup> It is commonly known that Canaanite religion was the most sexually depraved of any in the ancient world, and this ran counter to Israel's central rule of holiness. The very pantheon itself was a cosmic soap opera of diabolic proportions, and Israel was to stand against it with faith in Yahweh alone.<sup>822</sup> James Kelso states it nicely:

A heathen Canaanite watching an Israelite sacrificial service would see one which was somewhat similar to his own.

However, as soon as he asked an Israelite what was the *meaning* of his sacrificial service, the Canaanite would discover that the two services were as far apart in significance as east and west are different. It demanded worship of Yahweh; and no other concept of deity was tolerated. God insisted that every iota of idolatry be eliminated.<sup>823</sup>

Contrast Canaanite worship with that of the Israelites: The first Canaanite sanctuaries were bedrock, open-air high places on grove covered hill tops. Sacred groves and certain isolated trees remained a place of their worship through Biblical history. Canaanite city life soon called for temples to be built upon such open air high places. Such a temple was erected directly upon the high place at Bethel, and at a later time Solomon's temple occupied the old Canaanite high place at Jerusalem. In the groves, stone pillars were added as cult symbols of the gods. Later idols of Baal and the other gods and goddesses were used. Small plaques or statuettes of the fertility goddesses were kept in the homes. The sacred tree was also brought into the temple. Animals for sacrifice were more diverse than those used by the Israelites. Human sacrifice was their most heinous act.

There is some disagreement among scholars about the extent of some of these things, but there is enough evidence of Canaanite religion to firmly prove the distinction of Israel's faith and practice from Canaan's is very certain. Some other characteristics worth mentioning are summarized by G. E. Wright that, despite the polytheism of Canaan, the Israelites had no personification of the various elements of the universe. The activity of the God of Israel was not to be seen in an abstract, unreal mythology, but rather as the direct cause of events in nature and history. The God of Israel stood alone "with no other being on or near his level." His power was to be seen even in Egypt. He had no wife or family. In fact, biblical Hebrew possesses no word for 'goddess.' Archeology offers support for the antiquity of this commandment in Israel. No where can we place our hands on a figure of Yahweh among the excavated ruins of Palestine. At the same time, however, large numbers of figurines representing the Canaanite mother-goddess or fertility goddess are found in every excavation into Israelite houses, indicating that among the common people almost every home must have had one or more of them. They are indisputable evidence of widespread syncretism, verging on polytheism, among the masses.<sup>824</sup>

Israel's relationship with God was unique because it was real, but also because there were no other people group with whom Yahweh had revealed himself. This describes the fundamental and unique concept in ancient Israel: God and man are in perpetual covenant. This can be seen most clearly in the covenant sign of the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant. The covenant promise is contained within the picture and reality of the Meeting Place with God; i. e. "I will be their God and they will be my people."<sup>825</sup> In light of this, the seriousness of Israel's compromise with the idolatry of Canaan is obvious. Canaan's idols were lifeless, man-made artifacts with no power

destruction level shows the deliberate destruction of cult objects and images (p. 194). And, Shechem: sacred precinct and sanctuary completely destroyed in the late twelfth century (p. 196). And, Dan (Laish) destroyed by Israel (Judg) and occupied, establishing an idolatrous object of some sort (Judg 18:30f). "This sanctuary was definitely Israelite and not pagan, though obviously paganizing in tendency" (see Deut 32:17) (p. 197). It must also be mentioned that despite Israel's hostility towards Canaan, Israel frequently compromised with Canaan's pantheon, although this was strictly forbidden it can not be denied: Gideon cut down the sacred '*asherah*, thereby incurring the wrath of his fellow citizens . . . and yet Gideon is said to have borne a name formed with "Baal." Gideon also "later set up a golden ephod in Ophrah" (p. 200).

<sup>821</sup> Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan*, p. 185. Nevertheless, Albright affirmed, "There are, however, a great many minor vestiges from Canaanite religion among the Hebrews. The names of many pagan gods and goddesses continued to be used in Hebrew for religious or nonreligious purposes. . . ." "In the area of specific divine names or appellations and their functional evolution among Canaanites and Israelites, we are on much more solid ground than when we attempt to combine the archeological remains of the Hebrew and Canaanite cults with literary material" (*ibid.*, p. 193). Also, "Religious beliefs and practices were both crude and depraved by Israelite standards" (*ibid.*, p. 26). "The Hebrew language had no word to designate a female god . . . they could only refer to them by their proper names" (William F. Albright, *The Biblical Period From Abraham to Ezra: An Historical Survey* [New York: Harper and Row, 1963], p. 413). (Cf. Deut 20:17-18; Ex 22:19; Deut 18:10 on prohibitions and in Ex 34:13 the command to destroy alters; but note Ps 106:34-41 for the sad reality.)

<sup>822</sup> See M. C. Tenney, ed., *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 1, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977. Israel and Canaan: There was considerable correspondence between Hebrew and Canaanite religion at least in a superficial way. It is the essential differences between Canaanites and Israelites that are important, however, for it was these that enabled Israel to break away from what was essentially a baneful influence" (p. 706).

<sup>823</sup> James L. Kelso, *Archeology and the Ancient Testament: The Christian's God of the Old Testament vs. Canaanite Religion* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), pp. 95-97.

<sup>824</sup> Wright, G. Earnest. "How Did Early Israel Differ From Her Neighbors?," *Bible and Spade* vol. 3 no. 4 (Autumn 1974), pp. 102,104,107.

<sup>825</sup> Wright, G. Earnest. "How Did Early Israel Differ From Her Neighbors?": "Israel was a covenanted society, and for which there is no direct Near Eastern parallel" (p. 108).



nor personality, and they were they worst form of insult to Yahweh who was omnipotent and the creator of all personality.<sup>826</sup>

The situation regarding the critical debate is described well by Herbert Livingston:

How much the Israelites absorbed from the Canaanite culture before the establishment of the kingdom has been a matter of dispute among scholars. Some have held that the Israelites were rather primitive nomads when they entered Canaan and hence borrowed a great deal from the Canaanites. This approach clearly exaggerates the situation. The Israelites were well versed in the ancient Semitic cultures; though vacillating in their loyalty to Yahweh, they were no simply a cultural sponge. Whatever the Hebrews learned from the Canaanites they changed and adapted to their own needs. Albright has demonstrated that a number of names for Canaanite deities were stripped of theological meaning and employed by the Hebrews in a purely secular sense.<sup>827</sup>

There are many today who assert that Israel's faith evolved from primitive to more advanced, and thus conclude that the relation of Canaan's religion to Israel's is like root and branch. But such a simplification of the facts does no justice to the matter. A good example of such is found in such statements as Michael David Coogan's: "It is essential to consider biblical religion as a subset of Israelite religion and Israelite religion as a subset of Canaanite religion."<sup>828</sup>

Fohrer gives the background to this, and it is worth quoting from him in full:

All recent studies of the religion of the early Israelites take as their point of departure the work Alt, who viewed the terms "God of Abraham," "God of Isaac," "God of Jacob," "pahad yishaq," and "'abir ya'aqob" as true divine names, which included the name of the founder of the cult. He maintained that worship of these "gods of the fathers" lasted until the adoption of Yahwism, while the 'elim mentioned in Genesis with various epithets were local nature gods (pp. 35-36). The clan gods were soon linked [after entrance into Canaan] to some Canaanite sanctuaries. The clan gods were soon linked to these sanctuaries rather than to the clan, which had now settled permanently; deities of the road became deities of specific places (p. 62). The ancient cultic sagas were replaced by the sanctuary and cult legends of the various Canaanite sanctuaries, which were made to refer to the founders of the cults and their gods. This was the necessary consequence of joint use of the sanctuaries, and at the same time provided the religious basis and justification for such joint use (p. 63). The equation of the clan gods with El laid the groundwork for the borrowing of various aspects of Canaanite religion; later the further equation of El with Yahweh incorporated this material into Yahwism (p. 64). The religion of El and Yahwism began to coalesce. This is the third stage--after the worship of the clan gods and their identification with El--in the development of the Israelite Idea of God (p. 104). In contrast to El, Baal gradually came to be apprehended and opposed as a rival to Yahweh (p. 105). Under the influence of Canaanite rites and ceremonies the cult of Yahweh was constantly elaborated. In particular, the Canaanite sacrificial system was largely adopted; the notion of food and drink for the gods played an important role in this process (p. 106).<sup>829</sup>

This *reconstruction* of Israel's history is based upon speculation, and it is undergirded by evolutionary assumptions about the history of Israel's faith. Another quote of the same nature as the one just given shows how deep such notions have gone into the scholarly intellectual quagmire:

For centuries after their occupation of Canaan the Israelite tribes remained polytheistic, differing little from their neighbors except in the identity of their own chief or national deity. The polytheistic worship so frequently reported by the Bible was regarded by most Israelites as normal and sensible, and that is why it was so common".<sup>830</sup> There is

<sup>826</sup> William F. Albright, *Archeology and the Religion of Israel*, New York: Anchor, 1969. "Two things strike the student at once when he deals with the Canaanite deities. The first is the extraordinary fluidity of personality and function, a fluidity which makes it exceedingly hard to fix the domains of different gods or to determine their relation to one another" (p. 70).

Regarding religious practice, "Canaanite sacrificial ritual was much more diversified than Israelite. Many more animals were employed as offerings" p. 89. Human sacrifice: the extent has not been clarified, but is most certain, p. 90. Sacred prostitution: "There is certainly no archeological confirmation of the supposed practice of temple "sacred prostitution" p. 230.

No 'idols' of comparative size [to Canaanite] have ever been found in Palestinian excavations, and the representations of divinity from Canaanite temples are all carved outlines on stelae. . . " " . . . No Astarte plaques or figurines have hitherto been discovered in any early Israelite levels in central Palestine" p. 110. (This is explained by "the aniconic character of Yahwism, which was, especially at first, bitterly opposed to human representations of all kinds, especially to representations of pagan idols or amulets" p. 111. )

<sup>827</sup>Livingston, G. Herbert. "The Relation of the Old Testament to Ancient Cultures." *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, vol. 1. F. E. Gaebelien, J. D. Douglas eds. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979, p. 348. See also Currid, *Ancient Egypt*, pp. 43-49.

<sup>828</sup>Michael David Coogan, "Canaanite Origins and Lineage: Reflections on the Religion of Ancient Israel" p. 115.

<sup>829</sup>Georg, Fohrer, *History of Israelite History*, New York: Abindon, 1972.

<sup>830</sup> J. Maxwell Miller, John H. Hayes *A History of Ancient Judah* Philadelphia: Westminster Press 1986, p. 157. Also, "The authors posit that Israel is in some way evolved from the Syro-Palestinian population and thus there is a "degree of continuity between the religion and cult of the "Israelite" tribes and that of the general Syro-Palestinian population. . ." (*ibid.*, p. 109). They also posit that Israel worshiped Baal and Asherah, although "It was Yahweh, of course, who emerged as the national god of Israel and Judah, although he was probably never worshiped exclusively by the early Israelites, and certainly not during the tribal period. Also it must be presumed that Yahweh would have been perceived and worshiped in much the same fashion as the other gods of the Syro-Palestinian pantheon" (*ibid.*, p. 110). "That Yahwism and Baalism existed alongside each other with essentially the same cultic procedures and paraphernalia is apparent. . ." And ". . . the lines of

considerable unanimity among critical scholars that Israel's faith is deeply rooted in Canaan's pantheon and cultic practice, but they are nevertheless often inconsistent. For example, two authors assert that, "Faith in Yahweh, the national god, contrasted sharply with the religious beliefs and practices of the indigenous peoples of the land of Canaan" on one page.<sup>831</sup>

But three pages later state, "Also it must be presumed that Yahweh would have been perceived and worshipped in much the same fashion as the other gods of the Syro-Palestinian pantheon."<sup>832</sup> Can the faith of Israel "contrast sharply with" and be of the "same fashion" as Canaan's both at the same time?]]

Quick assumptions based on scanty evidence that fail to take into account the clear biblical record are undoubtedly going to lead to manifold and contradictory conclusions. This has been the case in much interpretation of the excavated material and the scripture. Apparent parallels are not proof of corroboration for theories (that by their nature often contradict the history or principal teaching of the Bible).<sup>833</sup> Before scholars accept assertions they should carefully check to see if there is any solid evidence.<sup>834</sup>

Relevant scriptures: Gen 24:3; Ex 20:3-5; 23:24f; 34:12-17; Lev 15:31; 18:3; Deut 11:16; 12:2f; 13:6-11; 27:5; Ps 115; 147:19f; Isa 8:19-21; 44:9-20; Jer 10:1-16; Acts 10:28; 11:3; 2 Cor 6:17).]]

O. T. Allis gives a good summary of the distinctions of Israel's faith:

1. historical and supernatural
2. monotheistic and monergistic
3. spiritual
4. reverential
5. six days of work, one of rest
6. the commandments govern personal relation: "All the sinful practices of the Egyptians which they know through their bondage there, and all the abominations practiced by the Canaanites whose land they are to inherit are to be shunned and abhorred (Lev 18:3)."

distinction between Yahwism and Baalism were vague" (*ibid.*, p. 111). See also, Cross, Frank Moore. *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973. Canaanite influence on Israel's royal cult: "Yahwism was conceived in the matrix of the patriarchal 'El cults, and 'El shrines dotted the land in the area of the League. The new Canaanite influences which informed the temple cult on Zion in the late Empire and which shaped the ideology of kingship which developed especially in the Solomonic era and later, stemmed not from 'El myths but in large part from the Ba'al cult, as might be expected in view of the Tyrian design of the temple and its appurtenances and the dominant patterns of Canaanite kingship" (p. 211). From the jacket: Cross "stresses the continuities between early Israelite religion and the Canaanite culture from which it emerged."

<sup>831</sup> Miller, J. Maxwell, John H. Hayes. *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986. p. 107.

<sup>832</sup> *ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>833</sup> A case in point is the often repeated assumption about the household gods from Nuzi as discussed by M. J. Selman: "Recent interpretation of the significance of household gods at Nuzi and among Laban's family has moved away from seeing the gods as a title to an inheritance, following Greenburg's strong denial of the earlier view. In their view, the Nuzi evidence has been wrongly understood and uncritically applied to the account of Rachel's theft, and even apart from this, the Old Testament story on its own gives no indication that either Jacob or Rachel had any interest in inheriting Laban's estate" (A. R. Millard, D. J. Wiseman, editors, "Comparative Customs and the Patriarchal Age," *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives* [Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1983], p. 115. Also, O. T. Allis: ". . . the claims that Ugarit was Canaanite and that it strongly influenced Israel are by no means convincing . . ." (*The Old Testament: It Claims and Its Critics*, Presbyterian and Reformed, [Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed], 1972, p. 326). Critical assumption of Canaanite sources for much of Hebrew poetry of the OT has been propagated with little to no evidence (*ibid.*, pp. 326-27). Critics assumed the Israelites borrowed and emended to suit their own purpose, but this is disputed by Allis. He also discusses the differences between Israel's religion and Canaan's: "The mythological texts of Ugarit give the clearest illustrations of the nature of Canaanite religion. They throw a lurid light on its abominations. They show us Oriental polytheism at its worst. In them we see that the gods of the Canaanites were only magnified men" (*ibid.*, p. 365). "Archeological research has thrown a lurid light upon the religion of the Canaanites. The mythological poems from Ras Shamra have shown us a polytheism which was, sensuous, licentious, and vile. The gods and goddesses of Ugarit . . . are magnified human beings who have all the parts and passions of men. Archeology has given us a ghastly picture of Canaanite religion and fully confirmed the statements of the Old Testament regarding it" (*ibid.*).

<sup>834</sup> Rowley, H. H. *Worship in Ancient Israel: It Forms and Meaning*. Philadelphia: Fortress 1967. Contrary to other liberal opinions, Rowley is in disagreement with John Bright's statement, "As the patriarchs entered Palestine, their cults were carried on at local shrines, and their gods no doubt identified with the gods worshipped there" (*History of Israel*) he says that, "Since neither the local name for the god is used, and there is no mention of attendance at any local shrine, and since, moreover the patriarchs offered sacrifice themselves, and did not avail themselves of the services of any priests of the shrines, there does not seem to be any evidence that they worshipped at these shrines." The Tabernacle: "It is not to be doubted that the whole conception of the Tabernacle and its ministry was a projection into the past of the Temple and its ministry." (Also note M. Haran (*JBL* lxxxii, 1962, pp 14ff) agrees that the account of the Tabernacle is largely imaginary, and that it never existed in Israel. But he suggests that it was derived from the tradition of the Shiloh shrine, which was presented in a Jerusalem dress" (p. 51). "It is true that El was the high god of the Ugaritic pantheon, but alongside him were many gods who do not figure in the book of Genesis. "We should therefore be careful before we equate the deities of the patriarchs with those of their neighbors." (See note 1 of N. H. Snaith in Manson's *Companion to the Bible*, p. 525: "To what extent the wandering patriarchs were influenced by the gods of Canaan, it is impossible to say. There is no evidence.")

- |   |
|---|
| <p>7. miraculous and redemptive<br/>8. prophetic and messianic<br/>9. special divine revelation<sup>835</sup></p> |
|---|

We can add: a cosmic fall into sin by man and a cosmic redemption from sin by God. Humans have real significance in real history.

Is there anything in such a list that shows any parallel with Canaanite religion that could have been the product of social evolution? Any comparison of the two diametrical faiths should lead us to conclude that the astonishing thing is not just Canaanite depravity but the swiftness with which intelligent men will distort history to suit fanciful theories.<sup>836</sup> No, there is not the kind of social evolution often proposed, but rather *absorption* and *compromise*, and some *adaptation*. This is not to suggest a *radical discontinuity* in the cultural ethos, but that within a shared linguistic and cultural heritage the Israelite faith stands out in bold relief in just those areas that the revelation of God required. Where they failed is where they had absorbed and accommodated themselves to the *status quo*.

#### 4. *Assyrian and Babylonian pantheons*<sup>837</sup>

➤ See background references to Assyria and Babylonia, p. 630.

***Babylonian pantheon:*** gods were immortal, but were not omnipotent, and had many anthropomorphic characteristics. The triad of Anu, Enlil, and Ea was supreme.

An-Anu (Sumerian An) in Uruk (Erech) - the heaven-god (Semitic 'El)

Innana, wife of Anu (confused with Ishtar?).

Enlil – (primary Sumerian god) the wind-god, of destiny (see later Bel [Baal] or Marduk [Merodach])

Ninlil or Ninhursag, - wife of Enlil (identified with Ishtar later)

Ea at Eridu (Sumerian god 'Enki) - god of wisdom, ocean

Dam-gal, Nin-mah or Damkina, wife of Ea - great wife of earth and heaven

Ishtar (Semitic) – supreme goddess of love and war (daughter of Sin).

Sin at Ur and Harran (Babylonian moon-god) – god of power and war (son of Anu or of Enlil)

Ningal – wife of Sin (cf. Canaanite Nikkal)

Shamash at Sippar and Larsa – the sun god (the son of Sin)

Aya – wife of Shamash

Adad (W. Semitic) - god of storms (see Canaanite-Aramaeon Addu or Hadad)

Nergal - lord of plagues, fevers, illnesses, ruled underworld

Ereshkigal – wife of Nergal

Marduk (Enki's oldest son) – creator god of order (see the *Enuma Elish*) – from Middle Babylonian period, elevated to head of pantheon by Nebuchadnezzar I (1125-1104) (see OT Merodach)

Zarpanitum – wife of Marduk

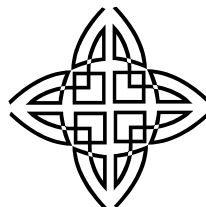
Nabu at Nineveh, Calah, Borsippa, etc. - god of science and writing

Dagon (Tammuz) (W. Semitic) -

Dummuzi – god of vegetation

Igigu-gods – peopled the upper world

Annunaku – peopled lower world



<sup>835</sup> O. T. Allis, *The Old Testament*, pp. 372-373.

<sup>836</sup> G. Earnest Wright, "How Did Early Israel Differ From Her Neighbors?," *Bible and Spade* vol. 3 no. 4 (Autumn 1974). "G. E. Wright tells us with regard to Canaanite religion: 'The amazing thing about the gods is that there seems to have been no standard of morality governing their actions . . . The lives of the gods were certainly on a moral level below that of the average of society as a whole . . . Their fertility rites were . . . corrupting and debasing. A man could easily be better than his religion. By contrast the demand of the Mosaic law was, 'Be ye holy for I the Lord your God am Holy' (Lev19:2).'" (Endnote # 90)

<sup>837</sup> See von Soden, *Ancient Orient*, pp. 177-202.



gods of Babylon<sup>838</sup>

<sup>838</sup>Times Atlas of the Bible, p. 102.

**Assyrian pantheon:** the gods were closely aligned with the state's political interests, wherein the king was seen a kind of regent for Ashur, the national god. (Assyrian religion was derived largely from Babylonian, thus quite similar. )

Ashur (temple in the capital, Assur) – the god of the kings and later the state and imperialism

Anu and Adad at Assur

Ishtar at Nineveh and Erbi - goddess of war and love

Nabu at Nineveh and Calah (Nimrud) - god of wisdom and the sciences

Sin at Ehulhul in Harran - moon-god

Shala, Gula, Ea and Damkina, Shamash

Ninurta at Calah and Nergal – god of war and the hunt

Nusku - god of light

Nabû at Borsippa – god of scribes and scholars (associated with Mercury)

### **Priesthood in Mesopotamia:**

There were many classes of temple servants, with the king or ruler as the supreme pontiff at certain solemn festivals. In early Sumerian times the whole economy was centred on the temple, where the chief official (ênû) was 'the lord of the manor'. In the worship of Sin, the high-priestess (entu) was usually a royal princess. The chief priests (maḥḥu) had many priests (šangu), males of sound body and often married, to assist them. The chief liturgist (urigallu) was supported by a host of minor officials who had access to the temple (ēreb bīti). In the ceremonial, chanters, psalmists, dirge-singers and musicians played a great part.

In man's approach to the god many specialists might play a role. The exorcist (ašipu) could remove the evil spirit or spell with the incantations or ritual prescribed in the texts (šurpu; maqlu) involving symbolic substitutions (kuppuru), purification by mašmašu-priests or by those who cleansed by water (ramku). There are many documents describing the action to be taken against evil spirits (utukki limnūti), demons of fate (namtaru), demons plaguing women (lamaštu) or taboos. The extensive medical literature of the early period was closely allied to religion, as was the astronomy or astrology of the later 'Chaldean' dynasty. The latter was based on the equation of deities with planets or stars (e. g. Nabu = Mercury), or with parts of the heavens ('The Way of Anu' = fixed stars).

Others were engaged in ascertaining the will of the gods by omens from livers (the barû-priest or 'seer'), or by inquiry by oracle (ša'ilu), or by offering prayers. Many women, including sanctuary prostitutes, were attached to the temples (H.A. Hoffner, *Orient and Occident*, 1973, pp. 213-222) and local shrines where travellers prayed have been found at Ur (*Iraq22*, 1960).

The regular service (dullu) included giving the gods something to eat and drink. Statues were dressed and ornamented and votive figures of worshippers set near by. Sacrifices placed on altars were subsequently allocated, wholly or in part, to the priests. The gods had their own chairs, chariots and boats for use in processions. <sup>839</sup>

## **5. Persian pantheon**

- See M. N. Dhalla, *Zoroastrian Theology* (1914, repr. 1972) and *History of Zoroastrianism* (1938, repr. 1963); R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism* (1961); M. Boyce, *Zoroastrians* (1986); M. Farhang, *The Zoroastrian Tradition* (1988).
- On Zoroastrianism, Magi, and Mithraism, see Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible*, pp. 395-524.

(right) Zoroaster<sup>840</sup>

Persian religion had a complex history, originating in worship of nature fertility gods, and developing after 1000 BC from **Zoroastrian** influence (no certain date for Zoroaster). It was characterized by a dualistic perspective which promised blessing to all who worshipped **Ahur-Mazda** (p. 625), the god of all creation (Ahur means "lord" and Mazda means "wise"). Within this scheme were **Ormazd**, the god of good and light, who was opposed to **Ahrimah**, the god of evil and darkness. There is considerable debate as to whether the Achaemenid dynasty (Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius, Xerxes) were Zoroastrian. Achaemenid Persian religion was "tolerant" in contrast to most other ANE religions. **Mithraism**, mystery (secret) religion, was also a central feature of Persian belief, though its relation to Zoroastrianism is disputed.



<sup>839</sup> D. J. Wiseman, *New Bible Dictionary*, Logos Bible Software.

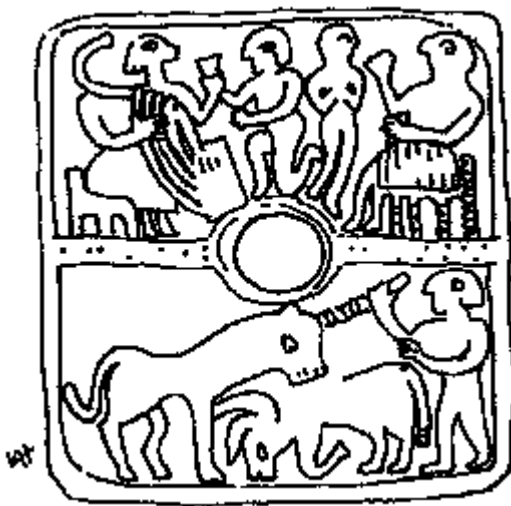
<sup>840</sup> From [www.westminster.edu/staff/brennie/images/zoroaster.jpg](http://www.westminster.edu/staff/brennie/images/zoroaster.jpg)

### 6. A comparison of A.N.E. pantheons<sup>841</sup>

Canaanite	Aspect	Akkadian	Egyptian
El	heaven	Anu	Ra
Asherah	mother earth	Aruru	Tefnut
Baal	storm	Marduk	Seth
Anath	fertility	Ishtar	Hathor
Astarte	fertility	Ishtar	Isis
Koshar	wisdom	Ea	Ptah
Resheph	nether world	Nergal	Osiris
Dagon	grain	Tammuz	Osiris

From "Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity," by John Milton

Peor, and Baalim,  
 Forsake their Temples dim,  
 With that twise-batter'd god of Palestine,  
 And moonèd Ashteroth,  
 Heav'n's Queen and Mother both,  
 Now sits not girt with Tapers holy shrine,  
 The Libyc Hammon shrinks his horn,  
 In vain the Tyrian Maids their wounded Thamuz mourn.



And sullen Moloch fled,  
 Hath left in shadows dred,  
 His burning Idol all of blackest hue,  
 In vain with Cymbals ring,  
 They call the grisly king,  
 In dismal dance about the furnace blue;  
 The brutish gods of Nile as fast,  
 Isis and Orus, and the Dog Anubis hast.

Nor is Osiris seen  
 In Memphian Grove, or Green,  
 Trampling, the unshowr'd Grasse with lowings loud:  
 Nor can he be at rest  
 Within his sacred chest,  
 Naught but profoundest Hell can be his shroud,  
 In vain with T'imbrel'd Anthems dark  
 The sable-stolèd Sorcerers bear his worshipt Ark.

He feels from Juda's Land  
 The dredded Infants hand,

<sup>841</sup> Livingston, *The Pentateuch*, p. 127.

The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;  
 Nor all the gods beside,  
 Longer dare abide,  
 Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:  
 Our Babe to shew his Godhead true,  
 Can in his swadling bands controul the damnèd crew . . .



### C. *Summary of A.N.E. cultures' salient features*<sup>842</sup>

1. The nature circle is all-inclusive of all realms of reality: divine, natural, human. "The lines of demarcation between the divine, natural, and human were understood as porous, that is, there was easy movement and cross identification between them" (Livingston, p. 128). "The interrelationship was fluid, and though the gods and goddesses were personified, their relationship with humans was impersonal and mediated through the cult" (Livingston, p. 130).
2. A primeval simplicity lay behind all things: primeval material is the source of all things by creation or procreation, which were then ruled by a force of fate.
3. The high gods were cosmic in character: although born or died, they were immortal. "The traders, diplomats, and migrants of the ancient Near East were quite aware that the features of nature, which the high gods represented, were present wherever they traveled. Hence, ancient man both tied their high gods to specific images at localized temples and saw that the high gods of other nations were like their own. This phenomenon made it easy for Akkadians to adopt the religion of the Sumerians, or the Egyptians to absorb foreign deities into their pantheon" (Livingston, p. 131) [this has interesting suggestions for Israel that could not tolerate the religions of any of these nations, and any notion that Israel was extremely syncretistic with Canaanite religion]
4. The divine realm was subservient - to polytheistic rivalry, etc., and to the same needs and woes as humankind. "Though the gods and goddesses were personified, they were never really persons. They were not truly free, nor could they enter meaningful relationships with primordial stuff, with each other, or with human beings. They were only aspects, or objects, of nature" (Livingston, p. 132).
5. The popular fertility cult was grossly immoral
6. The mythological stories provided a rationale for the status quo of the community, king
7. The cultic rites sought to maintain the status quo
8. Myth and ritual unified the pagan's world (Livingston, p. 134)
9. Divination oriented the pagan toward the future
10. Magicians were at the "control board" of power: word formulae and symbolic acts are potent in themselves, recited correctly, they renewed the potency of the king and the reproductive cycles of nature, etc. The gods relied on magic, as well (e. g., Baal's potent club) (Livingston, p. 136).
11. Kingship related the king to deity, whether as the god's representative, or the means of god's rule, or as a descendent of the gods.

#### *Cultural dependence versus cultural adaptation*<sup>843</sup>:

4. Pan-Babylonian School - cuneiform study led them to view Hebrew thought, culture dependent on Babylonia
5. Pan-Egyptian School - viewed Hebrew thought, culture dependent on Egypt.
6. Pan Canaanite School - Ugaritic discovery led to view that Hebrew thought, culture dependent on Canaanite

#### *Cultural adaptation*<sup>844</sup>:

9. *Spiritual personalization*: names of God, covenant structures, etc. transformed in Hebrew context
10. *Radical displacement*: rejection of all pagan religious practice

<sup>842</sup> Livingston, *The Pentateuch*, p. 128-136.

<sup>843</sup> Livingston, *The Pentateuch*, pp. 183-184.

<sup>844</sup> Livingston, *The Pentateuch*, pp. 184-188

11. *Theological displacement*: all things taken from Semitic culture were rid of pagan meanings (e. g. tabernacle)
12. *Historical displacement*: Passover replaces all pagan spring festivals and the Feast of Tabernacles replaces all pagan fall festivals. Some critics say *historicization* occurred making ancient myths into history.
13. *Secularization*: of names of gods and goddesses and numerous common words
14. *Depersonalization*: of all natural objects of any divine person or character
15. *Vocational reorientation*: Priests, rulers, prophets all subject to God's law not pagan practice
16. *Legal moralization*: humane laws, positive regulations adapted to pure worship, and case law allowed for preventative aspects to avoid obsolete customs becoming sacred law



## VI. APOLOGETIC VALUE OF BIBLICAL PROPHECY

- For an example of evangelicals presenting the evidential value of prophecy, see “Public Theology and Prophecy Data: Factual Evidence That Counts for the Biblical Worldview” by Robert C. Newman, John A. Bloom, and Hugh G. Gauch, Jr., Copyright © 2002 Interdisciplinary Biblical Research, Institute at [http://www.ibri.org/Papers/Public\\_Theology/PubTheoData.pdf](http://www.ibri.org/Papers/Public_Theology/PubTheoData.pdf)

This aspect of biblical prophecy is much denigrated in our times by both Evangelicals and Liberals who deny it such value: Evangelicals who believe that unbelievers can not know anything truly either from general or special revelation because they cannot “presuppose correctly,” and Liberals (Neo-Orthodox) who deny all value to general revelation, as well as the predictive value of supernatural revelation. (The same holds true for both groups in regards to archeological evidences that confirm or illustrate the biblical world.) In contrast to both these views, the biblical record persistently calls the world to account through the evidences of prophecy given, confirmed, and fulfilled. This call to acknowledge the Lord is consistently given to both believers and unbelievers. God holds us accountable for revelation in nature and scripture, and the evidence he has established is overwhelming. That is, the case is closed on human ignorance, for no one can claim to be truly ignorant of God. This does not mean that the evidence itself can save someone from their sin and unbelief, rather that the evidence clearly condemns all who deny God. Indeed, the frequent attempts of interpreters to call biblical prophecy strictly forthtelling and not foretelling suggest a widespread reluctance to view the Word of God as supernatural revelation confirmed by general revelation (esp. in historical fulfillments). This is not to say that speculative fulfillment seeking is in order, especially in regards to modern events, but rather that the massive amount of clearly fulfilled prophecies are sure evidence of God's work and word. His promises are sure. This holds great value in evangelism of the lost, for there is more than enough material to persuade unbelievers (not the same as convincing them, which the Holy Spirit does), and enough material to encourage all believers in all times not to lose heart. Take courage, God has worked, and God is working. As God has sent his Son, Acts 1:10-11 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11 “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

Take courage

## VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY(SELECT)

### A. *Academic references*

Langevin, Paul-Emile, editor. *Bibliographie biblique*. Biblical bibliography. Biblische Bibliographie. Bibliografia biblica (1972-). 3 vols. Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval. An index of periodical and monographic literature classified by biblical book, chapter, and verse, and by theme.

*Book List*. Published once each year by the Society for Old Testament Study, Sheffield, Eng., this contains reviews of recently published books in Old Testament studies.



*Critical Review of Books in Religion* (1988-). Ed. Eldon Jay Epp. Atlanta, GA: Scholars. An annual volume that contains book reviews in Old Testament and Judaism, as well as other areas in religion and theology.

*Elenchus Bibliographicus Biblicus of Biblica*. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute. An index of periodical literature on biblical books.

*Index to English Periodical Literature on the Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern Studies* (1987-). Ed. William G. Hupper. American Theological Library Association Bibliography Series, no. 21. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow.

*Internationale Zeitschriftenschau für Bibelwissenschaft und Grenzgebiete* (1951/52-). International Review of Biblical Studies. Revue Internationale des Études Bibliques. Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag. A classified bibliography of periodical articles and chapters in multi-authored books.

*Old Testament Abstracts*. Published by the Catholic Biblical Association. Triannual. Each issue contains a listing and brief description of virtually every article which had been published in scholarly journals on an Old Testament topic for the preceding review period (about one third of a year). They are classified by topics and by books of the Old Testament. The third issue of each volume contains cumulative indexes for the entire volume, and includes an index of Bible passages. Also available on CD-ROM.

*Research guides for Old Testament study:*

Brisman, Shimeon (1977). *A History and Guide to Judaic Bibliography*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College. Describes Hebraic and Judaic bibliographies, including subject bibliographies, bibliographic periodicals, and indexes.

Fitzmyer, Joseph A. (1990). *An Introductory Bibliography for the Study of Scripture*. 3d ed. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute.

Powell, Mark Allan, compiler. *The Bible and Modern Literary Criticism*. New York, London: Greenwood Press, 1992. Contains abstracts of many works.

*Religion Index One: Periodicals* (1977-), *Religion Index Two: Multi-Author Works* (1976-), and *Index to Book Reviews in Religion* (1986-). Produced by the American Theological Library Association (Chicago) and cover biblical studies as well as the field of religion more broadly. All three indexes are currently available on CD-ROM.

Zannoni, Arthur E. (1992). *The Old Testament: A Bibliography*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical.

WWW pages: not meant as an endorsement of content

1. Apologetics of Ravi Zacharias: [www.sliceofinfinity.org](http://www.sliceofinfinity.org)
2. Bible material: [www.biblicalchronologist.org](http://www.biblicalchronologist.org)
3. Bible materials: [www.Bible.org](http://www.Bible.org)
4. Bible questions: [www.biblequery.org](http://www.biblequery.org)
5. Biblical studies links: [www.info.ox.ac.uk](http://www.info.ox.ac.uk)
6. Book reviews, see the *Journal of Theological Studies* web page:
7. British Museum collection: [www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk](http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk)
8. Church fathers: The Ethereal Library at [www.ccel.org/fathers](http://www.ccel.org/fathers)
9. Hypertext encyclopedia of church history at the Ecole Institute's Ecole Initiative: <http://cedar.Evansville.edu/~ecoleweb.index.html>
10. History of redemption hermeneutics: **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**
11. Logic and philosophical material: [www.christianlogic.com](http://www.christianlogic.com)
12. Near Eastern Archeology Society (Evangelical): [www.neasoc.org](http://www.neasoc.org)
13. Pictures of the Holy Land: [www.bibleplaces.com](http://www.bibleplaces.com)
14. Pictures of the Holy Land: [www.holylandphotos.org](http://www.holylandphotos.org)
15. Pictures, content, ANE material: [www.biblehistory.com](http://www.biblehistory.com)
16. Preaching: [www.preachingtoday.com](http://www.preachingtoday.com)
17. Public-domain literature: [www.classicbookshelf.com](http://www.classicbookshelf.com)
18. Science and the Bible: [www.BibleAndScience.com](http://www.BibleAndScience.com)
19. Temple in Jerusalem: [www.archpark.org.il](http://www.archpark.org.il)
20. Temple material: [www.templemountonline.com](http://www.templemountonline.com)
21. See Lambert Dolphin's web link pages for hundreds of links.

## ***B. Ancient Israel and the A.N.E.***

➤ See stand-alone supplement to this syllabus on the ANE.

➤

Ahlström, G. W. *The Early History of Ancient Palestine from the Paleolithic Period to Alexander's Conquest*. Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1992.

Craigie, Peter. *Ugarit and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1983.

Davis, John J. *Moses and the Gods of Egypt: Studies in Exodus*. Winona Lake, Indiana: BMH Books, 1986.

Carter, Martha L. and Keith Schoville. Editors. *Sign, Symbol, and Script: An Exhibition on the Origins of Writing and the Alphabet*. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1984.

- Cross, Frank Moore. *From Epic to Canon: History and Literature in Ancient Israel*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.
- Currid, John D. *Ancient Egypt and Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1997.
- Dorsey, David. *The Roads and Highways of Ancient Israel*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1991.
- Edelman, D. V.. Editor. *The Triumph of Elohim: From Yahwisms to Judaisms*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.
- Finegan, Jack. *Handbook of Biblical Chronology: Principles of Time Reckoning in the Ancient World and Problems of Chronology in the Bible*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999.
- Herr, Larry. "Whatever Happened to the Ammonites?" *BAR* November/December. Volume 19. Number 6, pp. 26-68.
- Hoerth, Alfred J., Mattingly, Gerald L., Yamauchi, Edwin M. eds. *Peoples of the Old Testament World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994.
- Hoffner, H.A. "Hittites," in Hoerth, Alfred J., Gerald L. Mattingly, and Edwin M. Yamauchi. Editors. *Peoples of the Old Testament World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994. pp. 127-155.
- "Hittites and Hurrians." *People of Old Testament Times*. Edited by D.J. Wiseman Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973, pp. 187-228.
- Leach, Marjorie. *Guide to the Gods*. Edited by Michael O. Jones and Frances Cattermole-Tally. Santa Barabara, Denver, Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 1992.
- Hoffmeier, James K. *Israel In Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Isserlin, B. S. J. *The Israelites*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1998.
- Jones, Clifford M. *Old Testament Illustrations*. Cambridge University Press, 1971.
- Keel, Othmar & Christoph Uehlinger. *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*. Translated by T. H. Trapp. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998.
- Kitchen, K.A. *The Bible and its World*. Grand Rapids: InterVarsity Press, 1978.
- *Ancient Orient and Old Testament*. London: Inter-Varsity Fellowship, Tyndale Press, 1966.
- Livingston, Herbert G. "The Relation of the Old Testament to Ancient Cultures." *The Expositors Bible Commentary*. Volume 1. Edited by F. E. Gaebelain, J. D. Douglas. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979.
- Mallowan, M.E.L. *Early Mesopotamia and Iran*. New York, McGraw Hill Book Company, 1965.
- Matthews, V.H. and D.L. Benjamin. *Old Testament Parallels: Laws and Stories from the A.N.E.* N.Y.: Paulist Press, 1997.
- Nemet-Nejat, Katren Rhea. *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002.
- Pritchard, James B. Editor. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Third ed., Princeton: University Press, 1969.
- Editor. *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*. Volume 1. Princeton Universtiy Press, 1973.
- Editor. *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*. Volume 2. Princeton Universtiy Press, 1992.
- Thompson, T. L. *Early History of the Israelite People from the Written and Archaeological Sources*. Leiden: Brill, 1992.
- Thompson, W. M. *The Land and the Book: Biblical Illustrations Drawn from the Manners and Customs, the Scenes and Scenery of the Holy Land*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1954.
- Redford, D. B. *Egypt, Canaan and Israel in Ancient Times*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Walton, John H. *Ancient Israelite Literature in its Cultural Context: A Survey of Parallels Between Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Texts*. Library of Biblical Interpretation. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989, reprint. ed., 1990.
- , Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
- Wiseman, D. J. Editor. *People of Old Testament Times*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973.
- Yadin, Yigael. *The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*. Two Volumes. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963.

Yamauchi, Edwin. *Foes from the Northern Frontier: Invading Hordes from the Russian Steppes*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982.

-----, "Urartu." *Dictionary of Biblical Archeology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983, pp. 463-465.

## C. Archeology

*The Biblical Archaeologist* (American School for Oriental Research).

*Israel Exploration Journal* (Jerusalem).

*Levant* (London: British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem).

*Palestine Exploration Quarterly* (London: Palestine Exploration Fund).

*Near Eastern Archeological Society Bulletin*. (Evangelical, student rate \$15, subscribe: Wilbur Fields, 2313 East 20th Street, Joplin MO 6484)

Albright, W.F. *The Archaeology of Palestine*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1960.

Anati, E. *Palestine Before the Hebrews*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1963.

Avi-Yonah, Michael. *Encyclopedia of Archeological Excavations in the Holy Land*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1975. [in four volumes]

Blaiklock, E.M. and R.K. Harrison, editors. *The New International Dictionary of Biblical Archeology*. Grand Rapids: Regency Reference Library, 1983.

Burrows, M. *What Mean These Stones?* London: Thames and Hudson, 1957.

Dever, William G. *Recent Archeological Discoveries and Biblical Research*. Seattle, London: University of Washington Press, 1990.

Fraken, H.J. and Franken-Battershill, C.A. *A Primer of Old Testament Archaeology*. Leiden: Brill, 1963.

Free, J.P. *Archeology and Bible History*. Wheaton, 1952.

Freedman, D.N. and Wright, G.E. *The Biblical Archaeologist Reader 1*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1969.

Fritz, Volkmar. "Temple Architecture: What Can Archeology Tell Us About Solomon's Temple?" *Biblical Archeological Review*. Volume 13. Number 4, 1987, pp. 38-49.

Harding, G.L. *The Antiquities of Jordan*. London: Lutterworth, 1959.

Hoerth, A.J. *Archeology and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.

Kenyon, K.M. *Archeology in the Holy Land*. London: Ernest Benn, 1960.

Kitchen, Kenneth A. "How We Know When Solomon Ruled: Synchronisms with Egyptian and Assyrian Rulers Hold the Key to Dates of Israelite Kings." *Biblical Archeological Review*. Volume 27. Number 4. September/October, 2001, pp. 32-37, 58.

Kramer, S.N. "Man and His God," *A Sumerian Variation of the 'Job' Motive*, in *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum*, III. Leiden, 1955.

Lemonick, Michael D. "Are the Bible's Stories True?" *Time*, December 18, 1985, pp. 46-54.

McNutt, P.M. *The Forging of Israel: Iron Technology, Symbolism, and Tradition in Ancient Society*. JSOTSupp 108 (Sheffield: Almond, 1990).

Mitchell, T.C. *The Bible in the British Museum: Interpreting the Evidence*. London: The British Museum Press, 1994.

Monson, John. "The New Ain Dara Temple: Closest Solomonic Parallel." *Biblical Archeological Review*. Volume 26. Number 3. May/June, 2000, pp. 20-35, 67.

Moscato, Sabatino. *The Face of the Ancient Orient: A Panorama of Near Eastern Civilization in Pre-Classical Times*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company, 1962.

Oppenheim, A.L. *Ancient Mesopotamia*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964.

Parrot, André. *Nineveh and the Old Testament*. Studies in Biblical Archeology, number 3. New York: Philosophical Library, 1955.

Ritmeyer, L. "Locating the Original Temple Mount." *Biblical Archeology Review*. Mar-Apr (1992): 26ff.

Sanders, J.A. *Near Eastern Archaeology in the Twentieth Century*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1970.

Schoville, Keith N. *Biblical Archeology in Focus*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991.

Thomas, D.W., ed. *Archaeology and Old Testament Study*. London: Oxford University Press, 1967.

Yamauchi, Edwin. *The Stones and the Scriptures*. Philadelphia, New York: J.B. Lippincott Company/Holman Book, 1972.

Unger, M. F. *Archeology and the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, 1962.

## **D. Bible encyclopedias/dictionaries/atlasses**

Archer, Gleason. *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982.

Bromily, Geoffrey, editor. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. Four volumes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979-1988.

Douglas, J. D., editor. *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*. Three volumes. England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1980.

----- *The New Bible Dictionary*, revised. Cambridge: Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1982.

Elwell, Walter, editor. *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Two volumes, Baker House, 1988.

Orr, James, editor. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. Five volumes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956.

Pritchard, James B., editor. *The Harper Concise Atlas of the Bible*. Edited. New York: Harper Collins, 1991.

----- *The Times Atlas of the Bible*. London: Times Books, 1987. A longer version of the Harper Concise.

Tenny, Merrill C., editor. *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Five volumes. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976.

*Tyndale Handbook of Bible Charts and Maps* with CD Rom. Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers Incorporatedm 2001.

*Zondervan Image Archives* with CD Rom, Grand Rapids: Zondervan Book Publishers, 1999.

## **E. Bible study, hermeneutics, preaching**

➤ See supplement to this syllabus on the hermeneutics of redemption.

Berkhof, L. *Principles of Biblical Interpretation*, Baker, 1950.

Baker, David L. *Two Testaments, One Bible: A Study of the Theological Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments*. Leicester, England: IVP, Apollos, 1991.

Barker, Kenneth. *et. al., Bibliography for Old Testament Exegesis and Exposition*. Fourth edition. Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1979.

Carson, D. A. *Exegetical Fallacies* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984).

Clowney, Edmund. *The Unfolding Mystery: Discovering Christ in the Old Testament*, Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1988.

Danker, Frederick W. *Multipurpose Tools For Bible Study*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1969; third edition, 1970.

France, R.T. *Jesus and the Old Testament: His Application of Old Testament Passages to Himself and His Mission*. London: The Tyndale Press, 1971.

Goldsworthy, Graeme. *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture: The Application of Biblical Theology to Expository Preaching*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000.

Greidanus, Sidney. *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

----- *Sola Scriptura: Problems and Principles in Preaching Historical Texts*. Toronto: Wedge, 1970.

Hayes, John H. and Carl R. Holladay. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1987; second edition. London: SCM Press, 1988.

Holmgren, Frederic C. *The OT & the Significance of Jesus: Embracing Change – Maintaining Christian Identity: The Emerging Center in Biblical Scholarship*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing House, 1999 (see “Israel and the New Covenant in Jer 31:31-34,” pp. 75-95 and “Jesus and the New Covenant,” pp. 96-104.)

Longenecker, Richard N. *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*. Reading: Cox and Wyman Ltd., 1995.

Longman, Tremper. *Making Sense of the Old Testament: Three Crucial Questions*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.

Mickelsen, A. Berkeley. *Interpreting the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985.

Osborne, Grant. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991.

Pratt, Richard Jr. *He Gave Us Stories: The Bible Student's Guide to Interpreting Old Testament Narratives*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1990; reprint edition, 1993.

Thiselton, Anthony C. *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.

Traina, Robert A. *A Methodical Bible Study: A New Approach to Hermeneutics*. New York: Ganis and Harris, 1952.

Tate, Randolph W. *Biblical Interpretation: An Integrated Approach*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991.

Wald, Oletta. *The Joy of Discovery*, , Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975.

Warren, Richard. *12 Dynamic Bible Study Methods for individual groups*. William Shell, Wheaton: Victor Books, 1988.

Westermann, Claus. Editor. *Essays in Old Testament Hermeneutics*. Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1960.

Wilhoit, Jim and Leland Ryken. *Effective Bible Teaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000.

## **F. Biblical/systematic theology**

Alexander, T. Desmond, Brian S, Rosner, D.A. Carson. Graeme Goldsworthy. Leicester, England. *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology: Exploring the Unity and Diversity of Scripture*. Downers Grove, USA: Inter-Varsity Press, 2000.

Buswell, James Oliver, Jr. *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*. Two volumes in one. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962.

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Edited by John T. McNeill. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960, two volumes.

Delitzsch, Franz. *Old Testament History of Redemption*. Translated by Samuel I. Curtiss. Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1881; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988.

Dunzweiler, Robert J. "Regeneration and Indwelling in the Old Testament." Hatfield, PA: *Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute*, 1985.

Elwell, Walter A.. Editor. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984.

Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989.

Feinberg, S. John, ed. *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments*. Ill: Crossway, 1988.

Hasel, Gerhard F. "The Relationship Between Biblical Theology and Systematic Theology." *Trinity Journal* 5 (1984): pp. 113-127.

----- *Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972; reprint edition, 1989.

----- *The Remnant: The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea From Genesis to Isaiah*. AUM 5, Berrien Ssprings, MO: Andrews University Press, 1972.

----- "Proposals for a Canonical Biblical Theology." *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 34, number 1 (1996): pp. 23-33.

Hodge, Charles. *Systematic Theology*. Three volumes. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972.

Kaiser, Walter C., Jr. "The Present State of Old Testament Studies." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 18 (1975): pp. 69-79.

----- *Toward an Old Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978.

----- *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981.

----- *Toward Rediscovering the Old Testament*. Academic Books, Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987.

----- *Hard Sayings of the Old Testament*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1983.

----- *Mission in the Old Testament: Israel as a Light to the Nations*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000.

Kline, Meredith G. "The Two Tables of the Covenant." *Westminster Theological Journal* 22 (1960): pp. 133-146.

- *Kingdom Prologue*. Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary: by the author, 1993.
- *Images of the Spirit*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980; reprint edition, Meredith Kline, 1986.
- *Treaty of the Great King: The Covenant Structure of Deuteronomy: Studies and Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.
- Lints, Richard. *The Fabric of Theology: Prolegomenon to Evangelical Theology*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993. )
- McComiskey, Thomas Edward. *The Covenants of the Promise: A Theology of the Old Testament Covenants*. Nottingham: InterVarsity Press, 1985.
- Oosterzee, J.J. Van. *Christian Dogmatics: A Text book for Academical Instruction and Private Study*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1872.
- Orr, James. "Immortality in the Old Testament." *Classical Evangelical Essays in Old Testament Interpretation*. Edited by Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972, pp. 253-265.
- Payne, J. Barton. *The Theology of the Older Testament*. Grand Rapids: Academie Books, Zondervan, 1962.
- Radmacher, D. Earl and Preus D. Robert, eds. *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy, and the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984.
- Robertson, O. Palmer. *The Christ of the Covenants*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publ. Co., 1980.
- *The Israel of God: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publ. Co., 2000.
- Scobie, Charles H. H. "The Challenge of Biblical Theology." *Tyndale Bulletin* 42. 1 (1991): pp. 31-61.
- "The Structure of Biblical Theology." *Tyndale Bulletin*. Volume 43. 2 (Nov 1992): pp. 163-194.
- VanGemeren, Willem. *The Progress of Redemption: The Story of Salvation From Creation to the New Jerusalem*. Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1988.
- Vannoy, J. Robert. "Divine Revelation and History in the Old Testament." *Interpretation and History: Essays in Honor of Allan A. MacRae*. Edited by R. Laird Harris, Swee-Hwa Quek, and J. Robert Vannoy. Singapore: Christian Life Publishers, 1986.
- "Biblical History and its Meaning for Us," *Biblical Bulletin* No 48, 1983
- Veer, Van't M. B. *My God is Yawheh*. St. Catherines: Paideia Press, 1980.
- Vos, Geerhardus. *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948.
- "Christian Faith and the Truthfulness of Bible History." *The Princeton Theological Review* 3 (Jul 1906): pp. 289-305.
- "The Idea of Biblical Theology as a Science and as a Theological Discipline." *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1980, pp. 3-24.
- *The Eschatology of the Old Testament*. Edited by James T. Dennison, Jr. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2001.
- Wood, Leon J. *The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998.
- Zuck, Roy B., Eugene H. Merrill, and Darrel L. Bock. *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1991.

## G. Concordances

- Evan-Shoshan, Abraham, editor. *A New Concordance of the Old Testament Using the Hebrew and Aramaic Text*. Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer Publishing House, Ltd., 1990.
- Goodrick, Edward W., and John R. Kohlenberger III, editors. *The NIV Exhaustive Concordance*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990.
- Lisowsky, Gerhard. *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1958; reprint edition, 1981.
- Morrish, George. Compiler. *A Concordance of the the Septuagint*. Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1887; reprint edition, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976.
- Wigram, George V, editor. *The Englisman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament*. London: Samuel Bagster and sons, Ltd., 1843; reprint edition, 1971.

## H. *Current issues and apologetics*

- Alcorn, Randy. *Christians in the Wake of the Sexual Revolution: Recovering our Sexual Sanity* (title is self-explanatory, highly recommended, popular level)
- Billingsley K. Loyd *The Generation That Knew Not Josef: A Critique of Marxism and the Religious Left* (popular level)
- *The Seductive Image: A Christian Critique of the World of Film* (popular level)
- Carson, D. A. *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.
- Collier, Peter and David Horowitz. *Destructive Generation: Second Thoughts About the Sixties* (a must for anyone wanting to understand the present 1990's in light of our recent past, popular level, explicit language, etc. throughout)
- Craig, William Lane. *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1994.
- Fairlie, Henry. *The Seven Deadly Sins Today* (brilliant application of the word "sin" to analyze American society by a self professed "reluctant unbeliever" who gets at the heart of the problem more honestly than many Christian writers)
- Foh, Susan. *Women and the Word of God: Critique of Feminism* (college-seminary level, theological-exegetical analysis)
- Geisler, Norman and William D. Watkins. *Worlds Apart: A Handbook on World Views*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989.
- *Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976.
- Gerstner, John. *Reasons For Faith*. Grand Rapids: Baker, (popular level intro to apologetics)
- Grounds, Vernon. *Evangelicalism and Social Responsibility*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1969.
- Grunlan, Stephen A. "Biblical Authority and Cultural Relativity." *Christian Perspectives on Sociology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982, pp. 47-65.
- Guinness, Os. *The Dust of Death: A Critique of the Establishment and the Counter Culture—a Proposal for a Third Way*. Downer Grove: IVP, 1973.
- Hodge, Charles. *Systematic Theology*. Volume 1. Part 1. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972.
- Hofstadter, Richard. *Anti-intellectualism in American Life*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963.
- Jones, Peter, *Spirit Wars: Pagan Revival in Christian America*. Escondido, CA: Wine Press Publishing, Main Editions, 1998.
- Kilpatrick, William Kirk. *The Psychological Seduction*. New York: Thomas Nelson, 1983.
- Lasch, Christopher. *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*. New York: Warner Books, 1979.
- Lewis, C. S. *The Abolition of Man: or Reflections on Education with Special Reference to the Teaching of English in the Upper Forms of Schools*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1975.
- "On Obstinacy in Belief." New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1960.
- Machen, J. Gresham. *What is Faith*. Carlisle, PA, Edinburgh, UK: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1991.
- "The Importance of Christian Scholarship." *Education, Christianity, and the State*. John Robbins, ed., Jefferson, MD: The Trinity Foundation, 1987.
- Montgomery, John Warwick. Editor. *Evidence for Faith: Deciding the God Question*. Dallas. London: Probe Books, 1991.
- *The Shape of the Past: A Christian Response to secular philosophies of history*. Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1975.
- Netland, Harold A. "Apologetics, Worldviews, and the Problem of Neutral Criteria." *Trinity Journal*. (12NS, 1991): 39-58.
- Orr, James . "God as Religious Postulate," *The Christian View of God and the World as Centering in the Incarnation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1947, pp. 112-115.
- Pascal, Blaise. *Pensées* (1660) translated by W. F. Trotter (WWW public domain book).
- *Pensées: with an English translation, brief notes, and introduction* by H.F. Stewart. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950.
- *Pensées*. Translated by A.J. Krailsheimer. London: Penguin Books, 1976.

- Postman, Neil. *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in an age of Show Business*. NY: Penguin Books, 1986. (A must read critique of our image entertainment culture which has replaced an idea, print based culture)
- Reisser, Paul C. and Dale Mabe, *Examining Alternative Medicine: An Inside Look at its Benefits and Risks*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001. (A sobering critique of the mystical and occult roots of much "alternative medicine")
- Robb, Edmund W. and Julia Robb. *The Betrayal of the Church: Apostasy and Renewal in the Mainline Denomination*. (well documented criticism of the religious left in America who have abandoned the Gospel for ideology, college level)
- Schaeffer, F. A. *Back to Freedom and Dignity*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1973. (Critique of the romantic idealism of B.F. Skinner's *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*)
- Schlossberg, Herbert. *Idols for Destruction: Christian Faith and Its Confrontation with American Society*. New York: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983.
- and Marvin Olasky. *Turning Point: A Christian Worldview Declaration* (a challenge to the "tidal wave of militant anti-Christian belief engulfing society, and the chaos left in its wake," popular level)
- Singer, Gregg C. *A Theological Interpretation of American History*. New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1964.
- Sire, James. *The Universe Next Door: A Basic World View Catalog*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1978.
- Sproul, R. C. and John Gerstner. *Classical Apologetics: A Rational Defense of The Christian Faith and A Critique of Presuppositional Apologetics*, Academie Books (college level apologetics)
- Thomas, Cal. *Book Burning* (censorship of Christianity by the media, popular level)
- , *The Death of Ethics in America* (title is quite self-explanatory!, popular level)
- von Mises, Ludwig. *Socialism: An Economical and Sociological Analysis* (the classic economist's answer to Socialism, very scholarly college level)
- Wells, David. *God in the Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams*. Grand Rapids: IVP, 1994.
- , *No Place For Truth, or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?* Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans's Publishing Company, 1993.
- Whitehead, John. *The Stealing of America* (a lawyer's analysis of the many issues facing the Church, popular level)
- , *The Second American Revolution* (discusses "Christian and religious freedom versus a secular, humanistic elite, which increasingly controls our society," popular level)

## I. Ethics

- Boettner, Loraine. *The Christian Attitude Toward War*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1985.
- Geisler, Norman L. *Ethics: Alternatives and Issues*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1971.
- Greene, William Brenton, Jr. "The Ethics of the Old Testament." *Classical Evangelical Essays in Old Testament Interpretation*. Compiled and edited by Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972, pp. 207-235.
- Holmes, Arthur F. *Ethics: Approaching Moral Decisions*. Contours of Christian Philosophy. Edited by C. Stephen Evans. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1984.
- Kaiser, W. C. Jr. *Toward Old Testament Ethics*. Academie Books, Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983.
- Middelmann, Udo. *Pro-existence: the place of man in the circle of reality*. Downers Grove. InterVarsity Press, 1974.
- Morey, Robert A. *When Is It Right to Fight: A Christian Leader Looks at the Difficult Issues of Peace, Freedom, and Responsibility*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1985.
- Murray, John. *Principles of Conduct: Aspects of Biblical Ethics*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1957.
- Wright, Christopher J. H. "Ethics." *The New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. Volume 4. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997, pp. 585-594.
- , *An Eye for an Eye: The Place of Old Testament Ethics Today*, 1983
- , "The Ethical Authority of the Old Testament: A Survey of Approaches." *Tyndale Bulletin* 43, 1992, pp. 101-20, 203-31.



## **J. Eschatology**

Abanes, Richard. *End-Time Visions: The Doomsday Obsession*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998.

Bock, Darrel L. Editor. *Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond* (Zondervan, '99) premill, amill and postmill

Boettner, Loraine. *The Millennium*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1984. (postmil). See his bibliography for more references, pp. 407-408.

Clouse/Hosack/Pierard, *The New Millennium Manual*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.

Davis, John Jefferson. *Christ's Victorious Kingdom: Postmillennialism Reconsidered*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1987.

Grenz, Stanley. *The Millennial Maze: Sorting Out the Evangelical Options*. Grand Rapids: IVP, 1992,

Hendrickson, William. *More Than Conquerors*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1940. (amil)

Hoekema, Anthony. *The Bible and the Future*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1979.

Ridderbos, Herman N. *The Coming of the Kingdom*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1962.

Vos, Geerhardus. *The Kingdom of God and the Church*. Nutley N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1972.

## **K. Grammars**

Gesenius' *Hebrew Grammar*. Second Edition. Edited and Enlarged by E. Kautzsch. Translated by A. E. Cowley. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1910.

Joüon, S. J Paul and Takamitsu Muraoka. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. Two volumes. Translated by T. Muraoka. Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituzione Biblico, 1991.

Kelly, Page H. *Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.

Lambdin, T.O. *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*. NY: Scribner's Sons, 1973

Rogers, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew Handbook*, revised. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000.

Ross, *Introducing Biblical Hebrew Grammar*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000.

Seow, C.L. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, revised. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995.

## **L. Historical-criticism**

Abrahams, William J. *Divine Revelation and the Limits of Historical Criticism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.

John, Alan F. "Historical Critical Method: Egyptian Gold or Pagan Precipice." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 26 (1983): pp. 3-13.

Long, Valentin. "Higher Criticism has gone Bankrupt." *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* 83 (1982): pp. 61-68.

MacRae, Allan Alexander. *JEDP Lectures on the Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch*. Hatfield: Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute, 1994. Edited by Stephen T. Hague, Robert C. Newman.

----- "The Facts about J.E.D.P." Collingswood, NJ:L Reformation Books [pamphlet]; also published in *The Biblical Bulletin*

----- "The Ups and Downs of Higher Criticism." *Christianity Today*, October 10, 1980, pp. 32-36.

----- "The Higher Critical Assault Upon the Scriptures."

Maier, Gerhard. *The End of the Historical Critical Method*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1977.

Schaeffer, Francis A. *No Final conflict*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1975.

Stock, Augustine. "The Limits of Historical Critical Exegesis." *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 13 (1983): pp. 28-31 (with a response from Leland J. White, pp. 32-34).

Vos, Gerhardus. *Mosaic Origins of the Pentateuchal Codes*. London: Longmans, 1886.

Wenham, Gordon J. "Trends in Pentateuchal Criticism since 1950." *Theological Student's Fellowship Bulletin* (Autumn 1974): pp. 1-

## **M. History-writing and the Old Testament**

Long, Philips V. "The Art of Biblical History." *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation: Six Volumes in One*. Edited by V. Philips Long, Tremper Longman III, Richard A. Muller, Vern S. Poythress, and Moisés Silva. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996, pp. 287-429.

Martens, Elmer A. *Plot and Purpose in the Old Testament*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1981.

-----, "The Oscillating Fortunes of 'History' within Old Testament Theology." *Faith, Tradition, and History: Old Testament Historiography in its Near Eastern Context*. Edited by A. R. Millard, James K. Hoffmeier, and David W. Baker. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1994, pp. 313-340.

Millard, Allan. "Story, History, and Theology." *Faith, Tradition, and History: Old Testament Historiography in its Near Eastern Context*. Edited by A. R. Millard, James K. Hoffmeier, and David W. Baker. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1994, pp. 37-64.

Sailhamer, John H. *Introduction to Old Testament Theology: A Canonical Approach*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995.

Yamauchi, Edwin. "The Current State of OT Historiography." *Faith, Tradition, and History: Old Testament Historiography in its Near Eastern Context*. Edited by A. R. Millard, James K. Hoffmeier, and David W. Baker. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1994, pp. 1-36.

## **N. Idolatry**

Guinness, Os and John Seel. Editors. *No God But God*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1993.

Schlossberg, Herbert. *Idols For Destruction: Christian Faith and Its Confrontation With American Society*. Nashville, Camden, New York: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983.

## **O. Language (and Hebrew)**

Anderson, Francis I. and A Dean Forbes. *The Vocabulary of the Old Testament*. Rome: Editrice Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1989.

Carter, Martha L. and Keith Schoville, eds., *Sign, Symbol, and Script: An Exhibition on the Origins of Writing and the Alphabet*. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1984.

Hooker, J. T. *Reading the Past: Ancient Writing From Cuneiform to the Alphabet*. London: British Museum Press, 1990.

Lakoff, G., M. Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Muraoka, Takamitsu. *Emphatic Words and Structures in Biblical Hebrew*. Jerusalem/Leiden: Magnes/Brill, 1985.

Putnam, Frederic Clarke. *Hebrew Bible Insert: A Student's Guide to the Syntax of biblical Hebrew*. Quakertown, PA: Stylus Publications, 1996.

Silva, Moises. *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983.

Waltke, Bruce. "The Language of the Old Testament." *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Volume 1. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, pp. 211-228.

-----, and M. O'Connor. *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990.

Williams, Ronald J. *Hebrew Syntax: An Outline*. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1967; reprint edition, 1986.

Young, D. J. "The Language of the Old Testament," *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Volume 1. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, pp. 197-208.

## **P. Lexicons**

Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, editors. *The New Brown, Driver, and Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament with an Appendix containing the Biblical Aramaic*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1979.

Harris R. Laird, G. L. Archer, and B. Waltke. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. Two Volumes. Chicago: Moody, 1980.

Koehler, Ludwig and Walter Baumgartner. *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, second edition. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1958.

-----, and Walter Baumgartner. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Volume 1. The New Koehler-Baumgartner in English. Translated and edited by M.E.J. Richardson. New York, Leiden, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1994.

VanGemeren, Willem A, editor. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. Four Volumes. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997.

## Q. Linguistics

- Beekman, John and John Callow. *Translating the Word of God: with Scripture and Topical Indexes*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974.
- Bodine, W. Editor. *Discourse Analysis of Biblical Literature: What it is and What it Offers*. Semia Studies. Georgia: SBL Scholars Press, 1996.
- Calloud, Jean. *Structural Analysis of Narrative*. Translated by Daniel Patte. Semeia Supplement 4. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976.
- Callow, Kathleen. *Discourse Considerations in Translating the Word of God*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975.
- Cotterell, Peter and Max Turner. *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1989.
- "Linguistics, Meaning, Semantics, and Discourse Analysis. *The New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. Volume 1. Edited by Willem VanGemeren. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997, pp. 134-160. .
- Crystal, David. *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991<sup>3</sup>.
- Cully, Robert C. *Studies in the Structures of Hebrew Narrative*. Semeia Supplement. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976.
- Longacre, Robert E. "Weqatal Forms in Biblical Hebrew Prose: A Discourse-modular approach. " *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics*. Edited by Robert D. Bergen. Summer Institute of Linguistics. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1994, pp. 50-98.
- "Building for the Worship of God. " *Discourse Analysis of Biblical Literature: What it is and What it Offers*. Edited by Walter R. Bodine. Semia Studies. Georgia: SBL Scholars Press, 1996.
- Polzin, Robert M. *Biblical Structuralism: Method and Subjectivity in the Study of Ancient Texts*. Semeia Supplement 5. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977.

## R. Literary structures

Dorsey, David A. *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis-Malachi*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.

- Girdlestone, Robert Baker. *Synonyms of the Old Testament: Their Bearing on Christian Doctrine*. Second edition. London: James Nisbet & Co. Ltd, 1897.
- Ryken, Leland. *Words of Delight: The Bible as Literature*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987.
- *How to Read the Bible as Literature*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984.
- Longman, Tremper III. "Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation. " *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation: Six Volumes in One*. Edited by V. Philips Long, Tremper Longman III, Richard A. Muller, Vern S. Poythress, and Moisés Silva. Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.
- , Richard A. Muller, Vern S. Poythress, and Moisés Silva. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996, pp. 91-191.

## S. OT Introduction

- Allis, O.T. *The Old Testament: Its Claims and Its Critics*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1972.
- *God Spoke by Moses*. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing House, 1951.
- Archer, Gleason L., Jr. *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*. Chicago: Moody, 1974.
- Dillard B., Raymond, and Tremper Longman III. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Apollos (Inter-Varsity Press), 1995.
- Orr, James. *The Problem of the Old Testament: Considered With Reference to Recent Criticism*. London: James Nisbet & Co., 1906.
- Young, E.J. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949.

## T. Surveys

- Geisler, Norman. *A Popular Survey of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987.
- Hendriksen, William. *Survey of the Bible*. England Evangelical Press, 1976.
- Hill, Andrew E. and John H. Walton. *A Survey of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.

Kaiser, Walter C. Jr. *A History of Israel from the Bronze Age Through The Jewish Wars*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998.

LaSor, W. S., D. A. Hubbard, and F. W. Bush. *Old Testament Survey*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.

Merrill, Eugene H. *An Historical Survey of the Old Testament*. New Jersey: The Craig Press, 1971.

----- *A Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1987.

Schultz, Samuel. *The Old Testament Speaks*. Harper and Row, 1970.

----- "Proposals for New Approaches in Teaching Old Testament Overview." *The Living And Active Word of God*. Edited by Morris Inch, Ronald Youngblood. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1983.

Wood, Leon. *A Survey of Israel's History*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986.

## U. Textual criticism

Barr, James. *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968.

Brotzman, Ellis. R. *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994.

Bruce, F. F. *The Books and The Parchaments*. London: Harper Collins, 1991.

Klein, Ralph W. *Textual Criticism of the Old Testament*. Guides to Biblical Scholarship. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974.

McCarter, Kyle P. Jr. *Textual Criticism: Recovering the Text of the Hebrew Bible*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

Roberts, Bleddyn J. *The Old Testamant Text and Versions: The Hebrew Text in Transmission and the History of the Ancient Versions*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1951.

Silva, Moises. *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983.

Tov, Emanuel. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press; Assen/Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1992.

Waltke, Bruce. "The Language of the Old Testament." *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Volume 1. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, pp. 211-228.

Weingreen, J. *Introduction to the Critical Study of the Text of the Hebrew Bible*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982.

Würthwein, Ernst. *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica*. Translated by Erroll F. Rhodes. First published as *Der Text des Alten Testaments*, reprint edition 1988; English edition, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

## V. Prophets background

➤ For extensive Prophet's bibliography, consult VanGemeran, *Interpreting*, pp. 412-436.

Allis, O.T. *The Unity of the Book of Isaiah*. Presbyterian and Reformed, 1950.

Christensen Duane L., "A New Israel: The Righteous from among All Nations." *Israel's Apostasy and Restoration: Essays in Honor of Roland K. Harrison*. Edited by Avraham Gileadi. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988, pp. 251-259.

Emerson, Grace, ed. *Prophets & Poets: A Companion to the Prophetic Books of the Old Testament*, Oxford: The Bible Reading Fellowship, SPCK, 1994.

Green. J.B. *How to Read Prophecy*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1984.

Green, William Henry. *Prophets and Prophecy: A Compilation of Notes of the Lectures Before the Senior Class*. Princeton: The Princeton Press, 1888.

Hattori, Yoshiaki. "Divine Dilemma in Ezekiel's View of the Exodus: An Exegetical Study of Ezekiel 20:5-29." *The Law and the Prophets: Old Testament Studies in Honor of Oswald T. Allis*. Edited by John H. Skilton. [no place]: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1974, pp. 413-424.

Kline, Meredith. "The Covenant of the Seventieth Week." *The Law and the Prophets: Old Testament Studies in Honor of Oswald T. Allis*. Edited by John H. Skilton. [no place]: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1974, pp. 452-469.

Lindblom, J. *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962; repr. ed., 1967.

MacRae, A.A. "Prophets and Prophecy." *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Volume 4. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975.

Mathews, Victor H. *Social World of the Hebrew Prophets*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001.

Motyer, J.A. "Prophecy and Prophets." *New Bible Dictionary* (2nd ed). Edited by D.J. Douglas. Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1982, pp. 975-983.

-----, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, Leicester: IVP, 1993.

Payne, J.B. *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*. Harper and Row, 1973.

Pratt, Richard L. Jr. "Historical Contingencies and Biblical Predictions." *The Way of Wisdom*. Edited by J.I. Packer and Sven K. Sonderlund. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000, pp. 180-203.

Ridderbos, J. *Isaiah*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985.

Schultz, S.J. *The Prophets Speak*. New York: Harper and Row, 1968.

Smith, G.V. "Prophet, Prophecy." *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. Volume 3. Edited by G.W. Bromily. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986, pp. 986-1004..

Verhoef, Pieter A. "Tithing—A Hermeneutical Consideration." *The Law and the Prophets: Old Testament Studies in Honor of Oswald T. Allis*. Edited by John H. Skilton. [no place]: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1974, pp. 115-127.

Watts, John D.W. *Word Biblical Commentary: Isaiah 34-66*. Volume 25. Waco: Word, 1985.

Whitcomb, John C. Jr. "Cyrus in the Prophecies of Isaiah." *The Law and the Prophets: Old Testament Studies in Honor of Oswald T. Allis*. Edited by John H. Skilton. [no place]: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1974, pp. 388-401

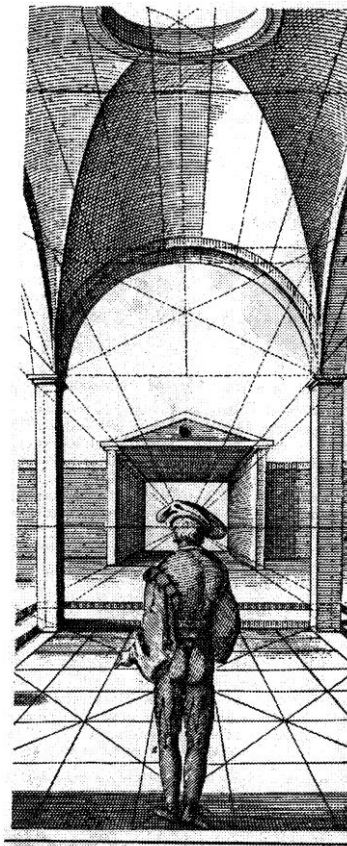
Young, E.J. *My Servants the Prophets*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.

-----, "Daniel's Vision of the Son of Man." *The Law and the Prophets: Old Testament Studies in Honor of Oswald T. Allis*. Edited by John H. Skilton. [no place]: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1974, pp. 425-451.

## **W. Surveys of OT**

William Hendriksen, *Survey of the Bible*, England Evangelical Press, 1976.

Samuel Shultz, *The Old Testament Speaks*, Harper and Row, 1970.



## VIII. SELECTIVE INDEX

- Aalders, G.H., 238, 284  
 absence of God, 282, 421, 506  
 Agagite, 600  
 Ahasuerus, 621, 623, 625  
 Amalekites, 599, 600, 601  
 Amillennialism, 91, 93, 94  
 Ammonites, 400, 403, 405, 454, 506, 588, 600, 601, 618, 657  
 Anglicanism, 113  
 antinomianism, 311  
 anti-wisdom, 467  
 Aram, 274, 275, 287, 313, 338, 457, 459, 600, 601, 602, 603, 637  
 Arameans, 56, 601, 602, 618  
 Archer, G., 229, 602, 645, 659, 665, 666  
 ark of the covenant, 53, 271, 323, 417, 435, 451, 533  
 Artaxerxes, 544, 554, 581, 622, 623, 625  
 Artaxerxes I, 581  
 Asherah, 306, 472, 604, 641, 644, 645, 648, 653  
 Ashtarte, 473  
 Assyria, 56, 152, 173, 187, 224, 238, 251, 252, 254, 256, 260, 261, 268, 274, 290, 291, 297, 300, 301, 304, 313, 318, 330, 338, 341, 342, 344, 345, 347, 351, 352, 353, 354, 356, 357, 363, 381, 388, 391, 392, 394, 395, 396, 399, 401, 404, 405, 406, 409, 412, 416, 423, 433, 445, 468, 513, 519, 544, 561, 572, 601, 610, 618, 629, 630, 632, 637, 650  
 authorial intention, 206, 207  
 Baal, 60, 73, 139, 148, 151, 255, 271, 276, 286, 290, 291, 296, 304, 305, 311, 383, 400, 408, 416, 420, 428, 434, 445, 457, 472, 473, 477, 495, 604, 617, 619, 641, 643, 644, 645, 647, 648, 650, 653, 654  
 Babylon, 53, 156, 181, 186, 187, 229, 238, 284, 285, 289, 304, 318, 347, 356, 357, 358, 363, 364, 365, 366, 368, 382, 388, 391, 392, 394, 395, 398, 399, 401, 402, 409, 412, 413, 415, 423, 425, 427, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 436, 437, 438, 440, 442, 443, 445, 446, 448, 449, 450, 451, 453, 454, 455, 457, 458, 459, 460, 462, 468, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 478, 479, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 490, 493, 494, 502, 506, 507, 512, 513, 514, 515, 521, 522, 523, 544, 548, 549, 552, 554, 564, 565, 600, 610, 625, 626, 629, 630, 632, 635, 636, 650  
 Babylonia, 173, 186, 252, 330, 395, 396, 412, 432, 487, 505, 513, 515, 516, 558, 561, 593, 629, 630, 632, 637, 644, 650, 654  
 Balaam, 23, 154, 195, 232, 600, 617  
 balancing of the books, 467  
 Barton, J., 661  
 biblical theology, 51, 323, 394  
 Blum, E., 508  
 Calvin, J., 15, 24, 25, 35, 37, 91, 208, 229, 239, 294, 456, 660  
 Canaan, 151, 153, 237, 290, 296, 313, 402, 412, 418, 454, 457, 472, 473, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 607, 613, 618, 619, 637, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 657  
 Canaanite, 120, 139, 151, 277, 291, 296, 348, 380, 382, 401, 409, 429, 457, 472, 510, 577, 593, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 626, 634, 641, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 653, 654  
 Canaanites, 264, 296, 383, 402, 577, 584, 588, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 613, 614, 626, 636, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649  
 Carson, D.A., 659  
 chariots, 384, 566, 625  
 Clements, R.E., 226  
 Corporeality, 342  
 cosmology, 359  
 counterpoint, 585  
 covenant-law, 48, 303, 379, 426, 588  
 covenant-presence, 21, 216, 244, 249, 265, 283, 341, 363, 414, 427, 560  
 covenant-promise, 51, 52, 74, 242, 244, 245, 248, 249, 272, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 288, 289, 303, 304, 310, 322, 340, 349, 351, 361, 368, 371, 379, 412, 421, 451, 471, 506, 571  
 creation imagery, 563  
 creation ordinances, 47, 48  
 Cross, F.M., 14, 220, 269, 389, 649, 657  
 cultural conservatism, 135, 142  
 Cultural Mandate, 122, 125  
 Darius I, 95, 492, 544, 554, 555, 621, 622, 623, 625  
 Darius II, 622  
 Delitzsch, F., 95, 187, 229, 236, 245, 246, 247, 294, 295, 300, 307, 331, 343, 348, 349, 352, 370, 373, 399, 401, 409, 442, 456, 462, 490, 491, 499, 514, 660  
 dialectic, 76, 224  
 Dillard, R.B., 229, 238, 240, 253, 329, 383, 391, 393, 399, 469, 585, 666  
 discipline, 467  
 disintegration, 77, 78  
 Dispensationalism, 36, 204  
 divination, 139, 140, 149, 151, 228, 305, 310, 339, 358, 386, 420, 483, 515, 637, 641, 644  
 Divination, 654  
 Dorsey, D.A., 231, 233, 291, 294, 325, 337, 383, 401, 403, 413, 445, 457, 461, 470, 471, 472, 478, 507, 547, 558, 585, 657, 666  
 Driver, S.R., 476, 665  
 dwelling-presence, 562  
 Eichrodt, W., 226  
 enthronement, 82, 392, 555, 586  
 evolution, 647, 650  
 fallacies, 119  
 Finegan, J., 629, 634, 637, 657  
 Fohrer, G., 229, 231, 233, 392, 469, 648  
 footstool, 462  
 Fritz, V., 626, 658  
 Geisler, N., 185, 662, 663, 666  
 Geshur, 601  
 Girdlestone, R.B., 666  
 gold, 563  
 Goldingay, J., 210  
 gracious presence, 563  
 Greene, W.B. Jr., 663  
 Greidanus, S., 199, 206, 207, 659  
 Grenz, S.J., 664  
 Guinness, O., 665  
 Gunkel, H., 223, 224, 227  
 Hadad, 275, 601, 602, 604, 641, 650  
 Hadadazar, 601  
 Hamilton, V.P., 222, 369  
 Haran, M., 473, 601, 603, 632, 636, 649  
 Harrison, R.K., 229, 234, 240, 383, 399, 401, 469, 476, 503, 613, 629, 644, 658, 667  
 Hartley, J.E., 467  
 Hasel, G., 255, 660  
 Hendriksen, W., 666  
 Hengstenberg, E.W. 50, 439, 442, 578  
 holy place, 477, 563  
 Hubbard, D.A., 667  
 hypocrisy, 72, 153, 225, 286, 297, 299, 353, 374, 385, 417, 419, 446  
 image of God, 77, 78  
 immutability, 203, 308, 309, 439  
 incense, 115, 280, 427, 456, 457, 563  
 insanity, 77  
 integration, 77, 78  
 intentional fallacy, 206  
 Jebusites, 264, 588, 602, 604, 613, 614, 646  
 Johnson, A.R., 206, 392, 665  
 Jonadab, 445  
 Kaiser, W.C. Jr., 660, 663, 666  
 Kaufmann, Y., 294, 295  
 Keel, O., 197, 657  
 Keil, C.F., 95, 229, 236, 245, 246, 247, 284, 294, 295, 300, 307, 348, 349, 352, 370, 399, 401, 442, 456, 462, 490, 491, 499, 514, 535, 538, 561, 563, 565, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 587  
 Kenites, 445, 617  
 Kitchen, K.A., 196, 605, 618, 645, 657, 658  
 Klein, G., 667  
 Kline, M., 48, 49, 82, 146, 216, 374, 491, 660, 661, 667  
 Konkel, A.H., 620  
 Kramer, S., 658  
 LaSor, W.S., 667  
 Lindblom, J., 226, 227, 667  
 Longacre, R., 666  
 Longacre, R.E., 666  
 Longman III, T., 123, 229, 238, 240, 253, 329, 383, 391, 393, 399, 469, 585, 659, 665, 666  
 love, 585  
 Machen, J. Gresham, 662  
 macrocosm, 49, 333  
 magic, 140, 227, 228, 358, 511, 577, 637, 641, 654  
 Maier, J., 664  
 Maier, J.R., 396, 664  
 Martens, E.A., 225, 665  
 Mazar, B., 645  
 McComiskey, T.E., 661  
 McConville, J.G., 53  
 meeting-presence, 587  
 mental illness, 77  
 Merrill, E.H., 631, 661, 667  
 microcosm, 49, 333  
 Millard, A.R., 602, 649, 660, 665  
 millennial madness, 113  
 Molech, 277, 305, 420, 459, 600, 618  
 Montgomery, J.W., 662  
 Moor, J.C. de, 195  
 Moriah, Mt., 379  
 motifs, 82, 244, 253, 256, 279, 288, 289, 291, 303, 306, 331, 337, 340, 350, 351, 355, 359, 360, 364, 365, 371, 379, 389, 400, 416, 420, 423, 424, 426, 435, 449, 450, 524, 530, 559, 563, 564, 568  
 Mowinckel, S., 155, 225, 227, 331  
 Muilenburg, J., 316  
 multiple fulfillment, 50, 115, 200, 204, 207, 339  
 Murray, J., 663  
 Netland, H.A., 662  
 Newman, M., 664  
 Niebuhr, 125, 126  
 Noth, M., 644, 645  
 Oosterzee, J.J. Van, 661  
 oral tradition, 223

- Orr, J., 662  
 paradox, 126  
 Pascal, B., 20, 54, 159, 161, 199, 206, 209, 220, 238, 363, 378, 662  
 perpetuity, 563  
 Persepolis, 544, 621, 623  
 Pfeiffer, R.H., 229  
 Pharisaism, 129, 130, 131  
 polynomanism, 311  
 populist dissent, 136  
 Postmillennialism, 92  
 Poythress, V.S., 123, 206, 208, 665, 666  
 Pratt, R. Jr., 206  
 Premillennialism, 91  
 Preterism, 108, 109  
 prophethess, 156  
 Realized Eschatology, 109  
 reconstructionism, 113  
 redemptive-historical, 14, 16, 222, 302, 533  
 reductionist view, 467  
 Reformed theology, 113  
 restoration, 78  
 resurrection, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 25, 36, 37, 47, 57, 76, 91, 92, 96, 116, 152, 211, 256, 292, 306, 307, 349, 350, 351, 360, 368, 477, 478, 492, 494, 499, 532, 533, 567, 578, 580, 588  
 retribution principle, 467  
 retribution-principle, 425  
 rhetorical questions, 244, 260, 345, 354, 382, 394, 396, 421, 424, 426  
 Robertson, O.P., 661  
 Rowley, H.H., 226, 228, 649  
 Ryken, L., 660, 666  
 sacred space, 563  
 Sailhamer, J.H., 665  
 sanctification, 78  
 sanity, 77, 78  
 Satan, 45, 84, 91, 92, 94, 95, 119, 120, 147, 148, 303, 304, 305, 482, 487, 491, 494, 522, 524, 562, 578  
 Schlossberg, H., 125, 126, 127, 136, 663, 665  
 Schmidt, W.H., 469  
 Schmitt, R., 533  
 Schultz, S., 667  
 Scobie, C.H.H., 661  
 seen and unseen, 466, 467  
 Seow, C.L., 664  
 seventy 'sevens', 94, 95, 490  
 Shakespeare, 195  
 Shechem, 607, 647  
 Shiloh, 262, 420, 649  
 Snath, N.H., 344, 649  
 Soden, W.von, 637, 650  
 Son of man, 505  
 Structuralism, 666  
 switch reference, 261, 443, 625, 632  
 Talmai, 601  
 telescoping, 204, 484  
 ten commandments, 389  
 Testimony, 35, 94, 146, 147, 161, 204, 269, 329, 389, 462, 513, 563, 567, 580, 586, 587, 589  
 Theodicy, 138, 233, 461  
 Theonomy, 113  
 Thiele, E.R., 435  
 Thiselton, A.C., 660  
 transspatial presence, 563  
 transtemporal presence, 563  
 transtemporal-presence, 563  
 Turner, H.W., 666  
 two realms, 466, 467  
 Universalism, 56, 251, 587  
 VanGemenen, V., 95, 105, 137, 139, 140, 186, 199, 229, 232, 233, 239, 240, 254, 272, 313, 325, 357, 360, 383, 391, 392, 410, 413, 476, 478, 491, 524, 549, 637, 661, 665, 666, 667  
 Vannoy, J.R., 173, 186, 223, 224, 229, 236, 239, 277, 331, 467, 620, 661  
 von Rad, G., 151, 469  
 Vos, G., 16, 24, 47, 48, 74, 75, 151, 152, 153, 158, 159, 186, 209, 210, 211, 216, 223, 224, 226, 228, 296, 331, 661, 664  
 Vriezen, Th.C., 233  
 Waltke, B.K., 340, 602, 619, 645, 665, 667  
 Walton, J.H., 666  
 Wellhausen, J., 51, 223, 224, 226, 228, 469  
 Westermann, C., 660  
 Wilson, I., 127, 504, 605  
 wisdom literature, 228  
 Wood, L., 667  
 Wright, C.J.H., 663  
 Würthwein, E., 667  
 Xerxes, 186, 262, 484, 486, 490, 494, 544, 559, 621, 623, 624, 625  
 Yates, John C., 563

To life

