

**'Good Figs, Bad Figs'**  
**Theologies of Differentiation in Jeremiah 21 – 45**

**R.J.R. Plant**

**Ph.D. Edinburgh 2003**

## Abstract

This thesis explores the concept of inner-Judean differentiation in the judgement and salvation oracles of Jer. 21–45. Specifically, it aims to identify the various ‘polarities’ of who will and will not be saved and to explore their underlying rationale. In order to show how these concepts interact, a synchronic approach is preferred, in which the relevant texts are analysed within their literary units.

Chapter 1 places the differentiation texts of Jer. 21–45 against the background of indiscriminate judgement preaching in Jer. 1–20. The works of K.-F. Pohlmann, C.R. Seitz and N. Kilpp on Jeremiah are then reviewed and assessed. It is argued that Pohlmann and Seitz, in particular, overlook important modes of differentiation within Jer. 21–45.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 form the bulk of the thesis. Chapter 2 identifies three polarities in Jer. 21–24: those who stay in Jerusalem v. those who surrender (21.1-10), Israel’s leaders v. its people (23.1-8), and the exiles in Babylon v. the non-exiles in Jerusalem (24.1-10). The hermeneutical relationship between these passages is then discussed. Chapter 3 focuses on Jer. 27–29, which presents two intersecting polarities; that of the exiles v. non-exiles, and that of prophets v. people. This configuration is complicated by the additional material in MT 29.16-20. Chapter 4 examines Jer. 37–45, where the mode of differentiation in the oracles to Ebed-Melech and Baruch reshape the mode of differentiation in Jeremiah’s message to the people of Jerusalem and the remnant of Judah. Chapter 5 briefly describes the message of undifferentiated salvation in Jer. 30–31.

In chapter 6, it is concluded that although inner-Judean differentiation forms a prominent motif in Jer. 21–45, no one expression of this has the final word. Rather, the juxtaposition of different or partly similar polarities results in a kaleidoscopic picture, consistent with the book as a whole and the period in which it was formed. It is also concluded that there is no single rationale for judgement or salvation; however, the actual experience of judgement seems to facilitate the promise of salvation. The thesis concludes by considering the relevance of the research to the works of Pohlmann and Seitz.

## Declaration

I, Robin John Ruskin Plant, hereby declare that I have written this thesis and that the work done here is entirely my own.

Signature:

Date: 27/07/03

## Acknowledgements

Like most doctoral theses, I imagine, this is submitted bearing an invisible 'work in progress' label. Nevertheless, it represents a provisional stopping-point on a line of enquiry that began seven years ago with a sermon preached to my home church on Jeremiah's 'letter to the exiles'. The ways in which the Christian scriptures conceptualise entire nations, and indeed all humanity, are an ongoing interest for me; this dissertation attempts to explore how this is done in the book of Jeremiah.

Sincere thanks are due to my supervisors, Dr. David Reimer and Prof. A.G. Auld, for their constant encouragement and accessibility, throughout the writing of this thesis. Their comments have been prompt and detailed, and have helped me avoid (or rectify) a number of blunders. I am also extremely grateful to Prof. M. Smallwood, for her time and wisdom in reading sections of the Greek text of Jeremiah with me.

Special thanks go to the computing support officers at New College, Dr. Jessie Paterson, Bronwen Currie and Crystal Webster, for their frequent and cheerful assistance with technical issues that are far beyond my comprehension. Much appreciated too has been the help given by my father, Peter Plant, in translating a number of French articles. It is a particularly happy duty to thank my post-graduate colleagues in Semple's Lab. for their personal friendship and support, which has made the 'Ph.D experience' much more pleasurable than it might otherwise have been.

No one, though, deserves my heartfelt gratitude more than my wife, Danielle, who has shared the trials and frustrations of the Ph.D with me, and put up with more than a few evenings and Saturdays by herself when I was at my desk. Her assistance in preparing the bibliography during the final frenetic weeks has been invaluable. After five grey Edinburgh winters, we can now enjoy the rhododendrons together.

## Table of Contents

<b>List of Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Chapter 1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>12</b>
1. Differentiation in the Old Testament Prophets .....	12
2. Differentiation in the Book of Jeremiah .....	13
2.1. <i>Undifferentiated Judgement: Jer. 1 – 20</i> .....	14
2.2. <i>Differentiated Judgement and Salvation: Jer. 21 – 45</i> .....	18
3. Differentiation in Jer. 21 – 45: Review of Scholarship .....	21
3.1. <i>The Work of K.-F. Pohlmann</i> .....	21
3.2. <i>The Work of C.R. Seitz</i> .....	25
3.3. <i>The Work of N. Kilpp</i> .....	28
4. Scope and Procedure for the Following Study .....	30
<b>Chapter 2. Differentiation in Jer. 21 – 24</b> .....	<b>37</b>
1. Introduction to Jer. 21 – 24 .....	37
1.1. <i>The Literary Setting of Jer. 21 – 24</i> .....	37
1.2. <i>Distinctiveness and Coherence: Jer. 21 – 24 as a Unit</i> .....	38
1.3. <i>Function: Jer. 21 – 24 in its Literary Context</i> .....	42
2. Jer. 21.1-10 .....	44
2.1. <i>Text</i> .....	44
2.2. <i>Textual Notes</i> .....	45
2.3. <i>Exegetical Notes</i> .....	49
2.4. <i>Coherence and Redaction</i> .....	53
2.5. <i>Differentiation in 21.1-10: הישבים / היצאים</i> .....	57
3. Jer. 23.1-8 .....	59
3.1. <i>Text</i> .....	59
3.2. <i>Textual Notes</i> .....	60
3.3. <i>Exegetical Notes</i> .....	63
3.4. <i>Coherence &amp; Redaction</i> .....	67
3.5. <i>Differentiation in 23.1-8: הרעים / הנאן</i> .....	68

4. Jer. 24.1-10.....	70
4.1. <i>Text</i> .....	70
4.2. <i>Textual Notes</i> .....	71
4.3. <i>Exegetical Notes</i> .....	75
4.4. <i>Coherence &amp; Redaction</i> .....	83
4.5. <i>Differentiation in Jer. 24.1-10: גלות יהודה / שארית ירושלים</i> .....	88
5. Conclusions: Differentiation in Jer. 21 – 24.....	90

### **Chapter 3. Differentiation in Jer. 27 – 29 ..... 97**

1. Introduction to Jer. 27 – 29.....	97
1.1. <i>The Literary Setting of Jer. 27 – 29</i> .....	97
1.2. <i>Distinctiveness and Coherence: Jer. 27 – 29 as a Unit</i> .....	101
1.3. <i>The Structure of Jer. 27 – 29</i> .....	105
2. Jer. 27 – 28[34 – 35].....	106
2.1. <i>Text</i> .....	106
2.2. <i>Textual Notes</i> .....	110
2.3. <i>Exegetical Notes</i> .....	117
2.4. <i>Coherence and Redaction</i> .....	122
2.5. <i>Differentiation in Jer. 27 – 28: הנביאים / המלך הכהנים וכל העם</i> .....	126
3. Jer. 29.1-32.....	128
3.1. <i>Text</i> .....	128
3.2. <i>Textual Notes</i> .....	131
3.3. <i>Exegetical Notes</i> .....	140
3.4. <i>Coherence and Redaction</i> .....	148
3.5. <i>Differentiation in Jer. 29: כל הגולה בבבל / הנביאים</i> .....	151
4. Differentiation in Jer. 27 – 29: הגולה בבבל / הישבים בירושלים.....	152
5. Differentiation in the MT Pluses of Jer. 29.....	155
6. Conclusions.....	158

<b>Chapter 4. Differentiation in Jer. 37 – 45</b> .....	<b>161</b>
1. Introduction .....	161
1.1. <i>Jer. 37 – 45 as a Unit</i> .....	161
2. Jer. 38[45].1-3; 14-23 .....	165
2.1. <i>Text</i> .....	165
2.2. <i>Textual Notes</i> .....	166
2.3. <i>Exegetical Notes</i> .....	169
2.4. <i>Coherence and Redaction</i> .....	172
2.5. <i>Differentiation in 38.1-3; 14-23: הישבים / היצאים / המלך צדקיהו</i> .....	176
3. Jer. 39[46].15-18 .....	178
3.1. <i>Text</i> .....	178
3.2. <i>Textual Notes</i> .....	178
3.3. <i>Exegetical Notes</i> .....	179
3.4. <i>Coherence and Redaction</i> .....	182
3.5. <i>Differentiation in Jer. 39[46].15-18: עבר מלך הכושי / העיר הזאת</i> .....	184
4. Summary: Differentiation in Jer. 38 – 39 .....	187
5. Jer. 42[49].1 – 43.7.....	188
5.1. <i>Text</i> .....	188
5.2. <i>Textual Notes</i> .....	191
5.3. <i>Exegetical Notes</i> .....	200
5.4. <i>Coherence and Redaction</i> .....	203
5.5. <i>Differentiation in 42.1 – 43.7: שארית יהודה / ישבי ירושלם</i> .....	208
6. Jer. 45.1-5 [51.31-35].....	210
6.1. <i>Text</i> .....	210
6.2. <i>Textual Notes</i> .....	211
6.3. <i>Exegetical Notes</i> .....	212
6.4. <i>Coherence and Redaction</i> .....	217
6.5. <i>Differentiation in Jer. 45.1-5: ברוך בן נריה / כל בשר</i> .....	221
7. Summary: Differentiation in Jer. 42 – 45 .....	224

<b>Chapter 5. Undifferentiated Salvation: Jer. 30 – 31 .....</b>	<b>225</b>
1. Introduction .....	225
2. Jer. 30 – 31 as a Literary Unit .....	225
3. Undifferentiated Salvation in Jer. 30 – 31 .....	226
3.1. <i>The Inclusion of Israel and Judah</i> .....	226
3.2. <i>The Non-specific Nature of the Diaspora</i> .....	227
3.3. <i>The Personification of Israel</i> .....	228
3.4. <i>The Listing of Groups</i> .....	230
<b>Chapter 6. Conclusions.....</b>	<b>233</b>
1. Summary of Findings .....	233
2. Conclusions .....	234
2.1. <i>The Prominence of the Concept of ‘Differentiation’</i> .....	234
2.2. <i>The Diversity of Differentiation</i> .....	234
2.3. <i>The Diversity of Rationales</i> .....	236
2.4. <i>Implications for the Work of Pohlmann and Seitz</i> .....	238
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>242</b>

## Abbreviations

### 1. Journals and Publications

AB	Anchor Bible
ATSAT	Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>BDB</i>	F. Brown, S.R. Driver & C.H. Briggs, <i>Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
<i>BHS</i>	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
BHT	Beiträge zur Historischen Theologie
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar, Altes Testament
BO	Biblica et Orientalia
BS	The Biblical Seminar
BTS	Biblisches-Theologische Studien
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CB	Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>DCH</i>	D.J.A. Clines, <i>Dictionary of Classical Hebrew, Vols. 1 – 5</i>
<i>DIHGS</i>	J.C.L. Gibson, <i>Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar – Syntax</i>
<i>DJD</i>	<i>Discoveries in the Judaean Desert</i>
ETL	Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses
<i>Ev. T.</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>GBH</i>	P. Joüon, <i>A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew, Vols. 1 &amp; 2</i> (ET: <i>Grammaire de l'Hébreu biblique</i> )
<i>GKC</i>	E. Kautzsch & A.E. Cowley, <i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i>
GTA	Göttinger theologische Arbeiten



<i>HAR</i>	<i>Hebrew Annual Review</i>
HKAT	Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HSM	Hebrew Semitic Monographs
<i>IB</i>	<i>Interpreter's Bible</i>
<i>IBH</i>	T.O. Lambdin, <i>Introduction to Biblical Hebrew</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>JB</i>	Jerusalem Bible
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
JSJ Sup.	Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplement Series
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOT Sup.	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
<i>KD</i>	<i>Kerygma und Dogma</i>
KHAT	Kurzer Hand-Kommentar zum Alten Testament
LAI	Library of Ancient Israel
LBI	Library of Biblical Interpretation
<i>L &amp; S</i>	H.G. Liddell & R. Scott, <i>A Greek – English Lexicon, Vols. 1 &amp; 2</i>
Lust, <i>Lexicon</i>	J. Lust, E. Eynikel & K. Hauspie, <i>A Greek – English Lexicon of the Septuagint</i>
<i>NBC</i>	D.A. Carson, R.T. France, J.A. Motyer & G.W. Wenham (eds.), <i>New Bible Commentary</i>
NCB	New Century Bible
<i>NEB</i>	New English Bible
New ICC	International Critical Commentary (New Series)
NGB	Das Alte Testament Deutsch: Neues Göttinger Bibelwerk
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
<i>NIDOTTE</i>	W.A. VanGemeren (ed.), <i>New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis, Vols. 1 – 5</i>

<i>NIDNTT</i>	C. Brown, <i>New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology</i> , Vols. 1 – 4
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
<i>NIV</i>	New International Version
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OBT	Overtures to Biblical Theology
OTG	Old Testament Guides
<i>OTE</i>	<i>Old Testament Essays</i>
<i>OTWSA</i>	<i>Die Outestamentiese Werkgemeenskap in Suid-Afrika</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTS	Old Testament Studies
<i>PEQ</i>	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
PTMS	Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series
Rahlfs	A. Rahlfs, <i>Septuaginta</i>
<i>REB</i>	Revised English Bible
<i>RSV</i>	Revised Standard Version
<i>RQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
SB	Subsidia Biblica
SBB	Stuttgarter biblische Beiträge
SBLDS	Society for Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society for Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSBS	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology (Second Series)
<i>SJOT</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of Theology</i>
SOF Sup.	Symbolae Osloenses Fasc. Supplementary Series
SOTI	Studies in Old Testament Theology
<i>ST</i>	<i>Studia Theologica</i>
<i>TLOT</i>	M.E. Biddle, <i>Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries
<i>VSH</i>	<i>Vanderbilt Studies in the Humanities</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VT Sup.	Vetus Testamentum Supplementary Series
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary

<i>WTJ</i>	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

### **Ancient Versions**

LXX	Septuagint
LXX <sup>A</sup>	Codex Alexandrinus
LXX <sup>B</sup>	Codex Vaticanus
LXX <sup>S</sup>	Codex Sinaiticus
LXX <sup>Luc</sup>	Septuagint (Lucianic recension)
LXX <sup>θ</sup>	Septuagint (Theodotion's revision)
LXX <sup>Q</sup>	Codex Marchalianus
LXX <sup>V</sup>	Codex Venetus
V <sup>P</sup>	Petersburg Codex to the Prophets
Vulg.	Vulgate
Targ.	Targum Jonathan to the Prophets
<i>EN</i>	<i>Aristotle. The Nicomachean Ethics</i>
<i>Hdt.</i>	<i>Herodotus</i>
<i>Memorabilia</i>	<i>Xenophon. Memorabilia &amp; Oeconomicus</i>

## Chapter 1. Introduction

### 1. Differentiation in the Old Testament Prophets

Die klassischen Propheten Israels sehen das Volk als Einheit. Die Gerichtsprophetie kündigt dem Volk Jahwes mit allem ihr zur Verfügung stehenden Sprachgewalt den Untergang an. Selbst wenn in den Anklagereden nur das Verhalten einzelner Exponenten oder Gruppen des Volkes, besonders der Oberschicht, angeprangert wird, gilt die Unheilsankündigung doch letztlich dem ganzen Volk . . . Auf der anderen Seite gelten auch die Heilsankündigungen – man denke an Hosea wie an Deuterocesaja – dem ganzen Volk. Den Propheten geht es nicht um ein individuelles, den jeweiligen Taten entsprechendes Ergehen, sondern um die Zukunft, die das Volk als Ganzes trifft.<sup>1</sup>

So begins Klaus Koenen in his study of the theology of the OT prophetic books. As he immediately points out, this undifferentiating perspective, in which salvation or judgement is announced in respect to ‘the people as a whole’, is peculiar to the prophets. In the legal, cultic and wisdom traditions of Israel, one sees far more interest in the conduct of the individual, and its consequences for that individual. However, Koenen concedes that even in the prophets, “es gibt Texte, die nicht vom Heil oder Unheil des ganzen Volkes sprechen, sondern im Blick auf die Zukunft zwischen Gerechten und Sündern – wie immer diese im einzelnen beschrieben sein mögen – unterscheiden. Den Gerechten wird es gut gehen, den Sündern dagegen schlecht.”<sup>2</sup>

In the rest of his study, Koenen examines how this pattern of differentiation is reflected in specific prophetic passages, distinguishing between those in which YHWH’s salvation for the righteous follows his judgement on the wicked, and those in which salvation and judgement occur simultaneously. With regard to the latter category, he finds the book of Habakkuk to form a watershed: “Mit der differenzierten Ankündigung von Heil und Unheil für die in einem Konflikt gegenüberstehenden Gruppen unterscheidet sich Habakuk von den klassischen Propheten, die bei ihrer Ankündigung immer das ganze Volk im Blick haben. Habakuk macht den verschiedenen Gruppen des Volkes erstmals unterschiedliche Ankündigung.”<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> K. Koenen, *Heil den Gerechten – Unheil den Sündern! Ein Beitrag zur Theologie der Prophetenbücher* (BZAW 229; de Gruyter: Berlin & New York, 1994) 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Koenen, *Heil den Gerechten*, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Koenen, *Heil den Gerechten*, 164. He traces this outlook to the earliest stratum of Habakkuk, which he places at the start of the sixth century (146). Most scholars date the book to sometime between the late seventh and early sixth century; see E. Nielsen, ‘The Righteous and the Wicked in Habakkuk’ *ST* 6 (1953) 54-78; E. Otto, ‘Die Theologie des Buches Habakkuk’, *VT* 35 (1985) 274-295; R.D. Haak, *Habakkuk* (VT Sup. 44; Leiden: Brill, 1992) 133; R. Mason, *Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Joel* (OTG; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994) 84.

It is fair to say that the concept of inner-Israelite differentiation emerges most clearly in the post-exilic prophets. G.I. Emmerson, for example, notes how conflict within the Judean community is reflected in the combined judgement and salvation oracle of Isa. 65.8-16 (cf. 66.5): “In this dual orientation it differs in a remarkable fashion from the traditional forms of pre-exilic prophecy in which the nation is treated as a corporate entity whether for judgment or salvation.”<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, S.L. McKenzie and H.N. Wallace see in Mal. 3.13-21 a redactional reinterpretation of the original message of the book: “The covenant people are narrowed to include only a segment of the postexilic community . . . No longer is the entire community indicted but only a part of it.”<sup>5</sup>

Working from a different angle, however, Iain Duguid explores the stance taken by the exilic prophet Ezekiel towards the leaders of Israel – kings and princes, priests and levites, prophets, and ‘lay leadership’ – and finds a striking corollary between what is promised, and the past conduct of each group.<sup>6</sup> There is, he concludes, “a coherent and connected attitude taken toward these leadership groups throughout the book: those singled out for the most reproach in Ezekiel’s critique of the past are marginalized in his plan for the future, while those who escape blame are assigned positions of honour.”<sup>7</sup> Duguid’s study demonstrates that the prophetic books are capable of differentiating among the people in ways that are not immediately obvious.

## 2. Differentiation in the Book of Jeremiah

Given the observations of Koenen and Duguid concerning Habakkuk and Ezekiel, the question arises as to whether, and to what extent, the concept of salvation for one Judean group and judgement for another is reflected in the book of their close contemporary, Jeremiah of Anathoth.<sup>8</sup> *Prima facie*, there would seem to be good reason for thinking that Jeremiah himself may have held (or developed) such a perspective. For one thing, irrespective of when his

---

<sup>4</sup> G.I. Emmerson, *Isaiah 56 – 66* (OTG; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992) 31-32; see further 81-94 for a discussion of the possible sociological background to this conflict.

<sup>5</sup> S.L. McKenzie & Howard N. Wallace, ‘Covenant Themes in Malachi’, *CBQ* 45 (1983) 563.

<sup>6</sup> Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel* (VT Sup. 56; Leiden: Brill, 1994).

<sup>7</sup> Duguid, *Leaders of Israel*, 1.

<sup>8</sup> Henceforth in this study, ‘Jeremiah’ will denote the figure of the prophet, and ‘Jer.’, the book that bears his name.

ministry began,<sup>9</sup> it spanned a period in which Judah twice suffered invasion and deportation (597 and 587). The fact that certain groups of citizens were taken away while others were left would lend itself to being interpreted in terms of salvation for some and judgement for others. For another, Jer. more than any other prophetic book witnesses to the plurality of political factions within Judah prior to 587. Not only so, it strongly suggests that Jeremiah himself was not merely an ‘outsider’ in Jerusalem (like Amos? cf. Am. 7.14-15), but rather was associated with certain prominent individuals, especially the scribal family of Shaphan (Jer. 26.24; 29.3; 36.10-19; 39.14).<sup>10</sup> To the extent that theology is shaped by socio-political factors,<sup>11</sup> we might expect Jeremiah to have entertained a hope for some to be spared YHWH’s judgement, and maybe even rewarded for their faithfulness. Indeed, G.H. Parke-Taylor connects the relative frequency of the term ‘remnant’ (שְׁאֵרִית) in Jer. with the existence of Jeremiah’s loyal supporters.<sup>12</sup>

## 2.1. Undifferentiated Judgement: Jer. 1 – 20

These observations notwithstanding, Koenen’s claim regarding the undifferentiating perspective of the prophets finds considerable support in the first twenty chapters of Jer., which adopt what we might call a ‘broad-brush’ approach to the evils of Judean society. In keeping

---

<sup>9</sup> On the basis of Jer. 1.2, most scholars trace the start of Jeremiah’s ministry to the thirteenth year of Josiah, i.e., 627-626; so, e.g., J. Bright, *Jeremiah. Introduction, Translation and Notes* (AB 21; New York: Doubleday, 1965) xxix; J.A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 10-11; H. Cazelles, ‘La Vie de Jérémie dans son Contexte National et International’, in P.-M. Bogaert (ed.), *Le Livre de Jérémie. Le Prophète et son Milieu, les Oracles et leur Transmission* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1981) 24-25, 29-32; P.C. Craigie, P.H. Kelley & J.F. Drinkard, *Jeremiah 1 – 25* (WBC 26; Dallas: Word Books, 1991) xlv. Some, however, maintain that this was the year of his birth, and that he did not begin preaching until 609; see J. Philip Hyatt, ‘The Beginning of Jeremiah’s Prophecy’, *ZAW* 78 (1966) 204-214; W. Holladay, *Jeremiah 2. A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 26 – 52* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989) 25-26; N.K. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible. A Socio-Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985) 395-396.

<sup>10</sup> For a helpful discussion of the biblical and archaeological evidence for Jeremiah’s ‘scribal support group’, see J. Andrew Dearman, ‘My Servants the Scribes: Composition and Context in Jeremiah 36’, *JBL* 109 (1990) 408-420.

<sup>11</sup> On this point, see R.R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980) 241-251, and B.O. Long, ‘Social Dimensions of Prophetic Conflict’, *Semeia* 21 (1981) 31-53; the latter writes of “a network of family relationships supportive of Jeremiah, and extending into the highest levels of royal and cultic service . . . Jeremiah may have been born a rural non-Jerusalemite, but his blood and social relationships are anything but lower class” (46-47). See too Gottwald, *Introduction*, 402-404.

<sup>12</sup> G.H. Parke-Taylor, *The Formation of the Book of Jeremiah: Doublets and Recurring Phrases* (SBLMS 51; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2000) 264.

with the general tenor of these twenty chapters, specificity is rare, a point reflected in the terms used for the prophet's audience: 'Judah' (2.28); 'Jerusalem' (4.14; 6.8; 15.5); 'men of Judah and Jerusalem' (4.3; 11.2; 18.11); 'this people' (7.16; 11.14; 15.1); 'the house of Israel' (9.26; 10.1; 18.6), etc. When particular groups (e.g., kings, prophets and priests) are identified, they are piled up without distinction (1.18; 2.26; 4.9; 8.1; 13.13). Only with the 'men of Anathoth' (11.21-23) and Pashhur ben Immer (20.1-6) are the targets of criticism made specific.

Likewise, Judah's guilt is universal. From the least to the greatest (מקטן ועד גדול), all (כולם) are greedy for gain and practice deceit (6.13 = 8.10). All of them (כולם) are rebels (6.28) and adulterers (9.1), and all of Jerusalem (בבל) is oppression (6.6). No one (אין איש) repents of his wickedness (8.6) or takes YHWH's judgement to heart (12.11). Indeed, in 9.25-26 YHWH refuses even to differentiate Judah from the other nations, since 'the whole house of Israel' (כל בית ישראל) is uncircumcised in heart'.<sup>13</sup>

Consequently, YHWH's judgement is against the entire land. When it falls, no one will be safe (12.12), for his wrath will be poured out on man and beast (על האדם ועל הבהמה, 7.20). YHWH has rejected 'the generation of his wrath' (דור עברתו, 7.29). Especially comprehensive is the language of 6.10-15, where, having described himself as 'full of the wrath of YHWH' (6.9), Jeremiah cries:

Pour it out on the children in the street and on the young men gathered together; both husband and wife will be caught in it, and the old, those weighed down with years. Their houses will be turned over to others, together with their fields and their wives . . . They will fall with the fallen; they will be brought down when I punish them.<sup>14</sup>

Granted, there is some variation regarding the *nature* of judgement, since alongside the prophecy that Judah will be carried into exile (הגלת יהודה כלה, 13.19) is the claim that both great and small (גדלים וקטנים, 16.6) will die in the land. The scope of the disaster, however, is not in doubt, and hints that any might survive are few. 6.9 speaks of the 'remnant of Israel' (שארית ישראל), but their fate seems to be annihilation rather than salvation.<sup>15</sup> An ominous future for

<sup>13</sup> On this depiction of Judah as wholly evil, see further R.P. Carroll, *From Chaos to Covenant. Uses of Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah* (London: SCM Press, 1981) 67-68.

<sup>14</sup> W. Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah: Exile and Homecoming* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 72, remarks: "The failure occasions the full, powerful release of YHWH's wrath against every part of the city. This passage, unlike others that indict the leadership, includes all in the scope of disobedience."

<sup>15</sup> So W. McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah. Volume 1. Introduction and Commentary on Jeremiah I – XXV* (New ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986) 144-145; R.P. Carroll,

השארית is also anticipated in 8.3 and 15.9. In 4.27, an announcement of devastation on the land is followed by the words, וכלה לא אעשה ('but I will not make an end of her'),<sup>16</sup> and a similar qualification occurs in 5.10, עלו בשרותיה ושחתו וכלה אל תעשו.<sup>17</sup> The meaning of the phrase כלה לא עשה, however, becomes clear after its third occurrence in 5.18; those who are spared will be taken to a foreign land (בן תעבדו זרים בארץ לא לכם) 5.19). The only real note of hope in Jer. 1 – 20 comes in prophecies of restoration, which necessarily assume the disaster of exile (12.14-16; 16.14-15).

This picture of unqualified guilt and judgement is encapsulated in Jer. 5. The chapter opens with YHWH challenging Jeremiah to 'find but one person who deals honestly and seeks the truth' (v. 1). Although the prophet concedes that 'the poor' (דלים) are ignorant of YHWH's ways (v. 4a), he has higher expectations of the leaders (הגדלים, v. 5a). But he is disappointed; they have *as one* (המה יחדו, v. 5b) rejected YHWH's yoke. Later on, the chapter hints at a more nuanced view (vv. 26-31). Here, YHWH singles out for rebuke 'wicked men' (רשעים, v. 26), who have failed to defend 'the poor' (אביונים) and 'the orphan' (יתום) (v. 28). This is a familiar social polarity in the OT, in which YHWH often sides with the poor (Ex. 22.22-24; Ps. 107.42; Job. 5.15; Isa. 14.30); indeed, אביונים sometimes stands in parallelism with צדיק, 'the righteous' (Am. 2.6; 5.12). Thus, we would most naturally take YHWH's question 'Shall I not punish *these people*?' (העל אלה לא אפקד, v. 29) as referring to the רשעים of vv. 26-28. However, the

---

*Jeremiah. A Commentary* (OTL; London: SCM Press, 1986) 195; W. Holladay, *Jeremiah I. A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 1 – 25* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989) 213; Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 102-103; Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 71-72; contra B. Duhm, *Das Buch Jeremia* (KHAT 11; Tübingen & Leipzig: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck] 1901) 68; W. Rudolph, *Jeremia* (HAT 12; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck] 1947) 38-39. If we follow MT, עולל יעוללו, the subject must be Israel's enemies and the meaning of the verb threatening. Following the Septuagint, Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 36, and Bright, *Jeremiah*, 44, emend to עולל עולל, so that Jeremiah is being addressed. Even so, it is still not certain that 'gleaning' means 'saving'; see on this point J. Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion. Studies in the Life of Jeremiah* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922) 156-157; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 257.

<sup>16</sup> Some commentators (e.g., Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 30; McKane, *Jeremiah I*, 109) avoid the problem by emending to וכלה לה אעשה ('and I will make an end of her'), but against this see Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 60-61. J. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah and the Lamentations. Volume I* (ET: J. Owen; Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1852) 241, takes the words to mean that God "would observe no moderation in executing his vengeance", while Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 80, translates them 'I will not *yet* have brought the end'.

<sup>17</sup> אל is deleted by Duhm, *Jeremia*, 59; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 33; McKane, *Jeremiah I*, 120; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 181; contra Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 243; Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 90. According to the latter, "the notion of pruning (v. 10b) and the notion of exile (v. 19) seem to support the notion that '*not a final end*' is in the prophet's mind, but only a terrible act of judgment that will seem like the end."



following clause, 'In such a nation (בְּנֵי אֲשֶׁר כִּזְוָה) shall I not vindicate myself?', makes the divine wrath sound less discriminating, and the shift back towards a unitary view of the people is completed in v. 31: 'The prophets prophesy lies, the priests rule by their own authority, and my people love it this way'.<sup>18</sup>

Granted, the idea of undifferentiated judgement in Jer. 1 – 20 may have been heightened redactionally. In his study of chs. 11 – 20, Mark Smith argues that Jeremiah's 'laments' have been placed in carefully constructed literary units (chs. 11 – 12, 13 – 15, 16 – 17 and 19 – 20), each of which also contains a prose story about the prophet.<sup>19</sup> As a result, Smith remarks,

there is a shift from the laments' original purpose to their main function in context. In their original usage, they serve to defend Jeremiah's prophetic mission against unnamed enemies. In context, however, the laments stress the guilt of the prophet's foes and extend their identity to include Judah and Jerusalem, in short all the people and its leadership.<sup>20</sup>

Again, this is not to say that in literary terms 'Jerusalem' is a uniform entity. As Mark Biddle has shown, Jer. 1 – 20 contains "a virtual chorus of voices in dialogue",<sup>21</sup> in which the persona of 'Lady Jerusalem', for example, is quite distinct from that of 'the people of Judah'. While the former voices a spontaneous emotional response to disaster (e.g., 4.19-21; 10.19-22), the latter express confusion and despair at YHWH's unwillingness to forgive (e.g., 14.7-9; 19-22). Nevertheless, while we encounter a variety of responses to the coming disaster, there is no indication that any of these personae are less culpable or less liable to judgement than another.

There is, though, one highly significant differentiation in Jer. 1 – 20, which we alluded to in connection with the laments; namely, that between the nations and the prophet himself. This is established in the very first chapter: Jeremiah has been 'set apart' (קָדַשׁ Hiph.) as 'a prophet to the nations' (v. 5). Indeed, he is given authority over them, expressed in language

---

<sup>18</sup> While McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 136, and Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 35, see vv. 30-31 as originally independent, J.R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1 – 20. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 21a; New York: Doubleday, 1999) 406, sees v. 29 as the intrusive element: "Without vv. 30-31 the indictment in vv. 26-28 remains flat, which may account for the need to bring in the stereotyped v. 29; with these verses, the false prophets are blamed, the puppet priests are blamed, but the real culprit turns out to be the people."

<sup>19</sup> Mark S. Smith, *The Laments of Jeremiah and Their Contexts. A Literary and Redactional Study of Jeremiah 11 – 20* (SBLMS 42; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990) 43-64.

<sup>20</sup> Smith, *Laments*, 39.

<sup>21</sup> M. Biddle, *Polyphony and Symphony in Prophetic Literature: Rereading Jeremiah 7 – 20* (SOTI 2; Macon GA: Mercer University Press, 1996) 115.

that will be paradigmatic in Jer.: לנתוש ולנתוץ ולהאביר ולהרוס לבנות ולנטוע (v. 10).

Accompanying this commission is a personal salvation oracle: אל תירא מפניהם כי אתך אני להצילך (v. 8). Rhetorically, therefore, YHWH's address creates just two parties: Jeremiah ('you') and the nations ('them'). The prophet is set over against the world. Later in the chapter, the scope of this differentiation is narrowed: YHWH has made Jeremiah 'a fortified city' against the whole land (על כל הארץ),<sup>22</sup> i.e., the land of Judah (1.18). 'All the land', of course, comprises a plurality of social groups – "the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests, and the people of the land" (v. 18c) – but they are all bracketed together in opposition to Jeremiah. It may be, of course, that 'Jeremiah' is representative of a wider group of readers, as Brueggemann believes.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, according to the text, there are only two 'people-categories'; Jeremiah of Anathoth, and everyone else. The sense of conflict between them will become pronounced from ch. 11 onwards.

## 2.2. Differentiated Judgement and Salvation: Jer. 21 – 45

The situation is quite different, however, when we turn to the central section of the book, chs. 21 – 45.<sup>24</sup> Here, despite the prevailing mood of doom, we encounter a series of oracles announcing judgement for some and salvation for others. *Polarities* are thereby set up, in which one group (or individual) is differentiated from another. At the same time, the *form* of these polarities is remarkably fluid. Those exiled to Babylon in 597 are contrasted with those left behind under Zedekiah (chs. 24 and 29); the people with their leaders (23.1-8); the nation that submits to Nebuchadrezzar with the nation that does not (ch. 27); the Rechabites with the Judeans under Jehoiakim (ch. 35); those who flee the city with those who remain in it (21.8-10;

---

<sup>22</sup> The Septuagint does not reflect על כל הארץ.

<sup>23</sup> Brueggemann writes: "The God of this oracle is not indiscriminate . . . An important distinction is made between the majority, who are unresponsive and so under threat, and this minority voice (Jeremiah), who holds faithfully to the purpose of Yahweh" (*Exile and Homecoming*, 30). Noting the emphatic ואתה in 1.17 and 45.5, Brueggemann adds: "These two 'but you' speeches in 1.17-19 and 45.5 may at one time have formed an envelope for the entire text. These two promises may provide a clue to the editorial history of the book of Jeremiah. That editorial work was done by those who came after Jeremiah, who lived in the Exile and who took the text seriously. These faithful people understood themselves to be recipients of the same 'but you' assurances." (30).

<sup>24</sup> Excluding chs. 30 – 33, to which we will return briefly in chapter five.

38.1-3); Ebed-Melech with 'this city' (38.15-18) and Baruch with 'all flesh' (45.1-5). All such texts we will call 'differentiation passages'.

None of these passages is discussed by Koenen; in fact, the only Jeremianic texts he examines are 17.5-8 and 30.23-24, to which we will return later. At first sight, their exclusion would seem quite legitimate, given the terms of his own enquiry; namely, the allocation of salvation and judgement to different groups on the basis of their *ethical* profile. As Koenen himself explains,<sup>25</sup> this means excluding from his investigation promises of salvation for a 'remnant' (e.g., Jer. 24.4-7), since these rest on YHWH's sovereign decision rather than the conduct of that particular group; 'Deuteronomistic' texts which set out two alternatives (e.g., Jer. 42.7-18), since these still view the people as a single entity; passages in which salvation depends on specific 'here and now' actions (e.g., Jer. 21.8); and passages in which a single individual is exempt from judgement on a wider group (e.g., Jer. 45).

Even within his own terms of reference, however, Koenen's exclusion of some of the differentiation passages in Jer. remains questionable. Especially this is true of the oracle to Ebed-Melech, which is explicitly grounded in the Cushite's 'trust' in YHWH (38.15-18).<sup>26</sup> But other passages would also seem to be relevant. For example, Koenen does not address Jer. 23.1-8, presumably because this is a 'remnant' prophecy; yet it begins by announcing judgement on 'the shepherds' (i.e., Judah's leaders) precisely because of their past misconduct.<sup>27</sup> Likewise, although the promise of restoration for the exiles (29.10-14) is grounded in divine initiative, it expressly anticipates their 'seeking' and 'praying to' YHWH,<sup>28</sup> and is followed by judgement oracles against three individuals for 'prophesying lies' (29.23, 31). In both cases, the promise of salvation for some and not others has an ethical aspect, although it is not the *only* aspect.

From another angle too, Koenen's approach is problematic. Although he sets out to explore oracles in which salvation is allocated to some and judgement to others according to

---

<sup>25</sup> Koenen, *Heil den Gerechten*, 5.

<sup>26</sup> Koenen concedes this point in a footnote (*Heil den Gerechten*, 5 n.11) but otherwise makes no mention of it.

<sup>27</sup> A similar point could be made regarding Ezek. 34.1-16, also largely ignored by Koenen. His claim, *Heil den Gerechten*, 74, that "nach [Ezek. 34] vv. 1-16 gehört das ganze Volk Israel zur Herde Jahwes", leaves the identity of the 'shepherds' a mystery.

<sup>28</sup> Indeed, in the Greek text these verbs are imperatives. As we will see later, the degree of conditionality in 29.13 depends on how we interpret כִּי.

their 'right conduct' (*recht Verhalten*),<sup>29</sup> this notion is left undefined. Indeed, his qualifying remark concerning the terms 'the righteous' and 'the sinners' – "wie immer diese im einzelnen beschrieben sein mögen"<sup>30</sup> – itself indicates that these are somewhat slippery concepts. *Prima facie*, one could argue that certain 'here and now' actions involving obedience to YHWH (such as surrender to the Babylonians) are in some sense 'ethical' actions. At the very least, they are not wholly unrelated. Without (for the moment) developing either of these points any further, taken together they suggest that when we are dealing with 'differentiation passages', the underlying logic – that is, the rationale for salvation and judgement – may be more complex than Koenen implies, at least as far as Jer. is concerned.

In any case, whatever the merits of a study (like Koenen's) which focusses on one specific mode of differentiation across a range of books, so far as Jer. 21 – 45 is concerned, it is precisely the plurality of inner-Judean distinctions that invites further study. Communities are distinguished from communities, individuals from communities, and individuals from nations. Salvation means personal survival, communal existence, and future restoration to YHWH and the land. The differentiations are, so to speak, different.

At the same time, there are signs of some sort of hermeneutical interaction between them. The offer of 'life as booty', for example, occurs in four contexts; in two of these (21.9; 38.2), it is made to any who will surrender to the Babylonians, while in the other two (39.15; 45.5) it is addressed unconditionally to two individuals. Similarly, YHWH's promise 'I will build up and not tear down; I will plant and not uproot' is applied unconditionally to the Babylonian *Golah* (24.6), but also conditionally to the post-587 Judean remnant (42.10). Moreover, as we will seek to demonstrate, the differentiation passages do not appear to be randomly scattered, but rather to counter-balance each other within well-defined literary units. To give one example, the three polarities of (a) those who leave the city and those who stay (b) the shepherds and the sheep, and (c) the exiled and non-exiled communities, stand at the opening, centre and conclusion of a widely recognised sub-section, Jer. 21 – 24. Consequently, the text itself invites us to explore the relationship between these differentiation passages.

---

<sup>29</sup> Koenen, *Heil den Gerechten*, 5.

<sup>30</sup> Koenen, *Heil den Gerechten*, 3 (cited above on page 1).

### 3. Differentiation in Jer. 21 – 45: Review of Scholarship

#### 3.1. The Work of K.-F. Pohlmann

A significant milestone in Jeremiah studies was set down with the 1978 monograph of K.-F. Pohlmann.<sup>31</sup> Pohlmann sees the final form of Jer. as witnessing to the rivalry between the descendants of those exiled to Babylon in 597, and those who were left in Judah.<sup>32</sup> The dominant voice in the book now is that of the former group. They alone constitute 'Israel' and they alone will enjoy YHWH's future blessings.<sup>33</sup> In order to promote this ideology, the editors have sought to depict Jeremiah as prophesying only disaster for those who remained in the land after 597 (as in 21.1-10, 38.23, and 42.17-21). Indeed, this ideological viewpoint is reflected in the literary structure of Jer. Ch. 24 concludes the first part by announcing YHWH's rejection of Zedekiah and his countrymen, but his favour toward the *Golah* community in Babylon. This message is then developed at length; chs. 26 – 34 describe the hopeful future of the exiles (cf. 24.3-7), while chs. 37 – 44 emphasise the fate of those who remained behind (cf. 24.8-10). Indeed, Pohlmann describes the rationale behind the present arrangement of Jer. 21 – 45 as one of 'prophecy and fulfilment'.<sup>34</sup> This editorial reworking of Jer. he terms '*die golaorientierte Redaktion*' (GR), and traces it to the fourth century BC (probably in Judah).<sup>35</sup>

Alongside this exclusivist claim for the Babylonian *Golah*, however, Pohlmann discerns in chs. 37 – 44 traces of an older 'base narrative' (*Grundtext*), which reflects a very different outlook.<sup>36</sup> According to its author, those who had not been deported in 597 could still live peacefully in their land if Zedekiah would submit to the Babylonians (38.17, 19-22). His refusal to do so, and the fall of Jerusalem, naturally prompted a crisis of self-understanding among those left after 587: Had YHWH now abandoned them? The answer, according to the author of the

---

<sup>31</sup> K.-F. Pohlmann, *Studien zum Jeremiabuch. Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach der Entstehung des Jeremiabuches* (FRLANT 118; Göttingen; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978).

<sup>32</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 191. As evidence for the emergence in Judah of this pro-*Golah* viewpoint, Pohlmann points to the pre-eminence of Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah (191 n.21).

<sup>33</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 183. Pohlmann describes this claim to be the exclusive representatives of Israel as an *Alleinvertretungsanspruch* (144).

<sup>34</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 185.

<sup>35</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 190-191.

<sup>36</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 186-187, 198-200. See his appendix, *Studien*, 208-223, for a synopsis of the original and the redactional material.

*Grundtext*, was no. Since the overthrow of Jerusalem was the fault of the leadership (“auf das Konto derer, die sich weigerten, auf Jahwe zu hören, die Stadt der Oberherrschaft der Babylonier auszuliefern”),<sup>37</sup> and since the land itself belonged to YHWH, an ongoing relationship between YHWH and the Judean remnant was still possible. It was, however, dependent upon their remaining in the land, and not (as some were already doing) fleeing to Egypt (42.9-11, 13-14). Pohlmann concludes:

Es ist deutlich, daß die in diesen Texten enthaltene Darstellung der situation im Lande nach der Eroberung Jerusalems späteren Vorstellungen widerspricht. Es genügt vorerst, die wesentlichsten Punkte hervorzuheben: Das Land ist nicht nur weiterhin bewohnt, die nach der Einnahme Jerusalems im Lande Verbliebenen erhalten sogar die Zusage, daß gerade im Lande mit Jahwes künftigem Heilshandeln zu rechnen ist.<sup>38</sup>

Consequently, in Pohlmann’s analysis the *Grundtext* differentiates (a) between Judah’s leaders and her people in regard to responsibility for the past, and (b) between those who stayed in Judah and those who migrated to Egypt in regard to maintaining their identity as YHWH’s people. In GR, on the other hand, there is only one mode of differentiation, namely, that between the 597 exiles and everyone else.

Pohlmann’s thesis amplified and developed certain ideas that had been mooted by earlier scholars,<sup>39</sup> and has subsequently had considerable influence. In particular, his belief that the pro-*Golah* message of Jer. reflects a political power claim within fourth century Judah, rather than the outlook of the sixth century prophet, anticipated a more general trend in the following two decades towards ‘ideological’ readings of Jer.<sup>40</sup> His description of ch. 24 as ‘programmatic’ for

---

<sup>37</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 198.

<sup>38</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 188-189.

<sup>39</sup> See for instance J.P. Hyatt, ‘The Deuteronomic Edition of the Book of Jeremiah’, *VSH* 1 (1951) 71-95; republished in L.G. Perdue & B.W. Kovacs (eds.), *A Prophet to the Nations: Essays in Jeremiah Studies* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1984) 247-267 (all subsequent citations of this essay are from the Perdue & Kovacs volume): “The attitude expressed (in Jer. 24) about the exiles accords well with the attitude of later times which saw in the Jews who gone into Babylonian exile and later returned the true Israelites, and with the view of those who considered the exiled Jehoiachin as the legitimate king and opposed the claims of Zedekiah. It does not accord with Jeremiah’s ideas expressed elsewhere.” (258). See too H.G. May, ‘Towards an Objective Approach to the Book of Jeremiah: The Biographer’, *JBL* 61 (1942) 148-149; E.W. Nicholson, *Preaching to the Exiles: A Study of the Prose Tradition in the Book of Jeremiah* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970) 110; P.R. Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration: A Study of Hebrew Thought of the Sixth Century B.C.* (OTL; London: SCM Press, 1968) 243-244, especially n.43.

<sup>40</sup> See in particular Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 65-82; also Roy D. Wells, ‘The Amplification of the Expectations of the Exiles in the MT Revision of Jeremiah’, in A.R.P. Diamond, K.M. O’Connor, and L. Stulman (eds.), *Troubling Jeremiah* (JSOT Sup. 260; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999) 272-292; Carolyn J. Sharp, ‘The Call of Jeremiah and Diaspora Politics’, *JBL* 119 (2000) 421-438. But note Brueggemann’s

Jer. as a whole is also echoed by others.<sup>41</sup> Methodologically, Pohlmann's argument is the stronger for its attention to conceptual (rather than simply lexical) aspects of a given text; in this respect, it marks an important advance on the work of W. Thiel.<sup>42</sup> He notes, for instance, the verbal similarities between 42.10 and 24.6, but adds:

Ist es denkbar, daß ein und derselbe Redaktor bzw. eine und dieselbe theologische Schule einerseits in Jer. 42 den im Lande Verbliebenen die, wenn auch an Bedingungen geknüpfte, Möglichkeit einer von Jahwe gestalteten heilvollen Zukunft anbietet, andererseits jedoch schon in Jer. 24 diese heilvolle Zukunft lediglich den Exilierten in Babylon vorbehält und die im Lande Zurückgebliebenen ausdrücklich davon ausnimmt? . . . *Der deuteronomistische Sprachcharakter einzelner Stellen oder Abschnitte allein kann noch kein ausreichender Grund sein, von einer einheitlichen deuteronomistischen Bearbeitung des Jeremiabuches auszugehen, wie die Gegenüberstellung von Jer. 42.10 und Jer. 24.6 beweist. Die Problemlage erscheint um einiges komplizierter.*<sup>43</sup>

We will, of course, discuss specific aspects of Pohlmann's argument in later chapters, but a few general criticisms may be offered at this stage. Firstly, whilst his focus on conceptual distinctions within texts is welcome, it sometimes lapses into hyper-criticism. Too often, perspectives that are complementary are assumed (rather than shown) to be incompatible, and thus allocated to different editorial hands. His identification of no less than four redactional strata in ch. 42, for example, is both implausible and unnecessary. Moreover, his readiness to designate material as 'redactional' means that, in his analysis, very little is left of the *Grundtext*; as Seitz remarks, "Pohlmann's *Vorlage* is barely a torso."<sup>44</sup> Pohlmann himself admits that its introduction has been lost altogether.<sup>45</sup>

---

qualifying remarks, *Exile and Homecoming*, 219-220, on Jer. 24: "The text is a partisan claim concerning who would exercise leadership among Jews and who would take initiative in the coming reconstruction of Judaism after the homecoming . . . (However) the Bible no longer presents this text as a self-serving claim. The rereading of history in ch. 24 is presented as a verdict rendered by God." See too Brueggemann's comments regarding 'ideological' and 'canonical' readings (x-xii).

<sup>41</sup> E.g., by J.G. McConville, *Judgment and Promise. An Interpretation of the Book of Jeremiah* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1993) 111-113; K. Schmid, *Buchgestalten des Jeremiabuches: Untersuchungen zur Redaktions- und Rezeptionsgeschichte von Jer. 30 – 33 im Kontext des Buches* (WMANT 72; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1996) 255-262.

<sup>42</sup> See W. Thiel's two-volume work, *Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 1 – 25* (WMANT 41; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1973) and *Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 26 – 45. Mit einer Gesamtbeurteilung der deuteronomistischen Redaktion des Buches Jeremias* (WMANT 52; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981).

<sup>43</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 130-131 (italics his).

<sup>44</sup> C.R. Seitz, *Theology in Conflict. Reactions to the Exile in the Book of Jeremiah* (BZAW 176; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989) 239.

<sup>45</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 208.

Secondly, Pohlmann's fourth century dating of GR is problematic. For, as several commentators have pointed out, if the redaction is as late as this, it is far from clear why it *exclusively* champions the 597 exiles. As McKane remarks, "all that is needed . . . is a simple antithesis between those who went into exile, whether in 597 or 586, and those who did not go into exile. What interest could he possibly have had in the middle of the fifth century or later in asserting that the only bearers of Judaism were those who had been deported with Jehoiachin in 597?"<sup>46</sup> Indeed, Pohlmann himself acknowledges the problem: "Wie die Redaktion dazu kommt, von einer der Gola von Jahwe gewährten Vorrangstellung auszugehen, bleibt allerdings unklar."<sup>47</sup>

Thirdly, and more relevant to our own concerns, Pohlmann's insistence that the voice of GR has final, 'dominant' status in Jer. fails to take adequate account of material which clearly does *not* promote an exclusive claim for the 597 *Golah*. This is most obviously the case with the salvation promises in chs. 30 – 33. Pohlmann (tellingly) gives little attention to this section, but claims that its present placement serves to narrow its original *pan-Israel* scope: "Da in Jer. 29 im wesentlichen die gleiche Auffassung wie in Jer. 24 und Jer. 44 zu Grunde liegt, können die folgenden Heilsweissagungen in Jer. 30ff jetzt nur noch mit der babylonischen Gola in Verbindung gebracht werden."<sup>48</sup> He seeks to buttress this claim by arguing that 32.16-44 repeats the pro-*Golah* outlook of 24.1-10.<sup>49</sup> This, however, will not do; as Schmid points out, there is no evidence anywhere in chs. 30 – 33 of a 597-exclusive voice.<sup>50</sup> But similar questions are raised by 23.1-8, where, as we noted earlier, YHWH promises to scatter the 'shepherds' but bring back his 'flock' "from all the lands where I scattered them" (23.3). It is hard to see how this can be subsumed within the GR perspective, and in fact, Pohlmann completely overlooks this passage (as he does all the material between 21.10 and 24.1). Nor does he explore the significance of the individual salvation oracles to Ebed-Melech and Baruch.

---

<sup>46</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah I*, 614. See too H.-J. Stipp, 'Zedekiah in the Book of Jeremiah: On the Formation of a Biblical Character', *CBQ* 58 (1996) 642-643; Sharp, 'Call of Jeremiah', 438 n.33.

<sup>47</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 189.

<sup>48</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 30-31 n.61; see too 46.

<sup>49</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 46-47.

<sup>50</sup> Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 177 n.607; he specifically criticises Pohlmann on this point.



Even in those passages Pohlmann assigns to GR, it is not certain that the pattern of differentiation is as uniform as he suggests. Although, for instance, 21.1-10 and 24.1-10 are similar in many respects, the former passage allows for the possibility of survivors among the people of Jerusalem in a way that the latter passage does not. Then again, while ch. 24 configures the 597 exiles as a unity, ch. 29 highlights internal distinctions among them. In fact, it is noticeable that despite Pohlmann's claim (above) that ch. 29 endorses the pro-*Golah* viewpoint of ch. 24, he actually says little about ch. 29, and even less about its relationship to chs. 27 – 28.

### 3.2. The Work of C.R. Seitz

Whilst accepting the main lines of Pohlmann's argument, the 1989 study of C.R. Seitz adopts both a wider perspective and a different starting point.<sup>51</sup> Seitz begins by noting that prior to 597, Jeremiah's preaching (as reflected in chs. 1 – 20) was one of wholesale judgement: "Up to this point in time, the powerful imagery of military destruction and deportation had dominated the prophet's description of impending judgment."<sup>52</sup> The deportation of Jehoiachin and others to Babylon, however, brought about a significant change in the prophet's thinking:

The concrete circumstances of 597 gave the prophet Jeremiah and his message a startling and forceful validation; at the same time, those circumstances gave rise to a distinct transformation of that message . . . This transformation included a new focus directed toward the necessity of Judah's submission to Babylon . . . Because Jeremiah was not deported, his message to the post-597 community had to address the altered circumstances of this 'remnant' community.<sup>53</sup>

It is against this backdrop that Seitz explores subsequent responses to exile in the central chapters of Jer. Here, like Pohlmann, he finds two very different viewpoints. The first, which is also that of the post-597 Jeremiah, Seitz characterises as 'submit and live'.<sup>54</sup> If Zedekiah and his people accept the suzerainty of Babylon, YHWH will allow them to live peacefully in their own land, and would show them favour. This message was promulgated in a document Seitz calls the 'Scribal Chronicle' (SC). Whilst sections of it are found in chs. 27 – 29 and 32 – 34, SC is most

---

<sup>51</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 205-291; see too his earlier essay, 'The Crisis of Interpretation Over the Meaning and Purpose of the Exile', *VT* 35 (1985) 78-97.

<sup>52</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 207.

<sup>53</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 207.

<sup>54</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 205-207.

evident between chs. 37 – 43. Noting the repeated references in these chapters to scribes and other individuals from the family of Shaphan, Seitz suggests that the author of SC himself belonged to this circle.<sup>55</sup>

At the same time, Seitz argues that SC was reworked and supplemented by what he calls the ‘Exilic Redaction’ (ER). In many respects, ER is similar to Pohlmann’s *golaorientierte Redaktion*, and has strong affinities with theological traditions in Ezekiel.<sup>56</sup> From the standpoint of its editors, the disobedience and destruction of the Judean remnant was inevitable from the outset and, indeed, in line with Jeremiah’s earlier preaching. According to Seitz,

It is to be emphasized that those deported in 597 were familiar in a direct way only with the pre-597 message of Jeremiah . . . A different line was adopted in the post-597 Jeremiah traditions, with an emphasis upon submission of king and community in the land. However, for the post-597 exilic community, the ongoing Jeremiah traditions were either unavailable . . . irrelevant . . . eclipsed . . . or, most likely, open to gross misinterpretation.<sup>57</sup>

ER expresses its ideological stance by supplementing SC with material pronouncing YHWH’s wrath against Zedekiah and his people (24.1-10; 29.16-19) and against the post-587 Judean remnant (42.13-22; 44.1-28). A key manoeuvre in this editorial process is what Seitz calls ‘foreclosing’; that is, placing a conditional promise of hope in a new context so that a negative response appears certain from the start. In this way, Seitz concludes,

. . . the sense of continuity the Exilic Redaction seeks to establish between all levels of Jeremiah tradition, regardless of provenance or temporal circumstances (pre-597, post-597, post-587) is underscored . . . Put another way, though it may appear in the Scribal Chronicle that Yahweh can ‘build and plant’ when the post-597 (27.1-11) and post-587 remnant (40.9-12; 42.10-12) submits to Babylonian rule . . . the Exilic Redaction anticipates a greater judgment awaiting both Judah and ‘the whole land’ (45.4-5). Only after this judgment is accomplished can restoration be considered (Jer. 52.31-34). Throughout the book of Jeremiah, the Exilic Redaction makes clear that the restoration of Israel involves Yahweh’s returning of a deported people.<sup>58</sup>

Despite the obvious similarities between Seitz’s analysis and that of Pohlmann, there are also important differences. As we have seen, Seitz finds SC much more extensively preserved in chs. 37 – 44 than Pohlmann does with his *Grundtext*. He traces ER to sixth century Babylon,

---

<sup>55</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 215-216, 285.

<sup>56</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 213-214.

<sup>57</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 227-228.

<sup>58</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 291.

rather than fourth century Judah,<sup>59</sup> and is much more sympathetic to its perspective: “Since they knew of the ultimate fate of Zedekiah (see xxxix 7ff.) and the city (xxxix 8-10), theirs was a *thoroughly justifiable and accurate interpretation*.”<sup>60</sup> More significantly, it is unclear whether Seitz considers ER to be quite as exclusive as Pohlmann considers GR; that is, whether he sees its message of hope as restricted to the 597 exiles alone. An affirmative answer in this respect seems to be implied by his claim that ER “presses for . . . a judgment which will bring about the final elimination of the post-597 remnant”.<sup>61</sup> On the same page, however, he ascribes 23.1-8 (which envisages the return of a wider *Diaspora*) to ER as well, and elsewhere he credits ER with the prophecy of 29.10-14,<sup>62</sup> which appears to address an exilic audience broader than that deported to Babylon in 597. In other words, Seitz may be guilty of blurring some important distinctions between different salvation oracles; or, we might say, of failing to differentiate between non-identical forms of differentiation.

Further evidence of blurred distinctions emerges in Seitz’s interpretation of SC. Its characteristic ‘submit and live’ message, he believes, comes to expression in 27.12-17 and 42.10-12, where Jeremiah assures the people that if they serve the king of Babylon, they can continue to live peacefully in their land. However, Seitz also ascribes 21.8-10 and 38.1-3 to SC, where (as we shall see) the promise is one of mere survival, and YHWH’s tone significantly more severe. Irrespective of whether we accept Seitz’s hypothesis of a ‘Scribal Chronicle’, therefore, or his analysis of its contents, we need to define more carefully what the call to ‘submit and live’ means in different contexts.

As will be evident, common to both Pohlmann and Seitz is a redaction-critical, diachronic approach to the text. Underlying Jer. 21 – 44, they believe, are two (or more) literary strata, each with its own ideological outlook, to which they then seek to allocate different passages. It is precisely this methodology, we suggest, that leads to the kind of ‘blurring’ of issues that we have observed in the work of both scholars. Whether or not they are right in their

---

<sup>59</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 212-214.

<sup>60</sup> Seitz, ‘Crisis of Interpretation’, 92 (italics mine).

<sup>61</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 224.

<sup>62</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 210 n.8; see too 283. The ambiguity in his position resurfaces in his more recent article, ‘The Prophet Moses and the Canonical Shape of Jeremiah’, *ZAW* 101 (1989) 3-27, where he remarks: “There are no sub-groups within Jeremiah’s generation to be given special treatment – at least until they are exiled” (13).

theories concerning the composition of these chapters, it would seem to be the case that the *mode* of differentiation in oracles of salvation and judgement is not as uniform or consistent as they have assumed. Neither Pohlmann or Seitz explores the synchronic issue, which we touched on earlier, of how within clearly defined literary units the various differentiation passages are related to each other.

### 3.3. The Work of N. Kilpp

A very different approach to judgement and salvation prophecy in Jer. is reflected in the 1990 monograph of Nelson Kilpp.<sup>63</sup> In the second part of this book, Kilpp discusses the salvation oracles in chs. 3 and 30 – 31, and concludes that the historical Jeremiah probably did preach a message of hope to the inhabitants of the former northern kingdom.<sup>64</sup> More relevant to our interests, however, is the first part of Kilpp's book, where he looks at salvation oracles addressed to a Judean audience.<sup>65</sup> Specifically, he considers ch. 24, where salvation for the exiles and judgement for the remnant are juxtaposed; ch. 29, with its 'letter to the exiles'; and ch. 32, where Jeremiah enacts and announces hope for the inhabitants of Judah. Unlike Pohlmann and Seitz, he also discusses oracles of salvation addressed to individuals and small groups; i.e., Zedekiah (34.1-5), Ebed-Melech (39.15-18), Baruch (45.1-5) and the Rechabites (ch. 35). Throughout, Kilpp seeks to distinguish between authentic and redactional elements.

Two features of Kilpp's analysis are of particular interest. Firstly, in each of the relevant passages he carefully considers the *meaning* of 'salvation'. In the oracles addressed to entire communities, he argues, salvation does not entail a return to how things were, but rather the creation of a new community under YHWH's blessing: "Jahwe handelt nun nicht mehr an dem Volk, sondern an den Volksteilen".<sup>66</sup> In this new situation, the people's geographical location, and the loss of their former religious and political institutions, become irrelevant.<sup>67</sup> This being so, physical return to Judah is unnecessary. Only in the redactional material (e.g., 24.6; 29.10-

---

<sup>63</sup> N. Kilpp, *Niederreißen und aufbauen. Das Verhältnis von Heilsverheißung und Unheilsverkündigung bei Jeremia und im Jeremiabuch* (BTS 13; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990).

<sup>64</sup> Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 99-176.

<sup>65</sup> Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 30-98.

<sup>66</sup> Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 38.

<sup>67</sup> Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 38, 60.

14) is restoration to the land seen as a prerequisite of salvation. On the other hand, in the oracles addressed to individuals and small groups, salvation consists merely of survival:

Einzelpersonen wird Heil verheißen. Es besteht im Überleben im kommenden oder schon eingetretenen Gericht . . . Die Lebenszusage schränkt die äußerst Auswirkung des Unheils für einzelne ein: eine karge Heilsverheißung, die noch zurückhaltender als Jer. 29.5-7 und Jer. 32.15 ist.<sup>68</sup>

Here too, variant perspectives are evident in the redactional elements. Regarding the prophecy against Shemaiah, that “he will not see the good which I will do for my people” (29.32), Kilpp writes:

Jeremia kennt die Aussonderung einzelner oder kleinerer Gruppen vom künftigen Unheil (Baruch, Ebed-Melech, Rechabiten); eine Aussonderung einzelner aus dem zukünftigen Heil ist sonst bei Jeremia nicht bekannt. Die Perspektive von Jer. 29.32 ist anders als die Jeremias: Das Heil geschieht prinzipiell dem Volk, doch gibt es Ausnahmen.<sup>69</sup>

The second point of interest in Kilpp’s study, which flows out of the first, is his attempt to identify the theological rationale underlying Jeremiah’s preaching of salvation. He concludes that while the prophet announced judgement on *all* the people, his message of hope was reserved for a particular group; namely, to those who had in some way experienced YHWH’s wrath. This explains why he can preach salvation to the exiles (but not the Judean remnant) in ch. 24, and to the inhabitants of the land (but not those in the city) in ch. 32. Upon both groups, judgement had now fallen. With regard to Jer. 24, Kilpp writes:

Das einzig sichtbare Merkmal, das die beiden Gruppen im ursprünglichen Visionsbericht Jer. 24 unterscheidet, ist ihre Situation. Dabei geht es nicht an erster Stelle um den Wohnort, sondern um das eingetroffene bzw. nicht eingetroffene Gericht.<sup>70</sup>

In ch. 32, meanwhile, the historical context is that of the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem in 587. Whilst Zedekiah and his people in the city continued to hold out, the inhabitants of the rest of Judah (*die Landbewohner*) were already suffering the effects of invasion and occupation.<sup>71</sup> Kilpp sums up the matter thus:

Wurde von Jeremia dem ganzen Volk und dem ganzen Land das Gericht angekündigt, geschieht in den Heilsweissagungen das Gegenteil: Nicht mehr das Volksganze,

---

<sup>68</sup> Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 93.

<sup>69</sup> Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 61.

<sup>70</sup> Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 38.

<sup>71</sup> On ch. 32, Kilpp remarks: “Ein gewisser Gegensatz zwischen Jerusalem und Land Juda macht sich bemerkbar . . . Damit träfe das verheißene Heil nicht allgemein all diejenigen, die irgendwann in der Zukunft im Lande Juda leben werden, sondern die in der Gegenwart lebende Landbevölkerung Judas, die dem Gericht schon ausgesetzt ist” (*Niederreißen*, 79).

sondern nur Teile davon werden betroffen. Dem Volksteil, der das Unheil erfahren hat und noch erlebt, wird Heil zugesagt. Sind es Jer. 24; 29 die 597 Deportierten im Gegensatz zu den Zurückgebliebenen, so in Jer. 32.15 die Landbewohner im Gegensatz zu dem Jerusalemern.<sup>72</sup>

Kilpp's study is significant in a number of respects. By paying close attention to the meaning of 'salvation' in different contexts, he achieves a more sophisticated analysis than those of Pohlmann and Seitz. Moreover, his description of the theological rationale underlying the salvation oracles enables him to account for the proclamation of hope to certain audiences, and judgement to others, in terms of Jeremiah's own understanding, rather than that of later editors; indeed, his primary interest seems to be in the authentic material, rather than the redactional. Particularly welcome, from the point of view of the present study, is Kilpp's interest in 'exemptions' (*Aussonderungen*) from more generalised statements. At the same time, however, his study is somewhat selective; notably, he takes no account of certain texts which we have already identified as important, i.e., 21.1-10; 23.1-8; chs. 27 – 28; ch. 42. Nor does he consider the hermeneutical relationship of different passages within their present literary units.

#### **4. Scope and Procedure for the Following Study**

We began this chapter by referring to Koenen's investigation of judgement and salvation preaching in the OT prophets. We noted his argument that, while the prophets mostly viewed the people 'as a whole', there are certain texts which differentiate between 'the righteous' and 'the wicked'. Turning our attention to Jer., we saw that, while Koenen's claim is valid for much the book, chs. 21 – 45 include a striking number of passages in which salvation (of some sort) is announced to one group, and judgement to another. The nature of the polarities in these 'differentiation passages' varies; however, there are signs of a 'hermeneutical dialogue' between them.

We then looked at how the issue of differentiation in Jer. 21 – 45 is analysed in three major studies. Pohlmann and Seitz both employ a redaction-critical approach to isolate two distinct literary strata; in one of these, there is still hope for the post-597 Judean remnant, while in the other, it is restricted to the 597 exiles. Both scholars, however, tend to blur key

---

<sup>72</sup> Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 80.

distinctions within these strata, and also to overlook relevant texts. The work of Kilpp is more nuanced, but it too is somewhat selective in the material it covers.

In the study that follows, therefore, we propose to explore the issue of differentiation in Jer. 21 – 45 using an alternative methodology. Rather than grouping together all the material that displays a particular polarity (e.g., salvation for exiles and judgement for non-exiles), we will instead take a synchronic approach, focussing on concepts of group differentiation in oracles of salvation and judgement in three specific literary units; chs. 21 – 24, 27 – 29, and 37 – 45. In each, we will seek to identify and describe the different polarities, and how they relate to each other.

Our procedure can be outlined as follows. Chapters 2 – 4 form the heart of the dissertation. In each, we will place the relevant section in its *Sitz im Buch*, and explain the reasons for viewing it as a distinct literary unit. We will then proceed to a detailed study of the differentiation passages. For each one, I will set out in parallel columns the relevant Hebrew and Greek texts, i.e., the consonantal base of the Masoretic Text (MT),<sup>73</sup> and the Old Greek Text (OG).<sup>74</sup> For the former, I have followed the text of *Codex Leningradensis* (B19<sup>A</sup>), as provided in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS);<sup>75</sup> in the passages we shall be discussing, this is identical with the text of the *Aleppo Codex*.<sup>76</sup> For OG, we have followed J. Ziegler's eclectic 'Göttingen' text.<sup>77</sup> Quantitative and content variants (though not word order variants) are underlined.

The ensuing sections, 'Textual Notes' and 'Exegetical Notes', are not intended to provide exhaustive commentary, but rather to highlight points that will have a bearing on subsequent discussion. In the former, our focus will be upon the MT and OG, although the other

---

<sup>73</sup> As E. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992) 22, points out, strictly speaking MT is a *family* of texts, which may or may not have a single archetype; what most scholars refer to as MT is in fact the Tiberian tradition of Ben Asher. For our purposes, however, the distinction has little significance.

<sup>74</sup> By OG, we mean the text of the original Greek translation of the Hebrew *Vorlage*, as distinct from that found in any particular later manuscript (e.g., LXX<sup>B, A, S</sup>); see A. Pietersma, 'Septuagint Research: A Plea for a Return to Basic Issues', *VT* 35 (1985) 296-298; Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 135.

<sup>75</sup> K. Elliger & W. Rudolph (eds.), *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (5<sup>th</sup> rev. ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997).

<sup>76</sup> This provides the base text in C. Rabin, S. Talmon & E. Tov (eds.), *The Hebrew University Bible: The Book of Jeremiah* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1997).

<sup>77</sup> J. Ziegler, *Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum, Vol. XV: Ieremias, Baruch, Threni, Epistula Ieremiae* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1957).

ancient versions, and the relevant Hebrew fragments from Qumran, will also be noted. A quantitative variant, i.e., a reading in one text that is absent from another, is indicated by the symbol >. If (as is usually the case) OG contains the shorter reading, the question is whether this is due to the translator having a shorter text in his *Vorlage* or to (deliberate or accidental) omission. If the former is judged more likely, the reading will be designated 'MT plus'. Where we are dealing with a content variant, the Greek reading is followed by a Hebrew equivalent (see, e.g., our note on 21.1: MT אל ירמיהו מאת יהוה יהוה אל ירמיהו; OG παρα κρυπτου προς Ιερεμιου = (מאת יהוה אל ירמיהו)). It should be stressed that such retroversions of OG are not necessarily being equated with the translator's *Vorlage*; a decision on that point will be indicated in the subsequent discussion.

In 'Coherence and Redaction', our focus will be on the literary and conceptual unity of the passage under review, rather than on its authorship. At the very least, this discussion will serve to highlight some of the key issues for interpretation. As will become apparent, I am frequently unpersuaded by claims for multiple redactional layers within a given text. Such hypotheses, it seems to me, tend to underestimate the capacity of the biblical writer (or prophet) for subtlety of thinking, paradox and irony.<sup>78</sup> Even if a text can be shown to display internal 'dissonance', this does not of itself indicate a plurality of speakers; an individual is perfectly capable of being inconsistent. It may, therefore, be better to speak of different *voices* in a text, without necessarily implying different *authors*.

With this textual and exegetical foundation in place, we will be able to explore the issue of 'differentiation' in the passage in question. The crucial questions we will need to ask here are: (1) Who exactly is being differentiated from whom in this text, and how? (2) What does 'salvation' and 'judgement' mean for each party? (3) What is the underlying rationale for this polarity?

At the end of each chapter, we will discuss the issues arising from the juxtaposition of different polarities within the literary unit. Key questions that we will want to ask here include: (1) How do these polarities interact with each other? Are they complementary, or in tension?

---

<sup>78</sup> On this point, see J. Unterman, *From Repentance to Redemption. Jeremiah's Thought in Transition* (JSOT Sup. 54; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987) 18; McConville, *Judgment and Promise*, 22-26.



Do they reinforce, qualify or question modes of differentiation in other parts of Jer.? (2) Does any one mode of differentiation have the dominant voice?

Earlier in this chapter, we showed how Jer. 1 – 20 conveys a message of undifferentiated judgement. With this in mind, in chapter 5 we will sketch out the ways in which Jer. 30 – 31, with its oracles of undifferentiated salvation, forms the opposite pole within the book. Finally, in chapter 6 we will summarise and reflect on the results of our enquiry, and consider their implications for the work of Pohlmann and Seitz.

#### Excursus: The Hebrew and Greek Texts of Jer.

As is well documented, the Hebrew and Greek texts of Jer. diverge significantly. The estimate of F. Giesebrecht that Jer. MT contains some 2,700 extra words<sup>79</sup> has now been superseded by Y.-J. Min's calculation of 3,097 words,<sup>80</sup> making Jer. OG one seventh shorter than Jer. MT. The additional material comprises numerous single words and short phrases, as well as lengthier passages such as 10.6-8, 10; 29.16-19; 33.14-26; 39.4-13; 51.44b-49a and 52.27b-30.<sup>81</sup> MT and OG also differ regarding the arrangement of Jer. Most obviously, the 'Oracles against the Nations' (OAN), which MT places at the end of the book (chs. 46 – 51) occur in OG immediately after 25.13. Within the OAN anthology, the sequence of the individual oracles is also different. Similar divergence, though on a much smaller scale, occurs in the 'polemic against idolatry' (10.1-16), where OG locates MT v. 5 after v. 9. Further, there are an important number of content variants.

As against the older 'abbreviation' hypothesis (i.e., that the Greek translator deliberately omitted material in his *Vorlage* that he considered superfluous),<sup>82</sup> most scholars now believe that OG is based on an earlier, shorter textual tradition, which was later expanded in the proto-MT;

---

<sup>79</sup> F. Giesebrecht, *Das Buch Jeremia, übersetzt und erklärt* (HKAT 3.2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1894) xix.

<sup>80</sup> Y.-J. Min, *The Minuses and Pluses of the LXX Translation of Jeremiah as Compared with the Massoretic Text* (unpublished Ph.D dissertation; Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1977) 159; cited by S. Soderlund, *The Greek Text of Jeremiah. A Revised Hypothesis* (JSOT Sup.47; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985) 11.

<sup>81</sup> For a summary of the different kinds of additional material in MT, see E. Tov, 'Some Aspects of the Textual and Literary History of the Book of Jeremiah', in P.M. Bogaert (ed.), *Le Livre de Jérémie. Le Prophète et son Milieu, Les Oracles et Leur Transmission* (BETL 54; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1981) 147-167.

<sup>82</sup> See K.H. Graf, *Der Prophet Jeremia* (Leipzig: Weigel, 1862) xlv-lvi.

indeed, these two traditions are sometimes referred to as ‘edition 1’ and ‘edition 2’ of Jer.<sup>83</sup> Exactly how and when the two editions diverged is much debated, and probably unanswerable.<sup>84</sup> The fragments of Jer. discovered at Qumran have clearly shown, however, that both traditions sat side by side in the library of the Covenanters. To date, six Jeremiah scrolls have been found there;<sup>85</sup> their estimated dates of composition range from the start of the second century BC (or earlier) for *4QJer<sup>a</sup>*, to the end of the first century BC for *4QJer<sup>c</sup>*.<sup>86</sup> Of these six scrolls, four – *2QJer*, *4QJer<sup>a</sup>*, *4QJer<sup>c</sup>*, and *4QJer<sup>e</sup>* – are considered generally proto-Masoretic in character, while the two – *4QJer<sup>b</sup>* (9.22 – 10.18)<sup>87</sup> and *4QJer<sup>d</sup>* (43.3-9) – for the most part agree with OG. The qualifiers ‘generally’, ‘for the most part’, should be taken seriously. With reference to *4QJer<sup>b</sup>*, for instance, Schmid concludes that the Qumran evidence points to a more fluid textual situation than is sometimes supposed:

*4QJer<sup>b</sup>* bezeugt zwar nicht *exakt* die hebräischen *Vorlage* von Jer. LXX, aber eine Textform, die der anzunehmenden hebräischen *Vorlage* von Jer. LXX deutlich nähersteht als Jer. MT. Diese Differenzierung ist insofern von Belang, als die zeigt, daß

---

<sup>83</sup> Tov, ‘Some Aspects’, 149; D.J. Reimer, *The Oracles Against Babylon in Jeremiah 50 – 51. A Horror Among the Nations* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1993) 110.

<sup>84</sup> J.G. Janzen, *Studies in the Text of Jeremiah* (HSM 6; Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1973) 134, dates the divergence to the mid-fifth or early fourth century, while P.M. Bogaert, ‘De Baruch à Jérémie. Les Deux Rédactions Conservées du Livre de Jérémie’, in Bogaert, *Le Livre de Jérémie*, 168 n.1, puts it around 300; cf. Y. Goldman, ‘Juda et son Roi au Milieu des Nations. La Dernière Rédaction du Livre de Jérémie’, in A.H.W. Curtis & T. Römer (eds.), *The Book of Jeremiah and its Reception* (BETL 128; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997) 151-182. Tov, ‘Some Aspects’, 166, describes Jer. MT as ‘post-exilic’. However, others argue that both textual traditions may have existed independently from early times. According to Reimer, *Horror Among the Nations*, “qualitative variants suggest the possibility - even probability - of dual traditions, i.e., the Jeremiah corpus from very early times could be found in variant types.” F.M. Cross, ‘The Evolution of a Theory of Local Texts’, in F.M. Cross & S. Talmon (eds.), *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1975) 309, argues for a divergence in the fifth or even the sixth century. J.R. Lundbom, ‘Baruch, Seraiah, and Expanded Colophons in the Book of Jeremiah’, *JSOT* 36 (1986) 108-109, and R.C. Steiner, ‘The Two Sons of Neriah and the Two Editions of Jeremiah in the Light of Two ATBASH Code-Words for Babylon’, *VT* 46 (1996) 74-84, ascribe the longer edition of Jer. to Seraiah (Baruch’s brother) in Babylon. A.W. Streane, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Together with the Lamentations* (CB; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1885) xxxvii, thought that the OG *Vorlage* was written hastily in Egypt, soon after Jeremiah’s death.

<sup>85</sup> For transcriptions of *4QJer<sup>a</sup>* and *4QJer<sup>b</sup>* see Janzen, *Studies*, 173-184. For a reconstruction of the available Qumran Jer. texts in English, see M. Abegg, P. Flint, & E. Ulrich (eds.) *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible. Translated and with Commentary* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999) 382-406.

<sup>86</sup> Their witness to Jer. is precious but limited; as Abegg *et al.* point out, “although these manuscripts between them preserve much of the book’s fifty-two chapters, they are all so badly damaged and fragmentary that not even a trace of twenty-one chapters is preserved” (*Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, 382).

<sup>87</sup> *4QJer<sup>b</sup>* was previously seen as also containing the fragments now categorised separately as *4QJer<sup>d</sup>* and *4QJer<sup>e</sup>*.

für das Jeremiabuch auch ein mit zwei präzise identifizierbaren Endgestalten rechnendes Modell nicht ausreicht: Man hat mit zwei Haupttypen und Mischformen zu rechnen.<sup>88</sup>

To chart the history of the texts of Jer. further back than the second century B.C. is probably impossible; at best, it would be a matter of inference based on theories of composition. Precisely this fact, however, means we should not automatically assume that a reading peculiar to MT is 'late' (still less, 'inferior').<sup>89</sup> Difference is one thing; antiquity is another, and authenticity something else.<sup>90</sup> As Craigie et al. observe, "having recognised the difference (between the Hebrew and Greek texts), it is much more difficult to provide a coherent account of the reasons for it, or to know with certainty whether the MT or the *Vorlage* of G represents the most ancient and original textual tradition."<sup>91</sup> In any case, we should not assume that the OG *Vorlage* was itself a perfect, pristine text; to the contrary, there is good reason to think it is in a number of places haplographic.<sup>92</sup> Consequently, where in our textual notes we have marked a given reading as 'MT plus', this means no more than that the reading was probably absent from the OG *Vorlage*.

What then is the goal of text criticism as it relates to the book of Jer.?<sup>93</sup> Reimer remarks, For text critical endeavours, especially as regards the Hebrew text, one must be clear about what stage in textual (literary?) history is being established. Any one of a number

---

<sup>88</sup> Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 15. Similarly, E. Tov, 'Three Fragments from Qumran Cave 4', *RQ* 15 (1992) 539-540, notes points of agreement between 4QJer<sup>d</sup> and MT. On the other hand, Aviyah HaCohen, '4QJer<sup>d</sup> – A Pre-Massoretic Text?', *Textus* 17 (1994) 7 - 8, argues that the 'proto-Masoretic' 4QJer<sup>d</sup> also has certain affinities with OG. See also the comments of G.J. Brooke, 'The Book of Jeremiah and its Reception in the Qumran Scrolls', in Curtis & Römer, *Book of Jeremiah*, 184-187.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Carroll's remark, *Jeremiah*, 51: "The developing consensus of scholarship now is that the shorter text on which G is based represents the more original and superior textual tradition of the book of Jeremiah."

<sup>90</sup> See Tov, 'Some Aspects', 150, on this point.

<sup>91</sup> Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, xliii.

<sup>92</sup> A point which Janzen, *Studies*, 117-120, readily concedes. See too now Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1 – 20*, 61-62, 885-887.

<sup>93</sup> As S. Talmon, 'The Old Testament Text', in P.R. Ackroyd & C.F. Evans (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Bible. Vol. 1. From the Beginnings to Jerome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970) 191, points out, "different books of the Old Testament differ in their textual history and furnish different sets of problems. Restraint should therefore be exercised in subjecting textual processes observed in one book to an analysis which is based on the analogy of issues which obtain in another book." This being so, the task of text criticism may vary from book to book. Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 171, admits that "those who adhere in general to the assumption of one original text may discard this view with regard to certain books in the light of special evidence." See too Bruce K. Waltke, 'Aims of OT Textual Criticism', *WTJ* 51 (1989) 107-108.

of 'stopping points' could reasonably be sought, ranging from the hoariest *Urtext* through the *Vorlagen* of the LXX translators to the text of the 'Jamnia council' up to the fully annotated text of the Masoretes.<sup>94</sup>

Traditionally, the goal of text criticism has been defined as the recovery of 'the original text'.<sup>95</sup> The very notion of an 'original text', however, is open to question,<sup>96</sup> and not least in the case of Jer. The situation might seem to be relatively straightforward in regard to the Greek text, where, according to Reimer, "the goal of the text critic is to establish the text as closely as possible to the one that left the pen of the translator".<sup>97</sup> Even here, however, if Tov's theory is correct that Jer. OG has undergone a revision, which is preserved in only part of the book,<sup>98</sup> then (unless we are to try to 'unrevise' the revision) 'OG' has to be defined at two levels. In respect to the Hebrew text, defining the goal of text criticism is clouded by disagreement over how far we can speak of a 'fixed' or 'canonical' text. For the purpose of the present study, however, the Hebrew text upon which exegesis and discussion will be based is that of the (unpointed) MT, except in those few places where textual *error* (as opposed to a modification or expansion) has clearly occurred (e.g., the reading יהויקים in 27.1).<sup>99</sup>

---

<sup>94</sup> Reimer, *Horror Among the Nations*, 112.

<sup>95</sup> According to R. Klein, *Textual Criticism of the Old Testament. From the Septuagint to Qumran* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974) vii, "textual criticism is the discipline that tries to recover the original copy (autograph) of a piece of literature by comparing its available copies, all of which inevitably contain mistakes"; so too, B.J. Roberts, *The Old Testament Text and Versions. The Hebrew Text in Transmission and the History of the Ancient Versions* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1951) xi; D. Winton Thomas, 'The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament' in H.H. Rowley (ed.), *The Old Testament and Modern Study. A Generation of Discovery and Research* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1951) 259; E.R. Brotzman, *Old Testament Textual Criticism. A Practical Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994) 124.

<sup>96</sup> A.P. Hayman, 'The "Original Text": A Scholarly Illusion', in *Words Remembered, Texts Renewed. Essays in Honour of John F.A. Sawyer* (JSOT Sup. 195; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995) 434-449, allows for the use of textual criticism "at least to reconstruct earlier forms of texts than are attested in the manuscripts we have" (436) but concludes that "the search for an 'original text' in the kind of literature with which we are dealing is likely to be fruitless." (442).

<sup>97</sup> Reimer, *Horror Among the Nations*, 113.

<sup>98</sup> E. Tov, *The Septuagint Translation of Jeremiah and the Book of Baruch: A Discussion of an Early Revision of the LXX of Jeremiah 29 – 52 and Baruch 1:1 – 3:8* (HSM 8; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976). Tov's thesis is accepted by Holladay, *Jeremiah 2, 6*; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 55; Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, xlii. See, however, the criticisms of Soderlund, *Greek Text of Jeremiah*, 190-192; B. Becking, 'Jeremiah's Book of Consolation: A Textual Comparison. Notes on the Masoretic Text and the Old Greek Version of Jeremiah XXX – XXXI', *VT* 54 (1994) 147.

<sup>99</sup> See Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 11; cf. Reimer's reference to "the fullest 'error-free' Hebrew text" (*Horror Among the Nations*, 113).

## Chapter 2: Differentiation in Jeremiah 21 – 24

### 1. Introduction to Jer. 21 – 24

#### 1.1. The Literary Setting of Jer. 21 – 24

Jer. 21 – 24 forms the final major unit in what is generally seen as ‘part one’ of the book, chs. 1 – 25.<sup>1</sup> Comprising a mixture of prose sermons, poetic oracles and laments, this macro-section is dominated by the threat of YHWH’s impending judgement against Judah. Its precise terminus varies, however, between MT and OG. In the former, the image of Jeremiah giving the ‘cup of wrath’ to the foreign kings and announcing YHWH’s judgement against the whole earth (25.15-38) seems to provide the fulfilment of (and an *inclusio* with) Jeremiah’s commission as ‘a prophet to the nations’ (1.5-10).<sup>2</sup> Thus, the first part of Jer. MT comprises 1.1 – 25.38, a demarcation often reflected in the secondary literature.<sup>3</sup> However, the first section of Jer. OG (and, we may assume, its *Vorlage*) ends with Jeremiah’s sermon in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (cf. the retrospective ἐν τρισκαιδεκατῷ ἔτει του Ιωσια . . . και ἕως της ἡμερας ταυτης, 25.3), with the Oracles against the Nations (OAN) forming the second major section (25.14 –

---

<sup>1</sup> T.R. Hobbs, ‘Some Remarks on the Composition and Structure of the Book of Jeremiah’, in Perdue & Kovacs, *Prophet to the Nations*, 192, believes that ‘part one’ of Jer. ends with ch. 24, since ch. 25 shares with the OAN “a common ideology, namely, the defeat of Israel’s enemies”. This surely misreads 25.1-11. A. Rofé’s argument, ‘The Arrangement of the Book of Jeremiah’, *ZAW* 101 (1989) 394-395, that chs. 1 – 24 are distinguished from 25ff. by using undated material, is weakened not only by the ‘exception’ of 24.1 (which he acknowledges) but also that of 21.1 (which he doesn’t). C. Rietzschel, *Das Problem der Urrolle. Ein Beitrag zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Jeremiabuches* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus / Gerd Mohn, 1966) 122-125, sees chs. 1 – 24 as forming a ‘traditions block’ (*Überlieferungsblock*) akin to chs. 26 – 35 and 36 – 44.

<sup>2</sup> So Bright, *Jeremiah*, lvii.

<sup>3</sup> The two-volume commentaries of Holladay, McKane, Brueggemann, and Craigie et al., and the two-part study of Thiel, all divide after ch. 25. See too Duhm, *Jeremia*, xxi; P. Volz, *Der Prophet Jeremia. Übersetzt und erklärt* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; KAT 10; Leipzig: Deichert, 1928) xlv; O. Eissfeldt, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament. unter Einschluß der Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen, sowie der apokryphen- und pseudepigraphen Qumran-Schriften. Entstehungsgeschichte des Alten Testaments* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1964) 469. R.E. Clements, ‘Jeremiah 1 – 25 and the Deuteronomistic History’, in R.E. Clements, *Old Testament Prophecy. From Oracles to Canon* (Westminster / John Knox Press: Louisville, 1996) 107-122, reads chs. 1 – 25 as an exposition of the main themes of the Deuteronomistic history, while L. Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos. Jeremiah as Symbolic Tapestry* (BS 57; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998) 31, sees them as “dismantling Judah’s first principles”.

32.24).<sup>4</sup> This structural division is highlighted in v. 13, where the clearly editorial phrase  $\pi\alpha\nu\tau\alpha\ \tau\alpha\ \gamma\epsilon\gamma\rho\alpha\mu\mu\epsilon\nu\alpha\ \epsilon\nu\ \tau\omega\ \beta\iota\beta\lambda\iota\omega\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omega$  (כל הכתוב בספר הזה) indicates the conclusion of a major literary unit.<sup>5</sup>

Some scholars believe that this ‘literary unit’ was in fact an early edition of the book of Jer. “Cap. 1 – 25 bildet, wenn auch vielleicht in etwas kürzerer Form als der jetzigen, sozusagen die Urgestalt des Jeremiabuches . . . und scheint eine gewisse Zeit für sich existiert zu haben”, wrote Duhm.<sup>6</sup> More recently, Clements has stated that the phrase  $\text{כל הכתוב בספר הזה}$ , “clearly betrays its role as a formal ending to a *literary collection*.”<sup>7</sup> Many have identified this ספר with Baruch’s second (and enlarged) scroll of 605 BC (36.32). Even if the notion of an *Urgestalt* or an *Urrolle* is correct, however, it is far from certain how much of chs. 1 – 25 it included (note Duhm’s ‘in etwas kürzerer Form’), and in particular, whether chs. 21 – 24 formed part of it.

## 1.2. Distinctiveness and Coherence: Jer. 21 – 24 as a Unit

That Jer. 21 – 24 constitutes a self-contained literary unit within the wider book is widely acknowledged. Stulman describes it as “the final macro-unit of the first scroll”,<sup>8</sup> while Carroll and O’Connor both designate it an ‘appendix’ to chs. 1 – 20.<sup>9</sup> Indirectly, this view is supported by the literary cohesion of the preceding chapters. Several scholars have shown, for

---

<sup>4</sup> See A. Weiser, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (ET: D.M. Barton; London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1961) 213, and Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 7. This arrangement is also reflected in Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 139.

<sup>5</sup> Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1 – 20*, 93, believes that “these words make better sense when taken as a pointer to what originally lay ahead – and what in LXX still does lie ahead – viz., the oracles against Babylon.” However, the preceding phrase,  $\text{כל דברי אשר דברתי עליה}$  strongly suggests that in the *Vorlage*,  $\text{כל הכתוב הזה}$  was retrospective (so Bright, *Jeremiah*, 163) and the same is probably true of  $\tau\omega\ \beta\iota\beta\lambda\iota\omega\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omega$  in OG. See further our discussion of 25.11-14 in ch. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, xxi; similarly Bright, *Jeremiah*, lvii-lviii.

<sup>7</sup> Clements, ‘Jeremiah 1 – 25’, 109 (italics mine).

<sup>8</sup> Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos*, 49.

<sup>9</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 404; see too Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 115; Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 283; McConville, *Judgment and Promise*, 54. Among the few dissenters, Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 127-128, detaches chs. 21 – 23 (‘Kings and false prophets denounced’) from chs. 24 – 25 (‘Two visions and a summary’), though note his disclaimer (125). Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1 – 20*, 95-97, designates chs. 21 – 23 ‘The king and prophet appendix’, and sees ch. 24 as introducing chs. 24 – 45. Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 188, brackets chs. 21 – 25 together, adding the caveat that “it is difficult to detect an intentional ordering.”

example, how chs. 11 – 20 form a sub-section structured around the ‘confessions’,<sup>10</sup> while Lundbom notes that Jeremiah’s anguished cry, למה זה מרחם יצאתי לראות עמל ויגון (20.18), creates an *inclusio* with YHWH’s words of commission in 1.5, בטרם תצא מרחם הקדשתיך.<sup>11</sup> We do not have to accept his conclusion that “chs. 1 – 20 can be designated the First Edition of the book of Jeremiah”,<sup>12</sup> therefore, to see that 20.18 marks a definite pause in the flow of the text. Ch. 25, meanwhile, has its own character as a review of the first part of the book.

Within chs. 21 – 24 themselves, the first indication that we are dealing with a new literary unit lies in the opening formula, היה הרבר אשר היה אל ירמיהו מאת יהוה (21.1).<sup>13</sup> Previously (7.1; 11.1; 18.1; also 30.1), this expression, in conjunction with לאמר, has served to introduce a specific command from YHWH to Jeremiah (‘Stand!’ ‘Go!’ ‘Rise!’). Here, no such instruction follows, and precisely what הרבר refers to is left unclear (see below, ‘Exegetical Notes’).

Two internal features of chs. 21 – 24 confirm their distinctiveness in relation to chs. 1 – 20. Firstly, they display far more interest in matters of historical detail. Here again, the opening formula of 21.1 is significant, since for the first time in the book it is linked to a particular context (בשלח אליו המלך צדקיהו את פשחור), thereby setting the subsequent pattern for this formula (cf. 32.1; 34.1, 8; 35.1; 40.1).<sup>14</sup> Moreover, chs. 21 – 24 regularly refer to specific kings and dates. Oracles addressed to Shallum, Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin (22.10-30) are framed by material set in the reign of Zedekiah (21.1-10 and 24.1-10); by contrast, apart from briefly mentioning Josiah in 3.6, chs. 1 – 20 conspicuously lack such historical notation.<sup>15</sup> In keeping

<sup>10</sup> See A.R. Diamond, *The Confessions of Jeremiah in Context. Scenes of Prophetic Drama* (JSOT Sup. 45; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987) 177-188; K.M. O’Connor, *The Confessions of Jeremiah. Their Interpretation and Role in Chapters 1 – 25* (SBLDS 94; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 130-146; Smith, *Laments*, 43-60. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1 – 20*, 869, notes that the end of ch. 20 repeats terms from the end of ch. 10 (ארור האיש אשר; 11.3; 20.15) and the beginning of ch. 11 (כלה; 10.25; 20.18).

<sup>11</sup> Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1 – 20*, 93.

<sup>12</sup> Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1 – 20*, 94. Lundbom is here following Reitzschel’s thesis, *Urrolle*, 128-129, that Jer. 1 – 20 formed a ‘traditions block’ which originally concluded in what is now ch. 45. Thus, Jeremiah’s final lament led straight into Baruch’s, linked by the catchword יגון, ‘sorrow’ (20.18; 45.3). This verbal echo may well be intentional, although 45.1b clearly presupposes the narrative of ch. 36.

<sup>13</sup> Strictly speaking, this formula marks a new *episode*, rather than a new *unit*; hence, it occurs three times between 34.1 and 35.1, whilst 26.1 and 36.1 – generally seen as inaugurating new macro-sections – begin with the somewhat different יהוה מאת יהוה לאמר (אל ירמיהו) היה הרבר הזה.

<sup>14</sup> See further Pohlmann, *Studien*, 32 n.63.

<sup>15</sup> Especially striking in this regard is the unspecified date of Jeremiah’s temple sermon in ch. 7 (cf. 26.1!) and the plural vocative in 19.3, ‘Hear the word of YHWH, O *kings* of Judah’.

with this is the observation (which will form the heart of this chapter) that chs. 21 – 24 contain the first messages of hope for particular groups of people (21.8-9; 23.1-8; 24.5-7). Whilst there have been promises of restoration before now (3.14-18; 12.14-17; 16.14-16), these have been of a pan-Israel, and even international, character.

Secondly, chs. 21 – 24 are defined by their internal literary structure, which can be outlined as follows:

Fig. 1: The Literary Structure of Jer. 21 – 24

- a. Judgement on Zedekiah and Jerusalem; hope for those who go out to Babylon (21.1-10)
- b. Oracles against the kings (21.11 – 22.30)
- c. Promises of restoration and of a new king (23.1-8)
- b'. Oracles against the prophets (23.9-40)
- a'. Judgement on Zedekiah and Jerusalem; hope for those in Babylon (24.1-10)

21.1-10 and 24.1-10 form an *inclusio*. Both warn of judgement on Jerusalem and its king, but offer hope to those who identify with Babylon.<sup>16</sup> Verbally, this theology is expressed in similar terms; compare שמתי עיני עליהם לטובה (21.10) and שמתי עיני עליהם לטובה (24.6). Another link lies in the trilogy רעב, חרב, דבר (21.7, 9; 24.9). Pohlmann terms 21.1-10 and 24.1-10 a ‘frame composition’ (*Rahmenkomposition*),<sup>17</sup> while Schmid refers to “die Klammerstellung um den Komplex 21 – 24”.<sup>18</sup> Within this frame are two anthologies, castigating the kings (21.11 – 22.30), and the prophets (23.9-39), highlighted by their superscriptions, לבית מלך יהודה,<sup>19</sup> and לנבאים. Sandwiched between them is the literary and theological heart of the unit, 23.1-8. Here, YHWH promises to raise up a new king (יהוה צדקנו), so echoing the name of Zedekiah (צדקיהו) with whom chs. 21 – 24 begin and end. Without

<sup>16</sup> “The prose discourse (of 21.1-10) declares that the destiny of Judah as a reimagined community depends in large measure on its response to Babylonian subjugation” (Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos*, 51).

<sup>17</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 184.

<sup>18</sup> Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 261. Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 84, speaks of “an even larger section on Judahite / Davidic kingship (chs. 21 – 24) framed by judgment oracles against Zedekiah (21.1-10; 24.8-10).”

<sup>19</sup> OG ὁ οἶκος βασιλεως Ιουδα suggests that the *Vorlage* contained vocative address rather than a superscription. Possibly MT added the preposition ל to counterbalance לנבאים in 23.9; *pace* Duhm, *Jeremia*, 171; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 116; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 506, who all take ו as MT plus but retain the preposition.



claiming that the second half of the unit is a perfect mirror image of the first, the overall pattern is too clear to be fortuitous.

What exactly is meant by describing chs. 21 – 24 as ‘a unit’ is a moot point. Arguably, this section is a *compositional* unity; that is, it existed independently before being added *en bloc* to the developing book. Rudolph saw these four chapters as a separate literary cycle that was then inserted between chs. 20 and 25,<sup>20</sup> while Reitzschel saw them as an oral ‘tradition complex’ (*Überlieferungskomplex*) that evolved in the exilic synagogues, before being added to the ‘tradition block’ of chs. 1 – 20.<sup>21</sup> Both views are attractive, but inevitably speculative. It is possible, for example, that 21.1 – 23.8 (‘oracles about kings’) was added first, and supplemented later by 23.9-39 and 24.1-10. All we can say with certainty is that chs. 21 – 24 constitute a *literary* unity within the present book.

This is not to deny the diversity of chs. 21 – 24. The anthological nature of the oracles against the kings and the prophets is shown not only by their headings, but also by the admixture of poetry (e.g., 22.20-23; 23.9-14) and prose (e.g., 22.1-5; 23.33-39) – and, in the case of the first collection, by the fact that three different kings are addressed. Literary and historical differences are also evident in the two passages set in the reign of Zedekiah; 21.1-10 records Jeremiah’s message to king and city during the siege of 588-587, while ch. 24 describes a private vision-experience of the prophet shortly after 597.

More important is the *conceptual* diversity. Granted, the critique of Judah’s leadership is a prominent theme; Thiel summarises their contents as “hauptsächlich Worte über die politischen und geistigen Führer des Volkes, Könige und Propheten”,<sup>22</sup> while Stulman entitles 21 – 24 “the dismantling of royal ideology”.<sup>23</sup> But can *all* of chs. 21 – 24 be subsumed under this

---

<sup>20</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, xviii.

<sup>21</sup> Reitzschel, *Urrolle*, 127-136. By ‘tradition-complexes’, Reitzschel meant small collections of poetry and prose arranged according to their “thematischen Gesichtspunkten oder Stichwortverknüpfungen.” (*Urrolle*, 24). This approach is broadly accepted by D.R. Jones, *Jeremiah* (NCB; London: Marshall Pickering, 1992) 29-31.

<sup>22</sup> W. Thiel, *Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 1 – 25* (WMANT 41; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1973) 230. Cf. Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 261: “21.1-10 vertritt eine sehr königs- und führungskritische Sicht: Der Abschnitt ist der nachfolgenden Königsspruchsammlung vorgeschaltet worden und macht klar, daß der nationale Untergang auf das Konto Zedekias und der Fürsten ging: Sie waren rechtzeitig informiert und hätten sich den Babyloniern ergeben können.”

<sup>23</sup> Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos*, 31, 49-52.

rubric (note Thiel's qualifying 'hauptsächlich')? As we will see, 21.1-10 contains an indictment of the entire city *plus* a message of (qualified) hope to the people. Moreover, in ch. 24 judgement and hope appear totally unrelated to the issue of leadership. Thiel attempts to link YHWH's condemnation of Jerusalem here to the preceding critique: "das Gericht mit dem Versagen der Führer des Volkes und wohl auch mit dem blinden Vertrauen des Volkes auf seine Leiter (vgl. 14.14-16) begründet",<sup>24</sup> but this is unconvincing.<sup>25</sup> As Carroll observes, ch. 24 "belongs to a rather different strand in that it distinguishes between two groups, those deported in 597 and those who remained behind in the city."<sup>26</sup>

### 1.3. Function: Jer. 21 – 24 in its Literary Context

If chs. 21 – 24 do form a distinct unit (and possibly a late addition), the question arises as to why they have been placed at this point in the text. Holladay's explanation – "because סבב Hiph., 'turn around', in v. 4 shares the same semantic field as הפך in 20.16"<sup>27</sup> – is hardly convincing. Nor is it clear, as Clines and Gunn believe, that "the self-curse and the 'why' question (20.18) are *naturally* understood as representing the prophet's personal reaction to the impending destruction which he will share with his people".<sup>28</sup> Possibly the name 'Pashhur' (20.1-6; 21.1) functioned as a catchword,<sup>29</sup> though we might have expected a more substantial connection. Rudolph offers some help here by contrasting the rough treatment meted out to Jeremiah by Pashhur in ch. 20 and the humble demeanour of his namesake in ch. 21.<sup>30</sup> For his part, Pohlmann simply notes that "eine Anknüpfung an den vorausgehenden Kontext ist nicht erkennbar".<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> Thiel, *Redaktion 1 – 25*, 260.

<sup>25</sup> See Pohlmann's criticisms of Thiel on this point, *Studien*, 184.

<sup>26</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 404.

<sup>27</sup> Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 569.

<sup>28</sup> D.J.A. Clines & D.M. Gunn, 'Form, Occasion and Redaction in Jeremiah 20', *ZAW* 88 (1976) 408 (italics mine).

<sup>29</sup> So, for example, J.P. Hyatt, 'The Book of Jeremiah', *IB* 5 (Nashville / New York: Abingdon, 1956) 976; J. Paterson, 'Jeremiah', in M. Black & H.H. Rowley (eds.), *Peake's Commentary on the Bible* (London & Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1962) 550.

<sup>30</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 116.

<sup>31</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 32.

We suggest, however, that there are several lines of continuity between chs. 21 – 24 and what precedes, which seem to have been strangely overlooked. Firstly, the military crisis facing Jerusalem in 21.1-10 is in two respects clearly anticipated in chs. 19 – 20, which explicitly state that the city will be placed under *siege* (מִצּוֹר, 19.9; cf. 21.4, 9), and that the enemy will be *Babylon* (20.4-6; cf. 21.1ff.) – the first time this identification has been made in the book. We might also note how the warning in 20.4 that the king of Babylon will ‘strike them with the sword’ (הִכּוּם לְפִי בַחֲרֹב, 20.4) finds an echo in 21.7, הִכּוּם לְפִי בַחֲרֹב.

Secondly, the double prediction in ch. 20 that Judah will be exiled (גִּלְיָה, v. 4) to Babylon,<sup>32</sup> and that Pashhur and his family will go into captivity there (הֵלֵךְ בְּשָׁבִי, v. 6), heralds a marked emphasis in chs. 21 – 24 on *deportation*. Though only hinted at in 21.1-10, it emerges clearly in the oracles against the kings: Shallum has already been exiled (גִּלְיָה, 22.12), Jehoiakim’s allies will go into captivity (הֵלֵךְ בְּשָׁבִי, 22.22) and Jehoiachin will be ‘cast’ (טוֹל) into another land (עַל הָאָרֶץ אַחֲרֵת, 22.26).<sup>33</sup> The promise of restoration in 23.1-8 presupposes a general *Diaspora*, while 24.1-7 offers hope to those exiled (גִּלְיָה) to Babylon in 587.

A third point relates to what we said earlier about the focus in chs. 21 – 24 on specific kings and groups of people. As we saw in our previous chapter, in chs. 1 – 19 the targets of Jeremiah’s denunciations are of a very general nature. Ch. 20 breaks the pattern, however, by singling out for criticism a particular individual, Pashhur ben Immer. In this way, it provides a transition between the generality of chs. 1 – 19 and specificity of chs. 21 – 24. The rhetorical impact of this movement has been noted by M.S. Smith:

Chapters 11-20 dramatize the guilt of the enemies in great detail, but leave them largely nameless. Through this mode of presentation, the audience is predisposed to accept the guilt of the enemies before their identity is unveiled, which takes place beginning in chapter 20 and is advanced in great detail in chapters 21 – 25.<sup>34</sup>

Smith’s comments about ‘the guilt of the enemies’ are particularly significant for our own concerns, and we will return to them at the end of this chapter.

---

<sup>32</sup> This is “the first explicit reference to the place of exile in the book” (Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1*, 268), and (after 13.19, הַגְּלִיתָ יְהוּדָה כְּלָה הַגְּלִיתָ שְׁלוֹמִים) only the second reference to exile at all.

<sup>33</sup> Or, as OG presupposes, עַל אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִלְדָתָם.

<sup>34</sup> Smith, *Laments*, 66.

Granted, the juxtaposition of chs. 21 – 24 with ch. 20 raises a problem. Since Jeremiah's confrontation with Pashhur almost certainly took place before 597,<sup>35</sup> one would assume Pashhur was among those exiled with Jehoiachin in that year. Consequently, the negative tone of 20.1-6 is in tension with ch. 24, which (if we take the passage at face value) assures the 597 exiles without exception of YHWH's favour.<sup>36</sup> But as we will see, the same tension applies to chs. 21 – 24 internally as well.

## 2. Jer. 21.1-10

### 2.1. Text

ὁ λογος ὁ γενομενος παρα κυριου προς Ιερεμιαν ὅτε ἀπεστειλε προς αὐτον ὁ βασιλευς Σεδεκιας τον Πασχωρ υἱον Μελχιου και Σοφονιαν υἱον Μαασαιου τον ἱερα λεγων	(1) הדבר אשר היה אל ירמיהו מאת יהוה בשלח אליו המלך צדקיהו את פשחור בן מלכיה ואת צפניה בן מעשיה הכהן לאמר
ἐπερωτησον περι ἡμων τον κυριον ὅτι βασιλευς Βαβυλωνος ἐφεστηκεν ἐφ' ἡμας εἰ ποιησει κυριος κατα παντα τα θαυμασια αὐτου και ἀπελευσεται ἀφ' ἡμων	(2) דרש נא בעדנו את יהוה כי נבוכדראצר מלך בבל נלחם עלינו אולי יעשה יהוה אותנו ככל נפלאותיו ויעלה מעלינו
και εἶπε προς αὐτους Ιερεμιας οὕτως ἔρειτε προς Σεδεκιαν βασιλεα Ιουδα	(3) ויאמר ירמיהו אליהם כה תאמרן אל צדקיהו
ταδε λεγει κυριος ἴδου ἐγω μεταστρεφω τα ὄπλα τα πολεμικα ἐν οἷς ὑμεις πολεμειτε ἐν αὐτοις προς τους Χαλδαιους τους συγκεκλεικοτας ὑμας ἐξωθεν του	(4) כה אמר יהוה אלהי ישראל הנני מסב את כלי המלחמה אשר בידכם אשר אתם נלחמים במ את מלך בבל ואת הכשדים הצרים עליכם מחוץ לחומה ואספתי אותם אל תוך העיר הזאת

<sup>35</sup> The incident is undated, but since Pashhur is described as פקיד נגיד בבית יהוה (20.1), and since by the time of Jeremiah's letter to the exiles this position was held by Zephaniah (29.26), a date before 597 is likely. Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 445-446, and Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1 – 20*, 850, suggest a date between 609-605.

<sup>36</sup> It might be argued that 21.1-10 has been juxtaposed with ch. 20 to make it appear that Pashhur was one of the 587 exiles. In this way, the message of 20.1-6 is made to conform to the outlook of ch. 24, with its bias towards the 597 exiles (cf. Carroll's remark, *Jeremiah*, 483, about reading "the poems in 2 – 20 against a backdrop of the events of 597, a feature the narratives know nothing about . . . they may be as easily read in terms of 587."). Against this, however, 21.1-10 speaks of Zedekiah's people facing death in Jerusalem, rather than being exiled. Also, the proposed redactional manoeuvre does nothing to mitigate 22.24-30, which forcefully expresses YHWH's judgement on Jehoiachin.

τειχους εἰς το μεσον της πολεως ταυτης	
και πολεμησω ἐγω ὑμας ἐν χειρι ἐκτεταμενη και ἐν βραχιονι κραταιω μετα θυμου και ὀργης μεγαλης	(5) וּגְלַחְמִי אֲנִי אֶתְכֶם בַּיַּד נְשׁוּיָה וּבִזְרוּעַ חֶזְקָה וּבִאֵף וּבַחֲמָה וּבִקְצֵף גָּדוֹל
και παταξω παντας τους κατοικουντας ἐν τη πολει ταυτη τους ἀνθρωπους και τα κτηνη ἐν θανατω μεγαλω και ἀποθανουνται	(6) וְהִכִּיתִי אֶת יוֹשְׁבֵי הָעִיר הַזֹּאת וְאֶת הָאָדָם וְאֶת הַבְּהֵמָה בְּדַבָּר גָּדוֹל יָמָתוֹ
και μετα ταυτα λεγει κυριος δωσω τον Σεδεκιαν βασιλεα Ιουδα και τους παιδας αὐτου και τον λαον τον καταλειφθεντα ἐν τη πολει ταυτη ἀπο του θανατου και ἀπο του λιμου και ἀπο της μαχαιρας εἰς χειρας ἐχθρων αὐτων των ζητουντων τας ψυχας αὐτων και κατακοψουσιν αὐτους ἐν στοματι μαχαιρας οὐ φεισομαι ἐπ' αὐτοις και οὐ μη οἰκτιρησω αὐτους	(7) וְאַחֲרַי כֵּן נֶאֱמַר יְהוָה אֲתָן אֶת צְדָקָתוֹ מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וְאֶת עַבְדָּיו וְאֶת הָעָם וְאֶת הַנְּשֹׂאִים בְּעִיר הַזֹּאת מִן הַדָּבָר מִן הַחֶרֶב וּמִן הָרֶעֶב בַּיַּד נְבוּכַדְרֶאֱצַר מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל וּבִיַּד אִיֻּבְיָהִם וּבִיַּד מִבְּקָשֵׁי נַפְשָׁם וְהֵכֶם לְפִי חֶרֶב לֹא יַחֹס עֲלֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִחְמַל וְלֹא יִרְחַם
και προς τον λαον τουτον ἐρεις ταδε λεγει κυριος ἴδου ἐγω δεδωκα προ προσωπου ὑμων την ὁδον της ζωης και την ὁδον του θανατου	(8) וְאַל הָעָם הַזֶּה תֹּאמַר כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הֲגַנִּי נָתַן לְפָנֵיכֶם אֶת דֶּרֶךְ הַחַיִּים וְאֶת דֶּרֶךְ הַמּוֹת
ὁ καθημενος ἐν τη πολει ταυτη ἀποθανειται ἐν μαχαιρα και ἐν λιμω και ὁ ἐκπορευομενος προσχωρησαι προς τους Χαλδαιους τους συγκεκλεικοτας ὑμας ζησεται και ἐσται ἡ ψυχη αὐτου εἰς σκυλα και ζησεται	(9) הַיֹּשֵׁב בְּעִיר הַזֹּאת יָמוּת בַּחֶרֶב וּבְרֶעֶב וּבְדָבָר וְהַיּוֹצֵא וְנִפְלַע עַל הַכְּשָׁדִים הַצָּרִים עֲלֵיכֶם יָחִיה וְהִיתָה לוֹ נַפְשׁוֹ לְשַׁלַּל
διοτι ἐστηρικα το προσωπον μου ἐπι την πολιν ταυτην εἰς κακα και οὐκ εἰς ἀγαθα εἰς χειρας βασιλεως Βαβυλωνος παραδοθησεται και κατακαυσει αὐτην ἐν πυρι	(10) כִּי שָׁמַתִּי פָנַי בְּעִיר הַזֹּאת לְרֵעָה וְלֹא לְטוֹבָה נֶאֱמַר יְהוָה בַּיַּד מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל תִּנְתֵּן וְשִׂרְפָה בְּאֵשׁ

## 2.2. Textual Notes

v. 1. MT מאת יהוה אל ירמיהו מאת יהוה; OG παρὰ κυριου προς Ιερειαν = מאת יהוה אל ירמיהו =  
The first of two word order variants in the passage (cf. v. 7). MT is consistent with this sequence; OG follows the same order as here in 11.1; 18.1 and 40[47].1, but agrees with MT in 30[37].1; 34[41].1; 35[42].1.

v. 2. MT נְבוּכַדְרֶצַּר >OG. The name of the Babylonian king is one of the most common MT plusses. This is its first occurrence in the book (cf. the variant spelling נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר in chs. 27 – 29); in Jer. OG, it does not occur till 24.1.

v. 3. OG βασιλεα Ιουδα >MT: This is unlikely to be an explanatory gloss by the translator, since he has already (v. 1) referred simply to ὁ βασιλευς Σεδεκιας. It thus points to a longer reading in the *Vorlage*. The wider significance of this is that it tells against the theory that the translator abbreviated such details; see further vv. 4 and 7.

v. 4. MT ואספתי אותם; את מלך בבל ו; אשר בידכם; אלהי ישראל >OG: The first of these is a typical MT plus. אשר בידכם could be absent from OG or its *Vorlage* by haplography (repetition of אשר).<sup>37</sup> The same may apply to את מלך בבל ו (repetition of את); however, MT also gives extra prominence to the Babylonian king in v. 7, and though haplography is possible there too, its occurrence in two verses on the same point would be rather coincidental. ואספתי אותם also appears expansionary;<sup>38</sup> leaving aside the lengthy subordinate clause (אשר אתם . . . לחומה), the *Vorlage* would have read מסב את כלי המלחמה . . . אל תוך העיר הזאת (for סבב [+direct object] אל, see 2 Kgs. 20.2). Some have argued that OG has in this verse shortened its *Vorlage* in order to produce a clearer text,<sup>39</sup> but as Janzen remarks, MT is if anything clearer than OG.<sup>40</sup>

v. 5. MT ובאף >OG: The term may have been overlooked in OG or the *Vorlage* due to homoiarchton (repetition of וב in ובהמה), but it is more likely that (as in vv. 7 and 9) MT has added a term to create a verbal trilogy.

v. 6. MT ימתו; OG και ἀποθάνουσιν: The conjunction affects the syntax of the whole verse: MT, ‘and I will strike down the inhabitants of this city . . . by a great plague they will die’; OG, ‘and I will strike down those who live in this city . . . with a great death, and they will die’.

---

<sup>37</sup> So Janzen, *Studies*, 43.

<sup>38</sup> So Janzen, *Studies*, 43; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 567; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 497; contra Thiel, *Redaktion 1* – 25, 233.

<sup>39</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 114; H. Weippert, ‘Jahwekrieg und Bundesfluch in Jer. 21.1-7’, *ZAW* 82 (1970) 398 n.11; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 34 n.82, considers this possible.

<sup>40</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 43.

MT **בדבר**; OG  $\epsilon\upsilon$   $\theta\alpha\nu\alpha\tau\omega$ : The use of  $\theta\alpha\nu\alpha\tau\omega$  ('death') to render **דבר** ('plague') is standard not only in Jer. (cf. v. 7; 14.12; 24.10, etc.) but also elsewhere in the OT (Ex. 5.3; 9.3, 15; Lev. 26.25; Num. 14.12; Deut. 28.21; 2 Sam. 24.13; 1 Kgs. 8.37).

v. 7. Again, it has been argued that the translator has here abbreviated a cumbersome *Vorlage*.<sup>41</sup> However, each variant must be considered individually.

MT **וְאֵת הַנְּשָׂאִים** >OG: Probable MT plus; this distinction between **הַנְּשָׂאִים** and **הָעָם** is unparalleled in Jer., whilst **הָעָם וְהַנְּשָׂאִים** occurs five times (39.9 x2; 40.6; 41.10; 52.15).<sup>42</sup> MT may have added **וְאֵת** in order to emphasise the totality of YHWH's judgement.<sup>43</sup>

MT **וּבִיד נְבוּכַדְרֶאֱצַר מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל וּבִיד** >OG: Haplography (either in OG or its *Vorlage*) is possible (repetition of **בִּיד**).<sup>44</sup> However, since MT also contains a reference to Nebuchadrezzar in v. 4 that is lacking in OG, the probability is that both are MT plusses.<sup>45</sup> The crucial point is that MT *requires* this reference to Nebuchadrezzar to facilitate its variant readings in the rest of the verse; without it, we are obliged to follow OG.

MT **וּבִיד מִבְּקֵשֵׁי**; OG  $\tau\omega\upsilon$   $\zeta\eta\tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\epsilon\tau\omega$ : The point here is not simply that OG does not represent **וּבִיד**, but rather suggests an underlying (**בִּיד אִיבִיהֶם**) **הַמְּבַקְשִׁים (נַפְשָׁם)**; for a similar construction, see Ex. 4.19; Jer. 11.21. However, it is unlikely that MT intends to imply an second group of people (who would they be?); rather, this is a case of hendiadys, 'their enemies seeking their lives' (a form of *waw explicativum*).<sup>46</sup>

MT **הַכֶּם**; OG  $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\sigma\upsilon\sigma\iota\upsilon\varsigma$   $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  = **הַכֶּם**: MT focuses on Nebuchadrezzar as the agent of judgement, while the plural form of the verb in OG connects it to 'their enemies seeking

---

<sup>41</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 114; Weippert, 'Jahwekrieg', 398 n.11; contra Janzen, *Studies*, 41; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 36; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 568.

<sup>42</sup> Pace C.F. Keil, *Biblischer Kommentar über den Propheten Jeremia und die Klagelieder* (BKAT 3.2; Leipzig: 1872) 243, who saw here a further example of *waw explicativum*.

<sup>43</sup> So Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 28.

<sup>44</sup> Though not addressing this point directly, McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 491, retains this phrase in his translation.

<sup>45</sup> So Janzen, *Studies*, 4; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 568 (though both concede haplography is possible).

<sup>46</sup> On *waw explicativum*, see GKC §154 n.1b; D.W. Baker, 'Further Examples of the Waw Explicativum', *VT* 30 (1980) 129-136. Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 234, renders Jer. 46.26, **וּבִיד מִבְּקֵשֵׁי נַפְשָׁם וּבִיד נְבוּכַדְרֶאֱצַר**, 'in die Hand derer, die ihnen nach dem Leben trachten, nämlich in die Hand Nebukadnezars' (italics mine). Note that wherever MT Jer. mentions **נַפְשָׁם** and **אִיבִים** together, it connects them with ו (19.7, 9; 34.20, 21; 44.30 x2; 49.37), while OG alternates between inserting  $\kappa\alpha\iota$  (19.7; 51.30 x2) and omitting it (21.7; 25.17).

their lives'. The subject of **הכם בחרב** in 20.4 is (in both texts) the king of Babylon, but if we are right to view **בביל ביד נבוכדראצר מלך** as an MT plus, OG's **κατακοψουσιν** accurately interprets its *Vorlage*.<sup>47</sup>

MT **לא יחמל**; OG **οὐ φεισομαι ἐπ' αὐτοῖς οὐ μη οἰκτιρησω αὐτούς**: While MT keeps the focus on Nebuchadrezzar, OG makes YHWH the subject. Again, a decision on whether the change was made by the translator or MT hangs on whether we think the *Vorlage* contained an antecedent reference to Nebuchadrezzar; as we have already suggested, this seems on balance unlikely.<sup>48</sup> See too 13.14, **לא אחמול ולא אחוס ולא ארחם** (cf. the expression **לא אחמול ולא אחוס עיני** . . . in Ezek. 5.11; 7.4; 8.18, etc.).<sup>49</sup> Since this is the end of the oracle, a summary statement by YHWH is appropriate. **ולא ירחם** is unreflected in OG and is probably an MT plus.

MT **מן הרבר ומן הרעב ומן החרב**; OG **ἀπο τοῦ θανάτου καὶ ἀπο τοῦ λιμοῦ καὶ ἀπο τοῦ μαχαίρας** = **מן הרבר ומן הרעב ומן החרב**: Curiously, both texts diverge from the sequence **דבר, רעב, חרב** that is otherwise consistent in Jer. (14.12; 24.10; 27.8, 13; 29.17, 18; 32.24, 36; 38.2; 42.17, 22; 44.13).

v. 9. **ובדבר** >OG: MT plus; the term is also unrepresented by OG in the parallel passage 38[45].2. For the two-member form **חרב ורעב**, see 5.12; 14.15; 16.4; 44.12, 18, 27. As in v. 5 (**ובאף**) and v. 7 (**ולא ירחם**), an MT plus has resulted in a verbal trilogy.

MT **יחיה** ('will live') is preferable to **Qere יחיה** ('and he will live') and is supported by OG.

OG **καὶ ζήσεται** = **ודי** >MT: The additional wording may reflect a longer *Vorlage*, or conflation by a later Greek copyist; cf. the parallel 38[45].2, where MT also supplies a final **ודי**.

---

<sup>47</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 170; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 36-37; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 568; contra Weippert, 'Jahwekrieg', 398 n.14; Thiel, *Redaktion 1 – 25*, 234; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 501.

<sup>48</sup> Favouring OG are Duhm, *Jeremia*, 170; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 37; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 568; favouring MT are Thiel, *Redaktion 1 – 25*, 234; Weippert, 'Jahwekrieg', 398 n.14; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 501.

<sup>49</sup> A somewhat similar divergence appears in 42[49].12, where in place of MT **ורחם אתכם** (referring to Nebuchadrezzar), OG reads **καὶ ἐλεησω ὑμᾶς** (referring to God).



### 2.3. Exegetical Notes

v. 1. **הדבר אשר היה אל ירמיהו מאת יהוה**: This is ambiguous; **הדבר** might denote the word which Jeremiah subsequently sent to the king, or the entire incident.

Pashhur ben Malchiah reappears later as one of a group who complain that Jeremiah's preaching is demoralising the people, and who attempt to kill him (38.1-6). The relationship of Zephaniah ben Maaseiah to Jeremiah is more ambiguous. In ch. 29, where he is a **פקיד בית יהוה** ('temple overseer'), he is urged by Shemaiah to rebuke Jeremiah for his subversive letter to the exiles in Babylon. Instead he reads Shemaiah's letter to Jeremiah, though his intention in doing so is not entirely clear.<sup>50</sup> He also appears in the similar account of a delegation in 37.3.

v. 2. **דרש את יהוה (בעד)** (like **התפלל בעד**)<sup>51</sup> is a phrase denoting prophetic intercession. Whether the subject is the king or the people, 'consulting YHWH' requires the mediation of a prophet (see Ezek. 14.10; 20.1).<sup>52</sup> The desired response may simply be information or direction (8.2; 10.21), but often the underlying hope is for some divine act of salvation, preceded perhaps by a **שלום** oracle (29.7; 38.4).<sup>53</sup> Here, the ensuing **אולי יעשה יהוה ככל נפלאותיו** makes this hope explicit. Zedekiah (and / or the writer) may be thinking of YHWH's deliverance of Judah during the Assyrian crisis (Isa. 37); both Zedekiah and Hezekiah send a delegation to the prophet (v. 1; Isa. 37.2), emphasise the gravity of the situation (v. 2a; Isa. 37.3), refer *hopefully* to the prospect of YHWH's assistance (v. 2b; Isa. 37.4a; note the use of **אולי** in both), and request intercession (v. 2a; Isa. 37.4b).

v. 3. **תאמרין**: Pohlmann finds the form remarkable,<sup>54</sup> but **כה תאמרין** is in fact more common than **כה תאמרו**.<sup>55</sup> We cannot therefore be sure whether this is a deliberate allusion to Isaiah's use of **כה תאמרין** to Hezekiah's delegation (Isa. 37.6).

---

<sup>50</sup> See W. McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah. Volume II. Commentary on Jeremiah XXVI – LII* (New ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996) 743 for a summary of how Zephaniah's actions have been interpreted.

<sup>51</sup> **דרש** and **התפלל (בעד)** can be used synonymously; see 29.11, and also 37.3-7, where following the request **אל יהוה** (v. 3), Jeremiah refers to **אל לדרשני** (v. 7).

<sup>52</sup> C. Westermann, 'Die Begriffe für Fragen und Suchen im Alten Testament', *KD* 6 (1960) 16-22.

<sup>53</sup> See further J.P. Sisson, 'Jeremiah and the Jerusalemite Conception of Peace', *JBL* 105 (1986) 429-442.

<sup>54</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 33.

<sup>55</sup> The former occurs in Gen. 32.5; 1 Sam. 11.9; 2 Kgs. 19.6, 10; 37.6, 10; Isa. 37.6, 10; the latter in Gen. 50.17; 1 Sam. 18.25; 2 Kgs. 22.18; Jer. 23.35; 27.4; 37.7; 2 Chron. 34.26. For **תאמרין** (without **כה**) see 2 Kgs. 18.22; Isa. 8.12; Jer. 10.11.

v. 4. Knowing exactly what is envisaged here is complicated by the textual difficulties and the ambiguity of the wording and syntax. In OG it is the Judean *כלי המלחמה* (rather than the Babylonians) which YHWH will ‘turn back’ (*סבב*) towards the city; this may also be the sense of MT, if *אותם* (*ואספתו*) relates to *כלי המלחמה*,<sup>56</sup> but *אותם* (*אספתו*) might also denote *את הכשדים הנצים עליהם*.<sup>57</sup> The *כלי המלחמה* themselves could be either the Judean troops or their weapons,<sup>58</sup> while *סבב* might mean either ‘turn back’ (in defeat or victory?) or ‘surround’ (to protect or to blunt?).<sup>59</sup> Thus, it is not immediately obvious whether YHWH is promising salvation or doom.<sup>60</sup> Weippert has interpreted v. 4 as predicting that YHWH will cause the Judean troops to turn on one another in confusion and destroy one another (cf. Jdg. 7.22; 1 Sam. 14.20; Zech. 14.13), thereby leaving the city open to the Babylonians.<sup>61</sup>

v. 5. *כלי המלחמה אני אתכם* again leaves some doubt as to who YHWH is fighting for.<sup>62</sup> The expression *ביר חזקה ובזרוע נטויה* often describes YHWH’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Deut. 4.34, 5.15; 2 Kgs. 17.36, etc.).<sup>63</sup> Here, however, the adjectives are transposed, perhaps as a further hint that YHWH has switched sides.<sup>64</sup>

v. 6. In the context of a prolonged siege, with diminishing food supplies, the prediction that the people will die *גדול*, ‘by a great plague’, is historically realistic. By contrast, the mention in v. 7 of survivors *מן הרב מן החרב ומן הרעב* is more stylised, and formally in tension with v. 6. Similarly, in 42.16-17, Jeremiah’s warning against fleeing to Egypt initially has a

---

<sup>56</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 114; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 34.

<sup>57</sup> Volz, *Jeremia*, 216. According to Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 571, “there is no way to decide.”

<sup>58</sup> *כלי המלחמה* usually means ‘weapons’ (Deut. 1.41; Jdg. 18.11; 1 Sam. 8.12), but in 2 Sam. 1.27 is synonymous with *גבורים*; cf. also Jer. 51.20. The addition of *אשר בידכם* in MT might seem to settle the matter in favour of ‘weapons’, but cf. Num. 31.49, *אנשי המלחמה אשר בידנו*, ‘the men of war at our disposal’.

<sup>59</sup> See Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 286, for further interpretative options.

<sup>60</sup> “The preponderance of evidence would suggest an oracle of judgement, for which Jeremiah was well known. But for a king seeking any possible hope *in extremis*, perhaps the ambiguity of the words could be grasped momentarily as the desired deliverance oracle” (Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 286-287).

<sup>61</sup> Weippert, ‘Jahwekrieg’, 407-408; followed by Pohlmann, *Studien*, 34.

<sup>62</sup> “The ambiguity would be precisely that of the English, ‘I am going to fight with you’ ” (Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 287).

<sup>63</sup> See Pohlmann, *Studien*, 35 n.92, for a full listing.

<sup>64</sup> So Weippert, ‘Jahwekrieg’, 399 n.20; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 571-572.

rather 'matter of fact' explanation, והרעב . . . ותשיג אתכם, but is followed by the more generalised claim, כל האנשים, אשר אתם דאגים ממנו שם ידבק אחרים, אשר שמו את פניהם לבוא מצרים ימותו בחרב ברעב ובדבר.

v. 7. The implications of the different readings in MT and OG have already been noted. The identity of מבקשי נפשם is unclear. The phrase מבקשי נפש is distinctive of the Jeremiah prose tradition,<sup>65</sup> occurring in 11.21; 19.7, 9; 21.7; 22.25; 34.20, 21; 38.16; 44.30 (twice); 46.26; 49.37.<sup>66</sup> Those whose life is sought vary,<sup>67</sup> but the identity of the מבקשי is stated only in 11.21 (the men of Anathoth). That the phrase here refers to the Babylonians is a reasonable inference, but internal enemies (deserters?) may also be in mind; see Zedekiah's admission, אני דאג את, אשר נפלו אל הכשדים פן יתנו אתי בידם (38.19).<sup>68</sup>

v. 8. The declaration recalls Moses' words to Israel, ראה נתתי לפניך היום את החיים ואת הטוב ואת המות ואת הרע (Deut. 30.15). In that passage, 'life' means YHWH's rich blessing (cf. v. 19) in the land Israel is about to enter. As v. 9 makes clear, however, what is on offer here is much more modest, making the allusion highly ironic. The terms 'good' and 'evil' from Deut. 30.15 are taken up in v. 10, where YHWH states that he has set his face against the city לרעה ולא לטובה.<sup>69</sup>

v. 9. Occasion: *היוצא*: Occasionally in Jer. יצא connotes 'go into exile', though this is made explicit by the addition of בגולה (29.16; 48.7; also Zech. 14.2).<sup>70</sup> Here, however, it means 'surrender' (1 Sam. 11.3; 2 Kgs. 18.31 = Isa. 36.16; 24.12; Jer. 38.2, 17, 18, 21). It is thus related to, but not identical with, נפל, which has here the sense 'go over to another side, defect'

---

<sup>65</sup> Elsewhere it occurs only in the books of Samuel (1 Sam. 20.1; 2 Sam. 16.11) and Psalms (35.4; 38.13; 40.15; 70.3).

<sup>66</sup> In 19.9; 34.20, 21; 38.16; 46.26, the expression is absent from OG.

<sup>67</sup> Jeremiah (11.21; 38.16), Jehoiachin (22.25), Zedekiah and his officials (21.7; 34.21; 44.30), the people of Judah and Jerusalem (19.7, 9; 21.7; 34.20), Pharaoh Hophra (44.30) and Elam (49.37).

<sup>68</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 36, argues that since Nebuchadnezzar is mentioned before 'the enemies', he cannot be identified with them, and concludes that "Jahwes Gerichtshandeln mit der Eroberung Jerusalems durch den König von Babel für die im Lande Übriggebliebenen noch nicht abgeschlossen ist, sondern weitergeht." Obviously, this can only apply to MT, since OG makes no reference to the Babylonian king.

<sup>69</sup> The use of דרך in conjunction with חיים and מות is more characteristic of the wisdom literature; see Prov. 6.23; 12.28; 14.12; 16.25. In Jer. 21.8, however, דרך seems to have a more literal meaning; the way of life is the road out of the city.

<sup>70</sup> In 22.11 and 29.2, however, יצא appears in an exilic sense without בגולה.

(1 Sam. 29.3; 2 Kgs. 7.4; Jer. 37.13-14; 38.19; 39.9 = 2 Kgs. 25.11; 52.15; 1 Chron. 12.20; 2 Chron. 15.9). Interestingly, while this is how *NIV* translates נפל in almost all these references, in Jer. 21.9 (and 2 Kgs. 7.4) it reads ‘surrender’ – thereby glossing the subversive aspect of the word. Such a translational decision is unwarranted, but it highlights how, in the crisis of 587, Jeremiah’s message could be framed in different ways; as ‘cowardly desertion’ (cf. 37.13-14), as ‘pragmatic realism’ (cf. 2 Kgs. 7.3-4) or as ‘courageous obedience to YHWH’.<sup>71</sup>

והיתה לו נפשו לשלל: Whilst the individual terms are clear enough (שלל denotes plunder in battle) the meaning of the expression, which is limited to Jer. (cf. 38.2; 39.18; 45.5)<sup>72</sup> is disputed. Most scholars interpret it as an ironic promise of survival *and no more*, and follow Volz’s conjecture that the expression was “vielleicht ein altes, gutmütig spottendes Sprichwort; wenn ein Besiegter entronnen war und sein nacktes Leben gerettet hatte, so hatte er wenigstens das als ‘Beute’ ”.<sup>73</sup> Parke-Taylor, however, argues that the contrast of דרך החיים and דרך המוות implies “more than bare survival, and points to the blessing of Yahweh as promised in Deut. 30.15-20.”<sup>74</sup> A review of the contexts in which these נפש לשלל promises occur, however, counts against such a positive interpretation. In the analogous passage 38.2, והיתה לו נפשו לשלל is explained exegetically by the ensuing וחי, (‘and he will live’), whilst the meaning of the promise to Ebed-Melech is supplied by what precedes, ולא תנתן ביד האנשים אשר אתה יגור מפניהם, כי מלט אמלטך ובחרב לא תפל (39.17-18). The austerity of YHWH’s word to Baruch is clear from its logical underpinning: והנה אשר אשר בניתי אני הרס . . . ואתה תבקש לך גדלות (45.4-5; note the emphatic pronouns). If YHWH must suffer the destruction of his own work, Baruch’s ambitions should be modest indeed; all he may hope for is to avoid the disaster that is coming ‘on all flesh’ (על כל בשר).<sup>75</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 191: “The announcement is ideologically pure, offers no reservations, and is experientially probable. An occupied city is likely to foster famine and pestilence after the sword.” He adds, however, that “because this convergence [between Babylonian policy and the will of YHWH] is now established in the canon, it cannot be explained simply on grounds of political conviction.”

<sup>72</sup> This strongly suggests its authenticity; so Parke-Taylor, *Formation*, 202.

<sup>73</sup> Volz, *Jeremia*, 219; so too Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 117; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 185; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 1, 574; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 469; McKane, *Jeremiah* 1, 502.

<sup>74</sup> Parke-Taylor, *Formation*, 203.

<sup>75</sup> According to Parke-Taylor, *Formation*, 202, this “is surely more than a promise of survival, and the additional phrase ‘in all places to which you may go’ carries with it the assurance of protection.” The latter is undoubtedly true, but it is hard to see how this amounts to ‘more than a promise of survival’.

Weippert and Pohlmann have argued convincingly that Jer. 21.1-10 depicts YHWH's judgement upon Israel as 'holy war in reverse'.<sup>76</sup> Indicative of this change in his stance towards them are the phrases *ונלחמתי אתכם* (v. 5), *ביר . . . אתן* and *להכריב לפי בהרוב* (v. 7), which are paralleled elsewhere in relation to Israel's conquest of the land, and especially the *herem*; see, for instance, Deut. 20.13, *ונתנה יהוה אלהיך בידך והכית את כל זכורה לפי הרב*, (also Josh. 6.2, 21; 10.28). Less convincing is Pohlmann's claim that *שלל* (v. 9) and *שרף באש* (v. 10) also belong to this *herem* language. As we have seen, the former is part of a characteristically Jeremianic expression (which concerns the actions of the Judeans, not the Babylonians!), while the warning that Nebuchadrezzar would burn the city is also well established in Jer. (32.29; 34.2; 37.8, 10; 38.18; cf. 39.8).

#### 2.4. Coherence and Redaction

Since 21.1-10 share the same historical setting, and since the stance taken by YHWH towards Jerusalem is consistently negative, it may seem natural to read these verses as a coherent whole.<sup>77</sup> At the same time, there is some tension between the two messages spoken by Jeremiah; whilst vv. 4-7 announce unqualified destruction on the city and those in it, vv. 8-10 introduce an exceptive element; those who surrender to the Babylonians will live. Given that the issue of differentiation and non-differentiation is central to our study, we need to explore the relationship between these two messages in Jer. 21.

The simplest solution might be to explain the disaster / hope distinction in audience-critical terms. Since the rhetorical markers *כה תאמרן אל זדקיהו* (v. 3) and *ואל העם הזה תאמר* (v. 8)<sup>78</sup> clearly distinguish between the king and the people, we might conclude that judgement is now inevitable for Zedekiah (and his royal court?), but may yet be averted by the ordinary people of Jerusalem. Brueggemann writes:

---

<sup>76</sup> Weippert, 'Jahwekrieg', esp. 398-402; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 34-39. Pohlmann argues that the concept of herem "als Leitgedanken bei der Abfassung dieses Abschnitts, besonders der Verse 7-10 zugrunde gelegen haben müssen" (39).

<sup>77</sup> So, for example, Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 115-117. Volz, *Jeremia*, 218, and Bright, *Jeremiah*, 217 see vv. 8-10 as originally separate from vv. 1-7, though equally authentic and from the same historical context.

<sup>78</sup> Since *תאמר* is singular, it is possible that YHWH is here speaking to Jeremiah.

The judgement is against the arrogant temple and the self-serving monarchy. It is as though a distinction is made between ‘people’ and ‘government’, as we often do with reference to ‘the Russian people’ or ‘the Cuban people’ . . . That is why vv. 8-10 are addressed to people, unlike vv. 3-7, which are addressed to the king.<sup>79</sup>

The problem with this analysis, however, is that the message sent to Zedekiah (vv. 4-7) makes no distinction at all between ‘people’ and ‘government’. YHWH will strike down ‘the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast’ (v. 6), and those who survive (הַעַם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים) will die at the hands of the king of Babylon (v. 7). Only when Jeremiah speaks to the people (vv. 8-10) does he suggest that some of them may live. Consequently, the audience / message correlation is not as neat as Brueggemann implies.<sup>80</sup> Putting the matter in somewhat formulaic terms, what we see is *not* audience ‘A’ being told that ‘A’ will be destroyed, and audience ‘B’ being told that ‘B’ has a choice; but rather, audience ‘A’ being told that ‘A’ and ‘B’ will be destroyed, and audience ‘B’ being told that ‘B’ has a choice.

Others seek to explain the tension between vv. 4-7 and 8-10 by ascribing them to different redactional layers. Seitz, for example, argues that in its present form, 21.1-10 is “a redactional piece meant to foreclose on the possibility of ongoing life in the land”.<sup>81</sup> It has thus been shaped by the ‘Exilic Redaction’ (ER), which sought to portray Judah’s disobedience and destruction as inevitable (see chapter 1). However, while Seitz attributes vv. 1-7 to ER, he believes that vv. 8-10 reflect the authentic ‘submit and live’ preaching of Jeremiah, preserved in the ‘Scribal Chronicle’ (SC). What we see in 21.1-10, therefore, is a classic example of ER’s practice of ‘foreclosing’ an offer of hope to Zedekiah and his people: “Within 21.1-7, v. 7 eliminates the possibility of survival after 587 B.C., even as 21.8-10 counsels surrender that ‘you might live and have your life as prize of war’ ”.<sup>82</sup>

Clearly, such redaction-critical hypotheses satisfy only if they convincingly account for the present form of the text; that is to say, if the reshaped text actually conveys the viewpoint

---

<sup>79</sup> Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 191; Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos*, 50, agrees.

<sup>80</sup> One might argue that Jeremiah’s audience influenced the *rhetoric*, as much as the *content*, of his preaching. Consequently, a message of total disaster addressed to one party is more nuanced when addressed to another. This might not make for formal consistency, but is historically plausible; thus, J. Rosenberg, ‘Jeremiah and Ezekiel’, in R. Alter & F. Kermode (eds.), *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (London: Fontana, 1987) 194, refers to “the alteration of preachment to context and circumstance” in Jer. But as we will argue below, vv. 8-10 do not so much ‘nuance’ the indiscriminate nature of vv. 4-7 as introduce a different scenario.

<sup>81</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 253.

<sup>82</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 161 n.130.

that has supposedly led the editor to reshape it. Whether 21.1-10 does in fact support a ‘foreclosing’ ideology is a question we will return to shortly. For now, we should note that, as a solution to the tension between vv. 1-7 and 8-10, Seitz’s attractively simple, two-part division of the text is something of a chimera. McKane agrees that the contents of v. 7 “do not allow for any survivors to whom the prophet could have spoken in the terms of vv. 8-10”,<sup>83</sup> but also recognises that – if taken literally – v. 6 allows no survivors to whom the prophet could speak as he does in v. 7: “The contents of vv. 5-6 will not allow the continuation in v. 7 indicated by וְאֶחָדֵינוּ כֵּן, and the contents of v. 7 will not allow the continuation in vv. 8-10.”<sup>84</sup> Consequently, McKane has to posit *three* redactional strata in this passage. His explanation for this awkward amalgam of material – “the editor of 21.1-10 has attempted to portray a sequence of events corresponding imperfectly with the sequence in Jer. 52.4-16”<sup>85</sup> – fails to convince, however. At this point, the redaction-critical approach to the problem of 21.1-10 begins to look suspect.<sup>86</sup>

In fact, the formal contradiction noted by McKane between vv. 6 and 7 is easily explicable by allowing for an element of hyperbole. As the following examples show, logically inconsistent statements are not uncommon in prophetic judgement oracles:<sup>87</sup>

If ten men are left in one house, they too will die. And if a relative who is to burn the bodies comes to carry them out of the house and asks *anyone still hiding there*, ‘Is anyone still with you?’, and he says ‘No’, then he will say, ‘Hush! We must not mention the name of the LORD. (Am. 6.9-10)

Outside is the sword, inside are plague and famine; those in the country will die by the sword, and those in the city will be devoured by famine and plague. *All who survive and escape* will be in the mountains . . . (Ezek. 7.15-16)<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>83</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 494.

<sup>84</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 494; similarly Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 409-410.

<sup>85</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 494.

<sup>86</sup> Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 287, rightly remark that to dismiss v. 7 as redundant “places too much rigidity on the oracular form.” See too J. Applegate, ‘The Fate of Zedekiah. Redactional Debate in the Book of Jeremiah. Part 1’, *VT* 48 (1998) 147-149 for criticisms of McKane’s “rather rationalistic” (147) reading of 21.1-10.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. H.M. Barstad, *The Myth of the Empty Land. A Study in the History and Archaeology of Judah during the ‘Exilic’ Period* (SOF Sup. 28; Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1996) 31, on the repeated references to the deportation of ‘all the people’ in 2 Kgs. 24: “We might wonder: who are all these people who seem to surface all the time, when, allegedly, there is no one left in the country? The answer to this question is simple enough. When the ancient writer says “all the people” he does not mean “all the people,” but a large number. And when he refers to a large number, this may simply be because he wants to make a point with regard to the importance of what had happened.”

<sup>88</sup> Both translations from *NIV*; italics mine.

Perhaps, then, the assumption of hyperbole can also resolve the tension between vv. 4-7 and vv. 8-10; what is meant by the former is that great numbers will die during the siege (through disease and hunger) and afterwards (at the hand of the Babylonians), rather than the death of every single individual. Yet whilst there may indeed be an element of exaggeration in vv. 4-7, it is important to observe that the potential survivors in vv. 8-10 are not people who somehow *live through* the coming disaster (as in the Amos and Ezekiel passages above); rather, they are people who *leave* the city before the disaster falls.

We suggest, however, that the key to the coherence of 21.1-10 lies in understanding the basic principle underlying it. This is stated clearly in v. 10: ‘For (כי) I have set my face against this city for evil and not for good’. That is to say, YHWH’s wrath is fundamentally against *Jerusalem*, rather than any particular group or individual. Accordingly, the fate of the people turns on their relationship to the city, a point highlighted by the term יֹשְׁבֵי הָעִיר. It is יֹשְׁבֵי הָעִיר whom YHWH will strike down (v. 6), and it is הַיֹּשֵׁב בְּעִיר who will die by the sword, famine, and plague (v. 9). יֹשֵׁב thus seems to denote affinity, or even commitment, to Jerusalem,<sup>89</sup> a stance which both vv. 4-7 and 8-10 dismiss as futile. What vv. 8-9 offer ‘this people’ (הָעָם הַזֶּה, v. 8), however, is the chance to redefine their relationship to the doomed city by ‘going out’ (יֵצֵא, v. 9) from it, and so to live. In more concrete terms, this suggests that ‘the way of life’ is only a temporary option (note the brief pause implied by הֲנִי מֵסֹב, v. 4),<sup>90</sup> and that once YHWH has begun to ‘fight against’ Jerusalem, it will be too late.<sup>91</sup>

If this is the underlying rationale of the passage, one might ask whether even Zedekiah’s fate is utterly inevitable. The judgement oracle of vv. 4-7, unqualified though it is, must be understood in relation to its purpose. The situation presupposed is that of Judean resistance to the Babylonians (cf. ‘the weapons of war with which you are fighting’, v. 4) and at the same time hope for YHWH’s assistance (v. 2). Jeremiah’s reply is intended to destroy both strategies: So far from fighting for the city, YHWH is fighting against them (v. 5); consequently, military resistance and prophetic intercession are futile. The idea that Zedekiah might live if he too ‘goes

---

<sup>89</sup> This emerges more clearly if יֹשֵׁב is understood to mean, ‘remain, stay, continue’ (cf. Gen. 24.55; Lev. 12.4; 1 Sam. 7.2; Mic. 5.3, etc.); this is implied in v. 9 by the contrast with יֵצֵא.

<sup>90</sup> On הֲנִי + participle to signify “the event as imminent, or at least near at hand”, see *GKC* §116p.

<sup>91</sup> For the motif of coming out (יֵצֵא) from the doomed city, see Josh. 6.23; Jer. 50.8; 51.6-10; Isa. 52.11.



out' to the Babylonians (see 38.17) is not so much precluded as ignored, since it lies beyond the intention of the oracle.<sup>92</sup>

## 2.5. Differentiation in 21.1-10: הישבים / היצאים

Our study of 21.1-10 has revealed that, whilst the different audience markers in vv. 3 and 8 initially imply that the key distinction is between the royal court and the ordinary people, a closer analysis of both messages (vv. 4-7 and 9-10) reveals that in terms of judgement and hope, the fundamental distinction is between the 'inhabitants' and 'non-inhabitants' of Jerusalem; those who stay, and those who go out. Whilst the city is doomed, there is still the opportunity for its people to surrender (to 'disaffiliate' from it, so to speak) and thereby live.

In the light of our discussion, we can now consider the arguments of Pohlmann and Seitz regarding this passage. Unlike Seitz (and McKane), Pohlmann accepts that the entire pericope derives from a single author, pointing to its pervasive 'holy war' imagery: "Daß der ganze Abschnitt die einheitliche Komposition eines Verfassers ist, belegen die zahlreichen und durchgehend verwendeten formelhaften Wendungen aus dem Vorstellungsbereich eines Jahwekrieges oder Bannvollzuges und die konsequente Umkehrung dieser Aussagen gegen Jerusalem."<sup>93</sup> Since the predominant message is clearly one of judgement on Jerusalem, Pohlmann allocates the pericope to his 'golaorientierte Redaktion' (GR; see our discussion of this in chapter 1).

It is at just this point, however, that Pohlmann's argument runs into trouble, since as we have seen, vv. 8-10 do hold out a *limited* hope to people who had not been deported with Jehoiachin. These verses would in fact seem to have more in common with the older redactional layer which Pohlmann identifies, which allowed for the people's continued existence if they surrendered to the Babylonians. Pohlmann seeks to counter this by minimising the scope of the offer in vv. 9-10; the author, he argues, has deliberately used indirect language in v. 9 (היצאים . . .

---

<sup>92</sup> Oracles of doom did not *necessarily* preclude repentance and hope. See W. Houston, 'What did the Prophets Think They Were Doing? Speech Acts and Prophetic Discourse in the Old Testament', *Biblical Interpretation* 1, 2 (1993) 167-188, who emphasises the ambiguity of many of the responses to such pronouncements (e.g., mourning, prayer and fasting): "On the one hand . . . the hearers react to the word of doom in the same way as to a death; on the other, they do not assume that their doom is inexorable, but that there is a possibility of mercy." (183).

<sup>93</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 39.

היִשָּׁב), partly to avoid having Jeremiah address *all* the people,<sup>94</sup> and partly to imply that only a few would escape the destruction.<sup>95</sup> But this will not do; v. 8 clearly indicates that Jeremiah's announcement was public (וְאֵל הָעָם הַזֶּה תֹּאמַר), while v. 9 leaves open the question of how many would 'go out' and so live; the terms הַיִּצֵּא . . . הַיִּשָּׁב express precisely this uncertainty.

Seitz, on the other hand, is fully aware of the significant shift that occurs after v. 7. Consequently, as we have seen, he attributes vv. 1-7 to SC and vv. 8-10 to ER. Such a conclusion is, however, questionable at two points. Firstly, whether vv. 8-10 refer to life in the land or in exile, it is far from clear how vv. 1-7 'foreclose' on the possibility of survival, as he claims. Rather, vv. 8-10 assume precisely the destruction of the city that is prophesied in vv. 1-7 and offer the only way of escape. Had it been the editor's intention to blunt the force of vv. 8-10, the most obvious solution would have been to omit them altogether.<sup>96</sup>

Secondly, Seitz understands Jeremiah's message in 21.9-10 as akin to his 'submit and live' preaching as found in 27.12-18 and 42.10-12 (both SC).<sup>97</sup> In so doing, however, he blurs some important differences between these three passages. Whereas in 27.11 and 42.10-12 the promise for those who submit to the Babylonians is, specifically, life *in the land*, the offer in 21.9 is ambiguous on this point; deportation is now at least a real danger. Then again, in contrast to the hopeful tone of 27.17, 'Why should this city become a ruin?', 21.9-10 accepts Jerusalem's destruction as utterly inevitable. In other words, we can characterise the message of these three passages as 'submit and live' only if we recognise that they define these terms quite differently. That being so, 21.8-10 turns out not to be in such tension with 21.1-7 as Seitz

---

<sup>94</sup> "Die Formulierung . . . היִשָּׁב (vgl. Jer. 38.2) scheint bewußt gewählt, um die direkte Anrede des ganzen Volkes zu vermeiden" (Pohlmann, *Studien*, 38). His explanation – "weil sonst eine Spannung zu den vorausgegangenen allgemeinen und uneingeschränkten Unheilsankündigungen entstanden wäre" (*Studien*, 38; see too n.113) – shows that he is uncomfortably aware of the tension between vv. 4-7 and 8-10.

<sup>95</sup> "Nur wenige werden der umfassenden Vernichtung entgehen" (Pohlmann, *Studien*, 38).

<sup>96</sup> Seitz makes precisely this point in criticising Pohlmann's methodology: "If such priority is given to the freedom of secondary redactors, one begins to wonder why seams, narrative tensions, and the like are obvious in the present form of the text at all. Put bluntly, if the *Vorlage* was such a torso, and at such odds with the redactional position secondarily supplied, why did secondary redactors not drop it altogether?" (*Theology in Conflict*, 240).

<sup>97</sup> "In the post-597 years in Judah . . . Jeremiah consistently counsels those who remain in the land to go out and submit to Nebuchadnezzar" (Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 206).

assumes.<sup>98</sup> In short, the conditional offer of life held out to the people of Jerusalem in 21.8-10 is more sincere than Pohlmann admits, but less optimistic than Seitz imagines.

This brings us to one final remark in connection with 21.1-10. As we have seen, the offer of ‘life as booty’ for those who leave the city is limited and undefined. In particular, it is unclear whether it will involve deportation or not.<sup>99</sup> If one assumes the authenticity of this declaration, the most likely explanation is that Jeremiah himself did not know what the outcome of surrender to the Babylonians would be.

### 3. Jer. 23.1-8

#### 3.1. Text

ὡ οἱ ποιμενες οἱ ἀπολλυοντες και διασκορπιζοντες τα προβατα της νομης αὐτων	(1) הוי רעים מאבדים ומפצים את צאן מרעיתי נאם יהוה
δια τουτο ταδε λεγει κυριος ἐπι τους ποιμαινοντας τον λαον μου υμεις διεσκορπισατε τα προβατα μου και ἐξωσατε αὐτα και οὐκ ἐπεσκεψασθε αὐτα ἴδου ἐγω ἐκδικω ἐφ’ ὑμας κατα τα πονηρα ἐπιτηδευματα ὑμων	(2) לכן כה אמר יהוה אלהי ישראל על הרעים הרעים את עמי אתם הפצתם את צאני ותרחום ולא פקדתם אתם הנני פקד עליכם את רע מעלליכם נאם יהוה
και ἐγω εἰσδεξομαι τους καταλοιπους του λαου μου ἀπο πασης της γης οὐ ἐξωσα αὐτους ἐκει και καταστησω αὐτους εἰς την νομην αὐτων και ἀύξηθησονται και πληθυνθησονται	(3) ואני אקבץ את שארית צאני מכל הארצות אשר הדחתני אתם שם והשבתי אתהן על נוהן ופרו ורבו
και ἀναστησω αὐτοις ποιμενας οἱ ποιμανουσιν αὐτους και οὐ φοβηθησονται ἐτι οὐδε πτοηθησονται λεγει κυριος	(4) והקמתי עליהם רעים ורעום ולא ייראו עוד ולא יחתו ולא יפקדו נאם יהוה
ἴδου ἡμεραι ἐρχονται λεγει κυριος και ἀναστησω τῷ Δαυιδ ἀνατολην δικαίαν	(5) הנה ימים באים נאם יהוה והקמתי לדוד צמח צדיק ומלך מלך והשכיל ועשה משפט וצדקה בארץ

<sup>98</sup> To be sure, 21.8-10 can be understood as a *re-application* of earlier principles to address a changed historical situation. In fact, the notion that Jeremiah’s outlook was not static is central to Seitz’s argument that the prophet’s message changed significantly after the deportation of Jehoiachin in 597; see especially *Theology in Conflict*, 207.

<sup>99</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 206. n.1, cautiously remarks that “it does not sound as though such action necessitates deportation.”

και βασιλευσει βασιλευς και συνησει και ποιησει κριμα και δικαιοσυνην ἐπι της γης	
ἐν ταις ἡμεραις αὐτου σωθησεται Ιουδας και Ισραηλ κατασκηνωσει πεποιθως και τουτο το ὄνομα ὃ καλεσει αὐτον κυριος <u>Ιωσηδεκ</u>	(6) בימיו תושע יהודה וישראל ישכן לבשת וזה שמו אשר יקראו יהוה צדקנו
δια τουτο ἴδου ἡμεραι ἐρχονται λεγει κυριος και οὐκ ἐρουσιν ἐτι ζη κυριος ὅς ἀνηγαγε τον οἶκον Ισραηλ ἐκ γης Αιγυπτου	(7) לכן הנה ימים באים נאם יהוה ולא יאמרו עוד חי יהוה אשר העלה את בני ישראל מארץ מצרים
ἀλλα ζη κυριος ὅς συνηγαγεν ἅπαν το σπερμα Ισραηλ ἀπο γης βορρα και ἀπο πασων των χωρων οὐ ἐξωσεν αὐτους ἐκει και ἀπεκατεστησεν αὐτους εἰς την γην αὐτων	(8) כי אם חי יהוה אשר העלה ואשר הביא את זרע בית ישראל מארץ צפונה ומכל הארצות אשר הדחתים שם וישבו על אדמתם

### 3.2. Textual Notes

v. 1. MT מרעיתי, ‘my pasture’; OG της νομης αὐτων = מרעיתם, ‘their pasture’.<sup>100</sup> Both readings make good sense contextually: MT provides the rationale for YHWH’s action in vv. 2-3, while OG highlights the shepherds’ abdication of responsibility. Consequently, it is hard to know which is the more original, though ‘the sheep of YHWH’s pasture’ is an established idiom in the Psalms (74.1; 79.13; 100.3; cf. Ezek. 34.1-16).<sup>101</sup>

v. 2. MT על הרעים הרעים; OG ἐπι τους ποιμαινωντας: OG may be paraphrasing the Hebrew idiom for stylistic reasons,<sup>102</sup> though Janzen considers OG / *Vorlage* haplography more likely;<sup>103</sup> in v. 25, OG renders הנבאים הנבאים with οἱ προφηται οἱ προφητευσιν.

v. 3. MT צאני; OG του λαου μου may be paraphrasing, or reflecting a variant עמי.

MT הארצות; OG της γης: Possibly OG reflects הארץ, but it is unlikely that this would refer to a specific land (i.e., Babylon). In 50[27].23; 51[28].25, 41, 49, παση ἡ γη renders כל הארץ, but in context both clearly mean ‘the whole earth’. Similarly, in 27.6[34.5], OG την γην

<sup>100</sup> Following (with Ziegler) LXX<sup>B,S</sup>; LXX<sup>A</sup> (followed by Rahlfs) reads της νομης μου.

<sup>101</sup> Preferring OG are Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 124; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 554. Duhm, *Jeremia*, 181, and Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 613, are undecided.

<sup>102</sup> Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 614; accepted as possible by McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 554.

<sup>103</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 117.

might reflect אֶת הָאָרֶץ<sup>104</sup> (cf. MT כָּל הָאֲרָצוֹת הָאֵלֶּה), but v. 4 shows that γη has international scope. In any case, it is doubtful whether the *Vorlage* here read differently to MT.<sup>105</sup> Decisive in this respect are the terms נָדָח and קִבְּץ, which in Jer. always imply a universal *Diaspora* and are collocated with the plurals אֲרָצוֹת, גּוֹיִם and מְקוֹמוֹת (16.15; 23.8; 29.14; 32.37; cf. 40.11-12).

v. 4. MT ולא יפקרו >OG. For the meaning ‘be lacking’ for פָּקַד Niph., see Num. 31.49; 1 Sam. 20.18; 25.7; 1 Kgs. 20.39; 2 Kgs. 10.19. After יהתו and ייראו, therefore, ופקרו introduces a somewhat new idea, which may suggest it was lacking from the *Vorlage*. Equally, however, it may have been sufficiently unclear for the translator to have omitted it.<sup>106</sup> Once again (cf. 21.1-10), MT shows a preference for a trilogy of terms while OG contains only two.

v. 5. MT צָמַח, ‘a shoot’; OG ἀνατολη, ‘a rising’: This rendition of צָמַח, which is standard in the OT (Ezek. 16.7; 17.10; Zech. 3.8; 6.12; cf. Gen.19.25; Isa. 61.11) is sometimes thought to involve a change of imagery to that of sunrise;<sup>107</sup> however, ἀνατολη can also carry a botanical sense in classical Greek.<sup>108</sup>

v. 6. LXX<sup>B,A</sup> Ἰσραηλ; LXX<sup>S</sup> Ἱερουσαλημ.

MT יקראו (‘he will call him’) probably combines יקראו and יקראו.<sup>109</sup> OG καλεσει αὐτον also reads the term as third person singular (cf. Targ., Vulg., which presuppose יקראו). MT leaves the subject of the verb ambiguous; either ‘one’ (i.e., people in general) or YHWH himself. The latter is explicit in OG, if καλεσει αὐτον κυριος Ἰωσηδεκ means ‘the Lord will

<sup>104</sup> So Janzen, *Studies*, 66; McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 687. In 40[47].11, OG ἐν παση τη γη (MT בכל הארצות) may reflect אֶת הָאָרֶץ, in which case אֶת הָאָרֶץ may mean ‘the land of Judah’ (in contrast to the foreign lands also mentioned).

<sup>105</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 124; McKane, *Jeremiah* 1, 558.

<sup>106</sup> So Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 126; MT is also preferred by Bright, *Jeremiah*, 143, and Holladay, *Jeremiah* 1, 613. Duhm, *Jeremia*, 181 emends to יפחדו, ‘terrified’. McKane, *Jeremiah* 1, 557, is undecided.

<sup>107</sup> So M.G. Abegg, jr., s.v. צָמַח, *NIDOTTE* 4, 816; E.M. Embry, s.v., ‘Tree, Plant, Root, Branch’, *NIDNTT* 3, 867.

<sup>108</sup> E.g., ἀγρος ἀνατολας και βλαστας ἐχει (*Ph.* 1.68). See further I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke. A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Exeter: Paternoster, 1978) 95, who notes the same double meaning in the Aramaic verb (צָמַח) and the Syriac noun.

<sup>109</sup> For this “doubly odd” form, see *GKC* §60c, 74e; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 124.

call him, “Josedek”<sup>110</sup> (thereby duplicating the divine name), but κυριος may also be a doublet of Ιωσεδεκ.<sup>111</sup>

MT צדקנו (cf. Vulg., *iustus noster*); OG Ιωσεδεκ: The Greek text probably reflects a variant reading in the *Vorlage* (יהוצדק or יהוצדק), although צדקנו may just have been sufficiently enigmatic to prompt the translator to make the change.<sup>112</sup>

vv. 7-8. In OG these verses occur at the end of the chapter, after v. 40. This, plus the fact that the translator has mistakenly related לנבאים (v. 9) to יהוה צדקנו (v. 6), clearly points to his having a *Vorlage* in which v. 6 was followed by v. 9.<sup>113</sup>

v. 7. MT בני ישראל; OG τον οικον Ισραηλ = בית ישראל. MT is supported by the corresponding use of בני (reflected by OG σπερμα) in v. 8.<sup>114</sup> On the other hand, OG is here almost certainly following its *Vorlage*. We may be dealing with equally ancient textual variants.<sup>115</sup>

v. 8. MT אשר העלה ו >OG: Probably MT conflation from the parallel passage in 16.15.<sup>116</sup> The conjunction at the start of ואשר הביא makes haplography (repetition of אשר [יהוה] העלה ואשר) unlikely.

MT את זרע בית ישראל; OG άπαν το σπερμα Ισραηλ: MT בית is not reflected in the versions, while OG άπαν is lacking in MT. Holladay posits a simple את זרע ישראל as the original text.<sup>117</sup>

---

<sup>110</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 181; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 446; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 564. Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1* – 25, 330, takes this as the likely meaning of MT as well.

<sup>111</sup> J. Ziegler, *Beiträge zur Ieremias-Septuaginta. Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. 1. Philologisch-Historische Klasse* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1958) 92; Janzen, *Studies*, 32.

<sup>112</sup> Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 619, prefers MT on grounds of it being *lectio difficilior*.

<sup>113</sup> So McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 566.

<sup>114</sup> “It is unlikely where there is such a deliberate juxtaposing of two oaths that the differences of vocabulary between the one and the other are original” (McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 374).

<sup>115</sup> See McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 374.

<sup>116</sup> Bright, *Jeremiah*, 140; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 621. However, McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 375, is undecided as to whether אשר העלה or אשר הביא is the secondary reading.

<sup>117</sup> Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 621.

MT הרהרתם, 'I have driven them'; OG ἐξώσεν αὐτούς = הרהרתם, 'he has driven them'. By maintaining the third person language, OG gives a more consistent reading (which also corresponds to 16.15),<sup>118</sup> but since we are dealing with human speech contained with divine speech, some formal inconsistency is not surprising and need not be secondary.<sup>119</sup>

### 3.3. Exegetical Notes

v. 1. The image of Israel as YHWH's 'flock' (צאן) occurs frequently in the OT (Num. 27.17; 1 Kgs. 22.17; Ps. 95.7; Jer. 31.10), as does the description of her rulers as 'shepherds' (רעים) of the people (Jer. 3.15; Mic. 5.4; cf. 2 Sam. 5.2; 7.7; Ps. 78.71, where David 'shepherds' the nation). However, the use of רעים and צאן together as a metaphor for Israel's leaders and people is confined to the exilic and post-exilic prophetic corpus (Jer. 10.21; 50.6; Ezek. 34.1-10; Isa. 63.11; Zech. 10.2-3). For the most part, such רעים are *political* leaders. That this is the case in these verses is clear from their context, following the oracles against the kings of Judah (who are also described as רעים in 22.22) and preceding the prophecy of a 'rightful king' (vv. 5-6).<sup>120</sup> Nevertheless, the term can also signify *spiritual* leaders. In Isa. 63.11, Moses is the shepherd of Israel, while in Zech. 11.4-9, 15-16, the prophet himself is given this role.<sup>121</sup> It is arguable that in Jer. 2.8, הרעים stands in synonymous parallelism with הנביאים,<sup>122</sup> while in 10.21, the רעים who do not enquire (לא דרשו) of YHWH might also include prophets.<sup>123</sup> Since 23.1-8 is followed by

---

<sup>118</sup> Although in 16.15, Vulg. and some editions of Targ. presuppose הרהרתם.

<sup>119</sup> Pace Bright, *Jeremiah*, 140, who emends MT on the basis of OG.

<sup>120</sup> So Volz, *Jeremia*, 232; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 555; Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 326; Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 205. However, Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 125 and Bright, *Jeremiah*, 143, believe that royal officials generally are in view.

<sup>121</sup> See M. Butterworth, *Structure and the Book of Zechariah* (JSOT Sup. 130; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992) 204-205.

<sup>122</sup> Especially if הכהנים is here synonymous with תפשי התורה; so J.M. Berridge, *Prophet, People and the Word of Yahweh. An Examination of Form and Content in the Proclamation of the Prophet Jeremiah* (BST 4; Zurich: EVZ Verlag, 1970) 140. On the other hand, the terminology may signify four different groups; so Bright, *Jeremiah*, 10; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 168; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 88. Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 12, equates הכהנים with תפשי התורה, but distinguishes between הרעים and הנביאים.

<sup>123</sup> So Holladay, *Jeremiah: Spokesman Out of Time* (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1974) 57; more recently, however, he takes it to mean "civil leaders" (*Jeremiah 1*, 342). Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 335, thinks it may be a secondary meaning.

the extended section לנבאים (23.9-40), the רעים might therefore include the prophets, at least in the 'afterlife' of the text.<sup>124</sup>

מאבדים (אבד, Pi.) is most naturally rendered 'destroying'. Since this disrupts the general emphasis on 'scattering' (פויץ, נדח) in vv. 1-4, some take the term to mean 'lose, cause to go astray';<sup>125</sup> note the antithesis of אבד (Pi.) and בקש (Pi.) in Ecc. 3.6. Conversely, this may weaken an intentionally forceful word; abusive rule by the leaders could explain why YHWH's promise of new shepherds (v. 4) is followed by the statement that his people 'will not be afraid again' (compare the accusation against the shepherds in Ezek. 34.3, בחזקה רדיתם אתם, 'you have ruled them with violence'). But in what sense are the leaders 'destroying' the people? One answer would be that by leading them away from YHWH, they have brought the disaster of exile upon the nation (cf. 50.6-7).<sup>126</sup> However, given the emphasis on social injustice in the previous chapter (22.3, 13-17), מאבדים might denote oppressive rule in Israel, and the same could even be true of מפצים, and ותדהום in v. 2.<sup>127</sup> On this view, the idea of exile is not introduced until v. 3, where, however, YHWH is the subject of נדח. Clearly, though, the language of v. 1 is flexible enough to allow both meanings.

v. 2. אתם הפצתם את צאני ותדהום: This emphatic assertion that it is the leaders of Israel who are responsible for the nation's demise is almost unparalleled in Jer. We may compare YHWH's statement in 50.6, צאן אבדות היה עמי רעהם התעום, though the following וצריהם אמרו וצריהם אמרו (v. 7) hints at a more general culpability.<sup>128</sup>

ולא פקדתם אתם הנני פקד עליהם: Most commentators see here an ironic word play, with פקד meaning 'attend to', initially in a positive sense ('care for') and then in a negative sense

---

<sup>124</sup> Cf. J.G. Baldwin, 'Shephar as a Technical Term in the Prophets', *VT* 16 (1964) 94: "The message of ch. 23 suggests that by 'shepherds' the prophet means rulers in general; prophets and priests (v. 11) as well as kings."

<sup>125</sup> A.B. Ehrlich, *Randglossen zur Hebräischen Bibel: textkritisches, sprachliches und sachliches*. 4. *Jesaja, Jeremia* (J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1912) 302; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 125; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 139; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 554.

<sup>126</sup> "The implication here is that neglect leaves the sheep as dead as if they have been deliberately killed." (Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 614); similarly Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 444.

<sup>127</sup> According to Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 125, the three verbs in vv. 1-2 "malen also nur die mangelnde Fürsorge der Hirten . . . und sind nicht auf Gefangenschaft und Zersprengung unter die Völker auszudeuten."

<sup>128</sup> Since these are the words of Israel's enemies, it is hard to know how far they represent the perspective of the author.



(‘punish’).<sup>129</sup> Recently, however, A.G. Auld has argued that both here and in v. 4, פקד should be given the meaning ‘count’, there being a conscious allusion to the story of David’s ‘counting’ the Israelites (2 Sam. 24.1-10).<sup>130</sup> Certainly, the meaning ‘(not) counted’ fits the context well in v. 4 (cf. ופרו ורבו, v. 3), but whether פקד means ‘count’ in v. 2 is unlikely; even if the author doubted that David’s census really amounted to a ‘sin’, it is hard to see why he would have fastened on the kings’ failure to count the people as particularly worthy of censure.<sup>131</sup>

v. 3. והיה כי תרבו ופרייתם, ופרו ורבו (‘they will be fruitful and multiply’) echoes 3.16, והיה כי תרבו ופרייתם, בארץ (the only other occurrence of פרה in Jer.). In both passages, this re-enactment of the creation mandate follows YHWH’s restoration of the people to their land; by contrast, 29.6 (רבו שם ואל תמעטו) commands the exiles to multiply in Babylon.

v. 4. The parallels with the prophecy of 3.14-18 become still clearer in this verse. With the promise והקמתי עליהם רעים ורעים, compare 3.15, והשכיל דעה ואתכם דעה והשכיל. Given the frequency of the ‘shepherd’ motif in Jer., it is striking that only in these two verses does YHWH promise to provide the people with new shepherds. Also common to both passages are the expressions לא . . . עוד and ולא יפקרו (3.16), though the latter is pointed differently. But there are also connections to the thought-world of chs. 30 – 33; the use of לא עוד to describe Israel’s transformation is prominent there too (30.8; 31.12, 29, 34, 40; 33.24), whilst the combination חתת ירא / חתת occurs elsewhere in Jer. only in 30.10 (= 46.27).

vv. 5-6 occur in a very similar form in 33.15-16: the main differences are the use of אצמיח (33.15aα) instead of אצמיח (23.5aα), הגה ימים באים נאם יהוה (33.15aβ) instead of הגה ימים באים נאם יהוה (23.5aβ), והקמתי (33.16aβ) for והקמתי (23.5aβ), וזה אשר יקרא לה, (33.16bα) for וזה אשר יקרא לה, (23.6aβ), and the absence in 33.15-16 of ומלך מלך והשכיל (23.5bα). As a result, the later passage is more focussed on the city of Jerusalem.

<sup>129</sup> So Bright, *Jeremiah*, 143; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 443; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 553; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 487; Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 326.

<sup>130</sup> A.G. Auld, ‘Counting Sheep, Sins and Sour Grapes: The Primacy of the Primary History?’, in A.G. Hunter & P.R. Davies (eds.), *Sense and Sensitivity. Essays on Reading the Bible in Memory of Robert Carroll* (JSOT Sup. 348; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002) 65. Auld claims that “the tradition in Jer. is deliberately encouraging reflection on that mysterious conclusion to the story of the first David.” (66).

<sup>131</sup> Auld points to the prophecy in Jer. 33.13 that in the restored Judah, the sheep will again be ‘counted’, but here מנה rather than פקד is used.

v. 5. צִמַח צְדִיק: Both terms must be considered together. Elsewhere in the OT (e.g., Zech. 3.8; 6.12), צִמַח denotes a messianic figure, and some believe that this is the sense here too.<sup>132</sup> If צְדִיק is then interpreted to mean ‘righteous’ (*JB*, ‘virtuous’),<sup>133</sup> the prophesied king stands in contrast to the unrighteous kings of ch. 22. However, the use of צִמַח צְדִיק in third century BC Phoenician inscriptions to mean ‘rightful scion’ has led scholars to see the same meaning here.<sup>134</sup> According to Holladay, “there is no plausible way in which one can assume that the Phoenician phrase somehow stems from a Hebrew phrase having a specific messianic nuance; one must conclude that Jeremiah is here using a general Northwest Semitic term for the legitimate king.”<sup>135</sup> This, however, is to create a false dichotomy; v. 5b, וְעָשָׂה מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה בְּאֶרֶץ, makes it clear that righteousness is the basis of rightfulness. Moreover, whilst the Phoenician inscriptions shed light on the origin of the expression, they do not exhaust its meaning in its present context. Whether צִמַח is thought to be ‘messianic’ depends partly on how we define the latter term.

v. 6. יְהוּה צְדִיקָנוּ: Most commentators see this as a deliberate word-play on צְדִיקָהוּ.<sup>136</sup> Less clear is its significance. Some see the allusion as positive; according to Clements, “there is no clear indication that it is intended to be an ironic dismissal of Zedekiah.”<sup>137</sup> Others see it as a contrast to the evil king: “das Programm, das im Namen des letzten Königs lag und dem dieser so wenig nachkam, wird unter dem neuen König erfüllt werden.”<sup>138</sup> Some go further and see

---

<sup>132</sup> E.g., Baldwin, ‘*Ṣemaḥ* as a Technical Term’, 93-97; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 143; Abegg, ‘צִמַח’, 816 (“there can be no doubt that צִמַח denotes the Messiah, the branch of David, in Jer. 23.5 and 33.15”).

<sup>133</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 125-126, allows that צְדִיק in v. 5b may be translated ‘echter’ (true) or ‘gerecht’ (righteous), but leans toward the latter.

<sup>134</sup> See J. Swetnam, ‘Some Observations on the Background of צְדִיק in Jeremias 23.5a’, *Biblica* 46 (1965) 38-40, who sets this promise against a background of tension regarding Zedekiah’s instatement as king. Similarly, Bright, *Jeremiah*, 144; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 561; D.J. Reimer, s.v. צְדִיק, *NIDOTTE* 3, 764.

<sup>135</sup> Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 618. In fact, Abegg, צִמַח, 816, concedes that the Phoenician inscriptions provide a parallel to Jer. 23.5.

<sup>136</sup> In addition to those cited below, see Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 491. Exceptions are McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 564, and A. Malamat, ‘Jeremiah and the Last Two Kings of Judah’, *PEQ* 83, 84, who argues that “the change of the name Mattaniah to Zedekiah upon his ascent to the throne was a subsequent result of Jeremiah’s prophecy on King Messiah”.

<sup>137</sup> R.E. Clements, ‘Jeremiah: Prophet of Hope’, in Clements, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 127. Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 446, suggests that this was a poem for Zedekiah’s coronation.

<sup>138</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 136; similarly, Bright, *Jeremiah*, 143; Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 329; cautiously, Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 207.

here an implicit critique of Zedekiah, thus supplying the oracle on his kingship that is otherwise lacking in this section. The oracle may well have undergone a semantic shift during its transition from *Sitz im Leben* to *Sitz im Buch*.

v. 8. Whether *בית ישראל* denotes the people of the former northern kingdom,<sup>139</sup> or Judeans exiled in the sixth century,<sup>140</sup> is uncertain, since the phrase ‘the land of the north’ (*ארץ צפונה*) might be either Assyria or Babylon. Either way, the subsequent *מכל הארצות אשר הדרחתם שם* (cf. v. 3) universalises the promise.

### 3.4. Coherence & Redaction

Although we have identified 23.1-8 as a literary unit, it comprises three clearly distinct oracles; vv. 1-4, 5-6 and 7-8. Formally, these are demarcated by their respective introductions; the first by the ‘Woe!’ formula (cf. 22.13), and the second and the third by the declaration ‘Behold, the days are coming’, otherwise restricted to the Book of Consolation (30.3; 31.27, 38; 33.14).<sup>141</sup> Each oracle, moreover, has its own dominant imagery; i.e., ‘shepherd / flock’ (vv. 1-4), ‘the righteous king’ (vv. 5-6), and ‘new exodus’ (vv. 7-8; note the twofold use of *העלה*). The fact that the second and third oracles occur almost verbatim in other contexts (vv. 5-6 = 33.15-16; vv. 7-8 = 16.14-15) also demonstrates their original independence; this is underlined in respect to vv. 7-8 by its different placement in MT and OG.<sup>142</sup>

In addition, several scholars have questioned the original integrity of vv. 1-4. Rudolph saw v. 3 as a post-exilic gloss because (unlike vv. 1-2, 4) it explicitly assumes a worldwide *Diaspora*.<sup>143</sup> McKane, however, argues that we should detach vv. 1-2 from vv. 3-4: “There are two separate worlds of ideas: on the one hand the community disintegrated because its leaders were negligent, and, on the other, the community exiled by Yahweh as a judgement for its

---

<sup>139</sup> So Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 491.

<sup>140</sup> So McKane, *Jeremiah I*, 565.

<sup>141</sup> Note too the shift to poetic parallelism in the middle of the second oracle (vv. 5b; 6a).

<sup>142</sup> So Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 491; McKane, *Jeremiah I*, 566-567.

<sup>143</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 125. A similar conclusion is reached by J. Lust, “Gathering and Return” in *Jeremiah and Ezekiel*, in Bogaert, *Le Livre de Jérémie*, 134-135, partly because v. 3 states that YHWH (rather than the shepherds) scattered the sheep, and partly because the language of multiplying “betrays a redaction influenced by a priestly style, unusual for Jeremiah” (135).

sins.”<sup>144</sup> Certainly there is a progression of thought from v. 2 to v. 3, but it is hard to see why the same person should not be author of both.

Whatever their literary history, these oracles have been intelligently combined. Despite the unifying ‘shepherd / flock’ imagery, vv. 1-4 actually contain two separate promises for YHWH’s people; that of restoration to their homeland (v. 3), and of new shepherds for their protection (v. 4). The function of the second and third oracles is to develop each of these promises. Thus, vv. 5-6 interpret the promise of new shepherds by prophesying a particular king who will reign for the benefit of Judah and Israel; note the use of **הקמתי** as the connecting word (vv. 4, 5). Then, vv. 6-7 take up the promise of homecoming by anticipating a return that will replace the exodus as the definitive act of YHWH’s salvation; note how v. 8 repeats **מכל הארצות** **אשר הרהחתי** from v. 3.

### 3.5. Differentiation in 23.1-8: **הרעים / הצאן**

Within 23.1-8, the crucial section for our purposes is the opening oracle in vv. 1-4. Here, the metaphor of ‘shepherds’ (**רעים**) and ‘flock’ (**צאן**) creates a sharp inner-Judean distinction upon which the following judgement and salvation oracles are based. The ‘shepherds’ are singled out for criticism. Instead of tending and overseeing (**רעה** and **פקד**) the flock, they have destroyed (**אכד**, v. 1) and scattered them (**פויץ**, vv. 1, 2; **נרח** Hiph v. 2). Consequently, YHWH will repay them in kind: **הנני פקד עליכם את רע מעלליכם** (v. 2; cf. 21.14). By contrast, in vv. 3-4 he promises to intervene on the flock’s behalf, restoring them **מכל הארצות אשר הרהחתי אתם** to security in their own land, and raising up (**הקמתי**) new shepherds to care for them. Equally striking is the affirmation of YHWH’s relationship with the people; they are ‘my people’ (**עמי**, v. 2), ‘my flock’ (**צאני**, v. 2), ‘the flock of my pasture’ (**מרעייתי**, v. 1). At the same time, the language throughout is historically and geographically non-specific; as we have seen, in vv. 5-8 even the Judah / Israel distinction is obliterated.

Within this oracle, judgement and salvation are closely linked to the question of culpability. In this respect, the adoption of ‘shepherds and sheep’ as the controlling metaphor is crucial. For by viewing the kings as ‘shepherds’, the text automatically presents them as morally responsible agents, deserving of YHWH’s punishment (**פקד**); scattering sheep is as reprehensible

---

<sup>144</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 557; similarly, Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 445.

for a shepherd as it is for a king. What the metaphor does not permit is for blame to be attached to the people, because the people are simply ‘sheep’; indeed, throughout vv. 1-4 the flock remain entirely passive. In other words, framing the issue in terms of shepherds and sheep inevitably places the moral burden on the shepherds.

Naturally, the metaphor has its limits, and should not be seen as implying that ‘the people’ are guiltless. On the contrary, the wording of YHWH’s pledge in vv. 3 and 8 to gather them ‘from all the places where *I* scattered them’ (אשר הרחתי אתם), with its overtones of his personal wrath, hints at the opposite. We can say, however, that Jer. 23.1-8 attaches greater culpability to the Israel’s leaders. Not only does this explain why the promise of restoration is limited to the people, it also accounts for the content of vv. 5-6. What YHWH promises here is not (as in ch. 24) the gift of a new heart and a new relationship; the terms עמי and צאני (v. 2) suggest this relationship is already established. Instead, since the chief problem has been their former leaders, what they are promised is a *new* leader, who will rule wisely and in righteousness.

This distinction between ‘leaders’ and ‘people’ in a combined judgement and salvation oracle is unique within Jer. It is important to bear this in mind, since 23.1-8 is sometimes bracketed along with other promises of return for the *Diaspora*, such as 16.14-15, 29.14 and 32.37.<sup>145</sup> Crucially, though, none of these other promises distinguish between different Judean or Israelite groups; *all*, without exception, will be saved. As we have seen, the closest parallel to 23.1-8 is in 3.14-18; there, however, while YHWH promises to provide the people with new shepherds כלבי (v. 14), there is no message of blame or judgement on their former shepherds. Indeed, 3.14-18 explicitly refers to the nation as a whole as בנים שובבים (v. 14), and contains the pointed prophecy, ולא ילכו עוד אחרי שררות לבם הרע (v. 17). For a genuine parallel to the shepherd and flock polarity in Jer. 23.1-8, we have to look to Ezek. 34.

---

<sup>145</sup> See for example Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 269-274.

#### 4. Jer. 24.1-10

##### 4.1. Text

<p>ἔδειξε μοι κύριος δύο καλάθους συκῶν κειμένους κατὰ πρόσωπον ναοῦ κυρίου μετὰ τὸ ἀποικισαί Ναβουχοδονοσορ βασιλεῖα Βαβυλῶνος τὸν Ἰεχονίαν υἱὸν Ἰωακίμ βασιλῆα Ἰουδα καὶ τοὺς ἄρχοντας καὶ τοὺς τεχνίτας καὶ τοὺς δεσμώτας καὶ τοὺς πλουσίους ἐξ Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ ἠγάγεον αὐτοὺς εἰς Βαβυλῶνα</p>	<p>(1) הראני יהוה והנה שני דודאי תאנים מועדים לפני היכל יהוה אחרי הגלות נבוכדראצר מלך בבל את יכניהו בן יהויקים מלך יהודה ואת שרי יהודה ואת החרש ואת המסגר מירושלם ויבאם בכל</p>
<p>ὁ καλάθος ὁ εἰς συκῶν χρηστῶν σφόδρα ὡς τὰ συκά τὰ προίμα καὶ ὁ καλάθος ὁ ἕτερος συκῶν πονηρῶν σφόδρα ἅ οὐ βρωθήσεται ἀπὸ πονηρίας αὐτῶν</p>	<p>(2) הרודר אחד תאנים שבות מאד כתאני הבכרות והרודר אחד תאנים רעות מאד אשר לא תאכלנה מרע</p>
<p>καὶ εἶπε κύριος πρὸς με τί σύ ὄρας Ἱερεμῖα καὶ εἶπα συκά τὰ χρηστὰ χρηστὰ λίαν καὶ τὰ πονηρὰ πονηρὰ λίαν ἅ οὐ βρωθήσεται ἀπὸ πονηρίας αὐτῶν</p>	<p>(3) ויאמר יהוה אלי מה אתה ראה ירמיהו ואמר תאנים התאנים הטבות שבות מאד והרעות רעות מאד אשר לא תאכלנה מרע</p>
<p>καὶ ἐγένετο λόγος κυρίου πρὸς με λεγῶν</p>	<p>(4) ויהי דבר יהוה אלי לאמר</p>
<p>ταδε λεγει κύριος ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραηλ ὡς τὰ συκά τὰ χρηστὰ ταῦτα οὕτως ἐπιγνώσομαι τοὺς ἀποικισθέντας Ἰουδα οὓς ἐξαπεσταλκά ἐκ τοῦ τοποῦ τούτου εἰς γῆν Χαλδαιῶν εἰς ἀγαθὰ</p>	<p>(5) כה אמר יהוה אלהי ישראל כתאנים הטבות האלה כן אכיר את גלות יהודה אשר שלחתי מן המקום הזה ארץ כשדים לטובה</p>
<p>καὶ στηρίω τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς μου ἐπ' αὐτοὺς εἰς ἀγαθὰ καὶ ἀποκαταστήσω αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν γῆν ταυτην καὶ ἀνοικοδομήσω αὐτοὺς καὶ οὐ μὴ καθέλω καὶ καταφυτεύσω αὐτοὺς καὶ οὐ μὴ ἐκτιλῶ</p>	<p>(6) ושמתני עיני עליהם לטובה והשבתיים על הארץ הזאת ובניתים ולא אהרס ונטעתים ולא אתוש</p>
<p>καὶ δώσω αὐτοῖς καρδίαν τοῦ εἶδεναι αὐτοὺς ἔμε ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος καὶ ἔσονται μοι εἰς λαόν καὶ ἐγὼ ἔσομαι αὐτοῖς εἰς θεόν ὅτι ἐπιστραφήσονται ἐπ' ἔμε ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν</p>	<p>(7) ונתתי להם לב לדעת אתי כי אני יהוה והיו לי לעם ואנכי אהיה להם לאלהים כי ישבו אלי בכל לבם</p>
<p>καὶ ὡς τὰ συκά τὰ πονηρὰ ἅ οὐ βρωθήσεται ἀπὸ πονηρίας αὐτῶν ταδε λεγει κύριος οὕτως παραδώσω τὸν Σεδεκίαν βασιλεῖα Ἰουδα καὶ τοὺς μεγιστάνας αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ καταλοιποῦν</p>	<p>(8) וכתאנים הרעות אשר לא תאכלנה מרע כי כה אמר יהוה כן אתן את צדקיהו מלך יהודה ואת שריו ואת שארית ירושלם הנשארים בארץ הזאת והישבים בארץ מצרים</p>

Ιερουσαλημ τους ὑπολειμμενους ἐν τη γη ταυτη και τους κατοικουντας ἐν Αἴγυπτω	
και δωσω αὐτους εἰς διασκορπισμον εἰς πασας τας βασιλειας της γης και εἰς ὄνειδισμον και εἰς παραβολην και εἰς μισος και εἰς καταραν ἐν παντι τοπω οὐ ἐξωσα αὐτους ἐκει	(9) ונתתים לזועה לרעה לכל ממלכות הארץ לחרפה ולמשל לשנינה ולקללה בכל המקומות אשר אדיחם שם
και ἀποστελω εἰς αὐτους τον λιμον και τον θανατον και την μαχαιραν ἕως ἄν ἐκλιπωσιν ἀπο της γης ἧς ἔδωκα αὐτοις	(10) ושלחתי בם את החרב את הרעב ואת הדבר עד תמם מעל האדמה אשר נתתי להם ולאבותיהם

## 4.2. Textual Notes

v. 1. והנה >OG (making καλαθους the object of ἐδειξε). OG may reflect a shorter Vorlage (cf. Jer. 38[45].22; Am. 7.1, 4, 5; 8.1, where it renders והנה with και ἰδου) but may also be haplographic, due to the juxtaposition of יהוה והנה.<sup>146</sup>

דודא:<sup>147</sup> Though often translated ‘baskets’ (so OG, καλαθος; Targ., סל), the normal function of a דוד was cooking (1 Sam. 2.14; 2 Chron. 35.13; Job. 41.12), so that ‘urns’ may be a better translation.<sup>148</sup>

מועדים: MT points as מועדים, Hoph. ptc. pl. יעד. Elsewhere in the OT, יעד Hoph. occurs only in Ezek. 21.21, where it means ‘appointed or ‘directed’.<sup>149</sup> Neither sense seems appropriate here. The commentaries usually read ‘placed, set’,<sup>150</sup> whether יעד Hoph. can bear this meaning

<sup>146</sup> So Janzen, *Studies*, 117, 119.

<sup>147</sup> See *GKC* §93x for this spelling.

<sup>148</sup> Cf. *3QTr.* 4.8, שני דודין מלאין כסף, ‘there are two pots of silver there’ (*DJD* 3, 288).

<sup>149</sup> Ezek. 21.21 is itself obscure. K.W. Carley, *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel* (CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974) 140, translates מעדות as ‘aimed’; J.W. Wevers, *Ezekiel* (NCB; London: Nelson, 1969) 166, as ‘directed’; M. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21 – 37. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 22a; New York: Doubleday, 1997) 426, as ‘assigned’.

<sup>150</sup> E.g., Bright, *Jeremiah*, 193; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 657; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 506 n.1; Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 356; S. Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition* (HSM 30; Chico: Scholars Press, 1980) 55. Niditch believes the same translation can be adopted in Ezek. 21.21.

is questionable,<sup>151</sup> but it can also be obtained by emending to מְעַמְדִים (Hoph. ptc. עַמַּד),<sup>152</sup> or to מוֹרְעִים, Hoph. ptc. of a proposed יָרַע, ‘place, deposit’.<sup>153</sup> The latter is the simpler, though we lack OT evidence for יָרַע = ‘place’. ‘Placed’ is clearly understood by Targ., מַחְתִּין, and Vulg., *positi*, though whether they assumed מוֹרְעִים, מוֹעַדִים or מוֹרְעִים is uncertain. On the other hand, OG κειμενους (literally, ‘laid out’) can mean both ‘placed, deposited’<sup>154</sup> (including objects placed in a temple),<sup>155</sup> and ‘appointed, ordained’.<sup>156</sup> Emendation to עוֹמְדִים (Qal. ptc. עַמַּד), ‘standing’<sup>157</sup> posits the transposition of non-adjacent characters, and scribal confusion over an extremely common word. The options seem to be either to retain MT and read ‘appointed’, despite the interpretative difficulties; or to emend and translate as ‘placed’. Either could claim possible support from OG.

MT שְׂרֵי יְהוּדָה; OG τους ἀρχοντας, probably reflecting אֵת שְׂרֵים.

OG τους πλουσιους >MT: That this is not OG conflation is indicated by the presence of four-fold lists in 2 Kgs. 24.14, 15, 16; Bar. 1.9.<sup>158</sup> The *Vorlage* may have read הַעֲשִׂירִים or אֲנָשִׁי / גְבוּרֵי הַחֵיל.<sup>159</sup>

<sup>151</sup> *BDB*, s.v. יָרַע, translates it here as ‘set, placed before’, while *DCH 4*, s.v. יָרַע, lists ‘placed’ as among possible meanings. This is rejected by Giesebrecht, *Jeremiah*, 133, and D. Winton Thomas, ‘A Note on מוֹעַדִים in Jeremiah 24.1’, *JTS* 3 (1952) 55. *HALAT 2*, s.v. יָרַע, gives the sole meaning of יָרַע Hoph. as ‘ordered’.

<sup>152</sup> Duhm, *Jeremiah*, 197; Volz, *Jeremiah*, 247; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 21 n.8.

<sup>153</sup> So Winton Thomas, ‘Note on מוֹעַדִים’, 55, postulating an Arabic root, *wd*’; see further D. Winton Thomas, ‘The Root יָרַע in Hebrew’, *JTS* 35 (1934) 298-306. This proposal is accepted by McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 606; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 506 n.1, finds it plausible.

<sup>154</sup> E.g., Sir. 22.18, χαρακες ἐπι μετεωρου κειμενοι; 2 Esd. 6.1, ἐν ταῖς βιβλιοθηκαῖς, ὅπου ἡ γὰζα κειται ἐν βαβυλωνι. According to McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 606, “it is unlikely that the Greek translator read a Hebrew text different from MT. Rather it was assumed . . . that מוֹעַדִים, derived from יָרַע, could bear the sense ‘placed’.”

<sup>155</sup> See *Hdt.*, 1.51, 52.

<sup>156</sup> Cf. *Memorabilia*, 4.4.21: οἱ παραβαινοντες τους ὑπο των Θεων κειμενους νομους. See further *L & S I*, s.v. κειμαι. In LXX Josh. 4.6, εἰς σημειον κειμενον δια παντος may mean ‘as an appointed sign forever’ (so Lust, *Lexicon*, s.v. κειμαι) or ‘a sign remaining forever.’

<sup>157</sup> So Giesebrecht, *Jeremiah*, 133; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 134; *HALAT 2*, s.v. יָרַע;

<sup>158</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 32.

<sup>159</sup> Niditch, *Symbolic Vision*, 57; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, xxvi. McKane notes, however, that in 2 Kgs. 24.14 and 16 these phrases are rendered τους δυνατους ἰσχυι and τους ἀνδρας της δυναμεως respectively.



המסגר resists translation,<sup>160</sup> though most agree that the root is סגר, 'to close' (cf. Vulg., *inclusorem*). Its association with חרש (29.2; 2 Kgs. 24.14, 16) suggests that מסגר is a craftsman of some sort,<sup>161</sup> though as McKane remarks, "the form מסגר remains a problem, since we might have expected a formation of the same type as חרש (סגר)".<sup>162</sup> OG δεσμωτας ('prisoners') takes המסגר to mean 'the enclosed ones', an interpretation Bright considers "not impossible".<sup>163</sup> Alternatively, המסגר might mean 'those who enclose', i.e., 'guards' (cf. Targ., תרעיא, cf. Ezra 7.24); leaning towards this view, McKane notes that in 2 Kgs. 24.16, OG renders המסגר with an active participle, τον στυκλειοντα.<sup>164</sup> If so, Jer. OG has misunderstood the term; conversely, Niditch argues that it is OG's translation in 2 Kgs. 24.16 that is faulty.<sup>165</sup>

v. 2. MT אחד . . . אחד; similarly Targ., וסלא חר . . . סלא חר, and Vulg., *calathus unus . . . et calathus unus*. OG ὁ εἷς . . . ὁ ἕτερος might reflect אחר . . . אחר, but the MT construction is found elsewhere (1 Sam. 13.17-18 and Ezek. 10.9).

MT תאנים . . . תאנים, 'the first jar was (i.e., consisted of) good figs';<sup>166</sup> OG rephrases with a genitive, στυκων χρηστων. Similarly, for כתאני הבכרות, 'figs (consisting) of early figs',<sup>167</sup> OG rephrases with ὡς τα στυκα τα προιμα.

v. 3. תאנים התאנים הטבות; OG στυκα· τα χρηστα (LXX<sup>B, S</sup>) is more succinct, perhaps reflecting תאנים הטבות טבות מאד in the *Vorlage* (thus paralleling רעות רעות מאד).<sup>168</sup> However,

<sup>160</sup> As is freely acknowledged by Duhm, *Jeremiah*, 197, and Rudolph, *Jeremiah*, 134.

<sup>161</sup> So Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 657; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 506; Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 357. A. Condamin, *Le Livre de Jérémie: Traduction et Commentaire* (Études Bibliques, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.; J. Gabalda et Cie: Paris, 1936) 188-189, translates 'les serruriers' ('locksmiths'); A. Bea, 'König Jojachin in Keilschrifttexten', *Biblica* 23 (1942) 82 n.1, and Niditch, *Symbolic Vision*, 56 suggest 'goldsmiths'; cf. the phrase זהב סגר, 'closed (i.e., fine) gold' (1 Kgs. 6.20, 21, etc).

<sup>162</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 608.

<sup>163</sup> Bright, *Jeremiah*, 193; cf., Ps. 142. 8; Isa. 24.22; 42.7, where מסגר = 'prison, dungeon'.

<sup>164</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 607. He thus points המסגר in Jer. 24.1 as a Pi. ptc., המקסגר.

<sup>165</sup> Niditch, *Symbolic Vision*, 56.

<sup>166</sup> Cf. Ezr. 10.31, והעת גשמים, 'and the season was rains'; Ezek. 41.22, המזבח עץ, 'the altar was timber'. For the apposition of a noun to denote *contents* (as distinct from *material*) cf. Ex. 28.17, טור אדם פטדה, וברקת הטור האחד. See further *GKC* §131d; *GBH* 2, §154e.

<sup>167</sup> So *GKC* §128m; *GBH* 2, §129f-g. For this 'genitive of species', see too Ex. 20.24, מזבח אדמה, 'altar of (i.e., made of) earth'; 1 Kgs. 19.6, ענת רצפים, 'bread of (i.e., baked on) burning stones'.

<sup>168</sup> So Niditch, *Symbolic Vision*, 57.

OG omission due to haplography<sup>169</sup> or stylistic preference is equally possible. Targ. (תנין תיניא) and Vulg. (*ficus ficus bonas bonas valde*) follow MT.

v. 5. גלות,<sup>170</sup> ‘exiles’; OG ἀποικισθεντας, ‘colony’ (cf. ἀποικια in 29[36].1).<sup>171</sup>

v. 6. MT עיני points עיני as singular; OG τους ὀφθαλμούς understands it as dual. The same variation occurs in Jer. 40[47].4; Am. 9.4.

v. 8. כִּי >OG: Even if כִּי carries an emphatic sense (‘ah!’),<sup>172</sup> it is almost certainly MT plus; elsewhere Jer. OG consistently represents כִּי כה with ὅτι οὕτως (29[36].10, etc.) or (δι)οτι ταδε (22.6, 11, etc.).

v. 9. לזועה: ‘(object of) terror’; OG, διασκορπισμον, ‘a scattering’. Niditch argues that OG might reflect some form of an original זרה (‘to scatter’) or זרע (‘to sow’),<sup>173</sup> though as she admits, זרע is nowhere else translated by διασκορπιζω. Her suggestion – “better yet, there may have been a noun-form *zērû‘â* after the pattern of *sēmû‘â*, ‘report’”<sup>174</sup> – sounds more hopeful than convincing. The translator has probably guessed at a term that was unclear to him.<sup>175</sup>

לרעה >OG: Quite apart from the lack of a conjunction, MT is obscure. Relocating לרעה to the end of v. 8,<sup>176</sup> so that it balances לטובה at the end of v. 5, is attractive, but doesn’t

---

<sup>169</sup> So Janzen, *Studies*, 117.

<sup>170</sup> For the pointing, see *GKC* §95t.

<sup>171</sup> The use of ἀποικισζειν / ἀποικια, rather than φυγη, may be significant. A similar preference for ἀποικισζειν / ἀποικια is found in Josephus; Feldman argues that this is deliberate, to enable Josephus to avoid the idea of ‘punishment’ contained in φυγη. See Louis H. Feldman, ‘The Concept of Exile in Josephus’, in J.M. Scott (ed.), *Exile: Old Testament, Jewish and Christian Conceptions* (JSJ Sup. 56; Leiden: Brill, 1997)145-148.

<sup>172</sup> So Bright, *Jeremiah*, 193; Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 360. However, A. Aejmelaeus, ‘The Function and Interpretation of כִּי in Biblical Hebrew’ in A. Aejmelaeus, *On the Trail of the Septuagint Translators. Collected Essays* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1993) 184, concludes her study of כִּי by noting that as it had progressed, “ever less and less room was left for the emphatic interpretation.”

<sup>173</sup> Niditch, *Symbolic Vision*, 57-58.

<sup>174</sup> Niditch, *Symbolic Vision*, 58.

<sup>175</sup> As Tov, ‘Did the Septuagint Translators Always Understand Their Hebrew Text?’, in E. Tov (ed.), *The Greek and Hebrew Bible. Collected Essays on the Septuagint* (Leiden: Brill, 1999) 208, suggests. Tov points out that elsewhere in Jer. this term is rendered variously as ἀναγκας, ‘punishment’ (15.4) and διασκοπορα, ‘scattering’ (34 [41].17), while in 2 Chron. 29.8, ἐκστασις, ‘astonishment’ is used.

<sup>176</sup> Volz, *Jeremia*, 247; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 655; tentatively, Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 134; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 192, note ‘a’.

explain its omission in OG. It is lacking in the similar 15.4 and 29.18, and is probably the result of conflation after one faulty manuscript read only רעה.<sup>177</sup>

v. 10. ולאבותיהם >OG. Probably MT plus,<sup>178</sup> since similar phrases in 7.14, 23.39 and 25.5 are represented by OG. If it is a minus in OG, the only explanation would be haplography due to homoioteleuton (cf. the ending הם of the last two words).

### 4.3. Exegetical Notes

v. 1. הראני יהוה והנה: The use of ראה Hiph. + הנה is typical of the 'vision report', found elsewhere in the OT; see especially Am. 7.1, 4, 7, where both the above elements are present.<sup>179</sup> However, the lack of an initial כה, otherwise typical of this genre, is striking.

היכל יהוה: This expression occurs elsewhere in Jer. only in 7.4, the preferred term being בית יהוה. Commentators generally see היכל יהוה as a reference to the temple in Jerusalem, and possibly, as in 1 Kgs. 6 and Ezek. 41, the inner sanctuary in particular (cf. the possible cultic associations of the דוורים). Calvin, however, argued that "the temple . . . is to be taken here for the tribunal of God",<sup>180</sup> citing Isa. 26.21 and Mic. 1.2-3 for the same idea.<sup>181</sup> In 7.3-15, although the people come to worship (ובאתם ועמדתם לפני בבית הזה, v. 10), they are rejected because of their evil deeds, which YHWH has *seen* (גם אנכי הנה ראיתי, v. 11).<sup>182</sup> In other words, the point is less that the figs are being 'presented' as an offering before God, than that they have been summoned for judgement.

---

<sup>177</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 199; Ziegler, *Beiträge*, 87; Janzen, *Studies*, 12-13; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 617.

<sup>178</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 44; Niditch, *Symbolic Vision*, 59; *contra* Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 660; Volz, *Jeremia*, 247; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 134. Janzen notes that textual expansion frequently occurs where a book contains parallel passages or stock phrases: "Through familiarity with the text as a whole, the scribe may elaborate one passage from the other." (*Studies*, 34).

<sup>179</sup> Also similar are Zech. 1.8; 2.1,5; 5.1, where we have ראה Qal + הנה. In 2 Kgs. 8.13 and Zech. 2.3; 3.1, we have ראה Hiph. without והנה.

<sup>180</sup> J. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah and the Lamentations, Vol. 3* (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1852) 221. Compare Volz's opinion, *Jeremia*, 249: "nicht als 'Tempel', sondern als 'Wohnort' Jahwes."

<sup>181</sup> Although Isa. 26.21 refers not to the היכל יהוה but to ממקמו.

<sup>182</sup> A different understanding of the significance of the temple is offered by A.C. Welch, *Jeremiah. His Time and His Work* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1951) 161: "The temple was introduced into the allegory because . . . the question in debate turned round religion."

אחרי הגלות נבוכדראצר מלך בבל את יכניהו: Cf. 29.2. The latter lists the exiles in more detail, while 24.1 amplifies the description of Jehoiachin (בן יהויקים . . . מלך יהודה). Also, 29.2 refers to the ‘departure’ (צאת) of the Judaeans, while 24.1 speaks of their being ‘exiled’ (הגלות) by Nebuchadrezzar. Both references to the deportation are considerably shorter than that in 2 Kgs. 24.15-16, on which they are probably dependent.<sup>183</sup> Most scholars regard the date rubric in 24.1 (and 29.2) as secondary, due its parenthetical nature,<sup>184</sup> but a syntactical parenthesis should not automatically be equated with a redactional gloss.<sup>185</sup> In fact, without v. 1b not only would the historical allusions in vv. 5 and 8 be highly abrupt, the vision as a whole would lose the key to its interpretation.<sup>186</sup> One might reasonably ask how a biblical writer could supply such a detail without it being suspected of being ‘secondary’.<sup>187</sup>

v. 2. הבכרות: As the root suggests, the בכורה (Isa. 28.4; Mic. 7.1; Hos. 9.10) is a fruit that ripens early in the season. Commentators differ as to whether we have here an allusion to ‘firstfruits’.<sup>188</sup> Noting that הבכרות is related to בכורים, ‘firstfruits’, Craigie et al. suggest that, “perhaps the very choice of words by Jeremiah is intended to suggest the figs were an

<sup>183</sup> “Er citiert die Stelle II Reg. 24. 12-16 nur flüchtig, weil er sie als bekannt voraussetzt” (Duhm, *Jeremia*, 197); so too Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 134; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 21; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 607; Jones, *Jeremiah*, 320. But Bright, *Jeremiah*, 193, merely describes this as ‘probable’ and Niditch, *Symbolic Vision*, 56, as ‘possible’. A common origin for all three passages cannot be ruled out.

<sup>184</sup> E.g., Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 134; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 193; Thiel, *Redaktion 1 – 25*, 254; B.O. Long, ‘Reports of Visions Among the Prophets’, *JBL* 95 (1976) 355; W. Zimmerli, ‘Visionary Experience in Jeremiah’, in R. Coggins, A. Philipps & M. Knibb (eds.) *Israel’s Prophetic Tradition. Essays in Honour of Peter R. Ackroyd* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) 110; Niditch, *Symbolic Vision*, 56; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 607; Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 225, n.36;

<sup>185</sup> In 40.1 we have at least two subordinate clauses: אחר שלח אתו / אחר יהודה / אחר ירמיהו מאת יהודה. נבוכדראצר רב טבחיים מן הרמה / בקחתו אתו. Here, והוא אסור creates an additional subsidiary clause; however, these words probably are secondary (see further our discussion of this verse in ch. 4).

<sup>186</sup> “Had not this been added, the vision would have been obscure.” (Calvin, *Jeremiah and Lamentations 3*, 221). Pohlmann, *Studien*, 21, agrees that the v. 1b appears to interrupt the report, but adds: “Trotzdem handelt es sich hier kaum um eine nachträgliche Einschaltung; die Zeitbestimmung charakterisiert nämlich das ganze Kapitel dem Inhalt entsprechend als einen Bericht über eine ‘neue’ bzw. jüngere Offenbarung, die dem Propheten zu Teil wurde, nachdem sich die ‘früheren’ mit der Exilierung Jojakins erfüllt hatten.”

<sup>187</sup> According to Niditch, “had the date segment begun Jeremiah 24, we might have considered it an original part of the vision . . . (however) we must assume that a redactor placed the indication of date within the initial description of the vision in order to make it *seem more a part of the whole*.” (*Symbolic Vision*, 60-61; italics mine). This rather gives the game away; a simpler explanation is that it *was* part of the whole.

<sup>188</sup> In favour of this view are Duhm, *Jeremia*, 197 (“בכרות” scheint Abstraktum ‘Frühreife’ zu sein.); Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 507-8; Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 358.

offering.”<sup>189</sup> However, the versions appear to understand **הבכרות** to mean ‘early fruit’ (LXX normally uses for ‘firstfruit’, **πρωτογενηματα**). Moreover, if the presentation of firstfruits was in mind we might have expected the cultic term **רצה (לא)** (Lev. 1.4, 22.25; Jer. 14.10, 12; Mal. 1.10, 13) to be employed, rather than **טוב**.

v. 5. **כה אמר יהוה אלהי ישראל**: The use of the ‘messenger formula’ here and in v. 8 is often seen as incongruous in a private vision report, and thus redactional.<sup>190</sup> Craigie et al. argue for its retention on the ground that the vision was for the benefit of the king and people,<sup>191</sup> but the text is silent regarding any third-party audience. More significantly, however, Samuel A. Meier has shown that **כה אמר** + personal name typically functions in the OT as a *citation* formula, without implying any ‘messenger’ activity.<sup>192</sup>

Since **אכיר** is often translated ‘regard as, consider as’,<sup>193</sup> it is often assumed that the simile, **כחאנים הטובת האלה כן אכיר את גלות נכר** Hiph. (like its LXX counterpart, **ἐπιγυωσσομαι**) is semantically quite flexible, the meaning ‘to regard as’ (for which **השב** would be a more likely word-choice)<sup>194</sup> is unattested for it. Rather, the analogy is between how people *view* ripe figs and how YHWH *views* the exiles.<sup>195</sup> Thus, a better translation of **אכיר** would be ‘I will take note of, observe’. Alternatively, given the emphasis in v. 6 on the positive things YHWH will do for the exiles, **אכיר** may even carry the

<sup>189</sup> Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 358. In Deut. 26.1-11, the worshipper is told to place the firstfruits in a basket, and set it before the Lord. But the terminology is different: **טנא** (basket, vv. 2, 4) **נוח** Hiph. (set down, vv. 4, 10) and **ראשית פרי** (firstfruit, vv. 2, 10). Moreover, the offering is set **לפני מזבח יהוה** (v. 4) rather than **לפני היכל יהוה**.

<sup>190</sup> E.g., Volz, *Jeremia*, 247; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 134; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 658; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 481; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 608.

<sup>191</sup> Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 358.

<sup>192</sup> Samuel A. Meier, *Speaking of Speaking: Marking Direct Discourse in the Hebrew Bible* (VT Sup. 46; Leiden: Brill, 1992) 277-291.

<sup>193</sup> So R.K. Harrison, *Jeremiah and Lamentations. An Introduction and Commentary* (TOTC; Leicester: IVP, 1979) 124; also *RSV, NIV, REB*.

<sup>194</sup> NB especially **ל השב**, ‘to count one thing as another’ (Gen. 38.15). Nor is **נכר** ever used in parallel with **השב**.

<sup>195</sup> I.e., seeing here an example of ‘gapping’ (ellipsis), in which the verb in the second part of the simile is implied in the first part. Cf. Hos. 9.10, **כענבים במדבר מצאתי ישראל כבכורה בתאנה בראשיתה ראיתי אבותיכם**, ‘I found Israel like [one finding] grapes in the desert, I saw your fathers like [one seeing] early fruit on the fig tree.’

sense 'I will show preference for' (a nuance that usually has a negative connotation, Deut. 1.17).<sup>196</sup> This then brings us to the meaning of לטובה.<sup>197</sup> Those who translate אכיר 'consider, regard as' take טובה as a feminine adjective; 'like the good figs, so YHWH regards the exiles as good'.<sup>198</sup> However, our interpretation of אכיר renders an adjectival understanding of טובה problematic. In fact, it is better seen as a noun,<sup>199</sup> with לטובה meaning 'for good, for a good purpose'. Not only is this nominal sense for לטובה characteristic of Jer. (15.11; 21.10; 39.16; 44.27), it is precisely what we find in the following verse.

v. 6. ושמתי עיני עליהם לטובה are epexegetical, removing any ambiguity as to what was promised in v. 5.<sup>200</sup> The expression ושמתי עיני (lit., 'I will set my eye') means, 'adopt a fixed attitude or disposition'.<sup>201</sup> It is infrequent in the OT, but note Jer. 40.4, ואשים את עיני עליך, and especially Am. 9.4, ושמתי עיני עליהם לרעה ולא לטובה. It is similar in meaning to 21.10, כי שמתי פני בעיר הזאת לרעה ולא לטובה.

וטוש ובניתים ולא אהרס ונטעתים ולא אתוש echoes a refrain that occurs throughout Jer.<sup>202</sup> The different ways in which it is used, however, raise complex hermeneutical questions. In 18.7-9, YHWH declares that his threats of destruction (ולא אביד לנתוש ולנתוץ, v. 7) and promises of blessing (לבנת ונטע, v. 9) are all reversible, being contingent on the response of those addressed. Does this contradict or merely qualify the (apparently) absolute promise of 24.6? The closest parallel, however, is in 42.10: ולא אתוש ובניתי אתכם ולא אהרס ונטעתי אתכם. Here, though, the

<sup>196</sup> T.E. Fretheim, s.v. נכר, *NIDOTTE* 3, 108, takes the phrase to signify "God's special regard for the exiles".

<sup>197</sup> Most scholars take לטובה as the complement of אכיר, with אשר שלחתי מן המקום הזה ארץ כשרים being parenthetical: 'Like these good figs, so I will look with favour on the exiles of Judah (whom I sent from this place to the land of the Babylonians) for good.' Alternatively, לטובה may relate syntactically to שלחתי: 'Like these good figs, so I will look with favour on the exiles (whom I sent from this place to the land of the Babylonians) for good.' (so Welch, *Jeremiah*, 165; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 22).

<sup>198</sup> E.g., Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 218.

<sup>199</sup> Jones, *Jeremiah*, 318; T.M. Raitt, 'Jeremiah's Deliverance Message to Judah', in J.J. Jackson & M. Kessler (eds.), *Rhetorical Criticism. Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (PTMS 1; Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1974) 171.

<sup>200</sup> "He confirms what he said in the last verse, but in other words . . ." (Calvin, *Jeremiah and Lamentations* 3, 225). So too Pohlmann, *Studien*, 22: "erläutert, was damit [v. 5] gemeint ist."

<sup>201</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah I*, 605, paraphrases as 'I will mark them out for favour'.

<sup>202</sup> As Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 481, puts it, these words "belong to the inner exegesis of the tradition." For a full listing and discussion, see M.A. Taylor, 'Jeremiah 45: The Problem of Placement', *JSOT* 37 (1987) 79-98.

promise is held out to those who had remained in Judah after 587 – that is, to precisely those people who in ch. 24 are excluded from any such hope. Granted, the offer in 42.10 is rendered hypothetical by the decision of the Judeans to flee to Egypt (41.17; 42.19-21). Nevertheless, the extension of the promise to the Judean remnant is startling.

v. 7. *לֵב לְדַעַת אֲתִי* occurs only here in Jer., though elements occur elsewhere; see 22.16, *וַיִּדַע אֲתִי כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה* (also 31.34, *כִּי כֹלֵם יָדַעוּ אֲתִי*; 9.23, *וַיִּדַע אֲתִי כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה*); and 32.39, *וַנְתַּתִּי לָהֶם לֵב אֶחָד לִירְאָה אֲתִי*. Thus, 21.7 fuses knowledge of YHWH with YHWH's gift of a heart.<sup>203</sup> Outside Jer., the closest parallel lies in Deut. 29.3, *וְלֹא נָתַן יְהוָה לָכֶם לֵב לְדַעַת וְעֵינַיִם*. Against this background, the climactic nature of 24.7 becomes clear: YHWH is promising the exiles what Israel had failed to receive even under the leadership of Moses.

*כִּי* (like OG, *ὅτι*, Targ., ארר, and Vulg., *quia*) can be taken as causal ('because I am YHWH')<sup>204</sup> or resultative ('that I am YHWH').<sup>205</sup> The latter seems more likely; the words just cited in Deut. 29.3, that YHWH had not given Israel 'a heart to know', is followed by the statement that he had miraculously provided for them, *לְמַעַן תִּדְעוּ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם* (v. 5). It is not unusual for *כִּי* to introduce a second object; for examples with *יָדַע*, see Ex. 32.22, *אֲתָהּ יָדַעַת* אֲתָהּ הוּא *כִּי בָרַע הוּא*; 2 Sam. 17.8, *אֲתָהּ יָדַעַת אֶת אַבְיָךְ וְאֵת אַנְשָׁיו כִּי גִבְרִים הֵמָּה*; 1 Kgs. 5.17, *אֲתָהּ יָדַעַת* אֲתָהּ דוֹד אָבִי *כִּי לֹא יָכַל לִבְנוֹת*.<sup>206</sup>

*וַהֲיוּ לִי לְעָם וְאֲנִי אֶהְיֶה לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים*: The 'covenant formula' first occurs in the OT in Ex. 6.7, *וְלִקְחֹתִי אֶתְכֶם לִי לְעָם וְהִיִּיתִי לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים*, where, interestingly, it is followed immediately by *וַיִּדְעֶתֶם כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה*. In Jer. it occurs (with variations) in 7.23; 11.4; 30.22; 31.1, 33; 32.38.

---

<sup>203</sup> See Pohlmann, *Studien*, 23: "Eigenartig ist nicht nur, daß die Erkenntnis Jahwes von der Verleihung eines (neuen?) Herzens abhängig gemacht wird, was sonst nirgends im AT der Fall ist; merkwürdig ist ebenso die Kombination der zwei hauptsächlichen alttestamentlichen Redeweisen von der Erkenntnis Jahwes, die in ihrem Streuungsbereich sonst reinlich geschieden sind."

<sup>204</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 605; Unterman, *Repentance to Redemption*, 76-80; Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 359. The same options are available for 9.23, *וַיִּדַע אֲתִי כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה*.

<sup>205</sup> Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 134; Condamin, *Jérémie*, 189; Volz, *Jeremia*, 247; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 192; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 506; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 658.

<sup>206</sup> See further *GKC* §117h; B.K. Waltke & M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990) 644. The declaration *וַיִּדְעֶתֶם כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה* meaning 'you (they) will know that I am YHWH' is very common in Ezek. (6.7, 10, etc.), though here it does not involve a double accusative.

Craigie et al. note that in the first two of these, the promise is conditional on human response, while in the latter four YHWH's initiative is to the fore. They conclude that "this passage bridges both contexts; it is a restoration oracle, but it is also conditional as the next phrase indicates."<sup>207</sup> This, however, depends on how we take v. 7b.

כִּי יָשׁוּבוּ אֵלַי: Here again it is possible to read כִּי as conditional ('if they return')<sup>208</sup> or causal ('for they will return'); most commentators accept the latter option.<sup>209</sup>

Whether this reading of vv. 6-7 precludes any element of conditionality is another matter; as Unterman points out, the statement 'for they shall return to me with all their heart' leaves open the question whether this is a free act of the people, or the result of YHWH's initiative.<sup>210</sup> In his view, the sequence of events promised in vv. 6-7 is: the exiles seek YHWH 'with their whole heart'; YHWH gives them 'a heart to know him'; the relationship is restored. Conversely, Nicholson argues that, while in Deut. 4.29-31; 30.1-6, and 1 Kgs. 8.46-50 repentance is indeed prerequisite for salvation, in Jer. 24.5-7 it is subordinated to YHWH's prior action:

Whilst it is still Israel's 'turning again' which will secure forgiveness and restoration, such a 'turning again' is now assured by Yahweh himself who now takes the initiative so that Israel will 'turn again' . . . That is to say, the conditional 'if' has now receded and the element of promise has come to the forefront of the kerygma.<sup>211</sup>

The fact that the reference to the exiles' wholehearted return to YHWH comes after his promise of 'a heart to know me' (to say nothing of the promise to set his eyes upon them for

---

<sup>207</sup> Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1*, 359-360. R. Rendtorff, *The Covenant Formula. An Exegetical and Theological Investigation* (ET: Margaret Kohl; OTS; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998) 35, sees 24.7 as marking a turning point in the use of the covenant formula in Jer; whereas in 7.23 and 11.24 it refers to Israel's rescue from Egypt and is the basis for his present judgement, in 24.7 it is oriented to the future and related to YHWH's salvific plan for the exiles.

<sup>208</sup> So Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1*, 360; Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 134 ("wenn").

<sup>209</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 134; Volz, *Jeremia*, 247; A. Weiser, *Das Buch des Propheten Jeremia* (NGB 20/21; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955) 219; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 192; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 506; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 659; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 609.

<sup>210</sup> Unterman, *Repentance to Redemption*, 81. He adds that repentance is "an act of the exiles' will which becomes the rationale for all the promises of restoration in vv. 6-7."

<sup>211</sup> Nicholson, *Preaching*, 81; similarly, Raitt, 'Jeremiah's Deliverance Message', 174; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 609; H. Lalleman-de Winkel, *Jeremiah in Prophetic Tradition. An Examination of the Book of Jeremiah in the Light of Israel's Prophetic Traditions* (CBET 26; Leuven: Peeters, 2000) 148. Indeed, Niditch, *Symbolic Vision*, 68, sees Jer. 24 as illustrating an "increasing emphasis on predetermination" in the symbolic vision genre.



good in v. 6) suggests that Nicholson's emphasis on divine initiative is correct. However, to say that Israel's turning is here 'assured' may be an overstatement; McKane is probably nearer the truth in describing YHWH's role in the people's response as 'enabling'.<sup>212</sup> Thus, the promise of restoration in this verse may not be as unconditional as it seems.<sup>213</sup>

v. 8. **כי כה אמר יהוה**: Partly for the same reasons as in v. 5, but also because it interrupts the word-flow, this phrase is probably secondary.<sup>214</sup> Without it, **כן אתן כתאנים הרעות אשר לא** כן אתן כתאנים הטבות האלה כן אכיר perfectly balances **כתאנים הטבות האלה כן אכיר** in v. 5.

**כן אתן**: Duhm suggested that OG  $\alpha\alpha\alpha\delta\omega\sigma\omega$  reflects **אגיר** (Hiph. **נגר**, 'hand over'), so forming a neat paronomasia with **אכיר** (v. 5).<sup>215</sup> This is unlikely, since in LXX  $\alpha\alpha\alpha\delta\omega\delta\omega\mu$  routinely represents **נתן**. Part of the reason for Duhm's proposal, however, was the fact that **כן אתן** appears to make YHWH exclusively responsible for Zedekiah's fate. This is so, however, only if **נתן** here means 'make, turn into'.<sup>216</sup> An alternative would be to interpret **כן אתן** as 'I will deal with, treat';<sup>217</sup> for this meaning of **כ** + **נתן**, see Gen. 42.30, **ויתן אתנו כמרגלים**, Ezek. 15.6, **כאשר עץ הגפן בעץ היער אשר נתתו לאש לאכלה כן נתתי את יושבי ירושלים**, is ambiguous; it might mean (a) that just as the wood of the vine is given over to fire, so YHWH will give the people over (to their enemies), or (b) that YHWH will treat the people like the wood of the vine (which is then given over to fire).

**הישיבים בארץ מצרים**: Many scholars see here an allusion to the Judean remnant which fled to Egypt after 586 (43.4-7),<sup>218</sup> while others take the words to refer to an earlier migration – either when Jehoahaz was taken to Egypt in 609 (2 Kgs. 23.34), or when Judah became a vassal

---

<sup>212</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 609.

<sup>213</sup> Unterman, *Repentance to Redemption*, 81, characterises (or caricatures) Nicholson's argument as meaning that YHWH will "forcibly bring about the return of the people," which he then describes as "a deterministic conception." But to say that A is a result of B is not to say that is a *forced* result.

<sup>214</sup> E.g., Duhm, *Jeremia*, 199; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 134; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 481; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 609.

<sup>215</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 199. In fact, **נתן** can itself mean 'hand over' (Num. 21.3; Hos. 11.8; cf. Jer. 18.21 where it parallels **נגר**).

<sup>216</sup> So McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 605; Craigie et al., *Jeremiah 1 – 25*, 356.

<sup>217</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 134 ('behandle'); Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 506. Cf. Volz, *Jeremia*, 247 ('sich erweisen', i.e., 'demonstrate') and Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 659 ('designate').

<sup>218</sup> E.g., Duhm, *Jeremia*, 199; Nicholson, *Preaching*, 110; Thiel, *Redaktion 1 – 25*, 257; Niditch, *Symbolic Vision*, 61; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 26; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 659; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 486; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 610.

state to Nebuchadnezzar (603), or shortly after the deportation of 597.<sup>219</sup> The first interpretation seems the more probable, since the only Jewish community in Egypt known to Jer. is that described in chs. 43 and 44. Those who take this view, but accept the authenticity of the vision as a whole, see *הישבים בארץ מצרים* as redactional.<sup>220</sup> Syntactically, however, it is well integrated in the sentence, *הישבים בארץ מצרים* balancing *הזאת בארץ הנשארים* and both being sub-divisions of *שארית ירושלים*. The ‘remnant of Jerusalem’ will comprise those who remain in Judah and those who flee to Egypt.<sup>221</sup> Consequently, some commentators see the phrase as evidence that the entire chapter is inauthentic.<sup>222</sup> However, it is not unlikely that Jeremiah should have foreseen that some of his compatriots would flee to Egypt in the crisis to come, especially if some had already done so.

v. 9. *ל* *ונתתי* clearly means ‘I will make them’ (for this meaning of *ל*, see 9.10; Deut. 28.13; Ezek. 7.20, etc.). Thus, just as v. 6 is epexegetical of v. 5, so is v. 9 of v. 8: YHWH will ‘deal with’ the people by ‘making them’ a curse.

*בכל המקומות אשר אדיחם שם*: The idea of YHWH pursuing the Judaeans to other lands is often thought to conflict with the point being made otherwise in vv. 9-10, that the people will die in their own land.<sup>223</sup> Thus it is argued that this phrase is secondary, influenced by Deut. 28.37, *והיה ישראל למשל*, and 1 Kgs. 9.7, *והיה ישראל למשל*, *ולשנינה בכל העמים אשר ינהגך יהוה שמה*. Such a verdict rests on a false antithesis; ‘perishing from the land’ is hardly incompatible with being banished from it, and indeed, *בכל המקומות אשר אדיחם שם* neatly counter-balances *לכל ממלכות הארץ* (v. 9a).

<sup>219</sup> E.g., Condamin, *Jérémie*, 189; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 193; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 508-509; Jones, *Jeremiah*, 320. However, Thiel, *Redaktion 1 – 25*, 256-257, and Pohlmann, *Studien*, 25-26 n.40, argue that the evidence for such a colony before 587 is very slight.

<sup>220</sup> So Volz, *Jeremia*, 247; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 659; so too McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 611, though he rejects the authenticity of the whole chapter.

<sup>221</sup> “The author of chapter 24 . . . represents that only two groups need be distinguished in the aftermath of 586: those who remained in Jerusalem and those who went to Egypt.” (McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 610-611). As Pohlmann notes, *Studien*, 25 n.38, the expression *שארית ירושלים* occurs nowhere else. A fragment from the Cairo Geniza reads *שארית יהודה*.

<sup>222</sup> E.g., Thiel, *Redaktion 1 – 25*, 257; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 26-27; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 486.

<sup>223</sup> E.g., Volz, *Jeremia*, 241 n.1; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 134; Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 659; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 611; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 482.

#### 4.4. Coherence & Redaction

As the preceding discussion has indicated, Jer. 24 is widely thought to contain secondary material. Suspicion has fallen on the historical note (v. 1) and the messenger formula (vv. 5, 8), while much of the vocabulary of vv. 7-10 is seen as characteristically Deuteronomistic. The relevant phrases have been noted in our previous section, but can be tabulated as follows:<sup>224</sup> לטובה (v. 5; cf. Deut. 28.11; 30.9); וישבו אלי בכל לבם (v. 7; cf. Deut. 30.2, 10; 1 Sam. 7.3; 12.20, 24; 1 Kgs. 8.23, 48; 14.8; 2 Kgs. 10.31; 23.25); ואנכי אהיה להם לאלהים והיו לי לעם (v. 7; cf. Deut. 4.20; 7.6; 14.2; 26.18; 27.9); ונתתם לזועה . . . לכל ממלכות הארץ (v. 9; cf. Deut. 28.25 [לכל ממלכות הארץ only]; 2 Kgs. 19.15, 19); לחרפה ולמשל לשנינה ולקללה (v. 9; cf. Deut. 28.37; 2 Kgs. 22.19);<sup>225</sup> בכל המקמות אשר אדיחם שם (v. 9; cf. Deut. 28.37); נדח Hiph. (v. 9; cf. Deut. 30.1); מעל הארמה אשר נתתי להם ולאבותיהם (v. 10; cf. 1 Kgs. 9.7; 2 Kgs. 21.8; also Deut. 3.20; 9.23).

Consequently, many scholars believe that Jer. 24 contains a Deuteronomistic redaction of an authentic vision report. According to Nicholson,

In its present form this passage clearly belongs to the Jeremianic prose tradition the language and style of which are well in evidence throughout. At the same time the striking imagery which it employs indicates that it is based upon an authentic saying of the prophet himself.<sup>226</sup>

Naturally, there is disagreement as to the extent of the secondary material. For some, it is a matter of only a few phrases. Volz deleted the historical note (v. 1), the messenger formulae (vv. 5 and 8), and the phrases והישבים בארץ מצרים (v. 8), כי ישבו אלי בכל לבם, כי אני יהוה (v. 7), and לחרפה ולמשל לשנינה ולקללה בכל המקמות אשר אדיחם שם (v. 9).<sup>227</sup> Holladay differs only in retaining the obloquies of v. 9,<sup>228</sup> while Rudolph restricts the secondary elements to the historical note, the messenger formulae and בכל המקמות אשר אדיחם שם.<sup>229</sup> More recently, Kilpp has

---

<sup>224</sup> Nicholson, *Preaching*, 110 n.1.

<sup>225</sup> Apart from the specific lexical items here, 'word chains' in general are often seen as a feature of Deuteronomistic literary style; see May, 'Objective Approach', 144, and Hyatt, 'Deuteronomic Edition', 252.

<sup>226</sup> Nicholson, *Preaching*, 110; similarly, W.J. Wessels, 'Jeremiah 24.1-10 as a Pronouncement of Hope?', *OTE* 4 (1991) 400.

<sup>227</sup> Volz, *Jeremia*, 246-247.

<sup>228</sup> Holladay, *Jeremiah I*, 654-655.

<sup>229</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 134.

argued that vv. 6-7 comprise the redactional material, obscuring the message of judgement that was the real point of the original vision report.<sup>230</sup>

Others have argued that the redaction covers all or most of vv. 6-10.<sup>231</sup> What is held to be decisive is not merely the language and literary style of these verses,<sup>232</sup> but their theology. Thus Herrmann sees here the setting out of alternatives typical of the deuteronomists, while according to S. Böhmer, the author of vv. 6-10 “entwickelt ein umfassendes theologisches Programm für die Zukunft”.<sup>233</sup> Meanwhile, Zimmerli detects a tension between the unconditional verdict on the two communities in the original vision, and its Deuteronomistic interpretation, “in that the announcement of salvation to the exiles is linked to the condition of their conversion.”<sup>234</sup>

One immediate problem with this argument, however, is knowing what a vision of two baskets of figs (one good and one rotten) might have meant, other than the meaning set out in vv. 5-10.<sup>235</sup> Nicholson insists there is an authentic core in the chapter, but does not specify what it is. If we grant that “a simple word picture”<sup>236</sup> (Zimmerli) was given to the prophet, what message did this ‘word picture’ express? According to Clements, “the original message delivered by Jeremiah . . . was to challenge the self-congratulation and mistaken self-esteem displayed by those who had been left as survivors in Judah”;<sup>237</sup> but challenging self-esteem is a purpose, not a message. Hardly convincing is the interpretation proposed by Gottwald: “The Jeremianic core of the passage was probably a severe warning to the Zedekiah faction that their hopes of rebellion, undeterred by the failure of the first rebellion, were as untimely as spoiled

---

<sup>230</sup> Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 37-41.

<sup>231</sup> S. Herrmann, *Die prophetischen Heilserwartungen im Alten Testament. Ursprung und Gestaltwandel* (BWANT 5; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1965) 165-166.

<sup>232</sup> For Long, ‘Reports of Visions’, 359, “the expansive prose, detailed date and long two-fold divine speech in a style characteristic of Deuteronomistic prose (vv. 6, 7, 9, 10) are major modifications.”

<sup>233</sup> S. Böhmer, *Heimkehr und neuer Bund. Studien zu Jer. 30 – 31* (GTA 5; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976) 32; cf. R.E. Clements, *Jeremiah. A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Interpretation; Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988) 145.

<sup>234</sup> Zimmerli, ‘Visionary Experience’, 111.

<sup>235</sup> So Unterman, *Repentance to Redemption*, 58.

<sup>236</sup> Zimmerli, ‘Visionary Experience’, 113.

<sup>237</sup> Clements, *Jeremiah*, 146.

fruit. By contrast, those already in captivity stood to learn obedience to Yahweh and could rightfully expect to one day return to Palestine.”<sup>238</sup>

We have already argued that there is no compelling reason for deleting the historical note (v. 1), the messenger formula (vv. 5, 8), the reference to those living in Egypt (v. 8), or the phrase ‘in all the places where I scatter you’ (v. 9). Regarding the Deuteronomistic language in vv. 6-10, it should be said that while a linguistic / stylistic ‘family likeness’ clearly exists, knowing what inferences to draw from this is extremely difficult. It should also be noted that two supposedly ‘Deuteronomistic’ expressions – the ‘building and planting’ motif (v. 6), and the ‘sword, famine and plague’ trilogy (v. 10) – are in fact examples of what one might call ‘Jer. D’ language; that is, language which is characteristic of the prose passages in Jer. but which does not actually occur in Deut. or Dtr.H. Thus, while Hyatt and Nicholson assign these phrases to the Deuteronomistic editors of Jer.,<sup>239</sup> others attribute them to his disciples,<sup>240</sup> and still others see them as authentic to Jeremiah.<sup>241</sup> Certainly, it is striking that almost all the expressions in vv. 5-10 listed above find parallels in Deut. 28 and 30.<sup>242</sup> But again, this is inconclusive as far as their authenticity is concerned. If Deut. 28 is a late addition to the book, it may have been influenced either by the authors of the Jer. prose material,<sup>243</sup> or by Jeremiah himself. If it is not, either Jeremiah or his editors could have drawn on it. The methodological impasse remains.

What should be noted, however, is that in its *theology*, Jer. 24 diverges markedly from the Deuteronomistic literature.<sup>244</sup> Against Herrmann, Pohlmann points out that this chapter does

---

<sup>238</sup> Gottwald, *Introduction*, 400.

<sup>239</sup> Hyatt, ‘Deuteronomic Edition’, 253; Nicholson, *Preaching*, 110 n.1; cf. 115. Hyatt, unlike Nicholson, views the entire chapter as Deuteronomistic. But see McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 615-616

<sup>240</sup> J.V.M. Sturdy, ‘The Authorship of the “Prose Sermons” of Jeremiah’, in J.A. Emerton (ed.), *Prophecy: Essays Presented to Georg Fohrer on his Sixty-Fifth Birthday, 6 September 1980* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1980) 149-150. Since Bright, *Jeremiah*, 194, refers to “some verbal expansion in the course of transmission”, and earlier (lxxi-lxxii) attributes such expansion generally to Jeremiah’s disciples, this would seem to be his position also.

<sup>241</sup> Jones, *Jeremiah*, 327-328; Unterman, *Repentance to Redemption*, 66.

<sup>242</sup> Even Jones, *Jeremiah*, 318 refers to “some unexplained connection with Dt 28 in v. 9”.

<sup>243</sup> So H.W. Wolff, ‘Das Kerygma des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerks’, *ZAW* 73 (1961) 181; Sturdy, ‘Authorship’, 145-148.

<sup>244</sup> See for example H. Weippert’s analysis of the רעה / טוב polarity, *Die Prosareden des Jeremiabuches* (BZAW 132; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1973) 206-208. Pohlmann, *Studien*, 130, notes that despite the verbal affinities between 24.6 and 42.10, there are fundamental differences in outlook: “Kann umgekehrt ein und

not in fact provide alternatives at all,<sup>245</sup> while Raitt notes that in vv. 5-6, the use of טוֹב “to designate the content of God’s decision as regards an action of deliverance instead of an action of judgment needs to be carefully distinguished from the uses of טוֹב indicating God’s blessing in the Deuteronomistic historian”.<sup>246</sup> Indeed, even Nicholson concedes that in vv. 6-7, “a considerable advance has been made upon xviii. 7-10, for whilst it is still Israel’s ‘turning again’ which will secure forgiveness and restoration, such a ‘turning again’ is now assured by Yahweh himself who now takes the initiative so that Israel *will* ‘turn again’ ”.<sup>247</sup> For this reason, Unterman argues that vv. 6-7 reflect an *anti*-Deuteronomistic theology, since they negate the view of Deut. 30.1-10 and 1 Kgs. 8 that repentance is prerequisite for restoration.<sup>248</sup>

Consequently, there is more to be said for the view that Jer. 24 is a unity, whether entirely authentic or entirely inauthentic. Significantly, those who take the latter view<sup>249</sup> do so less because of its ‘Deuteronomistic’ character as its ideological stance.<sup>250</sup> Given such ferocious prophecies of doom as we find in 8.1-3 and 9.15-16, some find it incredible that Jeremiah could have entertained any offer of hope at all, least of all to Jehoiachin (cf. 22.24-30).<sup>251</sup> But equally, the *restriction* of salvation to the 597 exiles in ch. 24 is hard to reconcile with passages in which Jeremiah speaks of a hopeful future for others (27.12, 17; 42.9-11). Instead, the privileged position of the 597 exiles in ch. 24 is thought to reflect a later, sectarian viewpoint.

---

dieselbe Hand in Jer. 24 programmatisch das Heil auf die babylonische Gola beschränken, später aber an anderer Stellen (Jer. 42) dem ‘Rest’ im Lande doch noch eine Chance zugestehen?”.

<sup>245</sup> “Jer. 24 bietet nicht eine Wahl zwischen Heil oder Unheil, ist also nicht ‘von einer Alternative ähnlich denen in Kap. 12 und 18 bestimmt’, sondern verteilt vielmehr beides exklusiv auf zwei deutlich voneinander unterschiedene Gruppen. Nur die babylonische Gola wird mit Jahwes Heilshandeln rechnen dürfen.” (Pohlmann, *Studien*, 29). The quotation is from Herrmann, *Heilserwartungen*, 166.

<sup>246</sup> Raitt, ‘Jeremiah’s Deliverance Message’, 171.

<sup>247</sup> Nicholson, *Preaching*, 81.

<sup>248</sup> Unterman, *Repentance to Redemption*, 177; similarly, Lalleman-de Winkel, *Jeremiah in Prophetic Tradition*, 147.

<sup>249</sup> E.g., Duhm, *Jeremia*, 196-197; May, ‘Objective Approach’, 149; Hyatt, ‘Deuteronomic Edition’, 258; Thiel, *Redaktion 1 – 25*, 258-260; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 29; McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 612; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 483-484; Stipp, ‘Zedekiah’, 642-643.

<sup>250</sup> Thiel, *Redaktion 1 – 25*, 258, accepts that “der erste Teil des Kapitels zeigt sich relativ frei von D-Elementen”, but still designates vv. 1-5 as Deuteronomistic due to its similarity to 3.6-11.

<sup>251</sup> “The deportation has in some magical way turned the wicked king and his equally evil retinue into something fine and good, and now only those who remain are to be viewed as wicked.” (Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 408). See too May, ‘Objective Approach’, 149.

Finding a convincing post-exilic *Sitz im Leben* for this chapter, however, is not easy. One option would be to attribute it to Jews returning from Babylon late in the sixth century, seeking to advance their position in Jerusalem over and against those who had stayed there. But as Stipp points out:

The text . . . does not really discredit those who were not in exile: it flatly gainsays their existence . . . Of those remaining in Judah in 597, none can possibly have survived. There simply can be no competing 'illegitimate' group associated with Zedekiah. One wonders of what benefit a piece of literature like Jeremiah 24 might have been in *the factional feuds of early postexilic Judah*.<sup>252</sup>

Others see the fifth-century conflicts depicted in Ezra as a possible setting.<sup>253</sup> But although Ezra insists that only the exiles were qualified to rebuild the temple, it makes no distinction between those deported in 597 and 587, and indeed, it is difficult to imagine what relevance such a distinction would have had by that time.<sup>254</sup> Pohlmann, noting a similar rivalry between exiles and non-exiles in the work of the Chronicler, places Jer. 24 in the fourth century.<sup>255</sup> But again, why is it so particular in privileging only the 597 exiles? This, says Pohlmann, "remains unclear."<sup>256</sup> "I would read the vision of Jeremiah 24", wrote Carroll in 1997, "as reflecting pro-deportation values entertained in Jerusalem by *whomever in that community (unknown to us now)* would have had reasons for supporting *Babylonian or Persian parties*."<sup>257</sup> Two years later, however, Carroll argued that Jer. 24 "must reflect some ideological

---

<sup>252</sup> Stipp, 'Zedekiah', 642-643 (italics mine). Similarly, Pohlmann, *Studien*, 190, notes that Jer. 24 implies the complete evacuation of Judah after 587. But since in reality Judah remained inhabited after 587, such a mythology could not (in his opinion) have developed until much later.

<sup>253</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 196-197; May, 'Objective Approach', 149; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 483, 487; Stipp, 'Zedekiah', 643.

<sup>254</sup> As McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 614, rightly observes. The same point was made by Condamin, *Jérémie*, 209, regarding 29.16-20: "Il est difficile de comprendre le motif d'une pareille insertion après l'exil. La distinction entre les Juifs en exil à Babylone avec Jéchonias et ceux restés à Jérusalem avec Sédécias, n'avait plus de sens à cette époque."

<sup>255</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 190.

<sup>256</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 189.

<sup>257</sup> R.P. Carroll, 'Deportation and Diasporic Discourses in the Prophetic Literature', in Scott, *Exile*, 79. Here, Carroll suggests that such parties need not have been exiles themselves, but a group 'imagining' an exilic viewpoint.

elements in the *Persian-Greek periods*.<sup>258</sup> The phrase ‘hedging one’s bets’ does come to mind.<sup>259</sup>

In the nature of the case, it is impossible to prove the authenticity of Jer. 24.<sup>260</sup> It is worth bearing in mind, however, that this enigma of why it is so particular about the *first* wave of exiles to the exclusion of the second, is solved if we accept its authenticity; the reason it takes no account of the 587 exiles is because 587 hadn’t happened yet.

#### 4.5. Differentiation in Jer. 24.1-10: גלות יהודה / שארית ירושלם

Our exegetical study of 24.1-10 has shown that, whilst it makes no claims about the *merits* of the exilic and non-exilic communities, it presents a stark contrast concerning YHWH’s *plans* for these communities. For those exiled with Jehoiachin and now in Babylon, YHWH promises inward renewal and restoration to their homeland. For Zedekiah and his people still in Jerusalem, nothing but disaster awaits.

Within these two communities, no further distinctions are drawn. The text says nothing of any inner-group among the *Golah* who will not be restored, or of any in Jerusalem who will be spared. Less certain however is how we should read this black and white, undifferentiated language. Particularly in view of the explicit reference to the deportation of Jehoiachin and his compatriots in v. 1, some argue that it should be taken at face value, believing that the chapter reflects a conflict between ‘the Jehoiachin group’ and ‘the Zedekiah group’.<sup>261</sup> According to Carroll, “everybody outside a small group in Babylon is to be hounded until wiped out as a sign

---

<sup>258</sup> R.P. Carroll, ‘The Book of J. Intertextuality and Ideological Criticism’, in Diamond, O’Connor & Stulman, *Troubling Jeremiah*, 238.

<sup>259</sup> Similar assertions of a late date, with similar uncertainty as to details, is not uncommon. According to Stipp, ‘Zedekiah’, 643, “there is no convincing alternative to dating Jeremiah 24 in a period fairly distant from the exile, even though we lack evidence to ascertain its time of origin more precisely”. Likewise, Duhm, *Jeremia*, 196, confessed that “das Ganze giebt uns ein geschichtliches Rätsel auf, das wir schwerlich vollkommen lösen werden.” By contrast, Thiel, *Redaktion 1 – 25*, 261, sees ch. 24 as an *exilic* text, reflecting disappointment with Zedekiah; so too Applegate, ‘Fate of Zedekiah, Part 1’, 146.

<sup>260</sup> As is maintained by Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion*, 251; Jones, *Jeremiah*, 317-318; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 507; Unterman, *Repentance to Redemption*, 58-59. S. Mowinkel, *Zur Komposition des Buches Jeremia* (Videnskapsselskapets Skrifter. II. Hist.-Filos. Klasse, 5; Kristiania: Jacob Dybwad, 1914) 21, assigned all of 24.1-10 to the ‘A’ source.

<sup>261</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 214. R.P. Carroll, ‘The Myth of the Empty Land’, in D. Joblin & T. Pippin (eds.), *Ideological Criticism of Biblical Texts* (Semeia 59; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992) 86.



of YHWH's rejection of those left behind when Nebuchadrezzar took away Jeconiah and his companions."<sup>262</sup>

Other scholars have argued, however, that the text is not so indiscriminating in regard to the two communities as it at first appears.<sup>263</sup> Since YHWH does not say *when* he will fulfil his word, it is a moot point as to whether *any* of the exiles currently in Babylon will benefit. Thus Rudolph insists that, "braucht Kap. 24 nicht so verstanden zu werden, als ob dieselben Leute, die 598 fort mußten, wiederkehren werden (es ist von der Gola als Gesamtbegriff die Rede)."<sup>264</sup> And for Applegate, "it is significant . . . that no mention is made of Jehoiachin or his successors."<sup>265</sup> Meanwhile, as we have seen, YHWH's promise to restore the exiles in v. 7 may contain at least an element of conditionality, in which case the potential for future differentiation among the *Golah* is set up.

Insofar as YHWH's contrasting plans for the two communities is concerned, however, no explanation is given. With most scholars, we have interpreted לְטוֹבָה (v. 5) as referring to the divine purpose for the exiles, rather than their own character. This point is to be emphasised, since several commentators have sought to introduce a moral element into the rationale of this chapter. According to Volz,

Der Kern des Vergleichs liegt nicht im Charakter, sondern im Geschick (wie in Kp. 13). . . Allerdings ist das Sittliche bei den Propheten immer stillschweigende Voraussetzung. Wenn Jeremia die beiden Hälften der Judenschaft verglich, so mußte er den Eindruck bekommen, daß die Gola Jahwe mehr gefiel. Dort waren Priester wie Ezechiël, Beamte aus der guten Zeit Josias (vgl. 36.25), tüchtige Handwerker, ernstgesinnte Leute, die, nachdem sie sich in ihr Geschick gefunden hatten, eine geistige Heimat in der Fremde bauten. Demgegenüber erschien der gewissenlose, genußsüchtige Haufe in Jerusalem als verlorene Masse, als ein Korb voll widerlicher Feigen.<sup>266</sup>

Doubtless there were innocent and upright people among the exiles of 597, but there is no exegetical warrant for seeing this as the logic for the pro-*Golah* outlook of ch. 24. More recently, McKane has written that,

---

<sup>262</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 486.

<sup>263</sup> Even Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 214, concedes that ER was not able to rehabilitate Jehoiachin personally. And Carroll, 'Empty Land, 86, concedes: "Of course, Jeconiah's fate . . . is not necessarily any indicator of the future fate of the descendants of those who were deported along with him."

<sup>264</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 135.

<sup>265</sup> Applegate, 'Fate of Zedekiah, Part 1', 146.

<sup>266</sup> Volz, *Jeremia*, 248-249. Similar ideas are expressed by Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 137.

A concern to emphasize the aspect of ‘grace’ . . . is not beside the point, but it should not be carried so far as to deny that the likening of Jehoiachin and his group to good figs is a statement about their worth (cf. Jerome) and the likening of Zedekiah and his group to bad figs is a statement about their worthlessness. The assigning of different destinies has a relation to desert and is not an exercise of bare sovereignty.<sup>267</sup>

Again, though, the final sentence seems to ignore the plain testimony of the text, which has nothing to say about ‘desert’ at all. Kilpp may be nearer the truth in seeing the experience or non-experience of exile as the key to the logic of the text: “geht es nicht an erster Stelle um den Wohnort, sondern um das eingetroffene bzw. nicht eingetroffene Gericht”.<sup>268</sup> As we will see, this thought will come to expression later in Jer. 29.16. For now, however, the differentiation of גלות יהודה and שארית ירושלם in Jer. 24 seems to rest entirely on YHWH’s initiative.

## 5. Conclusions: Differentiation in Jer. 21 – 24

In this chapter, we have examined three messages of salvation and judgement in the unit Jer. 21 – 24. In the first (21.1-10), Jeremiah announces that YHWH has handed Jerusalem over to the Babylonians, but promises that any who abandon the city before it falls will live. The second (23.1-8) states that YHWH will punish Israel’s leaders for their misrule of the now-dispersed people, whom he will bring back to the land under a new king. In the third (24.1-10), YHWH promises the exiles in Babylon ‘a new heart’ and homecoming, but total destruction for Zedekiah and those remaining in post-597 Jerusalem.

Each passage, in other words, sets out its salvation / judgement message according to a particular ‘polarity’ of inner-Israelite / Judean groups. The question we can now ask is how they are related. The fact that they are so closely positioned in a specific literary unit strongly suggests some sort of hermeneutical dialogue between them, but it is hard to see what this is, since the three passages are not in chronological order, and address different situations.

One notable attempt to answer this question has come from Pohlmann. He argues that 21.1-10 and 24.1-10 – both created by the editor of GR – stand in a ‘question and answer’ relationship, the latter passage categorically destroying the glimmer of hope that was (artificially) raised in the former. Pohlmann writes:

---

<sup>267</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 609.

<sup>268</sup> Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 38.

Jer. 21.1-10 versetzt den Leser gleichsam in eine Erwartungshaltung, indem hier implizit die Frage nach der Möglichkeit eines weiteren künftigen Heilshandelns aufgeworfen wird. Jer. 24 gibt darauf die Antwort und stellt fest, daß die Heilsgeschichte allein die Gola zum Ziel haben wird.<sup>269</sup>

Our reading of these two passages, however, does not support this. Whilst ch. 21 affirms (as emphatically as ch. 24) the disaster about to befall Jerusalem, vv. 8-9 explicitly promise 'life' for those who surrender to the Babylonians. Whilst we have emphasised the restrained nature of this promise, it still provides a clear alternative to the prospect of death ('sword, famine and plague') that dominates 24.8-10. Thus, for ch. 24 to serve the purpose Pohlmann attributes to it, it would need to show how the offer made in 21.8-9 was not actually taken up. In fact, it does not address the issue – unsurprisingly, given that it appears to be set several years before the siege of 588-587.

A quite different reading of 21.1-10 and 24.1-10 is offered by Applegate, who argues that the latter passage actually serves to ameliorate the severity of the former: "Although Jer. xxiv.8-10 threatens to drive the Judahites into exile by sword, famine and pestilence, it does not threaten total extermination, and so attenuates the extreme predictions of xxi.5-7. Annihilation is replaced by exile."<sup>270</sup> This too, though, is unconvincing; there is in fact no mention of exile in 24.8-10, and the words 'till they perish from the land' look very much like a prophecy of total extermination.

In fact, the hermeneutical relationship between these two 'frame passages' may be simpler than either Pohlmann or Applegate imply. Especially when due allowance is made for their differences in historical context (587 / sometime post-597), genre (prophetic oracle / vision report) and audience (Jerusalem / Jeremiah), it is arguable that ch. 24 functions as a *general summary* of YHWH's stance towards Jerusalem, which is stated more precisely in 21.1-10. Admittedly, it is curious that the more specific (and chronologically later) passage is placed first in the unit. This arrangement may, however, have been influenced by the shape of the book at the point when both passages were added. As we noted at the start of this chapter, 21.1-10 picks up key motifs from chs. 19-20 (siege, Babylon, 'strike with the sword'), making its present setting highly appropriate. Meanwhile, the vision report of ch. 24, set as it is in the **היכל יהוה**

---

<sup>269</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 42.

<sup>270</sup> Applegate, 'Fate of Zedekiah, Part 1', 150.

(24.1),<sup>271</sup> continues the theme of private divine revelation that figures prominently in 23.16-40; see, for instance, the references to ‘standing in the council of YHWH’ (עמד בסוד יהוה, 23.18, 22), and the rebuke of prophets who ‘dream’ (חלם, 23.25-32).

If, however, 21.1-10 can be synthesised satisfactorily with 24.1-10, the hermeneutical relationship between 23.1-8 and 24.1-10 is more problematic. For whereas 21.1-10 defines salvation merely in terms of personal survival, 23.1-8 and 24.1-10 both hold out the prospect of restoration to the land and spiritual renewal. Yet while the latter restricts this promise to the exiles in Babylon, the former sees geographical and historical details as immaterial; the two-fold שם (אתם) (אחם) (23.3, 8) is emphatically comprehensive. We thus have two texts defining salvation in similar terms, but seemingly in conflict regarding its recipients.<sup>272</sup>

Now it is an interesting feature of Pohlmann’s study that, despite his description of Jer. 21 – 24 as a ‘frame composition’, he completely ignores everything between 21.10 and 24.1, including the salvation oracle of 23.1-8. It is the opening and concluding sections alone that are ‘programmatically’ for the rest of the book.<sup>273</sup> Since we do not read chs. 21 and 24 without also reading ch. 23, this oversight is clearly a serious methodological weakness. Seitz also says little about the prophecy of 23.1-8, but in a brief parenthetical comment he ascribes it – along with 24.4-7 and other passages – to the Exilic Redaction, since it “focuses on a future involving the return of the exiles”.<sup>274</sup> In so doing, however, he blurs the distinction between the universality of 23.1-8 and the particularity of 24.1-10.

Is a combined reading of these two prophecies possible which recognises this difference between them? As an alternative to Pohlmann’s approach, let us consider the hermeneutical effects of giving 23.1-8 the ‘final word’ in this unit. There are, indeed, two good reasons for doing so. For one thing, the fact that 23.1-8 stands at the literary heart of the unit suggests also its conceptual centrality. For another, of all the three passages which we have examined, 23.1-8 has the broadest historical horizon. Since it is stated that YHWH has *already* scattered the people (23.3), the text’s perspective is clearly from sometime *after* the disaster predicted in chs.

---

<sup>271</sup> See our earlier discussion on the possible significance of the term היכל יהוה rather than בית יהוה.

<sup>272</sup> As we will see in the next chapter, a similar tension arises in the MT plusses of 29.14, 16-20.

<sup>273</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 30.

<sup>274</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 224; see too his brief comments concerning chs. 22 – 23 in general (226-227).

21 and 24; that is to say, it accommodates the judgement of 587 within its own prophecy, recognising the reality of disaster but asking ‘what then?’

When 23.1-8 is read in this way, the message of ch. 24 is significantly reformulated. Firstly, the ‘leader / people’ polarity of 23.1-4 removes the ambiguity (noted earlier) as to whether the promises of 24.5-7 are for *all* the exiles in Babylon. It now appears that they do not apply to Jehoiachin, nor perhaps to others of the ruling elite. Secondly, YHWH’s promise to restore the people *שם הרחתי אתם* (v. 3) anticipates his warning in 24.9 that the people of Jerusalem will be a byword and a curse *בכל המקומות אשר אדיחם*. By means of this verbal parallel, those whom YHWH will scatter in ch. 24 are effectively subsumed amongst those whom he will restore in ch. 23. Consequently, 23.1-8 can be seen as relativising ch. 24. Conceding that YHWH has indeed scattered his people, it looks ahead to a restoration that takes in the people of former Israel, the Judean deportees of 597 and 587, and even those who ‘dwell in the land of Egypt’ (24.8).

Summing up, then, we can say that despite the differences between the three salvation and judgement oracles in chs. 21 – 24, a synthesised reading of them in the final form of the unit is possible. Hermeneutically, such a synthesis is facilitated by what we may call the ‘silences’ of the two ‘frame units’. 21.1-10 does not *say* what will happen to those who leave the city (other than that they will ‘live’), thereby allowing them to be accommodated within the salvation oracle of 23.3-8. 24.1-7 does not *say* whether Jehoiachin is among those whom YHWH will restore, thereby leaving room for his inclusion among the judgement on the leaders in 23.1-2 (cf. 22.24-30). 24.8-10 does not *say* what will happen to the people of Judah after they are ‘scattered’, thereby enabling them to be subsumed within the ‘scattered’ people whom YHWH promises to restore in 23.3-4. In other words, 23.1-8 takes as its starting point a scenario not addressed by the other two passages. This may (or may not) violate their original intention, but allows us to read the literary unit chs. 21 – 24 not as privileging the 597 exiles to the exclusion of all others (so Pohlmann), but rather the entire *Diaspora*, minus their leaders.

At the same time, it may be argued that giving 23.1-8 the controlling voice in chs. 21 – 24 inevitably results in a rather flat, one-sided interpretation of the unit, rather than the ‘hermeneutical dialogue’ to which we referred in chapter 1. Is it possible instead to bring these three passages into a more open interpretative relationship, in which they are heard as equal voices in debate (or even argument)? We suggest that it is, if they are seen as contributing to a

discussion concerning divine judgement and human culpability, and we will conclude this chapter by outlining the basis for such an interpretation.

As we have seen, although 21.1-10 and 24.1-10 are not completely univocal, they share the view that YHWH's wrath is against all Jerusalem; its king, officials, people and even animals. Precisely because of the totality of the disaster coming upon the city, only those who flee its walls may hope to live. By contrast, 23.1-8 focuses entirely upon the nation's leaders as deserving of YHWH's punishment, in contrast to the ordinary people. We thus have two perspectives in tension with one another. However, as we noted earlier in this chapter (§1.2), standing between 21.1-10, 23.1-8 and 24.1-10 we have two further blocks of material, each containing an collection of oracles (21.11 – 22.30 and 23.9-40). We can now seek to show how these two anthologies function as a bridge between these three passages, thereby bringing them into dialogue.

As its superscription, *לְבֵית מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה* (21.11) suggests, the first section contains warnings and criticisms of several kings and their officials, culminating in a scathing attack on Jehoiakim. Here too, therefore, the text places the burden of guilt on Judah's leaders. This specificity is sharpened by references to socially vulnerable groups whom the kings are to defend: 'the victim of robbery' (*גְּזוּלָה*), 'the alien' (*גֵּר*), 'the orphan' (*יְתוּם*) and 'the widow' (*אַלְמָנָה*) (21.12; 22.3) – groups whom, elsewhere in the OT, YHWH pledges to rescue and vindicate. Consequently, in its allocation of moral responsibility the text implicitly distinguishes between Judah's leaders, and her people.

Elsewhere in this section, however, the identity of the addressee is more ambiguous. In contrast to the message to the royal house in 21.12, the feminine participle *יֹשֶׁבֶת* in vv. 13-14 suggests that here it is 'lady Jerusalem' – i.e., the whole city – who is in mind.<sup>275</sup> Consistent with this is the fact that the charge is now one of complacency, rather than social injustice. Similarly, whilst 22.6 is initially directed *עַל בֵּית מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה*, the oracle that follows (22.6b-7) envisages the destruction of the whole city, which it explains in terms that strongly suggest the entire nation is in mind: *עֲזָבוּ אֶת בְּרִית יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ לְאֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וַיַּעֲבְדוּם*. Again, after

---

<sup>275</sup> Cf. McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 512-513: "There is an allusion to the strong, defensive position of Jerusalem and to the defiant confidence which this awakens in its inhabitants who feel secure against every threat of military attack and penetration." (513).

the oracle against Jehoiakim (22.13-19), 22.20-23 reverts to feminine singular language,<sup>276</sup> thus addressing all Jerusalem.<sup>277</sup> In other words, 21.10 – 22.30 oscillates between singling out Judah's leaders for criticism, and indicting the whole city.

A similar ambiguity can be observed in the section headed לנבאים (23.9-32). Here, the moral focus is on the religious leaders of Israel; chiefly its prophets, although priests are also mentioned in v. 11. By their immoral conduct and false messages of hope, they mislead (תעה Hiph., vv. 13, 32) the people, who are (as in 23.1-8) described as 'my people' (עמי, vv. 13, 22, 27, 32). Nevertheless, throughout it is made clear that the rest of the people are also guilty; they 'despise' (נאין) YHWH (v. 17) and 'walk in the stubbornness of their hearts' (הלך בשררות לבו, v. 17). Their ways and deeds are evil (רע, v. 22b). This shifting focus from prophets to people is particularly evident in vv. 13-14, which begins by castigating 'the prophets of Jerusalem'. Not only do they commit adultery and falsehood (נאוף והלך בשקר, v. 14b) but they also fail to turn 'a man from his wickedness' (איש מרעתו, v. 14c). There is thus some ambiguity in YHWH's comment, היו לי כלם כסדרם (v. 14d). Are 'they' the prophets or the people? The uncertainty is only removed in the following clause: וישביה כעמרה. Jerusalem as a whole is like Gomorrah. Indeed, in the final section (vv. 33-39), the people appear to be positively colluding with the prophets.<sup>278</sup> Overall, the perspective of the entire passage seems to be well summed up in v. 15: כי מאת נביאי ירושלם יצאה חנפה לכל הארץ.

Consequently, these two sections – b and b' in the earlier outline – create a degree of continuity between the frame units and the centre. On the one hand, by focussing on the evils of the kings and the prophets and acknowledging the existence of the poor and the weak, they modify the indiscriminate condemnation of Zedekiah and his people in chs. 21 and 24. On the other hand, they retain, more clearly than 23.1-8, the awareness that the entire land is guilty, as well as its leaders.

---

<sup>276</sup> Cf. the imperatives חגי עלי, צעקי (v. 20); the verbs חבשי ונכלמתי (v. 22); and the nouns מאהביך, 'your lovers' (vv. 20, 22), שלוחיך, 'your security' (v. 21), דרכך מנעוריך, 'your way from youth' (v. 21; cf. 2.1!), רעתך, 'your evil' (v. 22) and רעיך, 'your neighbours' (v. 22).

<sup>277</sup> 'Your neighbours' are then either other Judean princes and their cities (Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 123) or more likely, foreign nations with whom Judah had formed alliances (Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 338).

<sup>278</sup> This is a notoriously complex passage, as even Thompson admits (*Jeremiah*, 506). But see McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 603: "The supposition that there is nothing in vv. 34-40 but terminological fussiness or tedious word-chopping or incredible representation is mistaken. There is an attempt to recapture the significance of the conflict between שלום and doom prophecy in the time of Jeremiah."

We have thus seen in chs. 21 – 24 three salvation / judgement oracles, each with its own group polarity. Those who stay in Jerusalem, and those who go out to Babylon; the shepherds and the flock; and the 597 exiles and the remnant of Jerusalem. What is clear, however, is that nowhere are these groups sub-divided further. No distinctions are made (although they may not be forbidden) among those who do not 'go out' from Jerusalem, or among those who are currently exiled in Babylon. As we will see, subsequent sections of Jer. introduce precisely such inner-differentiations.



## Chapter 3: Differentiation in Jeremiah 27 – 29

### 1. Introduction to Jer. 27 – 29

#### 1.1. The Literary Setting of Jer. 27 – 29

##### The Macro-Unit Jer. 26 – 45

Both in MT and OG, Jer. 27 – 29[34 – 36] constitutes the first sub-section of the macro-unit 26 – 45[33 – 51]. This is a unit which, despite the diversity of its sources and lack of chronological order, has been organised according to a particular pattern. The primary indication of this lies in the dating of its contents. With the exception of chs. 30 – 31 (widely seen as a late addition to Jer.), all the material in this section is explicitly set in the reign of either Jehoiakim or Zedekiah (or, in the case of chs. 40 – 44, in the post-Zedekiah period).<sup>1</sup> Although the narratives set in Jehoiakim's reign (chs. 26, 35, 36, 45) comprise only four of the twenty chapters, they form the structural pillars around which the rest of the material has been placed.<sup>2</sup> Before we focus on chs. 27 – 29 themselves, therefore, it is worth giving some attention to this broader literary framework.

The four 'pillar' chapters form two corresponding pairs; 26 / 35 and 36 / 45. Both pairs, we suggest, depict *YHWH's judgement on Judah in transition*, as it moves from being conditional to certain.<sup>3</sup> Hence, the initial chapters in each pair (26 and 36) begin by summarising YHWH's word to the people: YHWH is planning disaster (26.6; 36.3) and his

---

<sup>1</sup> This is true even of chs. 32 – 33, which begin with the story of Jeremiah's purchase of the field in the tenth year of Zedekiah's reign (32.1) and are set against the backdrop of the Babylonian siege (32.24-29; 33.1-5).

<sup>2</sup> J.R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric* (SBLDS 18; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975) 107-108, also sees the Jehoiakim material in chs. 25, 26, 35, 36 as chiastically arranged. Rofé, 'Arrangement', 390-398, treats the references to Jehoiakim and Zedekiah as structural markers within chs. 25 – 36, while Rosenberg, 'Jeremiah and Ezekiel', 194, concludes that in chs. 20 – 40 "the reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah are interspersed in something of a checkerboard pattern".

<sup>3</sup> According to M. Kessler, 'Jeremiah Chapters 26 – 45 Reconsidered', *JNES* 27 (1968) 84, "the profound difference between (chs. 26 and 36) is that the *רעה* mentioned in 26.3 is represented as contingent there, but in 36.3 as inevitable, as a result of the people's failure to hear Yahweh's prophet." But this overlooks the fact that judgement is still contingent at the start of ch. 36, and underestimates the significance of the *king's* failure to listen.

wrath is great (36.7). Nevertheless, there is still hope, as indicated by the term אִילִי (26.3; 36.3, 7);<sup>4</sup> perhaps the people will listen and repent, in which case YHWH will turn from bringing disaster (26.3) and forgive them (36.3). Both chapters then highlight the divided response of those who hear this message (26.16; 36.24-25)<sup>5</sup> before focussing on the figure of Jehoiakim, whose relentless pursuit of the prophet Uriah (26.20-23) anticipates his contemptuous burning of Baruch's scroll (36.21-26).<sup>6</sup>

By contrast, chs. 35 and 45 portray a situation in which the time for repentance has passed and judgement is certain. YHWH's promise of blessing on the Rechabites (35.18-19) contrasts with his declaration, "I am bringing on Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil I spoke against them" (35.17), a warning repeated after Jehoiakim's burning of the scroll (36.31). The reference back to this event in 45.1 also interprets YHWH's threat to "overthrow what I have planted and uproot what I have planted" (45.4) as referring to his judgement on Judah in the time of Jehoiakim.<sup>7</sup> We conclude, therefore, that in its present form, Jer. 26 – 45 is best viewed as comprising two sub-sections, chs. 26 – 35 and 36 – 45.<sup>8</sup> Both are made up mostly of material from the time of Zedekiah, but are framed by narratives which identify the actions of Jehoiakim as decisive in Judah's downfall.

---

<sup>4</sup> Compare YHWH's rejection of Zedekiah's hopeful אִילִי in 21.2.

<sup>5</sup> Noted by J. Applegate, "Peace, Peace, When There is no Peace". Redactional Integration of Prophecy of Peace into the Judgement of Jeremiah", in Curtis & Römer, *Book of Jeremiah*, 73.

<sup>6</sup> According to Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 101, Jehoiakim's response is "paradigmatisch für die des Volkes". Yet while his action is decisive for the fate of the nation, the narrator makes it clear that there were other voices urging a different response.

<sup>7</sup> As we will see later, in its present location ch. 45 serves a number of functions; it rounds off the narrative of the flight to Egypt (chs. 40 – 44), recalls the salvation oracle to Ebed-Melech (39.15-18), and (in MT) introduces the oracles against the nations (chs. 46 – 51).

<sup>8</sup> A similar analysis is advanced in detail by Rietzschel, *Urrolle*, 95-122, though he limits the second of his 'traditions blocks' to chs. 36 – 44. Also seeing ch. 36 as *introducing* what follows are Rudolph, *Jeremia*, xvii, and Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 102. Most scholars see ch. 36 as *concluding* its section; e.g., Volz, *Jeremia*, xlili-xlv; Kessler, 'Jeremiah Chapters 26 – 45 Reconsidered', 83; Hobbs, 'Some Remarks', 193; Nicholson, *Preaching*, 106-107; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 254; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 30; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 510; McConville, *Judgment and Promise*, 111; Applegate, 'Peace, Peace', 73. Other commentators are ambivalent on this point. Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 338, entitles chs. 36 – 45 'the Baruch Document', but admits, "it may well be that ch. 36 should not be grouped with the following materials." (n.1). According to Jones, *Jeremiah*, 337, "chapter 36 remains an enigma. From some points of view it might be regarded as a prelude to chapters 37 – 45. From others (which seem more cogent) it appears to be the concluding narrative of chapters 1 – 35."

Characterising these four framing chapters is a pronounced interest in questions of judgement and culpability. On the first point, we find here the same emphasis on the *totality* of judgement that we saw in chs. 1 – 20. Jeremiah addresses his call for repentance to the nation ('all the cities of Judah', 26.2; 'the house of Judah', 36.3), and it is the nation that stands under YHWH's wrath (35.17; 36.31b; 45.4-5). Granted, YHWH promises the Rechabites that they will always have a man to 'stand before' him (35.19), but they appear to be an external foil for Judah, rather than a genuinely exceptive element within it;<sup>9</sup> hence, their commendation is for loyalty to their forefather, rather than to YHWH and his prophets.

On the question of culpability, however, the four frame chapters are more ambiguous. Ch. 35 concludes with the unqualified statement, 'this people has not listened to me' (35.17), a charge repeated in 36.31. A more nuanced picture emerges, however, in chs. 26 and 36, which are careful to note the varied responses to Jeremiah's message, and to lay chief blame at the feet (or hands) of Jehoiakim. When Jeremiah is arrested for prophesying against Jerusalem (26.10-11), 'some of the elders of the land' (מִזְקְנֵי הָאָרֶץ) recall how Hezekiah had responded to Micah's warning of disaster by seeking YHWH's favour (26.17-19), while Ahikam son of Shaphan also comes to Jeremiah's defence (26.24). In 36.25, Jehoiakim's officials (שָׂרִים), Elnathan, Delaiah and Gemariah, 'urge' (פָּנֵעַ Hiph.) the king not to burn Baruch's scroll. Taken together, therefore, these four chapters affirm that Judah has not listened to YHWH, but certain individuals have.

This depiction of YHWH's word creating an inner-Judean division marks a significant development within the book. Stulman comments on ch. 26:

For the first time in the book, the message of Jeremiah receives an ambivalent reception . . . Such conflict and ambivalence foreshadow the texture and ethos of the second scroll as a whole. A faithful few will hear and be receptive to the words of the prophet, while the multitudes remain defiant and recalcitrant.<sup>10</sup>

Hobbs makes a similar observation in regard to chs. 26 – 36:

In these chapters, the focus of attention seems to be the personnel of the city of Jerusalem, who had been generally attacked in the first section. Now the accusations become more specific, and the reaction of various groups within the capital city to the prophet and his word become clear as the section progresses.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> The precise identity of the Rechabites is shrouded in uncertainty; 1 Chron. 2.55 identifies them as a Kenite clan. See the discussion in Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 195-196.

<sup>10</sup> Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos*, 65.

<sup>11</sup> Hobbs, 'Some Remarks', 193.

In fact, it is doubtful whether ‘the second scroll as a whole’ does portray the divergent reactions that Stulman and Hobbs believe. Although this section is more specific in naming particular individuals and groups, a closer reading reveals that chs. 26 and 36 are unique in depicting one group responding positively to YHWH’s word while another responds negatively. Nevertheless, the generalising / differentiating perspectives in these frame chapters supplies a significant hermeneutical context for what lies in between, including chs. 27 – 29.

#### The Different Settings of MT 27 – 29 and OG 34 – 36

Whilst MT and OG agree in placing 27 – 29 at the start of the macro-unit 26 – 45, they diverge sharply in their placement of the latter as a whole. In MT, chs. 26 – 45 constitute the second macro-unit of the book, following chs. 1 – 25. In OG, however, they form the third and final major division of the book, being preceded by the Oracles against the Nations (OAN).

How do these different macro-structures affect our reading of chs. 27 – 29[34 – 36]? Undergirding the outlook of these three chapters is the belief in YHWH’s worldwide sovereignty. By his power he has made the whole earth, and may thus subjugate its nations to whomever he pleases (27.5). On this basis, he instructs both Judah and her neighbours to serve the king of Babylon (27.6-11), while also indicating that the duration of Babylonian rule is limited (29.10; cf. MT 27.7, 22). By preceding this section with the oracles against the nations (including, of course, the oracle against Babylon), OG connects YHWH’s ultimate judgement with his ordering of present affairs. Both are international in their scope. The sequence may seem odd, but in this way the *provisionality* of the need to submit to Babylon (27.8-15) and to pray for the welfare of Babylon (29.7) is emphasised.

The placement in OG may also explain the wording of 29.1, וְאֵלֶּה דְבָרֵי הַסֵּפֶר; OG 36.1, και οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι της βιβλιου. The use of the article here is striking, since this is the first mention of the letter (cf. 51.60, סֵפֶר אֶחָד). True, Barr has shown that the Hebrew article may be used with a previously unmentioned noun;<sup>12</sup> in particular, “when someone writes something down, and though there has been no previous mention of a book or document which ‘determine’ the noun, we nevertheless find that it is written with article, and never as *b<sup>e</sup>-seper* without

---

<sup>12</sup> J. Barr, ‘Determination and the Definite Article’, *JSS* 34 (1989) 307-335; see too Waltke & O’Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 243.

article.”<sup>13</sup> We should, however, at least consider the possibility that in 29[36].1, the article is being used to distinguish this ספר from another. Such a distinction is quite explicable if, as OG implies, its *Vorlage* contained an *earlier* reference to a ספר (βιβλιον) sent by Jeremiah to Babylon, namely, that which contained the prophecy of her destruction (OG 28.59-64 = MT 51.60). The ספר to the exiles is then being contrasted with the ספר to Babylon, both being sent via a delegation from Zedekiah. An even more intriguing situation arises if, as Rietzschel has argued, OG reflects the original placement of the OAN but MT reflects their original sequence.<sup>14</sup> Since MT places the oracle against Babylon last, this would mean that the report of the ספר given to Seraiah immediately prefaced chs. 27 – 29.<sup>15</sup>

## 1.2. Distinctiveness and Coherence: Jer. 27 – 29 as a Unit

Within this macro-section, the delineation of chs. 27 – 29 as a self-contained literary unit is widely accepted.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, some scholars believe that it circulated as an independent ‘booklet’ before being combined with other Jeremiah traditions.<sup>17</sup> A number of features give these three

---

<sup>13</sup> Barr, ‘Determination’, 313, citing Ex. 17.14; Num. 5.23; 1 Sam. 10.25; Isa. 34.4. But this seems to be the exception rather than the rule; see, e.g., 2 Sam. 11.14; 1 Kgs. 21.8; 2 Kgs. 5.5; 10.1, 6; 20.12; 2 Chron. 32.17; Est. 1.22; 3.13.

<sup>14</sup> Rietzschel, *Urrolle*, 45; similarly, Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 228; tentatively, McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 1110.

<sup>15</sup> In fact, the prominence of ספרים in the second half of the OG *Vorlage* is striking. Here we have the ספר containing the OAN (25.14 – 32.24; cf. 25.13), including the ספר Seraiah takes to Babylon; the ספר Jeremiah sends to the exiles (36.1-32); a ספר containing prophecies of salvation (37.1 – 40.13), including the field-purchase narrative of ch. 39 with its references to הספר המקנה; the story of Baruch’s two ספרים (43.1-32); and a final reference to Baruch’s first ספר (51.31-35). This also makes the LXX location of Bar. immediately after Jer. thoroughly appropriate, and its opening words underline the connection: και οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι του βιβλιου ους εγραψεν Βαρουχ (1.1).

<sup>16</sup> In addition to those cited below, see Volz, *Jeremia*, 255; T.W. Overholt, *The Threat of Falsehood: A Study in the Theology of the Book of Jeremiah* (SBT 16; London: SCM, 1970) esp. 27-30; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 1, 114; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 528.

<sup>17</sup> E.g., Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 147 (“als Kampfschrift gegen falsche Propheten”); H. Kremers, ‘Leidensgemeinschaft mit Gott im Alten Testament. Eine Untersuchung der ‘biographischen’ Berichte im Jeremiabuch’, *Ev.T.* 13 (1953) 129f; Nicholson, *Preaching*, 93; Thiel, *Redaktion* 26 – 45, 5 n.1; G. Wanke, *Untersuchungen zur sogenannten Baruchschrift* (BZAW 122; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1971) 58 n.62; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 523-524; E. Tov, ‘The Literary History of the Book of Jeremiah in the Light of its Textual History’, in J.H. Tigay (ed.), *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985) 211-237; Keown et al., *Jeremiah* 26 – 52, 35-36. But see to the contrary Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 236 n.165.

chapters internal coherence, while also setting them apart from the rest of the book. These are well-documented and can be summarised as follows.

i) Orthography: The spelling נבוכדנאצר (27.6, 8, 20; 28.3; 29.1, 3) is here preferred to the form נבוכדראצר found elsewhere in Jer.<sup>18</sup> (and Ezek.). Other proper names, which elsewhere consistently have the long ending יהו, take here the short ending יה; e.g., ירמיה (27.1; 28.5, etc.; 29.1), חנניה (28.1, 5, etc), יכניה (28.4, 20; 29.2), צדקיה (27.12; 28.1, 29.3). However, this pattern breaks down in 29.21-32,<sup>19</sup> where long and short forms appear.

ii) Vocabulary: Although the designation of Jeremiah as הנביא is a feature of the MT rather than OG, it is clear that both MT and the OG *Vorlage* in these three chapters repeatedly employ the title הנביא for Jeremiah's opponents (OG itself paraphrases with ψευδοπροφητης). Also prominent is the verb שלח (לא), which seems to function like a catchword; it predicates YHWH's word (29.19), the prophets (27.15; 28.15; 29.9, 31), people (29.3, 20) and various 'messages' (27.3; 29.1, 25, 28, 31); cf. also the threat הגני משלח (28.16; 29.17). D.L. Smith has noted how the motif of prison, yokes and restraint also pervades these chapters.<sup>20</sup>

iii) Historical context: Despite textual problems in MT 27.1 and 28.1 (see below, §2.2), the events of chs. 27 – 28 appear to be set in the fourth year (בשנת הרבעית) of Zedekiah, i.e., 594/3. The date of the correspondence in ch. 29 is less specific (אחרי צאת יכניה המלך והנבירה) (מירושלם; cf. 24.1), but it is evidently some time between 597 and 587.<sup>21</sup> No other material in Jer. is dated to this period. This historical setting may account for the undercurrent of speculation about the early return of the exiles and the possibility of revolt.<sup>22</sup> The Babylonian

---

<sup>18</sup> The only instance of the נ spelling in this section is in 29.21. 28.11, 14 read נבכדנאצר, with *qibb ts* replacing *š req*.

<sup>19</sup> Note however the long forms צדקיהו, 27.3, and יאושיהו, 27.1.

<sup>20</sup> D.L. Smith, *The Religion of the Landless: The Social Context of the Babylonian Exile* (Bloomington: Meyer Stone, 1989) 128. Jones, *Jeremiah*, 346, also sees "the theme of the yoke" as uniting these three chapters.

<sup>21</sup> Overholt, *Threat of Falsehood*, 29-30, believes all three chapters are in accurate chronological sequence.

<sup>22</sup> So Volz, *Jeremia*, 255-256; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 118; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 36. But cf. Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 530: "the difficulties of demonstrating a specific set of events which would account for a coalition against Babylon after 597 . . . must raise questions about the historicity of 27 – 28".

Chronicle records a domestic revolt against Nebuchadnezzar in late 595 / early 594,<sup>23</sup> which may have been seen by Judah and her neighbours as an opportunity to rebel.

iv) Theme: The conflict between true and false prophecy is widely seen as *the* theme of Jer. 27 – 29.<sup>24</sup> In ch. 27, Jeremiah urges the foreign envoys, Zedekiah, and the people to submit to Nebuchadnezzar, and to reject the message of their own prophets (vv. 9-10; 14-15; 16). Ch. 28 describes the confrontation between Jeremiah and Hananiah (both of whom are described as ‘prophets’) regarding who has the word of YHWH. Without pre-empting our study of ch. 29, it is clear that Jeremiah is here in conflict with the Judean prophets in Babylon (vv. 8-9, 15, 21-24, 31-32). There is a corresponding stock of expressions: YHWH has ‘not sent’ the prophets (לֹא שְׁלַח, 27.15; 28.15; 29.9, 32; cf. 28.9); the people are told ‘not to listen’ (אַל תִּשְׁמְעוּ, 27.9, 14, 16, 17; 29.8) to them, because they are ‘prophesying falsehood’ (שִׁקְרַי נְבוֹאִים, 27.10; 15, 16; 29.9, 21; cf. 29.23). Though found elsewhere in Jer., these terms are especially concentrated in chs. 27 – 29.

v) Depiction of Jeremiah: After the dominant impression of him as broken, marginalised and ignored in the first scroll of the book, Jeremiah appears in these three chapters as a more powerful, authoritative figure. Carroll writes:

In this cycle he is clearly the leader of both communities, advising, condemning and encouraging the social leaders of the people in Jerusalem and Babylon . . . His role, therefore, in the cycle is that of an authoritative figure moving about Jerusalem, advising foreign nations of foreign policy (27), confronting an anti-Babylonian prophet (28), and proclaiming a policy of co-operation with the Babylonians to the Judaeans now living in Babylon.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Attempts to correlate Jer. 27 – 28 with the Babylonian Chronicle are complicated, however, by the textual corruption of 27.1 and 28.1. See further Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 47-48.

<sup>24</sup> E.g., Volz, *Jeremia*, 255; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 147; Nicholson, *Preaching*, 94-95; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 5; and especially Overholt, *Threat of Falsehood*, 24-48. Cf. however McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, cxxxviii-cxxxix. According to Kessler, ‘Jeremiah 26 – 45 Reconsidered’, 83, chs. 27 – 29 are unified by the theme of ‘peace’: “We might almost say that chap. 28 is the catalyst for Jeremiah’s shalom oracles; while Hananiah’s brand of imminent shalom is opposed, in Yahweh’s plan as represented by his true prophet there is also shalom – beyond Judah’s inevitable calamities which Yahweh has ordained as necessary punishment for their disobedience.”

<sup>25</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 555. This view of Jeremiah as an *authoritative* figure is perhaps less obvious in ch. 28, where Hananiah appears to win the dual (cf. v. 11); but even here, Jeremiah is subsequently vindicated (vv. 12-17).

Consequently, Overholt's conclusion that "in both style and content these chapters form a coherent, self-contained unit of narrative material"<sup>26</sup> seems well-founded.

This is not to say that they were composed as a unity. Chs. 27 and 28 both describe Jeremiah's confrontation with the prophets in Jerusalem, but 27.2 – 28.1 is written in the first person (cf. 27.1!) while 28.2-17 is in the second person. Ch. 29 stands apart from both, by virtue of its audience (the exiles in Babylon) and genre (written, rather than oral, prophecy). We should probably assume, therefore, that this unit has been compiled from different sources.<sup>27</sup> Jones sums up the matter well: "The differences are just sufficient to demand some such variety of origin; but the homogeneity of them equally points to a single redactor who has stamped the whole with the singleness of his own purpose."<sup>28</sup> We will discuss questions of composition and redaction for chs. 27 – 28 and 29 in more detail when we look at these respective sections.

It might be argued that ch. 26 belongs within this sub-section.<sup>29</sup> According to Jones, "the editorial unity of chapters 26 – 29 in general and chapter 29 in particular is shown . . . by the pervasive theme of false prophecy and the prose of the familiar prose tradition",<sup>30</sup> while Carroll affirms that "the triple strata of 26, priests, prophets and people . . . allow 26 to be considered as a preface to 27 – 29."<sup>31</sup> Certainly, the picture of the Judean community divided over Jeremiah's words (see above) foreshadows the question underlying chs. 27 – 28: Whom will the people believe? However, whilst these links with ch. 26 are certainly significant, chs. 27 – 29 are clearly demarcated by being set in the reign of Zedekiah, rather than of Jehoiakim.

---

<sup>26</sup> Overholt, *Threat of Falsehood*, 27.

<sup>27</sup> For surveys of opinion, see Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26-52*, 36-37; T. Seidl, *Texte und Einheiten in Jeremia 27 – 29* (ATSAT 2; Munich: Eos St Ottilien, 1977) 21-22, n.5; and Tov, 'Some Aspects', 161 n.30. However, Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 523, sees the cycle as "a literary creation rather than historical records or reflections" and dates it no earlier than the fifth century.

<sup>28</sup> Jones, *Jeremiah*, 346.

<sup>29</sup> So Clements, *Jeremiah*, 153. J.G. McConville, s.v. 'Jeremiah', *NBC*, 692, brackets all four chapters together under the heading 'Jeremiah becomes a prophet of salvation', though it is hard to see how this thought plays a prominent role in ch. 26. Meier, *Speaking of Speaking*, 89, notes that לְאִמֹר . . . לְאִמֹר in Jer. is particularly concentrated within 26.11 – 30. 2 (thirteen out of eighteen instances).

<sup>30</sup> Jones, *Jeremiah*, 360.

<sup>31</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 529. Duhm, *Jeremia*, 217 (cf. xxi-xxii) saw chs. 26 – 29 (minus interpolations) as having been added *en bloc* from Baruch's scroll into Jer., but doubted whether ch. 26 originally introduced chs. 27 – 29: "der zeitliche Abstand zwischen den in Cap. 26 und in Cap. 27f. erzählten Begebenheiten zu gross ist und andere Erzählungen vorhanden sind, die vor Cap. 27f. zu stehen beanspruchen".



Additional evidence for regarding chs. 27 – 29 as a redactional unit lies in its literary structure, to which we now turn.

### 1.3. The Structure of Jer. 27 – 29

Whatever the origins of the material in Jer. 27 – 29, the editor has carefully structured it in such a way that ch. 29 parallels chs. 27 – 28. Initial evidence for this lies in certain verbal and conceptual echoes. Both chs. 27 and 29 begin with Jeremiah sending a message (שלח . . . ביד)<sup>32</sup> to the foreign kings and the Jewish exiles respectively, thereby acting as a ‘prophet to the nations’ (1.10). Moreover, while the term נבאים (‘prophets’) is ubiquitous in this unit, the reference in 27.9 to קסמים and חלמות (‘diviners and dreamers’) recurs only in 29.8, אל ישיאו, לכם . . . קסמיכם ואל תשמעו אל חלמותיכם. Meanwhile, chs. 28 and 29 conclude with pronouncements of judgement on specific prophets, Hananiah and Shemaiah.<sup>33</sup> The charges against them are almost identical; לא שלחך יהוה ואתה הבטחת את העם הזה על שקר (28.15) and לא שלחתיו ויבטח אתכם על שקר (29.31). MT heightens this parallel with the comment that both prophets have ‘spoken rebellion against YHWH’, סרה דבר אל יהוה (28.16; 29.32). Finally, Overholt notes that chs. 27 – 28 and 29 show the same pattern of conflict: Jeremiah’s message about Babylon / A negative response from the prophets / Resolution: a curse on the prophets.<sup>34</sup> Consequently, he entitles these two sections ‘confronting the problem of false prophecy at home’ and ‘confronting the problem of false prophecy in Babylon’.<sup>35</sup>

In fact, the structure of chs. 27 – 29 is more nuanced than this, as will become clear if we consider the rhetorical interaction of Jeremiah, prophets and people. In ch. 27, Jeremiah warns the foreign envoys, Zedekiah, and ‘the priests and the people’ against listening to ‘the prophets’, a group consistently referred to only in the third person (vv. 9, 14-15, 16-18). In ch. 28, however, this situation is reversed; Jeremiah confronts Hananiah, while ‘the priests and the people’ observe (vv. 1, 5, 7, 11). This pattern is repeated in ch. 29. Though Jeremiah’s letter is

---

<sup>32</sup> 27.3 reads ושלחתם (‘and send *them*’), the object being presumed replicas of the yoke bars Jeremiah has made. However, the text says nothing about additional yokes, and some scholars emend to שלחה (‘send’) implying a message as object. Either way, however, it is clear from the context that Jeremiah does send a message to the foreign kings, whether or not model yokes were also part of the delivery.

<sup>33</sup> Shemaiah is not formally designated ‘a prophet’ (נבא), but cf. 29.31, שמעיה, לכם שבעיה.

<sup>34</sup> Overholt, *Threat of Falsehood*, 29-30.

<sup>35</sup> Overholt, *Threat of Falsehood*, 30.

addressed to כל הנולה (v. 4), vv. 8-9 clearly distinguish between its intended audience and ‘the prophets’: אל ישאו לכם נביאיכם . . . כי בשקר הם נבאים לכם. Even when Ahab and Zedekiah appear in vv. 21-23, they are differentiated from those to whom Jeremiah is speaking: נתן אתם ביד מלך בבל והכם לעיניכם (v. 21). The rhetorical shift occurs in vv. 24ff. Although the text is confused (see §3.2), in its present form MT represents Jeremiah as confronting another prophet, just as it does in ch. 28. Moreover, in MT v. 25 Shemaiah’s audience includes ‘all the people in Jerusalem’ and ‘all the priests’, the same groups mentioned in chs. 27 – 28. We suggest, therefore, that chs. 27 – 29 are structured according to the following pattern:

- a: Jeremiah’s message to the non-exiles about the prophets (27.1-22)
- b: Jeremiah’s confrontation with the prophet Hananiah (28.1-17)
- a’: Jeremiah’s message to the exiles about the prophets (29.1-23)
- b’: Jeremiah’s confrontation with the prophet Shemaiah (29.24-32).<sup>36</sup>

Consequently, the structure of chs. 27 – 29 serves to establish two *audience-critical* distinctions. On the one hand, Zedekiah’s people in Judea are distinguished from the exilic community in Babylon. In both places, however, there is an inner-Judean distinction between prophets and people. This is shown not only by the alternation of address, but also by the public nature of Jeremiah’s confrontation with Hananiah, which is described as taking place ‘in the eyes’ (בְּעֵינַי, 28.1, 5) and ‘in the ears’ (בְּאָזְנֵי, 28.7) of all the people. Indeed, the interaction between Jeremiah, prophets and people in these three chapters suggests that their theme is not simply ‘true and false prophecy’ but rather the interplay between prophets and people, prophecy and response, in the fate of the entire community.

## 2. Jer. 27 – 28[34 – 35]

### 2.1. Text

	<p>1. בראשית ממלכת יהויקים בן יאשיהו מלך יהודה היה הדבר הזה אל ירמיה מאת יהוה לאמר</p>
<p>1. οὕτως εἶπε κυριος ποιησον δεσμους και κλοιους και περιθου περι τον τραχηλον σου</p>	<p>2. כה אמר יהוה אלי עשה לך מוסרות ומשות ונתתם על צוארך</p>

<sup>36</sup> Admittedly, this section concludes by foregrounding the exiles once more, with Jeremiah writing to them concerning Shemaiah (vv. 30-32).

<p>2. και αποστειλεις αυτους προς βασιλεα Ιδουμαιας και προς βασιλεα Μωαβ και προς βασιλεα υιων Αμμων και προς βασιλεα Τυρου και προς βασιλεα Σιδωνος εν χειρσιν αγγελων αυτων των ερχομενων εις απαντησιν αυτων εις Ιερουσαλημ προς Σεδεκιαν βασιλεα Ιουδα</p>	<p>3. ושלחתם אל מלך אדום ואל מלך מואב ואל מלך בני עמון ואל מלך צר ואל מלך צידון ביד מלאכים הבאים ירושלם אל צדקיהו מלך יהודה</p>
<p>3. και συνταξεις αυτοις προς τους κυριους αυτων ειπειν ουτως ειπε κυριος ο θεος Ισραηλ ουτως ερειτε προς τους κυριους υμων</p>	<p>(4) וצוית אתם אל אדניהם לאמר כה אמר יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל כה תאמרו אל אדניכם</p>
<p>4. οτι εγω εποιησα την γην εν ισχυι μου τη μεγαλη και εν τω επιχειρω μου τω υψηλω και δωσω αυτην ω εαν δοξη εν οφθαλμοις μου</p>	<p>(5) אנכי עשיתי את הארץ את הארץ את הארץ ואת הבהמה אשר על פני הארץ בכחי הגדול ובזרועי הנטויה ונתתיה לאשר ישר בעיני</p>
<p>5. εδωκα την γην τω Ναβουχοδονοσαρ βασιλει Βαβυλωνος δουλευειν αυτω και τα θηρια του αγρου εργαζεσθαι αυτω</p>	<p>(6) ועתה אנכי נתתי את כל הארצות האלה ביד נבוכדנאצר מלך בבל עבדי וגם את חית השדה נתתי לו לעבדו</p>
<p></p>	<p>(7) ועבדו אתו כל הגוים ואת בנו ואת בן בנו עד בא עת ארצו גם הוא ועבדו בו גוים רבים ומלכים גדלים</p>
<p>6. και το εθνος και η βασιλεια οσοι εαν μη εμβαλωσι τον τραχηλον αυτων υπο ζυγον βασιλεως Βαβυλωνος εν μαχαιρα και εν λιμω επισκεψομαι αυτους ειπε κυριος εως εκλιπωσιν εν χειρι αυτου</p>	<p>(8) והיה הגוי והממלכה אשר לא יעבדו אתו את נבוכדנאצר מלך בבל ואת אשר לא יתן את צוארו בעל מלך בבל בחרב וברעב ובדבר אפקד על הגוי ההוא נאם יהוה עד תמי אתם בידו</p>
<p>7. και υμεις μη ακουετε των ψευδοπροφητων υμων και των μαντευομενων υμιν και των ενυπνιαζομενων υμιν και των οϊωνισματων υμων και των φαρμακων υμων λεγοντων ου μη εργασησθε τω βασιλει Βαβυλωνος</p>	<p>(9) ואתם אל תשמעו אל נביאיכם ואל קסמיכם ואל חלמתיכם ואל ענניכם ואל כשפיכם אשר הם אמרים אליכם לאמר לא תעבדו את מלך בבל</p>
<p>8. οτι ψευδη αυτοι προφητευουσιν υμιν προς το μακρυναι υμας απο της γης υμων</p>	<p>(10) כי שקר הם נבאים לכם למען הרחיק אתכם מעל אדמתכם והרחתי אתכם ואברתם</p>
<p>9. και το εθνος ο εαν εισαγαγη τον τραχηλον αυτου υπο τον ζυγον βασιλεως Βαβυλωνος και εργασηται αυτω και καταλειψω αυτον επι της γης αυτου και εργαται αυτω και ενοικησει εν αυτη</p>	<p>(11) והגוי אשר יביא את צוארו בעל מלך בבל ועבדו והנחתי על אדמתו נאם יהוה ועבדה וישב בה</p>
<p>10. και προς Σεδεκιαν βασιλεα Ιουδα ελαλησα κατα παντας τους λογους τουτους λεγων εισαγαγετε τον τραχηλον</p>	<p>(12) ואל צדקיה מלך יהודה דברתי ככל הדברים האלה לאמר הביאו את צואריכם בעל מלך בבל ועבדו אתו ועמו וחיי</p>

<p>ὑμων και ἐργασασθε τῷ βασιλεὶ Βαβυλωνος</p>	
	<p>(13) <u>למה תמותו אתה ועמך בחרב ברעב ובדבר כאשר דבר יהוה אל הגוי אשר לא יעבד את מלך בבל</u></p>
<p>11. <u>ὅτι ἀδίκᾳ αὐτοὶ προφητεύουσιν ὑμῖν</u></p>	<p>(14) <u>וְאֵל תִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל דְּבָרֵי הַנְּבִאִים הָאֹמְרִים אֵלֵיכֶם לֵאמֹר לֹא תַעֲבְדוּ אֶת מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל כִּי שִׁקֵּר הֵם נְבִאִים לָכֵן</u></p>
<p>12. <u>ὅτι οὐκ ἀπεστείλα αὐτοὺς φησὶ κυριος και προφητεύουσι τῷ ὀνοματι μου ἐπ' ἀδικῶ προς το ἀπολεσαι ὑμας και ἀπολεισθε ὑμεῖς και οἱ προφηται ὑμων οἱ προφητεύοντες ὑμῖν ἐπ' ἀδικῶ ψευδη ὑμῖν</u></p>	<p>(15) <u>כִּי לֹא שְׁלַחְתִּים נָאִם יְהוָה וְהֵם נְבִאִים בְּשֵׁמִי לְשִׁקֵּר לְמַעַן הַדִּיחֵי אֶתְכֶם וְאֶבְדַּתֶּם אִתְּכֶם וְהַנְּבִאִים הַנְּבִאִים לָכֵן</u></p>
<p>13. και παντι τῷ λαῷ τουτῷ και τοις ἱερευσιν ἐλαλησα λεγων οὕτως εἶπε κυριος μη ἀκουετε των λογων των προφητων των προφητευοντων ὑμῖν λεγοντων ἴδου σκευη οἴκου κυριου ἐπιστρεφει ἐκ Βαβυλωνος ὅτι ἀδίκᾳ αὐτοὶ προφητεύουσιν ὑμῖν</p>	<p>(16) <u>וְאֵל הַכְּהֵנִים וְאֵל כֹּל הָעָם הַזֶּה דִּבַּרְתִּי לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה אֵל תִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל דְּבָרֵי נְבִיאֵיכֶם הַנְּבִאִים לָכֵן לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה כָלִי בֵּית יְהוָה מוֹשְׁבֵית מִבְּלָה עֵתָה מֵהָרָה כִּי שִׁקֵּר הֵמָּה נְבִאִים לָכֵן</u></p>
<p>14. <u>οὐκ ἀπεστείλα αὐτοὺς</u></p>	<p>(17) <u>אֵל תִּשְׁמְעוּ אֵלֵיהֶם עֲבַדוּ אֶת מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל וְחָיו לְמָה תְּהִיָה הָעִיר הַזֹּאת חָרְבָה</u></p>
<p>15. <u>εἰ προφηται εἰσι και εἰ ἔστι λογος κυριου ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀπαντησατωσιν μοι</u></p>	<p>(18) <u>וְאֵם נְבִאִים הֵם וְאִם יֵשׁ דְּבַר יְהוָה אִתְּכֶם יִפְנְעוּ נָא בֵּיהוּה צְבָאוֹת לְבַלְתִּי בְּאֵן הַכְּלִים הַנּוֹתְרִים בְּבֵית יְהוָה וּבֵית מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וּבִירוּשָׁלַם בְּבַלָּה</u></p>
<p>16. <u>ὅτι οὕτως εἶπε κυριος και των ἐπιλοιπων σκευων</u></p>	<p>(19) <u>כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֵל הַעַמִּדִים וְעַל הַיָּם וְעַל הַמְּכֻנּוֹת וְעַל יַתֵּר הַכְּלִים הַנּוֹתְרִים בְּעִיר הַזֹּאת</u></p>
<p>17. <u>ὡν οὐκ ἔλαβε βασιλευς Βαβυλωνος ὅτε ἀπῶκισε τον Ιεχονιαν ἐξ Ιερουσαλημ</u></p>	<p>(20) <u>אֲשֶׁר לֹא לָקַחֶם נְבוּכַדְנֶאצַּר מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל בְּגִלּוֹתוֹ אֵת יְכוּנִיָּה בֶן יְהוִיָּקִים מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה מִירוּשָׁלַם בְּבַלָּה וְאֵת כָּל חָרֵי יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם</u></p>
	<p>(21) <u>כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל הַכְּלִים הַנּוֹתְרִים בֵּית יְהוָה וּבֵית מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם</u></p>
<p>18. <u>εἰς Βαβυλωνα εἰσελευσεται λεγει κυριος</u></p>	<p>(22) <u>בְּבַלָּה יוֹבֵאוּ וְשָׂמָה יִהְיוּ עַד יוֹם פְּקֻדֵי אֶתְכֶם נָאִם יְהוָה וְהָעִלְיָתִים וְהַשִּׁיבְתִים אֶל הַמְּקוֹם הַזֶּה</u></p>
<p>και ἐγενετο ἐν τῷ τεταρτῷ ἔτει Σεδεκια βασιλεως Ιουδα ἐν μηνι τῷ πεμπτῷ εἶπε μοι Ανανιας υἱος Αζωρ ὁ ψευδοπροφητης ὁ ἀπο Γαβαων ἐν οἴκῳ κυριου κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς των ἱερευων και παντος του λαου λεγων</p>	<p>1. וַיְהִי בַשָּׁנָה הַהִיא בְּרֵאשִׁית מַמְלַכַת צַדְקִיָּה מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה בַשָּׁנָה הַרְבַּעִית בְּחָדָשׁ הַחֲמִישִׁי אָמַר אֵלַי חֲנַנְיָה בֶן עֲזוּרָה הַנְּבִיאִי אֲשֶׁר מִגְּבֻעוֹן בְּבֵית יְהוָה לְעֵינַי הַכְּהֵנִים וְכֹל הָעָם לֵאמֹר</p>

οὕτως εἶπε κυριος συνετριψα τον ζυγον βασιλεως Βαβυλωνος	2. כה אמר יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל לאמר שכרתיו את על מלך בבל
ἔτι δυο ἔτη ἡμερων και ἔγω ἀποστρεψω εἰς τον τοπον τουτον τα σκευη οἴκου κυριου	3. בעוד שנתים ימים אני משיב אל המקום הזה את כל כלי בית יהוה אשר לקח נבוכדנאצר מלך בבל מן המקום הזה ויביאם בבל
και Ιεχονιαν και την ἀποικιαν Ιουδα ὅτι συντριψω τον ζυγον βασιλεως Βαβυλωνος	4. ואת יכניה בן יהויקים מלך יהודה ואת כל גלות יהודה הבאים בבלה אני משיב אל המקום הזה נאם יהוה כי אשבר את על מלך בבל
και εἶπεν Ιερεμιας προς Ανανιαν κατ' ὀφθαλμους παντος του λαου και κατ' ὀφθαλμους των ἱερεων των ἐστηκοτων ἐν οἴκῳ κυριου	5. ויאמר ירמיה הנביא אל חנניה הנביא לעיני הכהנים ולעיני כל העם העומדים בבית יהוה
και εἶπεν Ιερεμιας ἀληθως οὕτως ποιησαι κυριος <u>στησαι τον λογον σου</u> ὃν συ προφητευεις του ἐπιστρεψαι τα σκευη οἴκου κυριου και πασαν την ἀποικιαν ἐκ Βαβυλωνος εἰς τον τοπον τουτον	6. ויאמר ירמיה הנביא אמן כן יעשה יהוה יקם יהוה את דבריו אשר נבאת להשיב כלי בית יהוה וכל הגלות מבבל אל המקום הזה
πλην ἀκουσατε λογον κυριου ὃν ἔγω λεγω εἰς τα ὠτα ὑμων και εἰς τα ὠτα παντος του λαου	7. אך שמע נא הדבר הזה אשר דבר באזניך ובאזני כל העם
ὅτι προφηται ὅτι γεγονοτες προτεροι μου και προτεροι ὑμων ἀπο του αἰωνος και ἐπροφητευσαν ἐπι γης πολλης και ἐπι βασιλειας μεγαλας εἰς πολεμον	8. הנביאים אשר היו לפני ולפניך מן העולם וינבאו אל ארצות רבות ועל ממלכות גדולות למלחמה ולרעה ולדבר
ὁ προφητης ὁ προφητευσας εἰς εἰρηνην ἔλθοντος του λογου γνωσονται τον προφητην ὃν ἀπεστειλεν αὐτον κυριος ἐν πιστει	9. הנביא אשר ינבא לשלום בבא דבר הנביא יודע הנביא אשר שלחו יהוה באמת
και ἔλαβεν Ανανιας ἐν ὀφθαλμοις παντος του λαου τους κλοιους ἀπο του τραχηλου Ιερεμιου και συνετριψεν αὐτους	10. ויקח חנניה הנביא את המוטה מעל צואר ירמיה הנביא וישברהו
και εἶπεν Ανανιας κατ' ὀφθαλμους του λαου λεγων οὕτως εἶπε κυριος οὕτως συντριψω τον ζυγον βασιλεως Βαβυλωνος ἀπο τραχηλου παντων των ἔθνων και ὄχετο Ιερεμιας εἰς την ὁδον αὐτου	11. ויאמר חנניה לעיני כל העם לאמר כה אמר יהוה ככה אשבר את על נבוכדנאצר מלך בבל בעוד שנתים ימים מעל צואר כל הגוים וילך ירמיה הנביא לדרכו
και ἐγενετο λογος κυριου προς Ιερεμιαν μετα το συντριψαι Ανανιαν τους κλοιους ἀπο του τραχηλου αὐτου λεγων	12. ויהי דבר יהוה אל ירמיה אחרי שבור חנניה הנביא את המוטה מעל צואר ירמיה הנביא לאמר
βαδιζε και εἶπον προς Ανανιαν λεγων	13. הלוך ואמרת אל חנניה לאמר כה אמר יהוה מושת

οὕτως εἶπε κυριος κλοιους ξυλινους συνετριψας και ποιησω ἀντ' αὐτων κλοιους σιδηρους	עץ שברת ועשית תחתיהן מטות ברזל
ὅτι οὕτως εἶπε κυριος ζυγον σιδηρουν ἐθηκα ἐπι τον τραχηλον παντων των ἔθνων ἐργαζεσθαι τῷ βασιλει Βαβυλωνος	14. כי כה אמר יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל על ברזל נתתי על צוואר כל הגוים האלה לעבד את נבוכדנאצר מלך בבל ועבדהו וגם את חית בשדה נתתי לו
και εἶπεν Ιερεμιας τῷ Ανανια οὐκ ἀπεσταλκε σε κυριος και πεποιθεναι ἐποιησας τον λαον τουτον ἐπ' ἀδικῶ	15. ויאמר ירמיה הנביא אל חנניה הנביא שמע נא חנניה לא שלחך יהוה ואתה הבטחת את העם הוזה על שקר
δια τουτο οὕτως εἶπε κυριος ἴδου ἐγῶ ἐξαποστελλω σε ἀπο προσωπου της γης τουτῶ τῷ ἐνιαυτῶ ἀποθανῆ	16. לכן כה אמר יהוה הנני משלחך מעל פני האדמה השנה אתה מת כי סרה דברת אל יהוה
και ἀπεθανεν ἐν τῷ μηνι τῷ ἑβδομῶ	17. וימת חנניה הנביא בשנה ההיא בתדש השביעי

## 2.2. Textual Notes

### Chapter 27

v. 1. >OG. MT בראשית ממלכת יהויקים is clearly erroneous (cf. the subsequent references to Zedekiah), probably under the influence of 26.1.<sup>37</sup> Possibly יהויקים is itself a late gloss, with MT previously reading בראשית ממלכת צדקיה, as in 28.1. The whole verse is almost certainly MT plus. One could argue that OG has omitted it in order to avoid the historical problem, but this fails to explain the absence of הדבר הזה אל ירמיה מאת יהוה לאמר. The lateness of the verse is also suggested by the fact that, unlike the rest of the chapter, it refers to Jeremiah in the third person.

v. 2. MT נחחם; OG περιθου = ונחח; ellipsis of the verbal suffix is not uncommon where the context makes the meaning clear.<sup>38</sup> אלי is probably MT plus,<sup>39</sup> but לך could have been omitted by OG for stylistic reasons.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> So Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 21; Janzen, *Studies*, 14.

<sup>38</sup> See *DIHGS* §3 rem.3. However, E. Tov, 'Exegetical Notes on the Hebrew Vorlage of the LXX of Jeremiah 27 (34)', *ZAW* 91 (1979) 81, believes the *Vorlage* was identical to MT here.

<sup>39</sup> Tov, 'Exegetical Notes', 79; L. Stulman, *The Other Text of Jeremiah: A Reconstruction of the Hebrew Text Underlying the Greek Version of the Prose Sections of Jeremiah with English Translation* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1986) 58.

<sup>40</sup> Tov, 'Exegetical Notes', 81.

v. 3. MT **ושלחתם** and OG ἀποστελεις αὐτους, ‘and send *them*’ (i.e., the yoke bars) is possibly surprising, since v. 2 need mean no more than one set of yokes. Emendation to **שלחת**, ‘send’ (i.e., a message; cf. LXX<sup>Luc</sup>, ἀποστελεις) is attractive,<sup>41</sup> but OG clearly read **ושלחתם**.<sup>42</sup> MT also has the advantage of balancing the preceding verb, **ונתתם**.

MT **מלאכים**; OG ἀγγελων αὐτων: The *Vorlage* may have read **מלאכיהם**,<sup>43</sup> but a stylistic change by the translator is possible.<sup>44</sup>

OG εἰς ἀπαντησιν αὐτων >MT: OG suggests **לקראתם**,<sup>45</sup> but the resultant **לקראתם** לירושלם אל צדקיהו is extremely problematic. If **לקראתם** is objective (‘to meet *them*’), who are ‘they’? If it is subjective (‘for them to meet’), it is awkwardly separated from ‘Zedekiah’ by **לירושלם אל** (cf. Jdg. 4.18; 1 Sam. 17.48; Isa. 7.3). MT seems to preserve an older reading,<sup>46</sup> while the translator’s *Vorlage* may have contained a conflate text (cf. v. 15).

v. 5. **פני הארץ** >OG: Either MT plus or OG omission due to homoioteleuton (repetition of **הארץ**).<sup>47</sup>

v. 6. **ועתה אנכי** >OG: **נתתי (את)** is abrupt, and **ועתה אנכי** may have been lost through homoioteleuton (cf. the endings of **אנכי** and **בעיני**).<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 217-218; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 146; E.W. Nicholson, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah 26 – 52* (CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975) 31; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 686; A. Graupner, *Auftrag und Geschick des Propheten Jeremia. literarische Eigenart, Herkunft und Intention vordeuteronomistischer Prosa im Jeremiabuch* (BTS 15; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991) 63 n.8. According to Bright, *Jeremiah*, 199, “the suffix . . . has probably carried over from v. 2” – but as we have said, the *Vorlage* of v. 2 probably read **ונתתה**, with no suffix.

<sup>42</sup> Tov, ‘Exegetical Notes’, 79; Stulman, *Other Text*, 58; cf. Volz, *Jeremia*, 259; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 120; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 526.

<sup>43</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 218; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 146; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 63 n.8.

<sup>44</sup> Tov, ‘Exegetical Notes’, 81; Stulman, *Other Text*, 58. The lack of the article on **מלאכים** (before **הבאים**) is odd, but not impossible; see *GKC* §138i, k.

<sup>45</sup> Tov, ‘Exegetical Notes’, 82; Stulman, *Other Text*, 58.

<sup>46</sup> Tov, ‘Exegetical Notes’, 82.

<sup>47</sup> For the former, see Tov, ‘Exegetical Notes’, 82; Stulman, *Other Text*, 58; for the latter, see Janzen, *Studies*, 118; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 63 n.10; Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1 – 20*, 61.

<sup>48</sup> Tov accepts that **עתה** usually “denotes that the speaker or author reached an important point in a speech or discourse. *A priori*, it is therefore unlikely that **ועתה** would have been missing from the translator’s *Vorlage*.” (‘Exegetical Notes’, 82). However, he points to the absence of **עתה** from the *Vorlage* in 40.4 and 42.15. Both Tov and Stulman, *Other Text*, 58, allow that **אנכי** may have been in the *Vorlage*.

MT כָּל הָאֲרָצוֹת הָאֵלֶּה בִּיד; OG τῆς γῆς = אֵת הָאָרֶץ: Janzen points out that the global sense represented by OG follows on neatly from the previous verse; moreover, “had the reference in v. 6 originally been to nations, we might have expected אֵת כָּל הַגּוֹיִם הָאֵלֶּה”.<sup>49</sup> (cf. vv. 8, 11). But the reading in MT also provides a satisfying development from v. 5 (‘I made the whole earth . . . so I am giving these lands . . .’).<sup>50</sup>

MT עֲבָדִי; OG δουλεύειν αὐτοῦ:<sup>51</sup> Lemke argued that עֲבָדִי arose here as a scribal error, leading to its addition in 25.9 and 43.10.<sup>52</sup> However, while וְאֵל נְבוּכַדְרֶאֱצַר מֶלֶךְ בְּכָל עֲבָדִי in 25.9 is certainly MT plus, here and in 43.10 עֲבָדִי is likely to be the more original reading; לְעַבְדוֹ would entail an awkward repetition of לְעַבְדוֹ at the end of the verse. The translator (or a copyist of his *Vorlage*) may have misread י as ו, and read the final ל of בְּכָל twice.<sup>53</sup> Unease at this description of a foreign king may have contributed to an alternative reading.<sup>54</sup>

v. 7 >OG: MT plus;<sup>55</sup> cf. the very similar MT plus in 25.14. The idea of Babylon’s rule being limited in duration is not confined to MT (see 29.10) but it is heightened there; see too the prophecy of the return of the temple vessels in 27.22, also MT plus.

וְעַבְדוֹ בּוֹ is awkward; if the reference is to ‘his land’ (אֲרָצוֹ), emend to בָּהּ.<sup>56</sup>

v. 8. וְעַבְדוֹ אֶתְוֹ אֵת נְבוּכַדְרֶאֱצַר מֶלֶךְ בְּכָל וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר לֹא >OG: Either MT plus or OG haplography (repetition of אֲשֶׁר לֹא).<sup>57</sup> MT adds וְכַדְבָּר to conform to the ‘sword, famine and plague’ trilogy elsewhere. ἐμβάλωσι τον τραχηλον αὐτων ‘corrects’ the singular forms of

<sup>49</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 66; also preferring OG are Bright, *Jeremiah*, 199-200; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 112.

<sup>50</sup> “The relation between the texts of MT and Sept. cannot be elucidated with a high degree of confidence” (McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 688).

<sup>51</sup> Following LXX<sup>B, A</sup>; LXX<sup>S</sup> omits.

<sup>52</sup> W.E. Lemke, ‘Nebuchadrezzar, My Servant’, *CBQ* 28 (1966) 45-50; see the response by T.W. Overholt, ‘King Nebuchadnezzar in the Jeremiah Tradition’, *CBQ* 30 (1968) 39-48.

<sup>53</sup> So Tov, ‘Exegetical Notes’, 83-84.

<sup>54</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 201; Volz, *Jeremia*, 259; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 146; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 512.

<sup>55</sup> Tov, ‘Exegetical Notes’, 84-85; Stulman, *Other Text*, 58; Duhm, *Jeremia*, 220.

<sup>56</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 146. Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 529, renders, ‘then many nations and great kings shall reduce him to servitude’, evidently interpreting כ as instrumental (see *BDB* s.v. עֲבַד, Qal. 1).

<sup>57</sup> For the former view, see Duhm, *Jeremia*, 220; Tov, ‘Exegetical Notes’, 85-86; for the latter, see Stulman, *Other Text*, 58; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 63 n.10; cf. *BHS* footnote.



הגוי והממלכה (cf. הנוי והממלכה). αὐτοῦς may reflect עליהם rather than MT על הגוי ההוא,<sup>58</sup> or may be a further attempt to conform to הגוי והממלכה.

MT עד תמי אתם בידו ('until I have finished them by his hand') is awkward, since תמם Qal is nowhere else transitive;<sup>59</sup> ἕως ἀκλιπῶσιν ἐν χειρὶ αὐτοῦ = עד תמם בידו ('until they die by his hand'), but Targ. implies עד תתי אתם ('until I have given them'), which collocates well with בידו; MT תמי is easily understood as scribal error.<sup>60</sup>

v. 9. MT חלמתיכם ('your dreams'); OG ἐνσπνιαζομενων ὑμων ('your dreamers') = חלמיכם.<sup>61</sup> The context clearly points to a further group of people. Several scholars have adopted Ehrlich's revocalisation of MT as חלמתיכם, assuming a term חלום, 'dreamer'.<sup>62</sup> Alternatively, we could reposit as a feminine participle, חלמותיכם, 'dreaming women'.<sup>63</sup> Cf. 29.8.

v. 10. MT והרחתי אתכם ואברתם >OG: MT plus, influenced by v. 15.<sup>64</sup>

v. 11. OG ἐργαται αὐτω ('and it will serve him') misreads ועבדה as ועבדה.<sup>65</sup>

v. 12. MT slightly rearranges the text.<sup>66</sup> On וחיו, see below on vv. 13-14. For the phrase הביא הצואר ועבר, cf. Neh. 3.5.

vv. 13-14. OG lacks all of v. 13 and most of v. 14, yielding the nonsensical 'serve the king of Babylon, for they are prophesying a lie to you'. At least all of v. 14, therefore, must be original, the translator's eye skipping from ועבדו את מלך בבל (v. 12) to תעבדו את מלך בבל

---

<sup>58</sup> Stulman, *Other Text*, 58; Tov, 'Exegetical Notes', 86.

<sup>59</sup> Tov, 'Exegetical Notes', 86, accepts MT, but suggests החמי (Hiph. inf. cstr.) is also possible.

<sup>60</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 148; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 534; but cf. Volz, *Jeremia*, 259: "das vorgeschlagene תתי ist zu schwach, und die Verderbnis wäre nicht erklärt."

<sup>61</sup> Tov, 'Exegetical Notes', 86-87.

<sup>62</sup> Ehrlich, *Randglossen*, 312-313; Volz, *Studien*, 213; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 22; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 113.

<sup>63</sup> So *NEB*; cf. Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 113.

<sup>64</sup> Tov, 'Exegetical Notes', 87; Stulman, *Other Text*, 59.

<sup>65</sup> Tov, 'Exegetical Notes', 87.

<sup>66</sup> Tov, 'Exegetical Notes', 87; Stulman, *Other Text*, 59.

(v. 14). This might also explain the absence of **בבל** . . . (v. 13) **והיו** (v. 12); however, the fact that the very similar material in v. 17 is MT plus (see below) suggests the same is true here.<sup>67</sup>

v. 15. MT **הדיחי**; OG **προς το ἀπολεσαι** = **הדיח**. Which is the more original we cannot say; cf. 16.15, where OG reads **ἐξωσθησαν** rather than MT **הדיחם**. OG **ὕμιν ἐπ' ἀδικῶ ψευδῆ ὕμιν** probably reflects a doublet, **לכם לשקר שקר לכם**.<sup>68</sup> OG adds **ὕμιν**.

v. 16. **עַתָּה מֵהֵרָה** >OG: Either MT plus (cf. 28.3, 11) or OG haplography (confusion of final **ה** in **עַתָּה מֵהֵרָה מִבְּבֵלָה עַתָּה**).<sup>69</sup>

OG **οὐκ ἀπεστειλα αὐτους** (34.14) = **לא שלחתים** >MT. This may have been added by the translator to conform to v. 15, but was probably already in his *Vorlage*.

v. 17. OG **οὐκ ἀπεστειλα αὐτους** = **לא שלחתים**; MT **אל תשמעו אליהם עבדו את מלך**: **בבל והיו למה תהיה העיר הזאת חרבה**: The shorter and completely different reading of OG probably reflects its *Vorlage* accurately; we would then have a smooth flow of text concerning the prophets, **כי שקר המה נבאים לכם לא שלחתים ואם נבאים הם**, similar to v. 15.<sup>70</sup> The reading in MT may have been prompted by the similar question in v. 13.

v. 18. The longer MT is usually seen as a plus.<sup>71</sup> On the other hand, an invitation to 'entreat' YHWH with no suggestion as to the content of that petition is abrupt.

---

<sup>67</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 148; Tov, 'Exegetical Notes', 87; *pace* Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 528; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 64 n.14.

<sup>68</sup> Tov, 'Exegetical Notes', 88; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 692. Alternatively, the second **ὕμιν** may form the start of the following verse, i.e., **ὕμιν και παντι τῶ λαῶ τουτω**; so Ziegler, *Beiträge*, 96; H. Seebass, 'Jeremias Konflikt mit Chananja', *ZAW* 82 (1970) 449-452. Seebass argues that in the *Vorlage*, **לכם ולכל** (v. 16) introduces a citation of an *earlier* oracle concerning the temple vessels; this he sees as preferable to MT, which delays supplying the basis for the warning of vv.14-15 until v.16, and shifts the theme from that of the yoke to that of the temple vessels ('Konflikt', 450). Whether these features of MT really constitute such a serious problem is questionable; see below (§2.4) for criticism of the view that Jeremiah's message could have had only one focal point.

<sup>69</sup> For the former view, see Duhm, *Jeremia*, 222; Tov, 'Exegetical Notes', 88; for the latter, see Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 148, and Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 22, who suggest the phrase was deliberately omitted to avoid lending support to the legend of Bar. 1.8.

<sup>70</sup> Tov, 'Exegetical Notes', 88; Stulman, *Other Text*, 59.

<sup>71</sup> Tov, 'Exegetical Notes', 88-89; Stulman, *Other Text*, 59; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 530 n.11.

v. 19. OG is usually seen as reflecting a much shorter *Vorlage*: כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה עַל יַתֵּר הַכְּלִיִּים.<sup>72</sup> However, OG και [των ἐπιλοιπων] appears to represent (עַל) ו, implying additional preceding wording.<sup>73</sup> The Greek *could* be understood as starting a new sentence if και is translated, ‘even [the rest . . .]’;<sup>74</sup> but why not then the nominative, τα ἐπιλοιπα σκευη? One must also ask why a generally literal translator would have introduced this nuance.<sup>75</sup> On balance, OG haplography is more likely than MT expansion.<sup>76</sup> Alternatively, the mistake may be due to a later copyist; if OG originally read, περι των στυλων και περι της θαλασσης και περι των μεχωνωθ και περι των ἐπιλοιπων σκευων (cf. LXX<sup>θ, Luc.</sup>), one could easily account for the present text.

v. 20. וְאֵת כָּל חֵרֵי יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם בֶּן יְהוֹיָקִים מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה and נְבוּכַדְנֶאצַּר are typical MT additions. Possibly בְּבַלְהָ was lost through haplography (מִירוּשָׁלַם בְּבַלְהָ [v. 22]),<sup>77</sup> but since it is also absent from OG in 29[36].4 it is most likely an MT plus in both places.<sup>78</sup>

v. 21 >OG: Possibly omitted with בְּבַלְהָ at the end of v. 20, but probably MT plus.<sup>79</sup>

## Chapter 28

v. 1. MT gives two mutually exclusive dates, בְּשָׁנָה בְּרֵאשִׁית מַמְלַכַת צְדָקִיָּה מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה and בְּשָׁנָה הָרִבְעִית. OG ἐν τῷ τεταρτῷ ἔτει Ζεδεκία βασιλεως Ιουδα reflects בְּשָׁנָה הָרִבְעִית לְצְדָקִיָּה מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה. Most scholars believe בְּרֵאשִׁית מַמְלַכַת was added under the influence of 27.1.

<sup>72</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 222; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 148; Seebass, ‘Konflikt’, 450-451; Tov, ‘Exegetical Notes’, 89; Stulman, *Other Text*, 59-60.

<sup>73</sup> Graupner, *Auftrag*, 65 n.19, is almost alone in calling attention to this; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 148, mentions it in passing.

<sup>74</sup> E.g., Bright, *Jeremiah*, 197; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 530 n.11.

<sup>75</sup> A point recognised by Duhm, who believed that OG was translating גַּם מִיַּתֵּר (*Jeremia*, 222).

<sup>76</sup> Graupner, *Auftrag*, 65 n.19. Regarding the Greek text in vv. 16-18 (MT 19-22), he writes: “Ihre kürzere Fassung geht einerseits wiederum auf *aberratio oculi* – vgl. בְּבַלְהָ am Ende von v. 20a und am Anfang von v. 22 – zurück, andererseits auf bewußte Straffung der redundanten *Vorlage*.” (*Auftrag*, 65 n.19).

<sup>77</sup> Stulman, *Other Text*, 60.

<sup>78</sup> Tov, ‘Exegetical Notes’, 90.

<sup>79</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 148; Tov, ‘Exegetical Notes’, 90; Stulman, *Other Text*, 60.

MT represents a conflation of two variants: A] בשנה הרביעית ל [B] בשנה ההיא (בראשית ממלכת) צדקיהו מלך יהודה ויהי  
>OG: MT represents a conflation of two variants: A] בשנה הרביעית ל [B] בשנה ההיא (בראשית ממלכת) צדקיהו מלך יהודה ויהי  
(OG) is easily the superior reading; B arose after the addition of 27.1.

v. 3-4. MT בן יהויקים מלך יהודה; אשר לקח נבוכדנאצר מלך בבל מן המקום הזה ויביאם בבבל  
>OG: All MT plus.<sup>81</sup>

v. 5. MT לעיני הכהנים ולעיני כל העם; OG κατ' ὀφθαλμοῦ παντος του λαου και κατ'  
ὀφθαλμοῦ των ἱερεων: As in 27.16, OG lists these groups in reverse order to MT.

v. 6. MT יקם יהוה; OG στησαι: OG apparently read the infinitive להקים, which would  
then parallel להשיב.

MT דבריך, 'your words'; OG τον λογον σου, 'your word'.

v. 7. MT שמעו; OG ἀκουσατε: Possibly OG read שמעו, but the ensuing reference to 'the  
ears of all the people' may have prompted the translator to make the change.

v. 8. MT ולרעה ולדבר >OG: MT plus, prompted by the frequent Jeremianic trilogy, רעב  
(many Hebrew mss. read ולרעב rather than ולרעה).<sup>82</sup> Without these words, the  
*Vorlage* neatly counterbalances למלחמה with לשלום (v. 9).

v. 10. OG εν ὀφθαλμοις παντος του λαου >MT.

MT מוטה . . . וישברו; OG τους κλοιους . . . αὐτους = מוטה . . . וישברם: Note that in v.  
13, MT also the plural מוטה. The masculine suffix הו in MT is strange, given that מוטה is  
feminine; Holladay proposes an earlier וישבריהן, in which the final *nun* was later read as a *waw*.<sup>83</sup>

v. 11. MT בעוד שנתים ימים >OG: MT plus,<sup>84</sup> conforming Hananiah's prophecy to v. 3.

---

<sup>80</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 15.

<sup>81</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 224; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 23; Janzen, *Studies*, 48; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 125.

<sup>82</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 225; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 198; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 125; contra Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 23.

<sup>83</sup> Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 125. Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 150, proposes dittography of ו (cf. the following ויאמר).

<sup>84</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 225; Janzen, *Studies*, 48; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 125.

v. 13. MT ועשית; OG ποιησ: The second person reading in MT is (at least initially) surprising; precisely for this reason, however, the first person ποιησ is more likely to be due to the translator than to a variant ועשיתי in the *Vorlage*.<sup>85</sup>

v. 14. MT ועברו וגם את חית בשדה נתתי לו >OG: MT plus, influenced by 27.6.<sup>86</sup>

v. 15. MT שמע נא חנניה >OG: MT plus.<sup>87</sup>

v. 16. MT כי סרה דברת אל יהוה >OG: MT plus;<sup>88</sup> cf. Deut. 13.6.

v. 17. MT חנניה הנביא בשנה ההיא >OG: Probable MT plus.<sup>89</sup>

## 2.3. Exegetical Notes

### Chapter 27

v. 2. עשה לך מוסרות: The narrative begins with a ‘sign act’, comparable to those in 13.1-11 (the linen belt) and 19.1-13 (the clay jar), the first of which is also recounted in the first person.

מוטה: In the OT, מוטה (‘yoke bar’) is almost always a metaphor of oppression (foreign or social), and occurs either by itself (Isa. 58.6, 9; Ezek. 30.18) or in the phrase על מוטה (Lev. 26.13; Ezek. 34.27). Each time, it is something that YHWH breaks (שבר) or urges his people to remove (נתק, אסר, נתק). Likewise, מוסרה (‘strap’) occurs in 30.8 (על); Nah. 1.13 (מוטה) and Ps. 107.14, to symbolise foreign rule from which YHWH releases Israel. Only in Jer. 27 – 28 do we read of YHWH imposing a yoke. Though similar in meaning, the ensuing narrative uses מוטה to

---

<sup>85</sup> Volz, *Jeremia*, 263; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 23; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 713 (“The sense of v. 13 is ‘You have made a rebellious gesture (by breaking the wooden yoke) but you have thereby made for yourself an unyielding and unbreakable tyranny.’”); contra Duhm, *Jeremia*, 226.

<sup>86</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 226; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 150; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 201; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 23; Janzen, *Studies*, 48.

<sup>87</sup> Even Duhm, *Jeremia*, 227, notes that this clause “ist nicht gut zu entbehren.”

<sup>88</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 227; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 150; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 23; Janzen, *Studies*, 48; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 714; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 126. A contrary view is implied by Volz’s question, “von Jer. oder erst von Baruch stammt?”, *Jeremia*, 263.

<sup>89</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 48; contra Graupner, *Auftrag*, 69 n.33 (“Die LXX übergehen den Ruckbezug als überflüssig.”).

denote the object worn by Jeremiah (28.10, 12, 13) and על to denote the power of Babylon (27.8, 11, 12; 28.2, 4, 11, 14).

v. 5. בזרוע הנטויה ובכחי הגדול ובזרועי הנטויה: The phrase בזרוע הנטויה is commonly used in parallel with ביד חזקה (Deut. 4.34; 5.15; Ps. 136.12; Jer. 21.5), especially in contexts describing YHWH's acts of redemption and judgement. Only in three other places, however, is it used with כח גדול (Deut. 9.29; 2 Kgs. 17.36; Jer. 32.17), and only in the latter instance, as here, in relation to creation.

לאשר ישר בעיני: The phrase ישר בעיני, 'pleasing in the eyes of (YHWH)', is also common in the Deuteronomistic literature (e.g., Deut. 12.25; 21.9; 1 Kgs. 11.33; 2 Kgs. 10.30). There, however, as its collocation with עשה indicates, the emphasis is firmly on human conduct; here such considerations are absent, and the sense is rather 'to whom I see fit' (cf. 18.4).<sup>90</sup>

v. 6. עבד: YHWH's appellation of Nebuchadnezzar as 'my servant' occurs also in MT 25.9 and 43.10, but is otherwise unparalleled in the OT, though we should note the descriptions of Cyrus (Isa. 44.28; 45.1) as YHWH's רע ('shepherd') and משיח ('anointed'). 'Servanthood' here clearly implies subordination to, rather than devotion to, YHWH; just as the Judah and the nations will be Nebuchadnezzar's vassals, so he is YHWH's vassal.<sup>91</sup>

ונם את חית השרדה נתתי לו לעבדו: The statement clearly emphasises the extent of Nebuchadnezzar's dominion (cf. Dan. 2.38). The reference to wild animals, however, may find added significance in the fact that the kings are told to 'bow the neck to the yoke' (נתן את צוואר) (בעל, vv. 8, 11, 12) – thereby implicitly likening them to domestic animals. In this case, the certainty of Nebuchadnezzar's rule over the nations is made all the more certain.<sup>92</sup>

v. 10. למען הרחיק אתכם: Although the term למען usually has a final sense, 'in order to' (Jer. 32.14; 42.6; 43.3; 50.34; 51.39), it can also be resultative, 'so that' (Lev. 20.3; 2 Kgs. 22.17; Am. 2.7; Jer. 25.7; 32.35; Mic. 6.16).<sup>93</sup> Since the subjects of the verb are the prophets, a resultative sense seems certain here.

---

<sup>90</sup> Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 529; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 684.

<sup>91</sup> See Z. Zevit, 'The Use of 'ebed as a Diplomatic Term in Jeremiah', *JBL* 88 (1969) 74-77; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 512-513.

<sup>92</sup> So Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 119.

<sup>93</sup> See *GBH* 2, §169g. Cf. *BDB*, s.v. מען; "sometimes, in rhetorical passages, the issue of a line of action, though really undesigned, is represented by it [למען] ironically as if it were designed." *BDB* cites Jer.

v. 11. וְהִנַּחְתִּי עַל אֲדָמָתוֹ . . . וְעִבְדָהּ וַיֵּשֶׁב בָּהּ: The content of YHWH's promise for the nation that serves the king of Babylon is here spelt out. In Jdg. 2.23, YHWH allows the nations to remain (נוּחַ Hiph.) in Canaan, but the most striking parallel to this phrase occurs in Gen. 2.15, וַיִּנְחָהוּ בֶן־עֶרְן לְעִבְרָה וּלְשֹׁמְרָה. This is the only other place in the OT where נוּחַ Hiph. is used in conjunction with עִבְדָהּ; the possibility that we have here a deliberate echo of the Genesis passage is strengthened by the explicit reference to creation in v. 5.

v. 15. לְמַעַן הִרְחַתִּי אֶתְכֶם: Jeremiah concludes his message to Zedekiah with a second לְמַעַן clause (cf. v. 10). In the OG *Vorlage*, the subject is again the prophets, justifying a resultative interpretation. Conceivably, since MT attributes the scattering to YHWH (הִרְחִי), לְמַעַן could here have a final sense;<sup>94</sup> this would, however, go against the general tenor of Jeremiah's message.

v. 16. כָּלֵי בַיִת יְהוָה: 2 Kgs. 24.13 records that in 597 Nebuchadrezzar had broken up (קָצַץ) the gold vessels made by Solomon; the implication here is that some of the other temple utensils had been taken to Babylon, while others (v. 20) were left in Jerusalem. The emphasis on the return of these vessels may seem surprising, but as Ackroyd remarks, "restoration of the vessels implies re-establishment of that continuity of the cultus which was in some measure interrupted by the disaster of 597."<sup>95</sup>

v. 18. וְאִם יֵשׁ דְבַר יְהוָה אִתָּם: For similar expressions in relation to prophetic inspiration, see 5.13 (וְהִרְבֵּר אִין בָּהֶם) and 23.28 (וְאִשֶׁר דְּבַרִּי אִתּוֹ).

יִפְנְעוּ נָא בִיהוָה: Some commentators believe that Jeremiah was being perfectly sincere at this point;<sup>96</sup> however, the tone of scepticism in וְאִם יֵשׁ דְבַר יְהוָה אִתָּם should not be missed. The fact that 'intercession' was recognised as a distinctively prophetic activity makes

---

27.10, 15 as examples of this 'ironic' usage. *GBH* also sees לְמַעַן in Joel. 4.6 as resultative, but according to L.C. Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah* (NICOT; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1976) 113 n.33, the term here "is strictly telic, 'in order to (take)', and seems to imply a malicious design".

<sup>94</sup> The notion of YHWH sending false prophets in order to bring about disaster is not wholly alien to the OT (1 Kgs. 22.19-23).

<sup>95</sup> See P.R. Ackroyd, 'The Temple Vessels: A Continuity Theme', in P.R. Ackroyd (ed.), *Studies in the Religious Tradition of the Old Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1987) 55.

<sup>96</sup> "He invites the other prophets to believe the word of God given through him and to intercede for that which he has been forbidden to pray. The possibility that the LORD might relent is implicit in this challenge." (Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 53).

Jeremiah's instruction to the exiles in 29.7 to 'pray on behalf' (התפלל בעד) of Babylon the more striking.

v. 22. וְשָׁמָּה יִהְיוּ עַד יוֹם פִּקְדֵי אֲתָם: The significance of this MT plus should not be overlooked. The hitherto almost wholly negative meaning of פִּקְדֵי (see 29.10) is reversed, as a favourable visitation from YHWH is predicted. Compare the very similar prophecy concerning Zedekiah in Babylon (32.5, also MT plus).

#### Chapter 28

v. 4. וְאֵת יִכְנִיָּה וְאֵת גְּלוּת: Hananiah's prophecy of the return of the 597 exiles exceeds that of ch. 24 in two crucial respects; it supplies a time-frame (בעוד שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים, v. 3), and specifically lists Jehoiachin as among the returnees. As commentators have observed,<sup>97</sup> the latter point would have presented an implicit challenge to Zedekiah.

v. 6. אֲמַן כֵּן יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה יְקָם יְהוָה אֶת דְּבָרָיךָ: Jeremiah's reply to Hananiah has long puzzled commentators, given his insistence in ch. 27 and elsewhere in ch. 28 that there would be no early return from Babylon. Explanations include irony<sup>98</sup> or (more commonly), that Jeremiah was simply expressing his own desire as distinct from what he knew YHWH had decreed.<sup>99</sup> Either is plausible, and not necessarily mutually exclusive. Carroll notes that similar instances of a soft answer followed by אַךְ (cf. v. 7) occur in v. 12 and 26.15: "General agreement with a situation or belief is expressed, but a few dissenting points may yet be made . . . These points usually constitute the heart of the matter and have a tendency to reverse the agreement expressed with the sentiments just enunciated."<sup>100</sup> For an unambiguous example of irony (also directed at the false prophets) in Jer., see 23.28: הַנְּבִיאִים אֲשֶׁר אָתוּ חִלּוּם יִסְפֵּר חִלּוּם.

It may, however, be significant that Jeremiah makes no reference to Jehoiachin, whom Hananiah explicitly included among those whom YHWH would bring back in v. 4: "While the false prophet is hostile to the rule of Zedekiah and categorically demands the return of

---

<sup>97</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 543; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 54.

<sup>98</sup> Nicholson, *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 37.

<sup>99</sup> Volz, *Jeremia*, 265; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 152; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 201; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 539. McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 718, finds all these explanations problematic but offers no clear view of his own.

<sup>100</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 544.



Jehoiachin to the throne, as an integral part of his party's political platform, Jeremiah intentionally skips over this problem".<sup>101</sup>

v. 9. הנביא אשר ינבא לשלום בבא דבר הנביא יודע: The implication of Jeremiah's words seems to be that since prophetic oracles are in the main of disaster (v. 8), the burden of proof is on the prophet of peace.<sup>102</sup> The final *כי באמת שלחני יהוה*, echoes 26.15, *כי באמת שלחני יהוה*.

v. 15. ואתה הבטחת את העם הזה על שקר: The same accusation is made against Shemaiah in 29.31; elsewhere, *בטח* Hiph. occurs only in 2 Kgs. 18.30 = Isa. 36.15. *הבטחת* is most naturally taken to mean 'You have caused (this people) to trust (a lie)', an interpretation reflected in all the commentaries and *EVV*.<sup>103</sup> Yet whilst ch. 28 has carefully noted the presence of the people during Jeremiah's confrontation with Hananiah, nowhere has it reported their reaction. Equally, while in ch. 27 Jeremiah urges the people 'not to listen' to the prophets, their response is left open. It is more probable that *הבטחת* here has the sense 'you have *tried* to persuade'. In the OT, 'try to' is usually expressed by *ל + בקש + inf.* (Ex. 2.15; Deut. 13.11; 1 Sam. 19.10)<sup>104</sup> or simply *בקש + inf.* (Jer. 26.21). Key to our passage, however, is Deut. 13.2-6. Here, Moses warns the people that if a 'prophet or dreamer' (*נביא או חלום חלום*) urges them to follow other gods, they are not to listen (v. 4); rather, that prophet or dreamer must die, because he has spoken rebellion (*דבר סרה*) against YHWH, *לנהיך מן הדרך אשר צוה יהוה אלהיך* (v. 6). Here, although *בקש* is not used, *לנהיך* must mean, 'to try to seduce you'; the context makes it clear that the people resist the prophet's enticements (in MT v. 6, *ובערת הרע מקרבך*, indicates that they themselves remove him).

v. 16. הנני משלחך מעל פני האדמה: In this situation, however, YHWH will himself effect the death sentence. This phrase has no exact parallel in the OT, although YHWH also 'expels' (*שלח* Pi.) the man from the garden (Gen. 3.23), and the nations 'from before' (*מפני*) Israel (Lev. 18.24; 20.23).

---

<sup>101</sup> Malamat, 'Last Two Kings of Judah', 84.

<sup>102</sup> "Hananiah is suspect because he does not say what prophets characteristically say. He is soft on the dangers of covenant disobedience." (Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 252; similarly Thomson, *Jeremiah*, 540; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 128).

<sup>103</sup> Most use some such expression as 'led / persuaded / made to believe'. See especially Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 58: "Hananiah (and Shemaiah) had gone one step further and succeeded in making the people put their trust in a lie".

<sup>104</sup> This construction often means 'intend to'; however, in the instances cited above, it is clear that an attempt is made to do something.

## 2.4. Coherence and Redaction

The most obvious indication of editorial activity in these two chapters lies in the shift from first person to third person speech in 28.2. Nevertheless, there is little scholarly consensus as to the nature and extent of this redaction. Perhaps the simplest hypothesis is that an editor has utilised two different, but historically reliable, sources. Thus Rudolph assigned ch. 27 to 'A' (authentic sayings), with ch. 28 added later from 'B' (Baruch's biography).<sup>105</sup> Without naming particular sources, Jones also sees ch. 27 as the nucleus, to which the editor added ch. 28: "Without chapter 27, chapter 28 would lack its essential presupposition and clue. In particular, 28.10 presupposes 27.2."<sup>106</sup>

More commonly, it is held that the oldest kernel (whether or not from 'B') is found in ch. 28, plus a few elements of ch. 27, with most of the latter being redactional.<sup>107</sup> Those who take this view often describe the editor as 'Deuteronomistic', though the evidence is inconclusive. Nicholson calls attention to the expressions *ובזרועי הנטויה בכחי הגדול* (27.5; Deut. 9.29; 2 Kgs. 17.36), *הקם את דבר* (28.6; Deut. 9.5; 1 Sam. 1.23; 1 Kgs. 2.4; 6.12; 8.20) and *דבר סרה אל יהוה* (28.16; Deut. 13.6).<sup>108</sup> As he acknowledges, however, the language is for the most part that of the Jeremiah prose tradition, rather than of Dtr.H.<sup>109</sup> Nicholson also notes that the concern with true and false prophecy which dominates chs. 27 – 28 is characteristic of Dtr.H., and that the criterion implied in 28.8-9 for distinguishing between them echoes Deut. 13.5.<sup>110</sup>

---

<sup>105</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 147. Cf. Volz, *Jeremia*, xlvi: "Hier lagen Baruch schriftliche Aufzeichnungen Jeremias vor, die aber nur eine Teil der Handlung umfaßten; das übrige ergänzt Baruch auf Grund von Mitteilungen Jeremia oder von Notizen Jeremias."

<sup>106</sup> Jones, *Jeremiah*, 346.

<sup>107</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 216-217; Hyatt, 'Jeremiah', 788-789 (though ascribing more of ch. 27 to 'B' than did Duhm); Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 5-10. Nicholson, *Preaching*, 93-97, is less interested in identifying the original material (though he thinks 27.2-4, 8, 12 may be original), emphasising instead that the section "assumed its present form at the hands of the Deuteronomistic traditionists." (96). Mowinckel, *Komposition*, 42, assigned ch. 27 to the 'C' source.

<sup>108</sup> Nicholson, *Preaching*, 95-97.

<sup>109</sup> Nicholson, *Preaching*, 95-96, a point emphasised by Jones, *Jeremiah*, 22. L. Stulman, *The Prose Sermons of Jeremiah: A Redescription of the Correspondences with the Deuteronomistic Literature in the Light of Recent Text-Critical Research* (SBLDS 83; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986) 89, draws the same conclusion in respect to ch. 27 (though he overlooks *ובזרועי הנטויה בכחי הגדול*), pointing out that most of this Jeremiah prose language is in any case restricted to the MT plusses.

<sup>110</sup> Nicholson, *Preaching*, 97. Caution is needed here, since an interest in prophecy would probably have been widespread among Jews during and after the sixth century.

Others have offered more complex analyses. Noting the shift from third person to second person address in 27.9, Wanke identifies all of 27.9-22 as a late addition to the narrative.<sup>111</sup> In any case, he argues, their polemic against the false prophets is alien to the original meaning of the sign of the yoke.<sup>112</sup> Excising them reveals an older stratum comprising 27.2-8, 12b; 28.1-17. This has a coherent structure: Action of Jeremiah (27.2-3, 12b); counter-action of Hananiah (28.1-4, 10-11); vindication of Jeremiah and sentence on Hananiah (28.12-17). Even here, however, Wanke finds redactional elements. 27.4-8 are verbose, overtly theological, and unconnected to the symbolic action. Also secondary are 28.1-9, 15-17, as shown by their heightened interest in the Babylonian exiles and by the fact that they presuppose the symbolic action of Hananiah. Consequently, the oldest core comprises 27.2-3, 12b; 28.10-14.<sup>113</sup>

Although he criticises Wanke's argument at points, McKane takes essentially the same approach.<sup>114</sup> The warnings against false prophets are "only indirectly related to the message of the symbolic action."<sup>115</sup> 27.5-8 are clearly secondary, since "it was not a time to survey a grand theological structure which embraced the world."<sup>116</sup> The redactional nature of 27.12b-15 is shown by the fact that whereas v. 12a addresses Zedekiah, the subsequent verbs are plural. Like Wanke, McKane believes we should look for "a smaller core in which Jeremiah's action is explicated by a single meaning . . . a verse in which the tools of the symbolic action are preserved and in which the explanation sticks close to the concreteness of the metaphor."<sup>117</sup> Despite a painstaking analysis, however, McKane cannot decide whether this elusive verse is v. 11 or 12b. Meanwhile, ch. 28 contains two contrary views of שלום prophecy; that in vv. 6-9,

---

<sup>111</sup> Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 26-27.

<sup>112</sup> Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 26.

<sup>113</sup> Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 35. His analysis is partly shared by Graupner, *Auftrag*, 71-76, who identifies four redactional layers: an autobiographical kernel (27.2-4, 11), a secondary expansion (28.10-13), a further expansion (28.1-9, 15-17), and a final Deuteronomistic redaction (27.5-10, 12-22; 28.14).

<sup>114</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 695-704.

<sup>115</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 702.

<sup>116</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 700.

<sup>117</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 698.

where Jeremiah is content to let Hananiah's words be proved right or wrong by subsequent events, and that in v. 15, where he pronounces Hananiah a false prophet without further ado.<sup>118</sup>

Wanke and McKane have rightly highlighted the fact that chs. 27 – 28 deal with two distinct (though related) issues; namely, 'serving the king of Babylon', and 'not listening to the prophets'. Unfortunately, their conclusions illustrate all too well the dangers of operating with fixed notions of what is 'relevant' or 'superfluous' in a text.<sup>119</sup> On what basis is it assumed that 'this was not the time' for an affirmation of YHWH's worldwide sovereignty, when in fact it supplies the underpinning for a message that would otherwise be extremely abrupt? On what basis is it assumed that the warnings against the prophets are a distraction, when their message, 'You will not serve the king of Babylon' (27.9, 14), directly contradicts what Jeremiah is urging his own audience to believe? On what basis is it assumed that Jeremiah's message must be 'tightly' connected to the metaphor of the yoke? In any case, the claim that vv. 4-12 are unconnected with the yoke symbol is seriously undermined by their triple use of the expression *לֹא תִשָּׁעַבְדוּ אֶת צוּר אֲחֵר* (vv. 8, 11, 12b). To argue, as Wanke does, that these have been inserted to *create* a link is little short of desperation.<sup>120</sup>

Nor are the arguments for multiple redactional layers in ch. 28 compelling.<sup>121</sup> The fact that Jeremiah accuses Hananiah of promoting 'falsehood' (*שֶׁקֶר*, v. 15) in no way negates the 'test of time' set out in vv. 7-8. Precisely because this criterion stands, Jeremiah makes no attempt to have Hananiah put to death by the community (as prescribed in Deut. 13.5). Instead, he predicts that YHWH himself will remove Hananiah 'from the face of the earth' that same year (v. 16). In so doing, Jeremiah sets his own word against that of Hananiah. *Both* must now wait the test of time. As for Wanke's view that vv. 10-14 and vv. 1-9, 15-17 are from different authors, he himself supplies the best counter-argument: "Daß diese Einfügungen äußerst

---

<sup>118</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 719-720.

<sup>119</sup> See too Wanke's treatment of 27.4. Despite conceding (*Untersuchungen*, 24) that this verse is syntactically well-integrated with vv. 2-3, he insists: "Eine solche umständliche Ausdrucksweise ist den Berichten über symbolische Handlungen im Jeremiabuch nicht *eigen*; mit v. 3 wäre schon alles gesagt, was zur Einführung der Deutung der Handlung *nötig* ist, und v. 4 ist damit praktisch *überflüssig*. Alles das weist darauf hin, daß man damit zu rechnen hat, daß in v. 4 eine Naht vorliegt, die zwei ursprünglich nicht zusammengehörige Stücke miteinander verbindet." (*Untersuchungen*, 25; italics mine).

<sup>120</sup> Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 27.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 547: "Chapter 28 has been analysed without remainder and its interpretation appears to be unproblematical."

geschickt und dem vorliegenden Material entsprechend vorgenommen wurden, macht ihr Erkennen um so schwieriger.”<sup>122</sup>

Granted, chs. 27 – 28 are not completely straightforward. Jeremiah’s message in vv. 12-18 clearly implies the possibility of a peaceful existence for Judah, even under Babylonian rule (למה תמותו, v. 13; למה תהיה העיר הזאת חרבה, v. 17). Indeed, prophetic intercession may prevent still more of the temple vessels being ransacked (v. 18). In vv. 19-22 (excluding the MT plus in v. 22), however, the mood changes. The temple vessels will, after all, be taken to Babylon. Consequently, many scholars see vv. 19-22 as reflecting a viewpoint quite different to that expressed in vv. 12-18.<sup>123</sup> According to Seitz, the prophecy concerning the temple vessels “forms a redactional supplement to an otherwise coherent prophetic narrative.”<sup>124</sup>

The apparent tension between the prophecy of vv. 19-22 and Jeremiah’s invitation to the prophets in v. 18 to ‘entreat’ (פניע) YHWH vanishes, however, if we understand v. 18 (like 28.6) as either ironic, or as expressing a wish rather than an expectation.<sup>125</sup> Nor is it necessary to see vv. 19-22 as conflicting with the conditional promise of ‘life’ in vv. 13 and 17. The prediction that the temple vessels will be taken to Babylon is sobering, and serves to refute the optimism of the other prophets (v. 16), but it scarcely constitutes “an unqualified and unrelieved prophecy of

---

<sup>122</sup> Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 35. More convincing is the view of E. Jenni, *Die politischen Voraussagen der Propheten* (ATANT 29; Zurich: Zwingli Verlag, 1956) 59, which Wanke cites (*Untersuchungen*, 35 n.36): “Nur übertriebene rationalistische Kritik könnte die vv. 15-17 oder v. 17 allein als unechten Zusatz ablehnen.”

<sup>123</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 222; Volz, *Jeremia*, 258; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 703-704. Even Jones, *Jeremiah*, 359, concedes that 27.16-22 “may or may not be original to the episode.” But see Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 151: “Ein Widerspruch zu v. 18 ist nicht vorhanden: wenn die Propheten die Zukunft richtig wüßten wie Jer. selbst, täten sie Fürbitte, daß das von Jahwe Angedrohte nicht eintritt. Denn das prophetische Drohwort gilt ja nie unbedingt, Jahwe kann seinen Plan immer noch ändern”; also Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 123.

<sup>124</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 186. Seitz believes (207-214, 241) that chs. 27 – 29 contain the beginning of the Scribal Chronicle.

<sup>125</sup> “The prophet refutes his own playful invitation to the adversaries” (Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 248).

doom”.<sup>126</sup> Nor is it obvious how these three verses serve the function Seitz ascribes to them of ‘foreclosing’ what has gone before.<sup>127</sup> The option of ongoing life in a viable city still stands.

## 2.5. Differentiation in Jer. 27 – 28: הנביאים / המלך הכהנים וכל העם

In our previous chapter, we noted how at first sight, Jer. 21.1-10 appears to differentiate salvation and judgement along audience-critical lines (‘the king’ and ‘the people’). We argued, however, that despite those audience-markers, the issues of salvation and judgement were in fact correlated to the more basic issue of staying in the city and surrendering to the Babylonians. When we come to chs. 27 – 28 the matter is rather different. Here too, we find very clear audience-critical notes in the text; as we saw earlier when discussing the structure of the passage, Jeremiah’s rhetoric divides the post-597 Judah community into ‘prophets’ (הנביאים) and everyone else (המלך הכהנים וכל העם). This time, however, there is a striking difference in what he says to each group.

We can consider first his message to the king, the priests and the people. This can be designated as one of *modest hope*; what is on offer, for Judah as for the other nations, is the chance to ‘remain in the land and work it’ (27.11). This, as we have seen, echoes the creation narrative, and certainly entails more than the promise of ‘survival’ in 21.9. It is emphasised in MT by a double invitation to serve the king of Babylon and ‘live’ (חיה, 27.12, 17), so that Jerusalem may not become a ruin (27.17). We have argued that the prophecy concerning the temple vessels is not intended to ‘foreclose’ the possibility of life, but rather to refute the claims of the other prophets. Moreover, the choice presented in ch. 27 is still in the balance at the end of ch. 28; as we have seen, the words ואתה הבטחת את העם הזה על שקר (28.15) do not imply that the people have in fact accepted Hananiah’s message.

At the same time, this message of hope is highly restrained. In the first place, it is contingent upon the people accepting the sovereignty of the king of Babylon and ‘serving’ him, which also means ‘not listening’ to the prophets. Secondly, all that they are promised in return

---

<sup>126</sup> As McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 704, claims. Indeed, Seebass, ‘Konflikt’, 450, agrees that in OG, “eine erneute Demütigung des falschen Vertrauens auf den Tempel, nicht aber die Plünderung der Stadt ankündigte”, but argues that in MT they have become “(eine) *unbedingte* Unheilswort” (italics his). But it is hard to see how MT’s more detailed description of the temple vessels creates such a radically different message.

<sup>127</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 187.

is the prospect of life in their own land; this is not elaborated, nor is there any word of personal blessing or assurance from YHWH (as there is, for example, in 42.9-12). In fact, there is greater emphasis on the results of disobedience, i.e., removal from the land, scattering and perishing (vv. 10 and 15).<sup>128</sup> Thirdly, Jeremiah anticipates a further ransacking of the temple (27.19-22); the remaining temple vessels, national symbols of status and security, will be removed. The MT plus concerning the return of the temple vessels (v. 22b) looks beyond this, but does not negate it. Consequently, it is hardly surprising that in 28.9 Jeremiah distances himself from those who prophesy שלום.<sup>129</sup>

Now it is clear that this message of restrained hope is presented to Judah as a single entity. Although vv. 8 and 11 establish a (את המלך כבד / אשר לא עבד / אשר עבד) polarity at an *international* level, as far as Judah is concerned Jeremiah's words imply that they will respond as one. Nowhere does he raise the prospect of some serving the Babylonians and others refusing to do so; still less of what would happen if such a division occurred. To this extent, therefore, chs. 27 – 28 fall into the category of 'Deuteronomistic alternatives' to which Koenen referred. At the same time, however, the rhetorical differentiation of 'the prophets' in these chapters is matched by the dramatic pronouncement of judgement upon Hananiah in ch. 28. Precisely because his counter-prophecy is inimical to the welfare of the community (העם הזה, 28.15), YHWH will 'expel' him (שלח Pi. ptc.) 'from the face of the earth' (מועל פני הרמה, 28.16); that is, he will implement the sentence prescribed in Deut. 13 for a member of the Israelite community who attempts to mislead his brothers. This specific and rapidly-executed penalty is the more striking, since in ch. 27 the results of failing to serve the king of Babylon are that the prophets will be banished along with everyone else (27.15).

Consequently, chs. 27 – 28 witness to an inner-Judean polarity of 'people' and 'prophets'. A message of conditional hope is announced to the nation at large, from which Hananiah is decisively excluded. Stulman's remark, that in Jer. "*bad insiders* – indigenous outsiders – pose a profound threat to those who adhere to social and cosmic restraints",<sup>130</sup> finds in the prophet from Gibeon its prime exemplar. At the same time, this is not a rigid dichotomy.

---

<sup>128</sup> Compare 1 Sam. 12.25, where Samuel concludes his appeal to the people to serve YHWH with the words, ואם הרע תרעו גם אתם גם מולכם תספו. Though conditional, the final position of this clause ensures an ominous tone.

<sup>129</sup> Pace Seebass, 'Konflikt', 452.

<sup>130</sup> Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos*, 128 (italics his).

Undergirding Jeremiah's message in ch. 27 is what we might call a democratisation of responsibility; i.e, the assumption that it is the king, priests and people, rather than the prophets, who carry ultimate responsibility for the fate of the nation. It is *their* decision to listen or not to listen to the prophets which will determine their future. Hence, while Hananiah is singled out for judgement, accepting his message will result in *all* being scattered (27.15) and the city destroyed (27.17). Indeed, a hint of some blurring in the 'prophet / people' polarity lies in the term **נביאיכם**, 'your prophets' (27.9, 16), where the suffix suggests a degree of affinity between the two groups.<sup>131</sup>

This way of configuring the nation is quite distinctive. The hostile stance towards the prophets is mirrored in the judgement oracles of 23.33-32, but there is no suggestion there that *other* groups (or individuals) might be saved; in fact, that passage is followed by a warning of judgement on the entire nation (23.33-39). The salvation promise of 21.8-10, like that of chs. 27 – 28, includes an invitation to 'live' (חיה, 21.9; 27.12, 17) dependent on submission to the Babylonians (יצא ונפל, 21.9; עבר, 27.11, 12, 17),<sup>132</sup> but this is for any who will hear it. 23.1-8 prophesies disaster for Israel's 'shepherds' (who might include prophets) and restoration for the 'flock'; what is striking in that passage, however, is that even in the post-dispersal context that is assumed, the people are still viewed essentially as the victims of misrule. Meanwhile in ch. 24, salvation and judgement are allocated (without explanation) to the exiled and non-exiled communities respectively. As we will see, however, the differentiation between people and prophets will be repeated in ch. 29.

### 3. Jer. 29.1-32

#### 3.1. Text

<p>και οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι της βιβλιου οὗς ἀπεστειλεν Ιερεμιας ἐξ Ιερουσαλημ προς τους πρεσβυτερους της ἀποικιας και προς τους ἱερεις και προς τους ψευδοπροφητας</p>	<p>1. ואלה דברי הספר אשר שלח ירמיה הנביא מירושלם אל יתר זקני הגולה ואל הכהנים ואל הנביאים ואל כל העם אשר הגלה נבוכדנאצר מירושלם בבלה</p>
--	--

<sup>131</sup> In 27.16, OG (34.13) reads simply των προφητων, 'of the prophets', with no suffix. In the previous verse, on the other hand, OG reads ὑμεις και οἱ προφηται ὑμων, while MT reads simply אתם והנביאים. See too 29.8.

<sup>132</sup> It will be remembered that Seitz sees both passages (prior to redaction) as reflecting the 'submit and live' outlook of the Scribal Chronicle.



ἐπιστολὴν εἰς Βαβυλῶνα <u>τῆ ἀποικία</u> καὶ πρὸς παντὰ τὸν λαόν	
ὑστερον ἐξελθοντος Ιεχονίου του βασιλεως και της βασιλισσης και των εύνουχων και παντος ἐλευθερου και δεσμωτου και τεχνιτου ἐξ Ιερουσαλημ	2. אחרי צאת יכניה המלך והגבירה והסריסים שרי יהודה וירושלם והחרש והמסגר מירושלם
ἐν χειρὶ Ελεασα υἱου Σαφαν και Γαμαριου υἱου Χελκιου ὄν ἀπεστειλε Σεδεκίας βασιλευς Ιουδα πρὸς βασιλεα Βαβυλωνος εἰς Βαβυλῶνα λεγων	3. ביד אלעשה בן שפן וגמריה בן חלקיה אשר שלח צדקיה מלך יהודה אל נבוכדנאצר מלך בבל בבלה לאמר
οὕτως εἶπε κυριος ὁ θεος Ισραηλ ἐπι τὴν ἀποικίαν ἦν ἀπῶκισα ἀπο Ιερουσαλημ	4. כה אמר יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל לכל הגולה אשר הגליתי מירושלם בבלה
οἰκοδομησατε οἰκους και κατοικησατε και φυτευσατε παραδεισους και φαγετε τους καρπους αὐτων	5. בנו בתים ושבו ונטעו גנות ואכלו את פרין
και λαβετε γυναικας και τεκνοποιησατε υἱους και θυγατερας και λαβετε τοις υἱοις ὑμων γυναικας και τας θυγατερας ὑμων ἀνδρασι δοτε και πληθυνεσθε και μη σμικρυνθητε	6. קחו נשים והלידו בנים ובנות וקחו לבניכם נשים ואת בנותיכם תנו לאנשים ותלדנה בנים ובנות ורב שם ואל תמטעו
και ζητησατε εἰς εἰρηνην της γης εἰς ἦν ἀπῶκισα ὑμας ἔκει και προσευξασθε περι αὐτων πρὸς κυριον ὅτι ἐν εἰρηνη αὐτων ἔσται εἰρηνη ὑμιν	7. ודרשו את שלום העיר אשר הגליתי אתכם שמה והתפללו בעדה אל יהוה כי בשלומה יהיה לכם שלום
ὅτι οὕτως εἶπε κυριος μη ἀναπειθετωσαν ὑμας οἱ ψευδοπροφηται οἱ ἐν ὑμιν και μη ἀναπειθετωσαν ὑμας οἱ μαντις ὑμων και μη ἀκουετε εἰς τὰ ἐνυπνια ὑμων ἃ ὑμεις ἐνυπνιαζεσθε	8. כי כה אמר יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל אל ישאיו לכם נביאיכם אשר בקרבכם וקסמיכם ואל תשמעו אל חלמתיכם אשר אתם מחלמים
ὅτι ἀδिका αὐτοι προφητεουσιν ὑμιν ἐπι τῷ ὄνοματι μου και οὐκ ἀπεστειλα αὐτους	9. כי בשקר הם נבאים לכם בשמי לא שלחתים נאם יהוה
ὅτι οὕτως εἶπε κυριος ὅταν μελλη πληρουσθαι Βαβυλωνι ἐβδομηκοντα ἔτη ἐπισκεψομαι ὑμας και ἐπιστησω <u>τους λογους</u> μου ἐφ' ὑμας του ἀποστρεψαι τον <u>λαόν ὑμων</u> εἰς τον τοπον τουτου	10. כי כה אמר יהוה כי לפי מלאת לבבל שבעים שנה אפקד אתכם והקימתי עליכם את דברי הטוב להשיב אתכם אל המקום הזה
και λογιουμαι ἐφ' ὑμας <u>λογισμον</u> εἰρηνης και οὐ κακα του δουναι ὑμιν <u>ταυτα</u>	11. כי אנכי ידעתי את המחשבת אשר אנכי חשב עליכם נאם יהוה מחשבות שלום ולא לרעה לתת לכם אחרית ותקוה
και <u>προσευξασθε</u> πρὸς με και	12. וקראתם אתי והלכתם והתפללתם אלי ושמעתי

εἰσακουσομαι ὑμων	אליכם
και ἐκζητησατε με και εὔρησετε με ὅτι ζητησετε με ἐν ὅλη καρδια ὑμων	13. ובקשתם אתי ומצאתם כי תדרשני בכל לבבכם
και ἐπιφανουμαι ὑμιν	14. ונמצאתי לכם נאם יהוה ושכתי את שביתכם וקבצתי אתכם מכל הגוים ומכל המקומות אשר הדחתני אתכם שם נאם יהוה והשבתי אתכם אל המקום אשר הגליתני אתכם משם
ὅτι εἶπατε κατεστησεν ἡμιν κυριος προφητας ἐνβαβυλωνι	15. כי אמרתם הקים לנו יהוה נבאים בכלה
	16. כי כה אמר יהוה אל המלך היושב אל כסא דוד ואל כל העם היושב בעיר הזאת אחיכם אשר לא יצאו אתכם בגונה
	17. כה אמר יהוה צבאות הנני משלח בם את החרב את הרעב ואת הדבר ונתתי אותם כתאנים השערים אשר לא תאכלנה מרע
	18. ורדפתי אחריהם בחרב ברעב ובדבר ונתתים לזועה לכל ממלכות הארץ לאלה ולשמה ולשרקה ולחרפה בכל הגוים אשר הדחתים שם
	19. תחת אשר לא שמעו אל דברי נאם יהוה אשר שלחתי אליהם את עבדי הנבאים השכם ושלח ולא שמעתם נאם יהוה
	20. ואתם שמעו דבר יהוה כל הגולה אשר שלחתי מירושלם בכלה
οὕτως εἶπε κυριος ἐπι Αχιαβ και ἐπι Σεδεκιαν ἴδου ἐγὼ διδωμι αὐτους εἰς χειρας βασιλεως βαβυλωνος και παταξει αὐτους κατ' ὀφθαλμους ὑμων	21. כה אמר יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל אל אתאב בן קוליה ואל צדקיהו בן מעשיה הנבאים לכם בשמי שקר הנני נתן אתם ביד נבוכדראצר מלך בבל והכם לעיניכם
και λημψονται ἀπ' αὐτων καταραν ἐν παση τη ἀποικια Ιουδα ἐν Βαβυλωνι λεγοντες ποιησαι σε κυριος ὡς Σεδεκιαν ἐποίησε και ὡς Αχιαβ οὗς ἀπετηγανισε βασιλευς βαβυλωνος ἐν πυρι	22. ולקח מהם קללה לכל גלות יהודה אשר בבבל לאמר ישמך יהוה כצדקיהו וכאחב אשר קלם מלך בבל באש
δι' ἦν ἐποίησαν ἀνομιαν ἐν Ισραηλ και ἐμοιχωντο τας γυναικας των πολιτων αὐτων και λογον ἐχρηματισαν ἐν τῷ ὄνοματι μου ὃν οὐ συνεταξα αὐτοῖς και ἐγὼ μαρτυς	23. יען אשר עשו נבלה בישראל וינאפו את נשי רעיהם וידברו דבר בשמי שקר לוא צויתם ואנכי הוידע ועד נאם יהוה
και προς Σαμαιοιαν τον Νελαμιτην ἔρεις	24. ואל שמעיהו הנחלמי תאמר לאמר
οὐκ ἀπεστειλα σε τῷ ὄνοματι μου και	25. כה אמר יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל לאמר יען אשר אתה שלחת בשמכה ספרים אל כל העם אשר

προς Σοφονιαν υιον Μαασαιου τον 'ιερα ε'ιπειν	בירושלם ואל צפניה בן מעשיה הכהן ואל כל הכהנים לאמר
κυριος εδωκε σε 'ιερα αντι Ιωδαε του 'ιερεως γενεσθαι <u>επιστατην εν οικω κυριου</u> παντι ανθρωπω προφητευοντι και παντι ανθρωπω μαινομενω και δωσεις αυτον εις το αποκλεισμα και εις τον καταρρακτην	26. יהוה נתנך כהן תחת יהוידע הכהן להיות פקדים בית יהוה לכל איש משנע ומתנבא ונתתה אתו אל המהפכת ואל הצינף
και νυν δια τι ουκ ε'λοιδορησατε Ιερεμιαν τον εξ Αναθωθ τον προφητευσαντα υμιν	27. ועתה למה לא נערת בירמיהו הענתתי המתנבא לכם
ου δια τουτο απεστειλε προς ημας εις Βαβυλωνα λεγων μακραν εστιν ο'ικοδομησατε ο'ικιας και κατοικησατε και φυτευσατε κηπους και φαγεσθε τον καρπον αυτων	28. כי על כן שלח אלינו בבל לאמר ארכה היא בנו בתים ושבו ונשעו ננות ואכלו את פריהן
και ανεγνω Σοφονιας το βιβλιον εις τα ωτα Ιερεμιου	29. ויקרא צפניה הכהן את הספר הזה באזני ירמיהו הנביא
και εγενετο λογος κυριου προς Ιερεμιαν λεγων	30. ויהי דבר יהוה אל ירמיהו לאמר
αποστειλον προς την αποικιαν λεγων ουτως ειπε κυριος επι Σαμαιαν τον Νελαμιτην επειδη επροθητευσεν υμιν Σαμαιας και εγω ουκ απεστειλα αυτον και πεποιθεναι εποιησεν υμας επ' αδικω	31. שלח על כל הגולה לאמר כה אמר יהוה אל שמעיה הנחלמי יען אשר נבא לכם שמעיה ואני לא שלחתי ויבטח אתכם על שקר
δια τουτο ουτως ειπε κυριος 'ιδου εγω επισκεψομαι επι Σαμαιαν και επι το γενος αυτου και ουκ ε'σται αυτω ανθρωπος εν μεσω υμων του 'ιδειν τα αγαθα α εγω ποιησω υμιν	32. לכן כה אמר יהוה הנני פקד על שמעיה הנחלמי ועל זרעו לא יהיה לו איש יושב בתוך העם הזה ולא יראה בטוב אשר אני עשה לעמי נאם יהוה כי סרה דבר על יהוה

### 3.2. Textual Notes

v. 1. MT ספר; OG βιβλος: Unlike βιβλιον, the term βιβλος does not appear to have been used in Classical Greek or in LXX to signify 'letter'.<sup>133</sup> This might suggest that the

<sup>133</sup> *L & S I*, s.v. βιβλος, lists its meanings as 'a roll (of papyrus), book, writings, a division of a book'; and s.v. βιβλιον, 'a paper, document, book, letter'. The wider semantic range of βιβλιον means that it can represent ספר where the latter means 'book, scroll' (e.g., Ex. 17.14; Jer. 30[37].2; 32[39].10; 36[43].2; Nah. 1.1; Mal. 3.16) as well as where it means 'letter' (e.g., 2 Sam. 11.14; 1 Kgs. 21[20].8; 2 Kgs. 5.5;

translator has initially taken ספר to mean ‘book’ rather than ‘letter’. However, in Bar. 1, a double reference to Baruch’s βιβλιον (και οὔτοι οἱ λογοι του βιβλιου, v. 1; και ανεγνω Βαρουχ τους λογους του βιβλιου, v. 3a) is followed by a note of the people των ερχομενων προς την βιβλον (v. 3b).

OG ἐπιστολην, τη ἀποικια >MT: McKane remarks that this “looks like an inner-Greek gloss on βιβλος which is more exactly specified as a letter (ἐπιστολην)”.<sup>134</sup>

MT הגולה; OG ἀποικια: As we noted on 24.5, φυγας is the normal Classical Greek term for ‘exile’, while φυγαδες denotes an exiled group.<sup>135</sup> By contrast, ἀποικια usually signifies a colony or settlement. Whether Jer. OG is deliberately seeking to avoid the negative connotations of φυγας / φυγαδες, however, seems unlikely, since it uses ἀποικια and ἀιχμαλωσια (‘captives, captivity’) interchangeably (see on v. 14 regarding the LXX translation of שוב שבות).

MT יתר >OG: Cf. 27.19, where OG [34.16] renders with ἐπιλοιπος. 39.9; 52.15; 2 Kgs. 25.11. The enigmatic meaning of the term in association with זקני may account for OG omission, but MT plus seems more likely.<sup>136</sup>

אשר הגלה נבוכדנאצר מירושלם >OG: Probable MT plus, influenced by 24.1 and 52.28-30.<sup>137</sup>

MT הנביאים; OG ψευδοπροφητας is obviously an interpretative gloss (also in v. 8).

---

19.14 = Isa. 37.14; Jer. 51[28].60; 2 Chron. 32.17). In Isa. 39.1, however, Merodach’s ספר (letter) is an ἐπιστολη.

<sup>134</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 728.

<sup>135</sup> Hyperides’ *Fragmenta*, 133 (4th century BC) speaks of the property of exiles, φυγαδειων χρηματα. ἡ φυγαδεια, ‘exile, banishment’, is used of a group of fugitives in some mss. of LXX Ezek. 17.21.

<sup>136</sup> Favouring OG are Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 154; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 38 (cautiously); Y. Goldman, *Prophétie et royauté au retour de l’exil. Les origines littéraires de la forme massorétique du livre de Jérémie* (OBO 118; Freiburg; Universitätsverlag / Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992) 76-78; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 728 (cautiously); Graupner, *Auftrag*, 77-78 n.49. Favouring MT are Duhm, *Jeremia*, 228; Condamin, *Jérémie*, 207; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 204; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 131; Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 44 n.11. Volz, *Jeremia*, 270, argues that it originally stood before העם, was omitted, and then replaced in the wrong position.

<sup>137</sup> So Janzen, *Studies*, 48 n.81.

v. 2. MT שְׂרֵי יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם; OG και παντος ελευθερου: MT plus, especially given the awkwardly anarthrous form of שְׂרֵי<sup>138</sup> (cf. וְאֵת שְׂרֵי in 24.1) and the fact that Jer. OG consistently renders שָׂר not by ελευθερος but ἀρχων (1.18; 2.26; 17.25; 24.1; 26[33].10; 36[43].12, etc.). OG probably reflects חָר וְכָל חָר (cf. 27.20, כָּל חָרֵי יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם);<sup>139</sup> for ελευθερος to translate חָר, see 1 Kgs. 21 [3 Reg. 20].8, 11; Neh. 13 [2 Esd. 23].17.

MT והחֲרַשׁ וְהַמְסַנֵּר; OG δεσμωντου και τεχνιτου: The sequence in OG is the reverse of that in MT (see too 24.1, τους τεχνιτας και τους δεσμωντας), suggesting that the *Vorlage* here read המסנר והחרש. Or did the translator make the change, transposing δεσμωντης so that it balanced ελευθερος? On the meaning of מסנר, see our discussion of 24.1 in the previous chapter.

v. 6. >OG: ותלדנה בנים ובנות. This breaks the pattern of two-verb clauses elsewhere in vv. 5-6. It may be MT plus, making explicit the three-generational duration of the exile.<sup>140</sup> However, Janzen suggests inner-Greek haplography; if OG read δοτε ανδρασι και τεκνοποιησατωσαν και θυγατερας και πληθυνεσθε, the repetition of ρασ(ι) και could have caused a copyist's mistake.<sup>141</sup>

v. 7. MT הָעִיר; OG της γης: Commentators differ on which is the more original reading.<sup>142</sup> OG is often preferred on the grounds of being more realistic (the exiles were not restricted to one city), but Jeremiah's letter was probably intended specifically for the community in Babylon.<sup>143</sup> A. Berlin finds support for הָעִיר in the correspondence between vv. 6-

<sup>138</sup> Vulg. and several Hebrew mss. recognise the awkwardness and supply the article.

<sup>139</sup> So Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 154; Duhm, *Jeremia*, 228.

<sup>140</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 229; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 80; Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 48; Steiner, 'Two Sons of Neriah', 80; cautiously, Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 42.

<sup>141</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 103; accepted as possible by McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 728, and Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 132. This is more likely than OG abbreviation of the *Vorlage*; so P. Volz, *Studien zum Text des Jeremia* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1920) 217. Also favouring MT is Seidl, *Texte und Einheiten*, 92 n.146.

<sup>142</sup> Following MT are Seidl, *Texte und Einheiten*, 90-91 n.143; Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 48; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 80 n.62; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 62 (who note that OG translates עִיר as γης seven times in Jer., even where the meaning 'city' is clear from the context); and apparently McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 726. Following OG are Duhm, *Jeremia*, 229; Volz, *Jeremia*, 270; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 154; Welch, *Jeremiah*, 170 n.1; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 552.

<sup>143</sup> By contrast, some have argued for MT by reading הָעִיר in a general sense, 'any city'; so Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 155; K.A.D. Smelik, 'Letters to the Exiles: Jeremiah 29 in Context', *SJOT* 10.2 (1996) 291; tentatively Bright, *Jeremiah*, 208. This interpretation was rejected by Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 154.

7 and Deut. 20.5-10;<sup>144</sup> both contain the sequence, בנה בתים (build houses), נטע גנות / כרם (plant vineyards / gardens), לקח אשה (marry wives) and שלום העיר (the peace of the city). However, while this is unlikely to be coincidental, it is text-critically inconclusive.

v. 8. MT וקסמיכם אשר בקרבכם וקסמיכם; OG μη ἀναπειθετωσαν ὑμας οἱ ψευδοπροφηται οἱ ἐν ὑμῶν και μη ἀναπειθετωσαν ὑμας οἱ ματερις ὑμων: Unusually, OG implies a *Vorlage* longer than MT: אל ישאיו לכם הנביאים אשר בקרבכם ואל ישאיו לכם קסמיכם.<sup>145</sup> This has the virtue of greater parallelism. With its possessive suffix, MT נביאיכם strengthens the association between the people and the prophets.

MT חלמתיכם אשר אתם מחלמים; OG τα ἐνυπνια ὑμων ἃ ὑμεις ἐνυπνιαξεσθε = חלמתיכם: <sup>146</sup> MT ('your dreams which you cause to dream') is clearly awkward. Since חלם Hiph. is otherwise unknown in OT, many scholars follow OG and emend to חלמים, ('your dreams which you are dreaming'); the מ could have arisen by dittography.<sup>147</sup> However, the preceding and following clauses concern a third party, and Soggin notes that a personal referent is also implied by תשמעו.<sup>148</sup> Good sense can be made of the MT consonantal text if, as in 27.9, we vocalise as חלמתיכם ('your dreamers').<sup>149</sup>

v. 10. הטוב >OG: Probable MT plus.<sup>150</sup> MT thus points דברי as singular, whereas OG τους λογους reads it as a plural (דברי).

<sup>144</sup> A. Berlin, 'Jeremiah 29: 5-7: A Deuteronomic Allusion', *HAR* 8 (1984) 6.

<sup>145</sup> So Stulman, *Other Text*, 70. Janzen, *Studies*, 64, treats this as an addition in OG but it is not clear whether he thinks it was already present in the *Vorlage* or stems from a Greek scribe (see *Studies*, 67).

<sup>146</sup> LXX<sup>26</sup> reads τα ἐνυπνια αὐτων ἃ ἐνυπνιαζονται = אל חלמתיכם אשר הם חלמים; this is adopted by Duhm, *Jeremia*, 230; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 154; A. Weiser, *Das Buch des Propheten Jeremia* (NGB 20/21; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1960) 258; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 205. But as Soggin, 'Jeremiah 29,8b' in J. Alberto Soggin (ed.), *Old Testament and Oriental Studies* (BO 29; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1975) 239, points out, "only one LXX manuscript is a very flimsy critical justification." In any case, our primary concern is with the readings given in MT and OG.

<sup>147</sup> So *GKC* §530; Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 155; S.R. Driver, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah. A Revised Translation with Introductions and Short Explanations* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1908) 170; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 62.

<sup>148</sup> Soggin, 'Jeremiah 29,8b', 239.

<sup>149</sup> So Volz, *Studien*, 217; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 39; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 132. Cf. Targ., 'the dreamers of your dreams whom you cause to dream'.

<sup>150</sup> So McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 728; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 228, who suggests that טוב was added when 33.14-26 (which also begins והקמתי את הדבר הטוב) was written. But דבר הטוב may be a legal expression

MT אַתְּכֶם; OG τον λαον υμων = עמכם: OG (and perhaps its *Vorlage*) makes it clear that it is not the addressees themselves who would return. Whether such a meaning was intended by MT, however, is doubtful; since in v. 6 MT emphasises the three-generational duration of the exile, אַתְּכֶם should probably be read representatively.<sup>151</sup>

v. 11. MT אֲנִי יִדְעֵתִי אֶת הַמַּחְשֶׁבֶת אֲשֶׁר >OG: Probably lost due to haplography (repetition of אֲנִי).<sup>152</sup> חשב מחשבת is a common idiom in the OT (2 Sam. 14.14; Jer. 11.19; 18.11, 19; 49.20, 30; Ezek. 38.10; Dan.11.24, 25).

MT מַחְשֶׁבֶת שְׁלוֹם; OG λογισμὸν εἰρηνης = מַחְשֶׁבֶת שְׁלוֹם:

MT אַחֲרֵית וְתִקְוָה ('a hope-filled future');<sup>153</sup> OG ταυτα: OG makes little sense.<sup>154</sup> If it is defective for τα μετα ταυτα (so LXX<sup>Luc.</sup>) it may reflect a *Vorlage* that read simply אַחֲרֵית;<sup>155</sup> see 5.31, MT לְאַחֲרֵיתָהּ; OG εἰς τα μετα ταυτα). There is evidence, though, that תִּקְוָה posed a problem for the LXX translators. Outside Job and Proverbs (where it is rendered ἐλπεις), LXX often interprets תִּקְוָה as 'firmness' (ὑποστασις, Ru. 1.12; Ezek. 19.5; ὑπομονη, Ps. 9.19; 62.6; μονιμον, Jer. 31.17), evidently focussing on the root קָוָה, 'to wait for'.<sup>156</sup> Conversely, Zech. 9.12 (συναγωγη) and Hos. 2.17 (συνεσις) appear to interpret תִּקְוָה as from קָוָה, 'to gather'.<sup>157</sup> This may suggest that the meaning 'prospect, hope' was unknown to some of the translators. In favour of אַחֲרֵית וְתִקְוָה is that it maintains the parallelism in the rest of the verse (הַמַּחְשֶׁבֶת אֲשֶׁר וְיֵשׁ תִּקְוָה לְאַחֲרֵיתֶךָ, אֲנִי חֹשֵׁב; מַחְשֶׁבֶת שְׁלוֹם וְלֹא לְרָעָה). See too 31.17, וְיֵשׁ תִּקְוָה לְאַחֲרֵיתֶךָ.

---

meaning 'pledge'; so M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985) 473 n.37; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 62.

<sup>151</sup> Pace Duhm, *Jeremia*, 230.

<sup>152</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 154; Janzen, *Studies*, 118; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 39; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 553; contra McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 728-729.

<sup>153</sup> Bright, *Jeremiah*, 209; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 728; or, 'the future you hope for' (Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 542).

<sup>154</sup> Duhm's defence of OG at this point smacks of desperation (*Jeremia*, 230).

<sup>155</sup> Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 62; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 133.

<sup>156</sup> "Les traducteurs ont vu dans ces termes hébreux l'idée d'une cohésion, d'une fondation et en conséquence celle d'une attente assurée." – P.A.H. de Boer, 'Etude sur le sens de la racine QWH', *Oudtestamentische Studiën* 10 (1954) 232.

<sup>157</sup> For a discussion of the ("sehr auffallend") Greek rendition of Hos. 2.17, see W. Rudolph, *Hosea* (KAT; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, Gerd Mohn, 1966) 74.

vv. 12-13. MT וקראתם אתי והלכתם >OG: OG might be haplographic, having confused לתת לכם (v. 11) and הלכתם.<sup>158</sup> The similarity is not that great, however, and OG probably reflects a *Vorlage* shorter than MT.<sup>159</sup>

MT ובקשתם . . . התפללם; OG προσευξασθε . . . ἐκζητησατε: The imperatives in OG point to a *Vorlage* reading ובקשו . . . התפללו (as in v. 7).

v. 14. MT ונמצאתי; OG ἐπιφανεσμαι = ונראיתי ('I will be seen by you')<sup>160</sup> or possibly ונגלתי ('I will reveal myself to you').<sup>161</sup>

MT מושם . . . יהוה >OG: The textual evidence, and the broadening of the scope to include the entire *Diaspora*, indicates an extended MT plus.<sup>162</sup>

vv. 16-20 >OG: The absence of these verses from OG, plus the fact that they interrupt an otherwise smooth progression from v. 15 to v. 21, leads most commentators to view them as MT plus.<sup>163</sup> This is probably correct, though the case is less certain than is often assumed. Omission due to homoioteleuton (repetition of בבלה, vv. 15 and 20) is possible;<sup>164</sup> those who object that the length of the passage makes this impossible<sup>165</sup> overlook the even longer omission

---

<sup>158</sup> So Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 64, esp. n.103. He argues that והלכתם is to be read in conjunction with התפללם, rather than with וקראתם; this may be a valid reading of MT, but does not have the text-critical significance he attaches to it. Ehrlich, *Randglossen*, 315, believed OG omitted והלכתם due to a misunderstanding of it as an independent verb.

<sup>159</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 230-231; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 133. Volz, *Jeremia*, 270, and Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 154, delete והלכתם only.

<sup>160</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 231; Volz, *Jeremia*, 270; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 154; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 39; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 133.

<sup>161</sup> So Jones, *Jeremiah*, 366. OG also uses ἐπιφανεσται for גלה Niph. in Gen. 35.7.

<sup>162</sup> So Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 156; Volz, *Jeremia*, 269; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 154; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 39; Janzen, *Studies*, 48; McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 729; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 553; Goldman, *Prophétie*, 65-68. But Thiel, *Redaktion* 2, 16, argues for deliberate omission by OG, while Welch, *Jeremiah*, 174, and Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 133, believe the *Vorlage* included ושבתו את שביחכם.

<sup>163</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 231; Volz, *Jeremia*, 269; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 156; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 290; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 39; Seidl, *Texte und Einheiten*, 116-117; McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 736-737; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 554; Stulman, *Prose Sermons*, 90; Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 67; Jones, *Jeremiah*, 359; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 84; Goldman, *Prophétie*, 80-98.

<sup>164</sup> So Hyatt, 'Jeremiah', 1020; Janzen, *Studies*, 118. Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 135, posits haplography in the OG *Vorlage*. But Thiel, *Redaktion* 26-45, 18, thinks omission "als kritische Tilgung wegen des Wechsels der Situation" is more likely; see too May, 'Objective Approach', 152.

<sup>165</sup> So Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 554; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 84; Goldman, *Prophétie*, 96.



in OG of 39.4-13. The fact that vv. 16-20 would have had no relevance to the exiles in Babylon is itself irrelevant if they are not assumed to be part of the original letter. The problem of their placement can be solved on the hypothesis that v. 15 has been displaced from its original setting – either between vv. 16-20 and 21-22 (as reflected in LXX<sup>Luc</sup>)<sup>166</sup> or before vv. 8-9.<sup>167</sup>

On balance, however, the evidence suggests vv. 16-20 are MT plus. The argument that they originally stood in a different position assumes a process of ‘omission, marginal retention, replacement’ for which we have no textual evidence, and, whilst enough sense of v. 15 can be made in its present position to account for the present form of the text, it is most naturally read as an introduction to vv. 21-22.

v. 19. MT ולא שמעתם: The switch from third to second person is abrupt, and some scholars emend to ולא שמעו.<sup>168</sup> The second person form may be deliberate, however, especially given the following verse.<sup>169</sup>

v. 21. MT בן קוליה; בן מעשיה >OG: Probable MT plus.<sup>170</sup> A clear motive either for the addition or deletion of these names is elusive,<sup>171</sup> but in general MT tends to add patronymics.<sup>172</sup>

MT הנבאים לכם בשמי שקר >OG: MT plus, especially since the reason given for their condemnation in v. 22 is quite different (though not incompatible; cf. 23.14).<sup>173</sup>

---

<sup>166</sup> So Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 157; Janzen, *Studies*, 118; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 135.

<sup>167</sup> So Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 17.

<sup>168</sup> So Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 157-158; Holladay, *Jeremiah*, 134. Bright, *Jeremiah*, 206, transposes all of v. 19 into the second person, but notes that this still leaves a “scarcely grammatical” switch from v. 18.

<sup>169</sup> So Graupner, *Auftrag*, 85.

<sup>170</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 232; Stulman, *Other Text*, 72; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 730-731; contra Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 156; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 39; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 134; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 86 n.91. Janzen, *Studies*, 71-72, is undecided.

<sup>171</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 730-731, attributes these names to “an urge to supply more genealogical information” – a distinctly vague explanation. Conversely, Rudolph’s theory, *Jeremia*, 156 – “OG unterdrückt bei beiden Verbrechern die Bezeichnung ‘Sohn des . . .’ um sie als ‘Söhne eines Neimand’ verächtlich zu machen” – seems too subtle. No more convincing is Holladay’s suggestion, *Jeremiah 2*, 134 (“out of an urge for symmetry with v. 22?”).

<sup>172</sup> See Janzen, *Studies*, 143-153. Naturally, the text-critical status of these patronymics has no bearing on their authenticity; see Steiner, ‘Two Sons of Neriah’, 77.

<sup>173</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 232; Janzen, *Studies*, 49; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 731; but cf. Graupner, *Auftrag*, 86 n.91.

v. 23. MT (K) הוידע >OG: The *Ketiv* may be defective for the *Qere* הוידע ('I am the one who knows') or for הווא ידע ('I myself know').<sup>174</sup> M. Dahood proposes a corruption of הווא (ואנכי) הווא (ואנכי) הווא ('I myself know').<sup>174</sup> M. Dahood proposes a corruption of הווא (ואנכי) הווא ('I myself know') to הווא ידע ('I myself know'), with הווא being cognate with the Ugaritic הווא, 'word';<sup>175</sup> however, the meaning that results, 'I know the word and the witness', seems strained. Probable MT plus,<sup>176</sup> possibly due to conflation of הווא ידע and הווא ידע. OG ἔγω μαρτυρῶ implies הווא ידע.

שקר >OG: MT plus;<sup>177</sup> there is no plausible reason for its omission by OG.

vv. 24-28: All the textual witnesses diverge here, and none is satisfactory.<sup>178</sup> The chief problem lies in vv. 24-25. MT יען אשר (v. 25) lacks apodosis, unless we relate it to the לכן of v. 32, where, however, it is the exiles rather than Shemaiah who are addressed. The picture is still more confused in OG, where we have two oracles (οὐκ ἀπεστείλα σε τῷ ὀνόματι μου, v. 24; καὶ πρὸς Σοφονίαν υἱὸν Μαασαίου τὸν ἱερεῶν εἶπεν, v. 25), neither of which prepares us for the reference to τὸ βιβλίον in v. 29.<sup>179</sup> Moreover, if in v. 27 we read οὐκ ἐλοιδορησάτε

<sup>174</sup> For the former, see Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 158; Volz, *Jeremia*, 270; for the latter, Duhm, *Jeremia*, 233. Both are allowed by Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 156; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 134; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 731. But Ehrlich, *Randglossen*, 316, sees הווא ידע as grammatically unacceptable.

<sup>175</sup> M. Dahood, 'Word and Witness: A Note on Jeremiah XXIX 23', *VT* 27 (1977) 483: "Yahweh knows only too well the content of the message being spoken and the character of the witness uttering it". Dahood attributes the unusual word order to the poetic nature of the text.

<sup>176</sup> Stulman, *Other Text*, 72; Janzen, *Studies*, 22; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 134.

<sup>177</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 233; Volz, *Jeremia*, 270; Stulman, *Other Text*, 72; contra Dahood, 'Word and Witness', 483, who sees דבר בשמי שקר as an example of a 'broken construct chain'.

<sup>178</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 234, described this section as "eine geradezu unüberbietbare Konfusion". The Syriac *Peshitta* diverges from both MT and OG: '(24) And Shemaiah the Nehelamite said (25) "Thus has said YHWH the God of Israel"; and he sent in his name a letter to all the people who are in Jerusalem and to Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the priest and to the priests' (Holladay's translation, *Jeremiah 2*, 136). The problem here is the lack of an oracle in v. 25. Either we could shorten the text to, "Shemaiah the Nehelamite sent to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah" (so McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 727) or assume that Shemaiah's oracle has been lost (so Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 136-137). See too C. Hardmeier, 'Jer. 29, 24-32 – "eine geradezu unüberbietbare Konfusion"? Vorurteil und Methode in der exegetischen Forschung', in E. Blum, C. Macholz and E.W. Stegemann (eds.), *Die Hebräische Bibel und ihre zweifache Nachgeschichte. Festschrift für Rolf Rendtorff zum 65. Geburtstag* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990) 301-317, for a fresh attempt to make sense of these verses.

<sup>179</sup> "Den Inhalt dieses Stückes haben LXX total entstellt wiedergegeben." (Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 158); it is hard to see the justification for Duhm's claim, *Jeremia*, 234, that the Greek text "ist . . . viel besser als der hebräische."

(LXX<sup>Q</sup>; so Ziegler),<sup>180</sup> we have the absurdity of YHWH rebuking Sophonias for not rebuking Jeremiah. It may be that vv. 24-25 were originally cast as a narrative ('But Shemaiah the Nehelamite sent in his own name a letter to Zephaniah the priest . . .'), rather than an oracle, the confusion arising when *אל שמעיהו* ('concerning Shemaiah') was misinterpreted as 'to Shemaiah' (cf. v. 31).<sup>181</sup>

v. 25. MT *לאמר כה אמר יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל לאמר יען אשר אתה* >OG: The extended messenger formula is typical of MT expansion. OG *οὐκ ἀπεστειλα σε τῷ ὀνοματι μου* makes little sense, but may stem from an earlier *συ ἀπεστειλας ἐν τῷ ὀνοματι μου*.<sup>182</sup>

MT *ואל כל הכהנים; אל כל העם אשר בירושלם* >OG: Both MT plusses, since the ensuing message is addressed only to Zechariah.<sup>183</sup> Given these additional audience groups, MT *ספרים* should be interpreted as a genuine plural (cf. 2 Kgs.10.1; 19.14).

v. 26. MT *פקדים*; OG *ἐπιστατης*: Again, the singular form in OG is probably the more original (cf. Targ., *למהוי ממנא סגן כהניא*, "to be an appointer of chief priests.").

v. 32. MT *ולא יראה*; OG *του ἰδειν = לראות*.<sup>184</sup> MT retains the focus on Shemaiah, while OG makes 'his seed' the subject of the last part of the sentence.

<sup>180</sup> The problem is avoided if we follow LXX<sup>B,A</sup>, *δια τι συνελθοιδορησατε* (so Rahlfs); but this indictment of Sophonias for opposing Jeremiah makes his willingness to read 'the letter' to him (v. 29) very odd.

<sup>181</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 234-235; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 158; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 39; Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 43 n.9; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 12; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 89. MT thus reflects "an attempt to transform a third-person account into a prophetic oracle which was not carried through" (McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 731). This is preferable to M. Dijkstra's view, 'Prophecy by Letter (Jeremiah XXIX 24-32)', *VT* 33 (1983), that vv. 24-31 are "the copy of a letter written on behalf of Jeremiah" (319); on this view, v. 24 is Jeremiah's instruction to his secretary, while *אשר יען* introduce a quotation from Shemaiah's letter. This hypothesis fails to account for the narrative verse, v. 29.

<sup>182</sup> So Ziegler, *Beiträge*, 50-51. According to Stulman, *Other Text*, 77, it is "virtually impossible to reconstruct the LXX *Vorlage* of this verse with any degree of certainty."

<sup>183</sup> Bright, *Jeremiah*, 206; Thiel, *Redaktion 26-45*, 12; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 732; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 564.

<sup>184</sup> So Janzen, *Studies*, 202, n.78; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 158; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 39-40; contra McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 734 ("του ἰδειν is probably the result of a quest for neatness of the part of the Greek translator"); Graupner, *Auftrag*, 92 n.112.

MT בתוך העם הזה; OG εἰς μέσῳ ὑμῶν = בתוכם; MT לעמי; OG ὑμῶν = לכם:<sup>185</sup> In MT, the recipients of YHWH's promise are addressed less directly in third person terms, the emphasis being on their relationship to YHWH. MT יושב is a plus.

αὐτῶ ἀνθρώπος (LXX<sup>Q</sup>; Ziegler) = MT לֹא אִישׁ; αὐτῶν ἀνθρώπος (LXX<sup>B, A</sup>; Rahlfs): The latter, which has the stronger support, reads 'there will not be (a single) man of them', referring to Samaias *and* his descendants. With this plural referent corresponds οὐκ ὁψονταῖ (LXX<sup>B, S</sup>; Rahlfs) at the end of the verse.

MT על יהוה >OG: MT plus, influenced by Deut. 13.6.<sup>186</sup>

### 3.3. Exegetical Notes

v. 1. כל העם אל יתר זקני הגולה ואל הכהנים ואל הנביאים ואל: This includes the same three groups – priests, prophets and people – which have appeared in chs. 27 – 28 (27.16; 28.1, 5). The phrase זקני הגולה is otherwise unattested (cf. earlier references to זקני העם, 19.1, and זקני הארץ, 26.17); however, Ezek. 8.1 speaks of the 'elders of Judah' (זקני יהודה) sitting before Ezekiel in Babylon, while Ezek. 14.1 mentions 'some of the elders of Israel' (מזקני ישראל) coming to him.

יתר usually means 'remainder', which "provokes the question why they should have been so reduced."<sup>187</sup> Possibly the term reflects unrest in Babylon, leading to arrest or execution (cf. vv. 21-22).<sup>188</sup> Streane's proposal, that these were the elders who had survived the journey to Babylon, also has merit.<sup>189</sup> Alternatively, on the basis of Gen. 49.3, some scholars translate as

---

<sup>185</sup> So Janzen, *Studies*, 202, n.78; Stulman, *Other Text*, 73; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 145; contra Graupner, *Auftrag*, 92 n.112.

<sup>186</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 158; Janzen, *Studies*, 49; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 13.

<sup>187</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 727.

<sup>188</sup> See Duhm, *Jeremia*, 228; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 208; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 545. McKane's objection, *Jeremiah 2*, 727, that "there is a lack of evidence that Jewish communities in Babylon were subject to persecution or suppression", is unfounded; see D.L. Smith Christopher, 'Reassessing the Historical and Sociological Impact of the Babylonian Exile (597/ 587 – 539 BCE)', in Scott, *Exile*, 7-36.

<sup>189</sup> Streane, *Jeremiah*, 192.

‘pre-eminent’;<sup>190</sup> this would be consistent with the emphasis in this verse that it was the cream of society that had been deported.<sup>191</sup>

v. 2. Like the historical note in 24.1, the parenthetical nature of this verse regularly results in its being seen as redactional.<sup>192</sup> As we argued there, however, this does not follow. We may also compare 27.19-21, which, like 29.1-3, contains (1) an introduction to a prophetic message, with a four-fold list of referents (2) a subordinate clause referring to Nebuchadnezzar’s exiling of Jehoiachin (3) the resumption of the prophetic message, using the messenger formula.

v. 4. **אשר הגליתי**: Elsewhere in Jer. the subject of **גלה** is consistently human (20.4; 22.12; 27.20; 39.9; 43.3; 52.15, 28, 30), as is the pattern generally in the OT. Three times in ch. 29, however (vv. 4, 7, 14), **גלה** is predicated of YHWH. The use of this verb (rather than **שלח**, **פּוּץ** or **נדה**), emphasises YHWH’s sovereignty over the political dimensions of deportation.

vv. 5-6: **... בנו בתים ושבו**: The language echoes the refrain of building and planting found throughout Jer., but is also redolent of other OT passages. The paired imperatives, including the command **רבו**, ‘increase’, echo the creation mandate of Gen. 1.28; 9.1.<sup>193</sup> Similar language also occurs in Ps. 107.36-38, Isa. 65.21-23,<sup>194</sup> and especially Deut. 28.30-32, where Moses warns Israel of the curses that will result from disobedience:

You will betroth a wife and another man will lie with her. You will build a house but you will not live in it. You will plant a vineyard but you will not enjoy its use . . . Your sons and daughters will be given to another people.

Read against this backdrop, 29.5-7 is announcing that the curses are rescinded; the exiles may once again enjoy YHWH’s blessing on their day to day activities.<sup>195</sup> This message is

---

<sup>190</sup> E.g., Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 140.

<sup>191</sup> Ehrlich, *Randglossen*, 314, and Volz, *Jeremia*, 270, relocate **יתר** to refer to **כל העם**, but without textual support.

<sup>192</sup> So Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 11; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 545.

<sup>193</sup> Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 138.

<sup>194</sup> Benjamin D. Sommer, ‘New Light on the Composition of Jeremiah’, *CBQ* 61 (1999) 646-666, argues that the author of Isa. 65 is drawing on Jer. 29.5-7. N.C. Habel, *The Land is Mine. Six Biblical Land Ideologies* (OBT; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995) draws parallels between Jeremiah’s instructions to the exiles and Abraham’s peaceable conduct in a foreign land (Gen. 20 and 23).

<sup>195</sup> So Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 57. “The uprooted and orphaned exiles are invited to invest their lives in this new realm of blessing.” (Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 72). This ‘rescinding’ theology will dominate chs. 30 – 33.

emphasised by the use of paired imperatives, which imply a conditional promise.<sup>196</sup> The increasing length of the first four lines may also be intended to emphasise the idea of growth. However, Berlin and Smith see here an even closer parallel with Deut. 20.5-10.<sup>197</sup> As Berlin notes, while the combination ‘build / plant’ occurs frequently in the OT, the series ‘build / plant / wives / children’ is much less common. In addition, Deut. 20.10 shares with Jer. 29.7 the terms שלום and העיר. Consequently, “in addition to encouraging settlement, Jeremiah is also subtly counselling against revolt. Do those things, he tells the exiles, for which Deuteronomy permits a man to refrain from going to war.”<sup>198</sup>

v. 7. התפלל בעד is common in Jer. (7.16; 11.14; 14.11; 37.3 and 42.2), referring to prayer by the prophet on behalf of the people. As we have seen, דרש occurs in 21.1, when Zedekiah requests Jeremiah to enquire of YHWH on behalf of the city, while in 38.4 the officials complain of Jeremiah, איננו דרש ולשלום לעם הזה כי אם לרעה. What is remarkable about this injunction, however, is that up till now in Jer., the prophet has been expressly forbidden to pray for his people by YHWH (7.16; 11.14; cf.15.1).

The promise of שלום marks a turning point in Jer. Hitherto, Jeremiah has emphasised the absence of שלום from Judah (14.19; 15.5; 16.5), in contrast to other prophets whom YHWH has not sent (6.14; 8.11; 14.13; 23.17; 28.9). Now, for the first time in the book, YHWH promises שלום (albeit conditionally and indirectly) to his people;<sup>199</sup> this theme will be developed in v. 11, and again in 33.6, 9.

v. 10. The construction לפי + infinitive probably has the implication of ‘only when’.<sup>200</sup> It thereby serves to qualify the salvation oracle that follows.

---

<sup>196</sup> See *GKC* §110c.

<sup>197</sup> Berlin, ‘Jeremiah 29:5-7’, 3ff.; D.L. Smith, ‘Jeremiah as Prophet of Nonviolent Resistance’, *JSOT* 43 (1989)100-102.

<sup>198</sup> Berlin, ‘Jeremiah 29:5-7’, 4. Cf. Smith, ‘Jeremiah as Prophet’, 102: “Jeremiah is not simply advising a settled existence, but using the Deuteronomic exemptions from warfare to declare an ‘armistice’ on the exilic community.” Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 141, and Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, view this interpretation positively.

<sup>199</sup> “Having called upon the exiles to seek a *šālôm* oracle on behalf of the city of Babylon, Jeremiah then indicated that the divine response to that plea would be favorable.” (Sisson, ‘Conception of Peace’, 440).

<sup>200</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 156; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 205; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 141; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 60. Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 62 argues that כי relates to אפקד (cf. Num. 9.17, ולפי העלת הענן מעל האהל).

The much-debated phrase **שבעים שנה**<sup>201</sup> occurs here for the second time in Jer.; in 25.11-12 YHWH announces that Judah and the surrounding nations will be subjugated to another nation for seventy years.<sup>202</sup> There, however, the fulfilment of that period will be followed by YHWH's punishment of their oppressor; here, it will herald his salvation of the exiles in Babylon.

Although it can be argued that **שבעים שנה** refers to the actual duration of Judah's exile,<sup>203</sup> most scholars interpret it as metaphorical and / or symbolic.<sup>204</sup> It may be a round number for 'a lifetime' (cf. Ps. 90.10),<sup>205</sup> i.e., a long time; cf. Shemaiah's interpretation of Jeremiah's message in v. 28, **ארכה היא**. More likely, it represents three generations;<sup>206</sup> this would conform to the prophecy in 27.7 that Nebuchadnezzar's domination would end with his grandson, and also to the three generation perspective of 29.6. However, an inscription of Esarhaddon in which Marduk decrees seventy years of punishment for Babylon has led some to conclude that 'seventy

---

<sup>201</sup> For surveys of the debate and bibliographies, see Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration*, 240 n.27; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 74-75, and J. Applegate, 'Jeremiah and the Seventy Years in the Hebrew Bible. Inner-Biblical Reflections on the Prophet and his Prophecy', in Curtis and Römer, *Book of Jeremiah*, 92-93.

<sup>202</sup> There are significant variations between MT and OG in 25.9-12. In OG, the Lord will bring 'the family from the north' (την πατριαν ἀπο βορρα) upon 'this land' (την γην ταυτην) and 'all her surrounding nations' (παντα τα εθνη τα κυκλω αὐτης). 'All the land' (πανσα ἡ γη) will be desolate (v. 11), and 'they will serve among the nations' (δουλευσουσιν εν τοις εθνεσιν) for seventy years. Afterwards (v. 12), the Lord will punish 'that nation' (το εθνος εκεινο). MT identifies and highlights the role of Babylon. YHWH will bring not only **כל משפחות צפון** (note the plural) but also **בבל** upon Judah and her neighbours (v. 9). After the statement that 'all this land will be desolate', MT reads **ועברו כל הגוים האלה את מלך בבל**, 'and all these nations will serve the king of Babylon' (v. 11). When the seventy years have been completed, YHWH will 'visit the guilt' of the Babylonians upon them: **אפקד על מלך בבל ועל הגוי ההוא . . . את עונם ועל ארץ כשדים**.

<sup>203</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 230, related the figure to the period of Babylonian supremacy, i.e., from the defeat of Nineveh (612 B.C) to the overthrow by Cyrus (539 BC). See too C.F. Whitley, 'The Term Seventy Years Captivity', *VT* 4 (1954) 60-72, and 'The Term Seventy Years – A Rejoinder', *VT* 7 (1957) 416-418.

<sup>204</sup> For Volz, *Jeremia*, 269, "es ist die Vorstellung der geschichtlichen Epochen"; for Hyatt, 'Deuteronomic Edition', 263, "it is a vague number – probably two generations or 'the days of one king' as in Isa. 23.15".

<sup>205</sup> So Clements, 'Prophet of Hope', 125.

<sup>206</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 157; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 17; McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 689; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 547 n.21. Assuming a date of around 550 for the D edition of Jer., Thiel argues that the figure of seventy years indicates that the end of Babylonian domination was becoming clear, though the exact date of its demise was still unknown (17).

years' was a conventional description in the ancient near east for a deity's judgement on a nation (cf. Isa. 23.15-17).<sup>207</sup>

Up until this point in Jer., the meaning of פקד has been almost entirely ominous, i.e., 'to punish'.<sup>208</sup> Here, however, the connotation is clearly favourable. Leaving aside the MT plus of 27.22, only once previously has פקד signified YHWH's benevolent care, namely, in 15.15, where Jeremiah asks YHWH זכרני ופקדני. Henceforth, it will mostly signify the punishment of Israel's enemies (30.2; 46.25; 49.8; 50.18, 31; 51.44, 47, 52).<sup>209</sup> As with the term שלום, therefore, the use of פקד in ch. 29 seems to mark a turning point in the book.

Within the present book, YHWH's 'good promise' (דברי הטוב, MT) probably refers to that contained in ch. 24.<sup>210</sup>

v. 11. המחשבת אשר אנכי חשב עליכם: The benevolence of these plans is made explicit in what follows, מחשבות שלום ולא לרעה. Here again, we have a striking re-use of language that is otherwise consistently negative. By itself, the noun מחשבות signifies man's evil inclinations (4.14; 6.19; 18.12), while חשב is used in conjunction with YHWH's plan for judgement (18.8; 26.3; 36.3) or human plans for evil (23.27; 48.2). Likewise, the expression (מחשבות) חשב מחשבה is consistently ominous, whether the subject is human (11.19; 18.18) or divine (18.11; 49.20, 30; 50.45; 51.29). Within Jer., only here is this expression used positively.

vv. 12-13. As noted earlier, MT expands the text reflected in OG, thereby achieving a very close parallel to Deut. 4.29, ובקשתם משם את יהוה אלהיך ומצאת כי תדרשנו בכל לבבך. Moreover, in contrast to the imperatives in OG, MT uses indicatives. This does not necessarily mean that MT is eliminating the contingent aspect of the promise; the verses can still be translated, 'If you call . . . I will listen / If you seek . . . you will find'.<sup>211</sup> Similarly (תדרשנו) כי is

---

<sup>207</sup> See M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972) 144-146; Applegate, 'Jeremiah and the Seventy Years', 93.

<sup>208</sup> Jer. 1.10; 5.9, 29; 6.6, 15; 9.8, 24; 11.22; 13.21; 14.10; 15.3; 21.14; 23.2, 34; 25.12; 27.8; also 36.31; 44.13, 29. פקד does have a benevolent sense in its first occurrence in 23.2, but here the subject is human ('the shepherds') and the reference is to the care which they have failed to provide.

<sup>209</sup> It is also used of the political appointment of Gedaliah (40.5, 7, 11; 41.2, 10, 18).

<sup>210</sup> So Unterman, *Repentance to Redemption*, 85.

<sup>211</sup> For this use of the perfect consecutive in the protasis and apodosis of a conditional clause, see *GKC* §112 ff, kk.



probably conditional / temporal rather than causal.<sup>212</sup> The crucial difference is that OG retains the focus on the present, while MT is oriented towards the future.<sup>213</sup> The phrase **בכל לבבכם** **כי ישובו אלי בכל לבם**, recalls 24.7, **כי ישובו אלי בכל לבם**.

YHWH's affirmation **ושמעתי אליכם** marks a further dramatic reversal within the book; hitherto, he has repeatedly avowed not to listen to them, or even to the intercession of Jeremiah or another prophet on their behalf (7.16; 11.11, 14; 15.1).

v. 14. YHWH's promise, **ושבתי את שביכם וקבצתי אתכם מכל הגוים ומכל המקומות אשר** **ושב יהוה אליך את שבותך ורחמך ושב וקבצך מכל העמים אשר**, echoes Deut. 30.3, **הדרחתי אתכם שם הפיצך יהוה אליך שמה**.

The expression **שוב שבות** occurs here for the first time in Jer., and is repeated a further seven times in chs. 30 – 33.<sup>214</sup> The *Ketib* **שביתכם** was for a long time seen as derived from **שבה** ('take captive'). This has the nominal forms **שבי** and **שביה** ('captivity, captives'), but there is also the *hap.leg.* **שבית** in Num. 21.29. Accordingly, **שוב שבות / שבית** was translated 'restore the captivity' or 'restore the captives';<sup>215</sup> cf. the OG renditions, **ἀποστρεψω την ἀποικίαν** (37.3, 18; **τας ἀποικίας**, 39.44) and **ἀποστρεψω την ἀίχμαλωσίαν** (25.19; 38.23). This translation was always difficult in certain contexts (Job. 42.10; Ezek. 15.63) however, and E.L. Dietrich argued that the expression was a cognate accusative of **שוב**; lit., 'turn a turning', or more idiomatically 'render a restoration, restore the fortunes'.<sup>216</sup> This is now generally accepted for

---

<sup>212</sup> So Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 65; also Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 133; Keown et al., *Jeremiah* 26 – 52, 60 ('if'); Bright, *Jeremiah*, 205; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 547; Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 259 ('when'); Duhm, *Jeremia*, 231; Volz, *Jeremia*, 269; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 154 ('wenn'). McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 726, translates 'for'. **כי** is also translated 'if' in the parallel clause in Deut. 4.29 by S.R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy* (ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1895) 73; G. von Rad, *Deuteronomy. A Commentary* (OTL; London: SCM Press, 1966) 47; P.C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976) 138.

<sup>213</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 553, suggests that **והלכתם** reflects the practice of prayer in the second temple period.

<sup>214</sup> As John M. Bracke, 'šûb š'ûb: A Reappraisal', *ZAW* 97 (1985) 236, notes, this is by far the greatest concentration of occurrences of the expression to be found in the OT.

<sup>215</sup> So E. Preuschen, 'Die Bedeutung von **שוב שבות** im Alten Testamente', *ZAW* 15 (1895) 1-74, and E.L. Baumann, '**שוב שבות**, Eine exegetische Untersuchung', *ZAW* 47 (1929) 17-44; see too *BDB*, s.v. **שבית**, **שבות**.

<sup>216</sup> E.L. Dietrich, *Die endzeitliche Wiederherstellung bei den Propheten* (BZAW 40; Giessen: Töpelmann, 1925) 36-37.

most cases of *שוב שבות*, including those in Jer. 29 and 30.<sup>217</sup> Consequently, its scope is wider than ‘restoring the captives’, although in certain contexts (such as Jer. 29.14), this might be its implication.<sup>218</sup>

v. 15. The purpose of the initial *כי* might be to connect what the exiles are saying with what has been said in vv. 10-14.<sup>219</sup> It would then have an explicative sense, i.e., ‘(I say this) because you have said, “YHWH has raised up prophets for us in Babylon”’.<sup>220</sup> In this case, the literary unit comprises vv. 10-15, with the repetition of *קום* Hiph. enabling *לנו יהוה נבאים* to form an *inclusio* with *והקמתו עליכם את דברי הטוב* (v. 10). More probably, however, *כי* indicates that the exiles’ claim is the premise for an oracle still to come; see Isa. 28.15-16, which also begins with *כי אמרתם*. Since vv. 16-20 (MT plus) address Jerusalem rather than Babylon, it is likely that v. 15 originally introduced the oracle against Ahab and Zedekiah (vv. 21-23).

*נביא מקרבך מאחיד כמני יקים* echoes YHWH’s promise in Deut. 18.15, *לנו יהוה נבאים* לך יהוה (cf. v. 18).

v. 16. The exiles’ compatriots are described as *אחיים*. Elsewhere, this phrase generally expresses the Israelites’ solidarity with one another (Lev. 25.46; Deut. 3.18; Josh. 1.14; 1 Kgs. 12.24; Neh. 5.8; 2 Chron. 19.10). In Isa. 66.5, by contrast, *אחיים* are a group of Israelites hostile to those addressed.<sup>221</sup> But the clearest parallel is in Ezek. 11.15, where YHWH addresses the

---

<sup>217</sup> E.g., Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 142; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 548 n.22; Bracke, ‘Reappraisal’, 244; J.A. Thompson and E.A. Martens, s.v. *שוב*, *NIDOTTE* 4, 55-59. McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 726, renders as ‘I shall turn misfortune to good fortune’. According to Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 62, “The K represents a variant shaped by the later application of the formula primarily to the return from exile” – so reversing Preuschen’s argument, in which the more general meaning was seen as a post-exilic exception to the rule.

<sup>218</sup> As Driver, *Deuteronomy*, 329, pointed out on Deut. 30.3, “Whether *שבות* be derived from *שבה* or *שוב*, the expression does not mean ‘bring back thy captives’; it is used commonly with reference to a decisive *turn*, or change, in a people’s fortune. Here, as also Jer. 29.14, 30.3, Ezr. 29.14, the return from captivity is mentioned separately afterwards.” (italics his).

<sup>219</sup> Calvin, *Jeremiah 3*, 439, described this interpretation of *כי* as “not unsuitable”.

<sup>220</sup> “It is characteristic of the indirect causal expressions that they do not state the cause for what is actually said in the main clause but rather the reason for saying it” (Aejmelaeus, ‘Function and Interpretation of *כי*’ 178-179). See, for example, Gen. 32.21, *ואמרתם גם הנה עבדך יעקב אחרינו כי אמר אכפרה פניו במנחה*; 1 Sam. 26.15, *ולמה לא שמרת אל אדניך המלך כי בא אחד העם להשחית את המלך*; 1 Kgs. 1.24-25, *ויאמר דוד אל אבנר . . . ולמה לא שמרת אל אדני המלך אתה אמרת אדניהו ימלך אחרי . . . כי ירד היום ויזבח שור*. This may also be the significance of Zipporah’s words, *כי חתן דמים אתה לי* (Ex. 4.25); see W.H. Propp, ‘That Bloody Bridegroom (Exodus iv 24-6)’, *VT* 43 (1993) 496 n.8.

<sup>221</sup> For a discussion of the social divisions reflected in these verses, see Emerson, *Isaiah 56 – 66*, 81-94.

prophet concerning *בית ישראל וכל אחיך אחיך אנשי נאלתך* and *אחיך אחיך*. Here, *אחיך אחיך* might signify Ezekiel's siblings, as distinct from his kinsmen and 'the whole house of Israel',<sup>222</sup> or it may be a general term comprising *בית ישראל וכל אחיך אנשי נאלתך*. Either way, 'your brothers' are exiles in Babylon,<sup>223</sup> despised by the *ישבי ירושלם* (v. 15b) who will be punished by YHWH (vv. 7-12). Ezek. 11 thus reflects the same polarisation that we see in Jer. 29.16-19.

v. 17. The language here repeats that of 24.8, except that *שערים* is even stronger than *רעות*.

v. 19. *ולא שמעתם*: If, as we suggested above, we retain this reading rather than emending to *ולא שמעו*, the primary purpose of this pericope becomes clear; to rebuke the exiles for their failure to listen to YHWH's prophets. In this way, it complements their willingness to listen to their own prophets and dreamers (vv. 8-9). This reading also makes sense of the ensuing call, *ואתם שמעו דבר יהוה* (v. 20).

v. 23. *יען אשר עשו נבלה בישראל*. To 'commit folly in Israel' is a technical term denoting "a class of acts which bring appalling suffering in their wake because they disrupt the sexual harmony of the community."<sup>224</sup> Rape (Gen. 37.7), pre-marital intercourse (Deut. 22.21) and breach of rules regarding sacred property in holy war (Josh. 7.15) all constitute 'folly in Israel'.

The charge of adultery (*וינאפו את נשי רעיהם*) against Ahab and Zedekiah<sup>225</sup> is not part of the standard rhetoric against false prophets in these chapters, but echoes the accusation against the prophets of Jerusalem in 23.14, *נאוף והלך בשקר*.

YHWH's self-description as 'witness' (*עד*) may gain additional significance from the custom in other ANE letters to finish with a reference to 'witnesses'.<sup>226</sup>

---

<sup>222</sup> So Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel Chapters 1 – 24* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 346.

<sup>223</sup> This is clear, whether or not we emend MT *נאלתך* to *גלותך*, following OG *της αιχμαλωσιας σου*.

<sup>224</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 560

<sup>225</sup> "Foul livers and false teachers", as Welch, *Jeremiah*, 172, memorably terms them.

<sup>226</sup> See D. Pardee et al., *Handbook of Ancient Hebrew Letters* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1982) 177, who notes parallels with *papMur* 42 (signatories of witnesses) and with *papMur* 43 (oath formula with *m'yd*).

v. 24. *הנחלמי* may be a word-play, being the Niph. of *חלם* ‘to dream’ (hence ‘the dreamer’); cf. the earlier references to ‘dreamers’ (v. 8).<sup>227</sup>

v. 28. MT *כי על כן* may mean ‘For in the following manner he has written to us’, or ‘Is it not for this reason (i.e., because you have not controlled Jeremiah) that he has written to us?’<sup>228</sup>

### 3.4. Coherence and Redaction

Our observations so far regarding the textual and literary shape of ch. 29 indicate at least three stages in its compositional history: (1) the writing of the original letter<sup>229</sup> (2) the setting of that letter in a narrative framework (3) expansion in MT. Deciding the precise contents of each stage is more difficult, however, and some would argue that we should posit further redactional layers between (2) and (3).

The letter is widely agreed to comprise, as a minimum, vv. 5-7, with the possible exception of *ותלדנה בנים ובנות* (>OG). These verses possess a unity of theme (the call to peaceful life under YHWH’s blessing in Babylon) and style (semi-poetic parallelism). Some would also include vv. 8-9, parts of 10-14, and 21-23 in the letter; we will return to this below.

The narrative framework of the letter must have comprised at least the prologue (vv. 1-3) and the story of Shemaiah’s response (vv. 24-32).<sup>230</sup> With regard to the former, we argued earlier that there is no valid reason for regarding v. 2 as secondary. However, the inclusion of ‘the prophets, priests and people’ among the addressees in v. 1 *may* have been secondarily influenced by their presence in chs. 27 – 28; in this case, the introduction originally mentioned only ‘the elders of the exile’.<sup>231</sup> The confused flow of the text in vv. 24-32 strongly suggests that this narrative was later (partly) reworked into an oracle. This would explain the variations in orthography: Jeremiah’s name reverts to its normal *ירמיהו* (vv. 27, 29, 30), but both references

---

<sup>227</sup> So L. Yaure, ‘Elymas – Nehelamite – Pethor’, *JBL* 79 (1960) 297-314.

<sup>228</sup> So McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 735.

<sup>229</sup> That there *was* ‘an original letter’ from Jeremiah to the exiles is seldom disputed, though Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 552, and Smelik, ‘Letters to the Exiles’, 284-285, are ambivalent on the question.

<sup>230</sup> Although Weiser’s rendition of *דברי הספר* in v. 1 as ‘die Geschichte des Briefes’ (*Jeremia*, 260) is unwarranted, it accurately captures the theme of the narrative: Jeremiah’s letter and its consequences.

<sup>231</sup> So too Duhm, *Jeremia*, 228; Kilpp, *Niederreißen*; 44-45; contra Graupner, *Auftrag*, 77-78.

to Zephaniah (vv. 25, 29) use the short form צפניה. Shemaiah's name is long (שמעיהו) in v. 24, but short (שמעיה) in vv. 31-32.<sup>232</sup>

The chief questions surround vv. 8-9, 10-14, and 21-23, seen by many as secondary not only to vv. 5-7 but also to its narrative framework.<sup>233</sup> It is argued that the warnings against false prophets (vv. 8-9 and 21-23) are extraneous to the purpose of the original letter. Graupner refers to vv. 8-9 as “die nach vv. 5-7 überraschende Prophetenpolemik”,<sup>234</sup> while McKane writes of the need to “disengage a theme which is extensively represented in chapter 29, namely, false prophecy.”<sup>235</sup> Again, the promise of return in vv. 10-14 is thought to undermine the practical, present-oriented focus of vv. 5-7: “A prophet who is endeavouring to destroy expectations of a swift return to Jerusalem by urging exiles to cast away feverish excitement and to cultivate composure does not undo his single-mindedness by inviting those whom he addresses to engage in a more distant kind of expectation”, writes McKane.<sup>236</sup> Attention is also called to the presence of Deuteronomistic terminology in vv. 8-9 and 10-14; the former share with Deut. 13.2-4 the terms (יָם) וְנָבִיא (יָם) and חֵלֶם (יָם), who are described as being בְּקִרְבְּךָ / בְּקִרְבְּכֶם, while vv. 10-14 employ the expressions הַקִּים דְּבַר יְהוָה (v. 10; cf. Deut. 9.5; 1 Kgs. 2.4; 6.12; 12.15) and בְּכָל לֵבָם (v. 13; cf. 1 Sam. 12.20; 1 Kgs. 8.23; 14.8; 2 Kgs. 10.31).

If these arguments are valid, the question is when and by whom vv. 8-9, 10-14 and 21-23 were incorporated. Some believe that they were added *en bloc* to the letter and its narrative

---

<sup>232</sup> Orthographic evidence of this reworking of the text also appears in v. 21, where we find both קוּלִיָּה and צִדְקִיָּהוּ, while Nebuchadnezzar's name reverts to its normal ר spelling.

<sup>233</sup> Assessments of what is secondary include: vv. 8-9, 10-14, and 21-23 (Duhm, *Jeremia*, 228-233, though allowing for authentic elements in vv. 21-23; Nicholson, *Preaching*, 98-100; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 57-59; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 14-19; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 556-560; Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 61-67; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 82-87); vv. 10-14 and 21-23 (Hyatt, 'Jeremiah', 1017); vv. 8-9 only (Welch, *Jeremiah*, 171-174); vv. 10-14 only (Volz, *Jeremia*, 267-275; Böhmer, *Heimkehr*, 33-34).

<sup>234</sup> Graupner, *Auftrag*, 83.

<sup>235</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 738; similarly Nicholson, *Preaching*, 98; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 14.

<sup>236</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 737; similarly, Duhm, *Jeremia*, 230; Volz, *Jeremia*, 268; Welch, *Jeremiah*, 173; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 557; Smith, 'Jeremiah as Prophet', 96; Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 63. Y. Hoffman, 'The Deuteronomist and the Exile' in D.P. Wright, D.N. Freedman & A. Hurvitz (eds.), *Pomegranates and Golden Bells. Studies in Biblical, Jewish and Near Eastern Ritual, Law and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1995) 659-675, posits two editions of Dtr.H., the first of which viewed exile as final (though not hopeless), and the second of which saw exile as merely temporary; Jer. 29.10-14 thus belongs to the latter (672).

framework by a single editor.<sup>237</sup> Others propose a more complex literary history. According to Wanke,<sup>238</sup> the original letter and its introduction comprised vv. 1, 3-7, to which was added later the report of the exchange between Jeremiah and Shemaiah in vv. 24-32. At this stage, the text conformed to the three-part schema found in chs. 27 – 28 (action of Jeremiah; counter action; message of judgement). The remaining material was added in successive stages; first vv. 15, 21-23, then vv. 10-14, and then vv. 8-9.

It should not, however, be too quickly concluded that vv. 8-9, 10-14 and 21-23 are incoherent either with vv. 5-7 or its framework.<sup>239</sup> The claim that the warnings against false prophets are do not ‘belong’ to the letter is valid only if one assumes an extraordinarily one-dimensional author. Dogmatic statements as to what a prophet in sixth-century Judah would or would not do are best avoided, but it is hard to see why the dampening of false hopes (implied in vv. 5-7) is incompatible with the affirmation of a more realistic hope in vv. 10-14.<sup>240</sup> More significant is the Deuteronomistic nature of the terminology in vv. 8-9 and 10-14, though (as ever) it is hard to know how this should be interpreted. It *may* indicate that these verses are secondary, though the fact that vv. 5-7 themselves echo Deut. 20.5-10 and 28.30-32 gives us pause.<sup>241</sup> It should also be noted that the injunction *אל ישיאו לכם* is absent from Deut., and

---

<sup>237</sup> So Rietzschel, *Urrolle*, 117-119; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 19 (who also attributes vv. 2 and 16-20 to D).

<sup>238</sup> Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 57-59.

<sup>239</sup> The integrity of vv. 8-9, 10-14 and 21-23 with vv. 5-7 is accepted by Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 154-157; Weiser, *Jeremia*, 261-264; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 208-209; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 139-140; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 544; Unterman, *Repentance to Redemption*, 84; Jones, *Jeremiah*, 362-367 (though allowing that vv. 8-9 may have been reworded). Even Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 59, refers to “der trotz dieser verschiedenen Erweiterungen immer noch einigermaßen gute Textzusammenhang”.

<sup>240</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 156-157; Applegate, ‘Jeremiah and the Seventy Years’, 97. Indeed, the coherence of vv. 10-14 with vv. 5-7 is tacitly conceded by Hoffman, ‘Deuteronomist and the Exile’, 672: “It is not even improbable that the one who appended the words really believed that he interpreted his *Vorlage* correctly.”

<sup>241</sup> Berlin notes that “the deuteronomistic echo in our verses is different, in a way that I am not sure I can adequately express, from the kinds of deuteronomistic editorial additions usually pointed out. It is somehow more organic to the passage, more a part of the fabric of the text.” (‘Jeremiah 29:5-7’, 8). However, as she herself points out (7), if the allusion is intentional it demonstrates Jeremiah’s familiarity with the contents of Deuteronomy.

occurs only twice in Dtr.H (2 Kgs. 18.29; 19.10); it is more frequent in Jer. (4.10; 37.9; 49.16).<sup>242</sup>

The final stage in the redactional history of Jer. 29, that of MT expansion, covers the greater part of v. 14 and all of vv. 16-20. This material has the appearance of commentary on the preceding text, prompted by passages elsewhere in the book (e.g., 24.8-10). Since these MT plusses belong not merely to a further stage in the literary growth of the book, but rather to what we may call a later edition of it, we are justified in considering ch. 29 apart from them as well as with them.

However we reconstruct the literary history of the text, interpretation must take seriously its present shape. Both in OG and MT, the letter is represented as covering all of vv. 4-23.<sup>243</sup> This is emphasised by YHWH's statement **וְאֵנֹכִי עַד** (v. 23), which, as we noted earlier, echoes the conventional ending in ANE letters. Even the MT plus of vv. 16-20, with its prophecy concerning those still in Jerusalem, is depicted as part of 'God's letter'; hence the second-person address in **יִצְאוּ אַתְּכֶם** (v. 16), the rebuke **וְלֹא שָׁמַעְתֶּם** (v. 19) and the concluding call, **יְהוָה כָּל הַגּוֹלָה שְׁמַעוּ דְבַר** (v. 20).

### 3.5. Differentiation in Jer. 29: **כָּל הַגּוֹלָה בְּבָבֶל / הַנְּבִיאִים**

We can now explore the issue of differentiation as it appears in Jer. 29, before moving on in the following section to consider chs. 27 – 29 as a whole. Since in ch. 29 MT presents a significantly longer text than OG, in this and the following section we will focus on the text common to OG and MT, before looking at the impact of the MT plusses separately in section 5.

Without pre-empting our discussion of the nature of the salvation promised in ch. 29 (see section 4), it is clear that Jeremiah here assures the exiles of YHWH's blessing upon them in Babylon, and his benevolent plans for their descendants. In contrast to 24.4-7, however, these

---

<sup>242</sup> Nicholson's claim, *Preaching*, 98, that the "warning against being deceived by (false) prophets and diviners . . . reflects strongly that set forth in Deut. xviii. 10-14" is thus quite inaccurate. In addition, Lust, 'Gathering and Return', 123-126, shows that the promise of return in v. 14, though similar to Deut. 30.3, is hardly Deuteronomistic.

<sup>243</sup> Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 256 n.32, writes that "it is difficult to determine where the letter ends in this chapter", but he accepts v. 23 as a possibility, in which case "the letter is a witness against the false teaching". See too Pardee, *Handbook*, 177.

promises are not indiscriminate. Granted, Jeremiah initially addresses the exiles as one (אל הגולה אשר הגליתי מירושלם, v. 4), and this broad designation is repeated in v. 20. Yet as we noted earlier, the nature of Jeremiah's rhetoric in this chapter is such as to render 'the prophets' as 'others'. Although they are described as 'among you' (בקרבתכם, v. 8), and even as 'your prophets' (נביאיכם, v. 8), they are spoken of in the third person (vv. 8-9, 21-23, 32) or addressed separately (vv. 24ff.). Moreover, like Hananiah, they are specifically excluded from YHWH's salvation. Ahab and Zedekiah will be given over to Nebuchadrezzar to be burnt alive, and their names will become a curse לכל הגלות יהודה בבבל (vv. 21-22). The exact nature of Shemaiah's fate is not stated, but it is made clear (v. 32) that he will be excluded from the community (בתוככם) that will see YHWH's salvation (note that פקד here reverts to its customary negative meaning). Consequently, we find in ch. 29 the same polarity of 'prophets and hearers' that we saw in chs. 27 – 28.

What is striking about this, however, is that *in terms of blame* the distinction is much more blurred in ch. 29 than it was in the two previous chapters. Granted, the statement about Shemaiah, ויבטח אתכם על שקר (v. 31), need mean only that he had *attempted* to make the exiles believe a lie, as in 27.15. It is clear however, that in v. 8, whether we follow OG or MT, the 'hearers' themselves are being rebuked. Likewise, the exiles' claim, הקים יהוה לנו נבאים בבבל (v. 15), revealing their enthusiastic endorsement of the prophets, is quickly refuted (vv. 21-23); the fact that in future the exiles will see Ahab and Zedekiah as cursed only shows how misguided is their current opinion. The prophets, it seems, are having more success among the exiles in Babylon than they were among the community in Judah.<sup>244</sup>

#### 4. Differentiation in Jer. 27 – 29: הגולה בבבל / הישבים בירושלם

We have seen, therefore, that in regard both to the exiled and non-exiled communities, chs. 27 – 28 and 29 present an internal differentiation between 'prophets' and 'people'. The question we now need to consider, however, is whether, and how, these two communities are differentiated from one another. Whilst it is self-evident that the shorter text of ch. 29 proclaims a message of hope to the exile community in Babylon, some uncertainty attaches to how this

---

<sup>244</sup> It may be significant that the charge of adultery against Ahab and Zedekiah (v. 23) echoes 23.10, 14, a passage which views prophets and people *alike* as guilty.



compares with that offered to the Judeans in ch. 27. Some commentators see here a reflection of the same pro-*Golah* outlook that we find in ch. 24: “The exiles in Babylon”, writes Carroll, “are presented as Yahweh’s *special* concern in 24.4-7; 29.4-7, 10-14”.<sup>245</sup> Similarly, N.J. Rubinger believes that ch. 29 reflects “Jeremiah’s profound conviction about the inherent superiority of the Judean center in Babylon.”<sup>246</sup>

This interpretation of ch. 29 is disputed, however. Notably, Seitz argues that if we set aside the MT plusses, what we find here is the same principle of ‘submit and live’ that is held out to the Judeans in ch. 27, and that Jeremiah’s message is in fact decidedly cool. The long term perspective of vv. 4-7 “was doubtless unpopular”,<sup>247</sup> while vv. 15 and 21-32 contain “strong words to the exilic community and its prophets”.<sup>248</sup> Indeed, Seitz concludes that “in the broader literary context of ch. 29, the ‘good’ which Yahweh promises to do for his people arguably includes the ‘good’ he does for those in Judah as much as the ‘good’ he has in store for the exiles.”<sup>249</sup> Similarly, Keown et al. claim that “the LORD’s word through Jeremiah to the Judean exiles was the same as the divine message to Zedekiah and the others remaining in Jerusalem after 597, ‘Serve the king of Babylon and you will live’.”<sup>250</sup> Benjamin Sommer goes even further in describing the message of ch. 29 as “unremittingly bleak from the viewpoint of the individuals who received it”,<sup>251</sup> and emphasising that the promises of vv. 10-14 are for the distant future.

These scholars are certainly right to call attention to the less than glowing comments to the exiles in this chapter, and to its purpose of quelling unrest. However, our exegesis has shown that even in the shorter text represented by OG, the scope of YHWH’s salvation in ch. 29 considerably exceeds that found in chs. 27 – 28. While the prospect of ‘remaining in and

---

<sup>245</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 532 (italics mine).

<sup>246</sup> N.J. Rubinger, ‘Jeremiah’s Epistle to the Exiles and The Field in Anathoth’, *Judaism* 26 (1977) 87.

<sup>247</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 210.

<sup>248</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 212.

<sup>249</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 211. Seitz believes the original letter + introduction comprises vv. 1-9, 15, 20-32. Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 61, also interprets *הזהרם* in v. 32 as referring to the Jerusalem community, but assigns this latter part of the chapter to later redaction.

<sup>250</sup> Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 72.

<sup>251</sup> Sommer, ‘New Light’, 662. Cf. Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 144: “The words are words of judgment on the exiles for now, but words of salvation after a lapse of seventy years.”

working the land' in 27.11 may allude to the creation account of Gen. 2.15, the injunctions of 29.5-6 go much further in both commanding and promising prosperity. If they subtly counsel against revolt, they also rescind the curses of Deut. 28; we thus have a picture of fruitfulness under divine blessing that is absent in ch. 27. Moreover, the invitation to 'seek YHWH' on behalf of Babylon (29.7) gives the exiles a role previously forbidden even to Jeremiah and opens up the possibility of a personal relationship with YHWH, something conspicuously lacking in ch. 27. Above all, the promise of שלום (29.7) indirect and conditional as it is, appears here for the first time in the book, and is in striking contrast to the way Jeremiah distances himself from שלום prophecy in 28.9.

These affirmations of YHWH's favour intensify in the shorter text of vv. 10-14. The promises of return to the land, and of שלום rather than רעה, are inherently hopeful, but this is underlined by the positive use of פקר and חשב מחשבה, reversing their threatening connotations elsewhere in Jer. The personal nature of YHWH's promise culminates with לכם (or ונגלתי) ונראיתי (v. 14). This may be contingent upon the exiles praying and seeking (v. 13), but it also appears to be part of his 'plan' mentioned in v. 11. Seitz appears to attribute this material, like the rest of vv. 10-14, 16-20, to the Exilic Redaction, but in so doing blurs the distinction between ER and MT plus.<sup>252</sup> A final contrast with the nature of the salvation promised in chs. 27 – 28 comes in 29.32, where YHWH refers to (ה)טוב אשר אני עשה לכם.

This bias towards the exiles is also reflected in the fact that in ch. 29, the underlying rationale for the salvation promise is predominantly on YHWH's initiative. To be sure, the exiles' prosperity in Babylon depends on their accepting the realities of life in a foreign land rather than nurturing hopes of a swift return. Equally, their future restoration will require sincere, wholehearted prayer. Nevertheless, the very fact that these options are open implies a prior act of grace on YHWH's part. As we have seen, the biblical allusions in 29.5-7 suggest that the Deuteronomic curses have been rescinded, while YHWH's invitation to pray overturns his earlier refusal even to listen to Jeremiah. This understanding of salvation for the exiles as part of a divine *plan* is made explicit in 29.10-14. The notion of YHWH's gratuitous favour towards the exiles is reinforced by the fact that, whereas the Judean remnant are warned that

---

<sup>252</sup> "Jer. 29.10-14 appears to have entered the text together with the clearly supplemental 29.16-19 . . . vv. 11-14 are remarkably similar to the language and overall thrust of Deut. 30.1-10 and 1 Kgs. 8.33-34, passages which clearly presuppose the exile and point to the likelihood of an exilic author, working from the same perspective as the exilic redaction of Jeremiah." (Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 210 n.8).

listening to the prophets will inevitably mean disaster for the whole nation, the promises to the exiles appear to stand *despite* the charge that they are colluding with their prophets (29.8) and claiming that YHWH has sent them (29.15).<sup>253</sup>

We can sum up, then, by saying that Jeremiah's message to the exiles in the shorter text of ch. 29 differs significantly from that to Zedekiah's people in chs. 27 – 28. A rather austere exhortation to 'serve' the king of Babylon is replaced by an encouragement to build, plant and marry. Pure conditionality gives way to an emphasis on divine initiative. And the focus on serving the king of Babylon moves to seeking YHWH for Babylon, with an underlying promise of YHWH's accessibility and responsiveness.

## 5. Differentiation in the MT Plusses of Jer. 29

Throughout chs. 27 – 29, we have noticed a striking number of differences between the Hebrew and Greek texts, mostly in the form of MT plusses. Often, these are of relatively minor hermeneutical significance, clarifying or emphasising an idea present in the *Vorlage* of OG. We have seen, for example, that in MT 27.12, 17 the invitation to 'serve the king of Babylon and live' applies to the Judeans what is said in 27.11. At this point, however, we have to give special attention to the MT plusses in 29.14 and 16-20. This is due not simply to their length, but also to their relevance to the question of group differentiation in chs. 27 – 29.

We can look first at v. 14, and YHWH's promise, וקבצתי אתכם מכל הגוים ומכל המקומות, אשר הרחתי אתכם שם. The language is similar to that of 23.3; note especially the repetition of קבץ (otherwise used with YHWH as subject only in 31.8, 10; 32.37) and נדח Hiph. Unlike the earlier passage, though, 29.14 does not even exclude Israel's leaders from the anticipated restoration; its scope appears to be all-encompassing, as will be the case in chs. 30 – 33. Consequently, scholars without exception conclude that MT is here broadening the horizon of the text to address a general *Diaspora*, rather than just the exile community in Babylon.<sup>254</sup>

---

<sup>253</sup> This indictment of the exiles is strengthened in MT 29.19, 'and you (exiles) have not listened'.

<sup>254</sup> See for example Duhm, *Jeremia*, 231; Condamin, *Jérémie*, 210; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 154; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 15; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 39; Lust, 'Gathering and Return', 129; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 559; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 729; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 83; and especially Goldman, *Prophétie*, 74-75.

We suggest, however, that this interpretation needs to be reconsidered. If the author of the MT plus in v. 14 *did* intend to broaden the scope to the entire *Diaspora*, he has created an anachronism of which he could hardly have been unaware, given what follows: **כי אמרתם הקים לנו יהוה נבאים בכלה** (v. 15). Indeed, with its reference to **אחזכם אשר לא יצאו אתכם בגולה**, even the MT plus of vv. 16-20 retains a focus on the Babylonian exiles. In fact, if we look again at v. 14, there is a hint that here too the author has in mind the 597 exiles. Not only does **המקום אשר משם הגליתי אתכם מירושלם בכלה** point back to the (place-specific) **כל הגולה אשר הגליתי מירושלם בכלה** in v. 4, the very use of **גלה** (Hiph.), which in the OT invariably denotes a specific situation,<sup>255</sup> suggests that YHWH's promise is being directed to a *particular* exilic group. In other words, while the language of v. 14 is formally plural, its intended referent is most likely the *Golah* community in Babylon.<sup>256</sup> We find a parallel to this in Ezek. 11, where YHWH promises **וקבצתי אתכם מן העמים ואכפתי אתכם מן הארצות אשר נפצותם בהם** (v. 17), before taking Ezekiel to deliver this message to the exiles in Babylon (vv. 24-25). Given the similarity of 29.14 to Deut. 30.3, it is even possible that the author is deliberately alluding to the latter passage as known scripture, and applying it to the exiles.<sup>257</sup> If this reasoning is correct, the MT plus of 29.14 maintains the focus on the 597 exiles in Babylon found in the shorter text.

29.16-20 is a judgement oracle in which YHWH announces his wrath on all those in post-597 Jerusalem: **אל המלך היושב אל כסא דוד ואל כל העם היושב בעיר הזאת** (v. 16). The language of vv. 17-18, and especially the 'fig' imagery, closely parallels that of 24.8-10, though the tone is still more ferocious; Zedekiah is not even mentioned by name, while the expression

<sup>255</sup> Cf. Westermann & Albertz, 'גלה', 316: "The whole weight of a concrete political event, which resists thorough theologization, characterizes the process described by *glh*."

<sup>256</sup> We will suggest later (chapter 5) that something similar occurs in 46.27-28; there, the context suggests that YHWH's promise not to destroy Israel in 'all the nations among which I scatter you' has particular application to the Jews in Egypt.

<sup>257</sup> Most scholars argue that Deut. 30 is a late addition to the Dtr.H., influenced by Jer. and Ezek; e.g., H.W. Wolff, 'Das Kerygma des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerks', *ZAW* 73 (1961) 180-183; Lust, 'Gathering and Return' 125; A.D.H. Mayes, *Deuteronomy* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 367-368; M.Z. Brettler, 'Predestination in Deuteronomy 30.1-10', in L.S. Schearing & S.L. McKenzie, *Those Elusive Deuteronomists*, 187 ("Deuteronomy influenced Jeremiah, but once this happened, the 'new' book of Jeremiah had in some sense become Deuteronomic, and influenced Deuteronomy", 187-188). According to C. Begg, 'The Literary Criticism of Deut. 4.1-40. Contributions to a Continuing Discussion', *ETL* 56 (1980) 44-45, Jer. 29.13 probably draws on Deut. 4.29; however, Deut. 30.1ff. "elaborates and specifies the promise of 4.29ff. in such a way as to suggest that the former derives from a still later author who took the wording of the latter as his point of departure." (49). However, Unterman, *Repentance to Redemption*, 67-74, and McConville, *Judgment and Promise*, 162-163, argue that Jer. draws on Deut. 30.

כתאנים השערים (v. 17) is stronger than כתאנים הרעות (24.8). Consequently, vv. 16-20 seem to be reaffirming the geographical שארית / גלות יהודה / ירושלם polarity that we saw in ch. 24. Indeed, some argue that this was precisely the reason for the addition: “Versetzt man 15 vor 8f., schließen 16-19 direkt an 10-14 an, so daß eine durchgehende Parallelität zu 24.4-10 entsteht . . . D stellt hier wie in K. 24 Heil für die Exilierten und Gericht für die Zurückgebliebenen einander gegenüber”, writes Thiel.<sup>258</sup> Again we have a parallel to Ezek. 11, which also posits a fundamental distinction between the 597 exiles and those still in Jerusalem.

On the other hand, whereas ch. 24 gives no explanation for YHWH’s wrath against the Judeans, 29.16-20 supplies a two-fold rationale. The first point lies in v. 16: ואל כל העם היושב. The language here echoes (perhaps deliberately) the יצא / ישב polarity in 21.1-10. There too, those who ‘dwelt’ in Jerusalem would die, while those who ‘went out’ would live. However, the logic underlying the יצא / ישב polarity in 29.16 is quite different. In ch. 21, the fate of the people of Jerusalem turns on their relationship to the city during the siege of 587, and is thus still in the balance. In 29.16, their fate relates to their actions during the deportation of 597, and is thus already determined. Salvation thus entails acceptance of exile (יצא בגולה). The Judeans’ culpability is emphasised by the term אחיכם. As we noted earlier, this term frequently has connotations of loyalty, especially in battle (Deut. 3.18, 20; Josh. 1.14; 2 Sam. 18.2).<sup>259</sup> Consequently, אשר לא יצאו בגולה אתכם (v. 16) implicitly criticises those in Jerusalem for failing to show solidarity in accepting YHWH’s judgement of exile.<sup>260</sup>

The second reason for YHWH’s wrath is given in v. 19: . . . תחת אשר לא שמעו אל דברי . . . אשר שלחתי אליהם את עברי הנבאים. This, of course, is a standard (Deuteronomistic) indictment of the people of Israel and Judah. Yet intriguingly, the final words of this verse, ולא שמעתם, restore the focus to the exiles in Babylon, followed by the call, ואתם שמעו דבר יהוה כל הגולה. The effect

<sup>258</sup> Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 17-18. Similarly, Unterman, *Repentance to Redemption*, 84: “With the exception of the statements concerning the false prophets, the chapter parallels ch. 24.” Indeed, as we saw in chapter 1 of our study, Pohlmann (quite implausibly) believes that the bias towards the 597 exiles in ch. 29 is so strong that it serves to narrow the originally universal scope of chs. 30 – 31.

<sup>259</sup> Although the term אח is not used, the account in 1 Sam. 30.21-22 of resentment among David’s men against those who did not go with them (הלך עם) reflects a similar sense of obligation to fight with one’s compatriots.

<sup>260</sup> Note that the use of יצא and ישב means that the present situation of the two communities is interpreted with reference to their own actions, rather than to YHWH’s action (as is expressed elsewhere in ch. 29 by the term גלה Hiph.). Of course, we have no knowledge of whether those deported in 597 (or 587) had any choice in the matter.

of this is to underline the spiritual obduracy of the exiles themselves. Though they themselves have 'gone out' into exile, they are no better at listening to YHWH's word than 'their brothers' in Jerusalem. Consequently, the MT plus of 29.16-20, as much as the shorter text represented by OG, emphasises that whilst the *Golah* community in Babylon are indeed privileged as far as YHWH's plans are concerned, they are in no position to congratulate themselves on their own goodness. In this way, the verdict upon the exiles in ch. 29 echoes that in ch. 24, suggesting that claims that Jer. is 'pro-*Golah*' probably require more careful definition.

Clearly, there is a marked difference between the perspective of 29.16-20 and that of 27.12-22. Not only does the earlier passage see ongoing life for the non-exiles as a possibility, it also makes future disaster the result of failing to submit to Babylon, rather than of failing to 'go into exile'. Nevertheless, the outlook of both passages may not diverge as much as we might think. Firstly, we have seen that the message of ch. 27 is itself much more subdued than is often thought, especially in the shorter text of OG; moreover, it clearly envisages a further sacking of Jerusalem. Secondly, it is uncertain how optimistic Jeremiah himself was in ch.27 that his audience would listen to his message rather than that of the other prophets. Thirdly, there is no difficulty in a biblical author attributing YHWH's anger to more than one factor; 29.16-20 itself cites two distinct reasons, i.e, failure to go into exile (v. 16) and failure to listen to the prophets (v. 19). Consequently, whilst the vision of disaster as expressed in 29.16-20 may not have been apparent to Jeremiah when he delivered his 'submit and live' message, it could represent a natural development of his thinking.

## 6. Conclusions

We can now sum up our investigation of chs. 27 – 29. As we have seen, in the text common to MT and OG, these three chapters have been structured in such a way that ch. 29 counterbalances chs. 27 – 28. In so doing, they configure issues of salvation and judgement around two intersecting polarities – what we might call a 'double differentiation'.

The first is that of the two post-597 Judean communities; the remnant under Zedekiah and the exiles in Babylon. Although Jeremiah delivers a message of hope to both, the nature of this hope is by no means identical. To the people in Judah, he offers simply the option of ongoing life in their own land, under the suzerainty of Babylon. The exiles, by contrast, are called to a life marked by **שלום**; even now they may prosper and pray to YHWH, whilst also

anticipating spiritual renewal and restoration to the land. Reading these words in the wider context of Jer. underlines their positive nature.

Matching this disparity between the contents of the two messages is a significant difference in theological rationale. The entirely contingent nature of YHWH's offer to Judah is clear from the polarity, 'Whoever serves / Whoever does not serve the king of Babylon' (27.8, 11). Since this is bound up with the issue of prophecy, it could be reformulated as 'Whoever listens to their prophets / Whoever listens to Jeremiah'. 'Salvation' depends upon obedience to YHWH and submission to Babylon. By contrast, ch. 29 lays far more stress on divine initiative, without dispensing with the need for the exiles to 'seek YHWH'.

The MT plus of 29.16-20 radicalises this contrast between the two communities, so that it is now seen in the absolute terms of 24.1-10. Far from envisaging the possibility of the non-exiles submitting to Babylon and so remaining in their land, YHWH declares his wrath against them for remaining in their land, and the certainty of judgement. Clearly, this stands in considerable tension with Jeremiah's message in ch. 27. All distinctions between the Judean people and their prophets here vanish; indeed, the only prophets mentioned are those whom YHWH has sent and to whom they have *not* listened. In context, however, the primary function of these verses is to insist on the necessity of exile, and to rebuke the 597 exiles themselves for failing to hear the word of YHWH (v. 19b, 20).

The other polarity in chs. 27 – 29 is one of 'people / prophets'. In part, this involves an audience-critical differentiation; the prophets are consistently addressed separately from everyone else. At the same time, those prophets who are mentioned by name – Hananiah, Ahab and Zedekiah, and Shemaiah – receive notice of specific and final punishment from YHWH. Just as elsewhere in Jer. certain individuals are exempted from disaster (see the following chapter), so here certain individuals are exempted from a message of hope.<sup>261</sup>

Bearing in mind the comments of Koenen with which we began this study, it is important to note that this polarity of 'salvation for the people / judgement on the prophets' is at least in part ethically grounded. For whilst at no point does Jeremiah affirm the goodness of 'the

---

<sup>261</sup> We noted earlier Kilpp's observations on this point (*Niederreißen*, 61). Kilpp sees the exclusion (*die Aussonderung*) of Shemaiah from salvation in ch. 29 as a unique case in Jer.; however, Ahab, Zedekiah and Hananiah seems to offer some sort of parallel, even though the nature of 'salvation' in ch. 27 is different from that in ch. 29.

people' (quite the opposite in ch. 29), his verdict upon the prophets is explicitly based on their words and conduct. Hananiah and Shemaiah have attempted to 'make the people believe a lie' (28.15; 29.31) and have 'preached rebellion against YHWH' (28.16; 29.32 MT). Ahab and Zedekiah have 'preached lies in my name' (29.21) and have 'committed folly in Israel' (29.23). It may be the case (especially in ch. 29) that the people are encouraging them, but the text clearly implies that these prophets carry a singular degree of guilt.



## Chapter 4: Differentiation in Jer. 37 – 45

### 1. Introduction to Jeremiah 37 – 45

As we noted at the start of our previous chapter, Jer. 26 – 45 is unanimously recognised as the second macro-unit of the entire book, consisting of two major sub-sections; chs. 26 – 35(36) and 36(37) – 45. In this chapter, we will consider how the issue of inner-Judean differentiation is presented within the second of these sub-sections. Since this is a much longer section of text than those which we have looked at so far, discussion of every verse or even every pericope will be impossible. As we will seek to show, however, its contents and structure are such that the issue of differentiation can be studied with reference to four particular passages; 38.1-3, 14-23; 39.15-18; 42.1 – 43.7; 45.1-5. At the same time, of course, we will take account of, and frequently refer to, the remaining material. As in previous chapters, we will begin by setting out the basis for viewing chs. 37 – 45 as a distinct unit, and this itself will provide a broad framework for the subsequent analysis of specific passages.

#### 1.1. Jer. 37 – 45 as a Unit

In our previous chapter, we argued that the story of Jehoiakim's burning of the scroll in Jer. 36 marks the start, rather than the conclusion, of a literary unit.<sup>1</sup> In *narrative* terms, however, it is clear that a new section begins in ch. 37. Here, for the second time in the book, we move from the reign of Jehoiakim to that of Zedekiah (v. 1; cf. 27.1), with v. 2 giving an advance verdict upon both him and the nation: *ולא שמע הוא ועבדיו ועם הארץ אל דברי יהוה אשר דבר ביד ירמיהו הנביא*.<sup>2</sup> Less certain, however, is where this unit concludes. Since ch. 45 begins by referring back to Baruch's writing of the scroll in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and since it has no *necessary* connection with the story of the Jews' flight to Egypt (chs. 43 – 44), it is seen

---

<sup>1</sup> Alone in rejecting either option is Elmer A. Martens, 'Narrative Parallelism and Message in Jeremiah 34 – 38', in C.A. Evans & W.F. Stinespring (eds.), *Early Jewish and Christian Exegesis. Studies in Memory of William Hugh Brownlee* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987) 33-49. He argues that "chaps. 34 – 38 comprise a unit *as the material now stands*" (38; italics his).

<sup>2</sup> S. McEvenue, 'The Composition of Jeremiah 37.1 to 44.30', in W.C. van Wyk (ed.), *Studies in Wisdom Literature. OTWSA 15 & 16* (Pretoria, 1972) 59-67, sees chs. 37 – 44 as depicting the outworking of this opening statement.

by some as distinct from chs. 37 – 44.<sup>3</sup> Others, however, argue that ch. 45 must be read in conjunction with what precedes. This is true not only of those who view it as the final episode of Baruch's 'passion narrative' (*Leidensgeschichte*),<sup>4</sup> but also of others who see it as an appropriate conclusion (if not continuation) of the story.<sup>5</sup> Scholarly ambivalence on this point is reflected in descriptions of the unit as chs. 37 – 44(45).<sup>6</sup>

Let us consider first the case for the unity of chs. 37 – 44. On the one hand, these eight chapters present an extended, chronologically-arranged story, in two parts. Chs. 37 – 39 describe events leading up to the fall of Jerusalem in 587, while chs. 40 – 44 depict its aftermath, including Gedaliah's governorship of Judah, his assassination by the Ammonite-backed Ishmael, and finally the 'flight of the Jews' to Egypt. Bearing in mind how earlier sections of Jer. have oscillated between the reigns of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, the sustained historical sequence of chs. 37 – 44 is indeed striking. "Here," writes Jones, "the reader is conscious of moving into a different and unique section of the book . . . They need to be read as a whole."<sup>7</sup>

At the same time, chs. 37 – 44 are more than a historical chronicle. Although within them one may detect different perspectives and emphases, when read as a whole they convey a particular theological message; namely, the disobedience of the entire nation of Judah to YHWH and the disaster that thus befalls them. As we saw in chapter one of our study, this point has been emphasised in particular by Pohlmann, who sees in this narrative the fulfilment of the prophecy of 24.8-10:

Im blick auf Jer. 21.1-10 / Jer. 24 enthalten die Kapitel Jer. 37 – 44 zudem den Nachweis, daß sich diese Prophetenworte erfüllt haben. Denn der für die jetzige Textgestalt von Jer. 37 – 44 zuständige Verfasser (oder Redaktor) kommt in seiner Darstellung der Geschichte Judas nach der Eroberung Jerusalem zu dem Ergebnis, daß schließlich das Land gänzlich verlassen und ohne Bewohner war (vgl. Jer. 24.10) und der nach Ägypten abgewanderte Rest des Volkes (vgl. Jer. 24.8) sich selbst

---

<sup>3</sup> So McEvenue, 'Jeremiah 37.1 to 44.30', 65; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 282; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 209-211.

<sup>4</sup> Notably H. Kremers, 'Leidensgemeinschaft mit Gott im Alten Testament. Eine Untersuchung der 'biographischen' Berichte im Jeremiabuch', *Ev.T.* 13 (1953) 130-131 (but see further below).

<sup>5</sup> See especially Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 669-670, 745; also Kessler, 'Jeremiah 26 – 45 Reconsidered', 85; Nicholson, *Preaching*, 107; Hobbs, 'Some Remarks', 193; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 631; McConville, *Judgment and Promise*, 111, 122; Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos*, 72-73, 88-93.

<sup>6</sup> E.g., Pohlmann, *Studien*, 48; Jones, *Jeremiah*, 36.

<sup>7</sup> Jones, *Jeremiah*, 36; similarly, Nicholson, *Preaching*, 18.

disqualifiziert hat. Jer. 21.1-10 / Jer. 24 und Jer. 37 – 44 sind folglich nach dem Schema ‘Weissagung und Erfüllung’ aufeinander abgestimmt.<sup>8</sup>

It will be noted that Pohlmann does not try to incorporate ch. 45 within this theological schema, and indeed, he has very little to say about this chapter. Two other scholars, who do in fact include ch. 45 in the literary unit, nonetheless accept Pohlmann’s interpretation of chs. 37 – 44. Nicholson sees their unifying theme as the rejection of YHWH’s word, the consequences of which for Jerusalem are set out in 37.1 – 40.6, and for the Judean remnant in 40.7 – 44,<sup>9</sup> while McConville describes these chapters as “essentially an application of the theology of chapters 21 and 24 to the events that lead up to and into the exile.”<sup>10</sup>

Thus, considerations of narrative and theme appear to demarcate chs. 37 – 44 as a literary unit. This analysis would seem to be confirmed by ch. 45 itself. As we have said, 45.1 explicitly locates the oracle to Baruch in the time of Jehoiakim, and refers us back to ch. 36. Moreover, its character as a personal salvation oracle stands in contrast to the preceding chapters, which focus on YHWH’s judgement on Judah as a whole. Consequently, a good case can be made for treating chs. 37 – 44 as a self-contained unit, and regarding chs. 36 and 45 as “the brackets and boundaries which contain the entire narrative”.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, this point was tacitly conceded by Kremers; on the one hand, he terms chs. 37 – 45 an *Erzählungszyklus*,<sup>12</sup> to which the oracle to Baruch is the conclusion, but then, noting that 45.1 refers back to 36, adds, “dadurch ist sein Erzählungszyklus von Kap. 36 und Kap. 45 wie von einer Klammer umgeben.”<sup>13</sup>

There is, however, one very strong argument for treating ch. 45 as an integral part of chs. 37 – 44. As has often been noted, it forms a striking parallel with another individual salvation oracle, namely, that to Ebed-Melech in 39.15-18. Apart from their similarity of genre, both conclude with the promise of ‘life as booty’ (39.18; 45.5) for their respective recipients.

---

<sup>8</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 185.

<sup>9</sup> Nicholson, *Preaching*, 104-113; see too Clements, *Jeremiah*, 203, 228.

<sup>10</sup> McConville, *Judgment and Promise*, 112. He adds that ch. 45 “stands somewhat aside from the main argument of the preceding discussion” (121).

<sup>11</sup> Brueggemann, *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 121. Similarly, Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 102, notes that “Anfang und Ende dieser großen Einheit verweisen durch Datierung und inhaltlichen Kontrast aufeinander.” See too Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos*, 89.

<sup>12</sup> Kremers, ‘Leidensgemeinschaft’, 130.

<sup>13</sup> Kremers, ‘Leidensgemeinschaft’, 131.

Indeed, these two brief oracles seem to be counter-balanced, so that 39.15-18 concludes the account of the fall of Jerusalem, and 45.1-5 the story of the flight to Egypt. This suggests that both are crucial for the interpretation of chs. 37ff. in its final form. Consequently, in this chapter we will take chs. 37 – 45 as a meaningful literary entity within the final form of the book.<sup>14</sup>

It is, of course, accepted that this unity of narrative and theology relates to chs. 37 – 45 *in its present form*. Few would deny that the editor has utilised and adapted earlier material. As we will see later, chs. 37 and 38 are seen by many as doublets, as are the two accounts of the release of Jeremiah. In the first (39.11-14), he is released from ‘the courtyard of the guard’ directly into the care of Gedaliah; in the second (40.1-6), he is set free at Ramah after being rounded up with the other Judean captives.<sup>15</sup> Immediately after this second release account, we have an extended narrative (40.7 – 41.18) describing Gedaliah’s fledgling community, and the turmoil that follows his assassination; oddly, this makes no mention at all of Jeremiah.<sup>16</sup> “The simplest explanation,” write Keown et al., “is to suggest the incorporation into the larger narrative of historical information that originally had no connection with Jeremiah.”<sup>17</sup> Ch. 44, containing Jeremiah’s speech to the Jews in Egypt, is somewhat disconnected from the preceding narrative (note the introductory formula, *הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר הָיָה אֵל יְרֵמְיָהוּ*, v. 1a) and reads as a postscript.<sup>18</sup> And, as we shall see, even within smaller sections, scholars detect different voices.

---

<sup>14</sup> One must, therefore, question Pohlmann’s exclusion of ch. 45 from his analysis of chs. 37 – 44. It is also noticeable that he has little to say about 39.15-18, describing it simply as a late interpolation (*Studien*, 99).

<sup>15</sup> “It is thus clear that the editor had two stories before him both of which were included in the book.” (Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 648).

<sup>16</sup> Nor is Jeremiah mentioned in the account of the fall of Jerusalem (39.1-10), but as he is imprisoned during this time, this is less surprising.

<sup>17</sup> Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 242. According to Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 701, Jeremiah’s absence “is inexplicable except on the grounds that 2 Kgs. 25.22-26 has no place for him either.” But see Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 113.

<sup>18</sup> Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 262, describe it as “a self-standing oracle.”

## 2. Jer. 38[45].1-3; 14-23

### 2.1. Text

<p>και ηκουσε Σαφατιας υιος Ματθαν και Γοδολιας υιος Πασχωρ και Ιωαχαλ υιος Σελεμιου τους λογους ους Ιερεμιας ελαλει επι τον οχλον λεγων</p>	<p>1. וישמע שפטיה בן מתן וגדליהו בן פשחור ויוכל בן שלמיהו ופשחור בן מלכיה את הדברים אשר ירמיהו מדבר אל כל העם לאמר</p>
<p>οὕτως εἶπε κυριος ο̅ κατοικων εν τη πολει ταυτη αποθενειται εν ρομφαια και εν λιμω και ο̅ εκπορευομενος προς τους Χαλδαιους ζησεται και ε̅σται η̅ ψυχη αυτου εις ευρεμα και ζησεται</p>	<p>2. כה אמר יהוה הישב בעיר הזאת ימות בחרב ברעב ובדבר והיצא אל הכשדים יחיה והיתה לו נפשו לשלל</p>
<p>ο̅τι οὕτως εἶπε κυριος παραδιδομενη παραδοθησεται η̅ πολις αυτη εις χειρας δυναμεως βασιλεως βαβυλωνος και συλλημψεται αυτην</p>	<p>3. כה אמר יהוה הנתן נתן העיר הזאת ביד חיל מלך בבל ולכדה</p>
<p>και απεστειλεν ο̅ βασιλευς και εκαλεσεν αυτον προς εαυτον εις οικιαν ασελισηλ την εν οικω κυριου και ειπεν αυτω ο̅ βασιλευς ερωτησω σε λογον και μη κρυψης απ̅ εμου ρημα</p>	<p>14. וישלח המלך צדקיהו ויקח את ירמיהו הנביא אליו אל מבוא השלישי אשר בבית יהוה ויאמר המלך אל ירמיהו שאל אני אתך דבר אל תחד ממני דבר</p>
<p>και ειπεν Ιερεμιας τω βασιλει εαν αναγγειλω σοι ουχι θανατω με θανατωσεις και εαν συμβουλευσω σοι ου μη ακουσης μου</p>	<p>15. ויאמר ירמיהו אל צדקיהו כי אניד לך הלוא המת תמיתני וכי איעצך לא תשמע אלי</p>
<p>και ωμοσεν αυτω ο̅ βασιλευς λεγων ζη κυριος ος̅ εποιησεν η̅μιν την ψυχην ταυτην ει̅ αποκτενω σε και ει̅ δωσω σε εις χειρας των ανθρωπων τουτων</p>	<p>16. וישבע המלך צדקיהו אל ירמיהו בסתר לאמר חי יהוה את אשר עשה לנו את הנפש הזאת אם אמתך ואם אתנך ביד האנשים האלה אשר מבקשים את נפשך</p>
<p>και ειπεν αυτω Ιερεμιας οὕτως εἶπε κυριος εαν̅ εξελθων̅ εξελθης̅ προς̅ η̅γεμονας βασιλεως βαβυλωνος ζησεται η̅ ψυχη σου και η̅ πολις αυτη ου̅ μη κατακαυθη εν πυρι και ζηση̅ συ και η̅ οικια σου</p>	<p>17. ויאמר ירמיהו אל צדקיהו כה אמר יהוה אלהי צבאות אלהי ישראל אם יצא תצא אל שרי מלך בבל וחיתה נפשך והעיר הזאת לא תשרף באש וחיתה אתה וביתך</p>
<p>και εαν̅ μη̅ εξελθης̅ δοθησεται η̅ πολις αυτη εις̅ χειρας των Χαλδαιων και καυσουσιν̅ αυτην̅ εν̅ πυρι και̅ συ̅ ου̅ μη̅ σωθης̅</p>	<p>18. ואם לא תצא אל שרי מלך בבל ונתנה העיר הזאת ביד הכשדים ושרפוה באש ואתה לא תמלש מידם</p>

και ειπεν ο βασιλευς τω Ιερεμια εγω λογον εχω των Ιουδαιων των πεφευγοτων προς τους Χαλδαιους μη δωσι με εις χειρας αυτων και καταμωκησονται μου	19. ויאמר המלך צדקיהו אל ירמיהו אני דאג את היהודים אשר נפלו אל הכשדים פן יתנו אתי בידם והתעללו בי
και ειπεν Ιερεμιας ου μη παραδωσι σε ακουσον λογον κυριου ον εγω λεγω προς σε και βελτιον εσται σοι και ζησεται η ψυχη σου	20. ויאמר ירמיהו לא יתנו שמע נא בקול יהוה לאשר אני דבר אליך ויישב לך ותחי נפשך
και ει μη θελεις συ εξελθειν ουτως ο λογος ον εδειξε μοι κυριος	21. ואם מאן אתה לצאת זה הדבר אשר הראני יהוה
και ιδου πασαι αι γυναικες αι καταλειφθεισαι εν οικια βασιλεως Ιουδα εξηγοντο προς αρχοντας βασιλεως Βαβυλωνος και αυται ελεγον ηπατησαν σε και δυνησονται σοι ανδρες ειρηνικοι σου και καταδυσουσιν εν ολισθημασι ποδας σου απεστρεψαν απο σου	22. והנה כל הנשים אשר נשארו בכית מלך יהודה מוצאות אל שרי מלך בבל והנה אמרות הסיתוך ויכלו לך אנשי שלמך השבעו בכך רגלך נסגו אחור
και τας γυναικας σου και τα τεκνα σου εξαξουσι προς τους Χαλδαιους και συ ου μη σωθης οτι εν χειρι βασιλεως Βαβυλωνος συλλημθηση και η πολις αυτη κατακαυθησεται	23. ואת כל נשיך ואת בניך מוצאים אל הכשדים ואתה לא תמלט מידם כי ביד מלך בבל תתפש ואת העיר הזאת תשרף באש

## 2.2. Textual Notes

v. 1. MT  $\text{מלכיה בן מפשור}$  >OG: Probable MT plus. Since  $\text{מלכיה}$  lacks the final *waw* of  $\text{שלמי}$ , omission by homoioteleuton is unlikely, unless the OG *Vorlage* contained a variant orthography,  $\text{מלכיהו}$ .<sup>19</sup>

MT  $\text{כל}$  >OG: Characteristic MT plus (also v. 23).

$\text{LXX}^{\text{B,S}} \text{ελαλει} = \text{MT } \text{מדבר}$ ;  $\text{LXX}^{\text{A,V}} \text{ελαλησεν}$ :

MT  $\text{העם}$ :  $\text{LXX}^{\text{B,A}} \text{τον λαον}$ ;  $\text{LXX}^{\text{S}} \text{τον οχλον}$ : Ziegler maintains that the reading in S is to be preferred here, an alteration of  $\text{λαος}$  to the less common  $\text{οχλος}$  being unlikely.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> So McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 948; contra Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 204; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 230; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 635; Janzen, *Studies*, 119.

<sup>20</sup> Ziegler, *Beiträge*, 50.

v. 2. MT **וּבְדַבֵּר** >OG: MT plus (as in 21.9). Janzen notes that in the fifteen instances of the sequence **בַּחֲרֵב וּבְרַעַב וּבְדַבֵּר** in MT, OG lacks **בְּדַבֵּר** seven times.<sup>21</sup>

וחיה: Read *Ketiv*, **וַיְחִיָּה**, rather than *Qere*, **וַיְחִיָּה**.<sup>22</sup>

v. 3. OG **ὄτα** >MT: The expected **כִּי** appears to have been accidentally lost from MT (cf. 45.3).<sup>23</sup>

v. 14. MT **צְדַקְיָהוּ** >OG: The addition of a proper name is characteristic of MT; see too vv. 15, 16, 17, 19.<sup>24</sup>

MT **וַיִּקַּח אֶת יְרֵמְיָהוּ הַנְּבִיא**; OG **καὶ ἐκαλεσεν αὐτον**: The proper name and title are typical MT plusses. OG probably read **וַיִּקְחֵהוּ** (as in 37.17), rather than **וַיִּקְרָא לּוֹ / אֹתוֹ**. Pohlmann points out that the sequence **וַיִּקַּח . . . וַיְשַׁלַּח** (Gen. 20.2; 2 Sam. 9.5; 1 Kgs. 7.13) is just as possible as **וַיִּקְרָא . . . וַיְשַׁלַּח** (Gen. 31.4; Ex. 9.27; Num. 16.12, etc.).<sup>25</sup>

MT **מִבּוֹא הַשְּׁלִישִׁי**, ‘to the third entrance’; OG **οἰκίαν ἀσελῖσηλ**,<sup>26</sup> ‘the house of Aselisel’. MT lacks the grammatically necessary article for the noun, but Giesebrecht’s emendation to **מִבּוֹא הַשְּׁלִישִׁים**, ‘the entrance of the bodyguard’,<sup>27</sup> has not been widely accepted. Ziegler allows that OG may have had a variant *Vorlage* that read either **הַשְּׁלִישִׁיל** or **הַשְּׁלִישִׁים**.<sup>28</sup>

v. 16. MT **בַּסֶּתֶר** >OG: MT plus, influenced by 37.17 (where OG reads **κρυφαιως**).<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 43-44; 205 n.19.

<sup>22</sup> So Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 204; Duhm, *Jeremia*, 302; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 230; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 635; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 266.

<sup>23</sup> So Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 204; Volz, *Jeremia*, 337; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 266. However, Pohlmann, *Studien*, 71 n.122, suggests the omission may have been deliberate.

<sup>24</sup> See McKane’s summary of characteristic MT plusses in this chapter, *Jeremiah 2*, 947.

<sup>25</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 85 n.167.

<sup>26</sup> LXX<sup>B</sup>, ἀσελῖσηλ; LXX<sup>S</sup>, ἀσαλιηλ; LXX<sup>A</sup>, σαλαθηλ. See Ziegler, *Beiträge*, 79-80.

<sup>27</sup> Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 206-207; so too Duhm, *Jeremia*, 305 (but note his admission that “letzteres Wort ist allerdings für uns nicht klar”).

<sup>28</sup> Ziegler, *Beiträge*, 80.

<sup>29</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 305; Janzen, *Studies*, 53; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 267; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 956.

MT *Ketiv* (אשר) את >OG: With *Qere*, omit the object marker as “grammatically intolerable”.<sup>30</sup>

MT אשר מבקשים את נפשך >OG: MT plus,<sup>31</sup> cf. 19.9; 34[41].21.

v. 17. MT אלהי צבאות אלהי ישראל >OG: Characteristic MT plus.

v. 18. MT אל שרי מלך בבל >OG: Probable MT plus;<sup>32</sup> it is unnecessary after v. 17.

MT מידם >OG: MT plus (also in v. 23).

v. 19. MT ואני דאנ; OG ἐγὼ λογον ἐχω: This use of ἐχειν λογον (‘to take account of, have regard for’)<sup>33</sup> to render דאנ recurs in 42[49].16. The fact that דאנ is translated by φοβέω in 17.8 is consistent with Tov’s hypothesis that Jer. 29 – 52 represents a revision of the original Greek translation.

MT והתעללו בי; OG καταμωκασονται μου: In contrast to καταμωκαομαι (‘to mock’), עלל Hith. usually implies a more violent form of abuse (1 Sam. 31.4 = 1 Chron. 10.4; Jdg. 19.25). However, the idea of mockery is present in Num. 22.29 (the only instance of עלל Hith. in the Pentateuch), where LXX translates with παίζω, ‘to play, to jest’.

MT נפלו; OG των πεφευγτων: For the use of φευγω to translate נפל, see 37.13-14.

v. 20. MT בקול יהוה לאשר; OG λογον κυριου ου = את דבר יהוה אשר: In contrast to MT, (‘hear the voice of YHWH in respect to what I am telling you’),<sup>34</sup> OG offers a simpler reading (‘hear the word of the Lord which I am telling you’); it may reflect a variant *Vorlage*, or may simply be paraphrasing.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 956; similarly Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 207; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 206; Keown et al., *Jeremiah* 26 – 52, 221.

<sup>31</sup> See especially Janzen’s analysis of MT’s standardisation of this expression, *Studies*, 41-43; similarly Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 267; McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 956; contra Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 207.

<sup>32</sup> So Janzen, *Studies*, 53; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 267; McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 957; contra Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 207.

<sup>33</sup> For this meaning of ἐχειν λογον, see EN 1102b 32, και του πατρος και των φιλων φαμεν ἐχειν λογον; also *Hdt.* 1.62, 115.

<sup>34</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 206, who cites Jer. 35.8 (ונשמע בקול יהונדב בן רכב אבינו לכל אשר צונו) and Gen. 27.8 (ועתה בני שמע בקלי לאשר אני מצוה אתך); also McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 958.

<sup>35</sup> For the latter view, see McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 958.



v. 22. MT רגלך הטבעו בבץ רגלך; OG καταδυσουσιν εν ὀλισθημασι ποδας σου: MT takes רגלך as the subject and points the verb as Hoph. הטבעו, i.e., ‘your foot is sunk’. In OG, ποδας (accusative) indicates that the ἄνδρες εἰρηητικοί σου are the subject, with הטבעו being read as Hiph. הטבעו, i.e., ‘they made your feet sink down’. If the latter reading is accepted,<sup>36</sup> v. 22 has a single subject, the ‘men of your peace’; having misled Zedekiah and dragged him into the mud, they abandon him (סוג, v. 22b ).

MT רגלך, ‘your foot’; many Heb. mss. רגליך, and OG ποδας, ‘your feet’.<sup>37</sup>

v. 23: MT תשרף, ‘you will burn (this city)’; OG κατακαυθησεται, ‘(this city) will be burnt’: MT yields an interesting reading, but we should probably reposit to תשרף.<sup>38</sup>

### 2.3. Exegetical Notes

v. 14. שאל אני אתך דבר: Like בקש and דרש, the term שאל can denote seeking an oracle through a prophet (1 Sam. 28.16) and some believe this is the case here.<sup>39</sup> However, the combination דבר . . . שאל suggests simply ‘ask you something’;<sup>40</sup> cf. the very similar 2 Sam. 14.18 (אך דבר אחד אנכי שאל מאתך, also 2 Sam. 3.13, שאל מאתך, also 2 Sam. 37.17 (וישאלהו המלך . . . ויאמר היש דבר מאת יהוה)), Zedekiah is asking Jeremiah whether he has received an oracle, rather than asking him to consult YHWH for one.

אל תכחד: This too implies that Zedekiah believes Jeremiah already knows what YHWH’s word is. Pohlmann notes that the phrase is used when unpleasant news is expected (Josh. 7.19; 1 Sam. 3.17, 18; 2 Sam. 14.18).<sup>41</sup>

<sup>36</sup> As it is by Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 209; Duhm, *Jeremia*, 306; Volz, *Jeremia*, 344; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 89 n.193; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 268; McKane, *Jeremiah*, 960; contra Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 206; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 228; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 641. The absence of the object marker with רגלך is not significant, this often being the case when the direct object is a part of the body (*IBH* §85).

<sup>37</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 206; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 947; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 220.

<sup>38</sup> So Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 207; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 228; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 228; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 641 n.4; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 268; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 961; contra Streane, *Jeremiah & Lamentations*, 255.

<sup>39</sup> Bright, *Jeremiah*, 231; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 642; cautiously, Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 684.

<sup>40</sup> So Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 290 (‘I have something to ask you’).

<sup>41</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 85 n.170.

v. 15. וכי איעצך . . . וכי אניד לך: Some commentators see Jeremiah's hesitation as surprising (and perhaps indicative of redactional activity), since his rough treatment so far has been at the hands of the שרים (37.14-16; 38.4-6), from whom Zedekiah has twice acted to protect him (37.21; 38.10).<sup>42</sup>

v. 16. חי יהוה אשר עשה לנו את הנפש הזאת: This oath formula is otherwise unattested in the OT. According to Rudolph, its significance is that "wer in Gott den Schöpfer des Lebens erht, kann nicht eines seiner Geschöpfe ums Leben bringen."<sup>43</sup> From the narrator's point of view, however, it may be significant that Zedekiah does not respond to the second part of Jeremiah's prediction, לא תשמע אלי (cf. 37.2).

הרעו את אשר עשית = (הרעות את אשר עשית) = εροσθηρευσω α εροσησας can only be the שרים who placed Jeremiah in the cistern (v. 6). A clear antecedent is provided by Ebed-Melech's protest to Zedekiah in v. 9, הרעו האנשים האלה, though at this point OG reads quite differently (εροσθηρευσω α εροσησας = הרעות את אשר עשית).

v. 17. אם יצא תאצא: The use of the infinitive absolute emphasises the requirement, and provides a point of variation from Jeremiah's similar declarations to the people (21.9; 38.2). Cf. Jeremiah's ultimatum to the remnant in 42.10, אם שוב תשובו (OG εαν ααθησαατεαα ααθησητε = אם ישוב תשובו).

v. 19. אני דאג את היהודים אשר נפלו אל הכשדים פן יתנו אתי בידם: The term דאג occurs again in 42.16 (otherwise in Jer. only in 17.8). Exactly why Zedekiah would have feared those who had gone over to the Babylonians is unstated, but reprisals may have come from those who resented the suffering caused by the siege, as well as long-term political opponents.<sup>44</sup>

v. 20. וייתב לך: Here too, Jeremiah's promise to Zedekiah exceeds what was said to the people of Jerusalem. What 'it will go well with you' means in practical terms is unspecified. In 40.9, the phrase seems to signify 'a peaceful life under Babylonian rule', but it also occurs on the lips of the military officers in 42.6: אם טוב ואם רע בקול יהוה . . . נשמע למען אשר ייתב לנו.

---

<sup>42</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 85; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 290. Granted, Jeremiah may not have been aware that his rescue by Ebed-Melech was sanctioned by the king, but neither need he have known of the king's assent to the actions of the שרים in the first place (38.5).

<sup>43</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 207.

<sup>44</sup> See further Duhm, *Jeremia*, 306; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 207; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 642; Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 367; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 225. Either way, it was hardly a "strange excuse", as Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion*, 257, thinks.

Interestingly, 'it will go well with us' is there seen as compatible with receiving a 'bad' word from YHWH, which accords perfectly with Jeremiah's message in 38.20.

v. 21. **זה הדבר אשר הראני יהוה**: As Pohlmann notes, **הראני יהוה** with **דבר** as object occurs also in Num. 23.3 and Ezek. 11.25.<sup>45</sup> However, especially when seen in its wider context, the phrase also recalls Micaiah's words to Ahab and Jehoshaphat, **ראיתי את כל ישראל נפצים** (1 Kgs. 22.17). Although not qualified by an 'if' clause, a conditional aspect seems to be implied by the kings' question, **הנלך אל רמת גלעד למלחמה אם נחדל** (v. 15a). Only in vv. 19-23 does it emerge that their decision to go to war, and so to suffer 'disaster' (**רעה**), is certain; and with this latter point, we may compare how the 'hypothetical' scenario of Jer. 38.21-22 becomes more certain in v. 23.<sup>46</sup>

v. 22. **כל הנשים אשר נשאו בבית מלך יהודה**: The identity of these people is unclear, though Pohlmann detects an allusion to the deportation of Jehoiachin's wives in 2 Kgs. 24.15.<sup>47</sup>

**והנה אמרות**: The tone of the women's song is debated.<sup>48</sup> Rudolph resists the idea that it forms a taunt: "Warum sollten die Frauen über das Unglück ihres geliebten Herrn oder ihres Gebieters spotten, das doch ihr eigenes war?"<sup>49</sup> Granted, **הסיתוך ויכלו לך אנשי שלמך** can be read as mockery;<sup>50</sup> cf. **השיאוך יכלו לך אנשי שלמך** in Ob. 7, which is certainly part of a taunt. On the other hand, Jeremiah applies similar language to himself in his final lament: **כל אנוש שלומי לו שמרי צלעי אולי יפתה ונוכלה לו** (20.10). Ultimately, what settles the matter in favour of the 'taunt-interpretation' is the wider context of the verse; since the advice of the 'trusted friends' stands in opposition to that of YHWH's prophet Jeremiah, Zedekiah's downfall is due to culpable folly,

---

<sup>45</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 89 n.190.

<sup>46</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 958, claims that "a 'hypothetical vision' seems to teeter on the edge of nonsense", adding that "Cornill's justification of the 'hypothetical vision', that the setting out of alternatives is a formality, and that the vision contains Jeremiah's foreknowledge of the outcome, is a move out of the frying pan into the fire." (959). Reflection on the Micaiah story might have led to a different conclusion. In fact, it is surprising that few commentators connect the two passages.

<sup>47</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 89 n.192.

<sup>48</sup> "Outwardly a lament, inwardly it is a taunt-song" (Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 290).

<sup>49</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 207; similarly, A.S. Peake, *Jeremiah and Lamentations Vol. II. Jeremiah XXV to LII, Lamentations* (CB; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1911) 173.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. *NIV*'s rendition of this phrase, 'they overcame you, those trusted friends of yours'.

rather than misfortune. This is emphasised if the writer intends us to see in אנשי שלמך an allusion to the prophets of שלום (chs. 27 – 28; 37.19).<sup>51</sup>

וַיִּטְבַּע יִרְמְיָהוּ בְּשֵׁיט, 38.6: The fate envisaged for Zedekiah mirrors that suffered by Jeremiah in 38.6.

## 2.4. Coherence and Redaction

38.14-23 presents Zedekiah's 'second interview' with Jeremiah, the first having been reported in 37.17-21. The relationship between these two interviews, and indeed between both chapters, is open to different interpretations. Some scholars see in chs. 37 – 38 a continuous sequence of events,<sup>52</sup> and find it quite plausible that Zedekiah held two separate audiences with the prophet.<sup>53</sup> There is a problem in that the second interview begins with Jeremiah being brought from the courtyard of the guard (38.13) but ends with him pleading not to be sent back (שוב Hiph.) to the house of Jonathan (38.26-27); Volz attempts to solve this by relocating 38.24-28 to immediately after 37.17-21.<sup>54</sup>

On the other hand, Skinner's proposal that chs. 37 and 38 contain duplicate accounts of the same sequence of events has more recently gained wider acceptance (though with varying descriptions of these chapters as 'contradictory' or 'complementary').<sup>55</sup> As Bright observes, "everything seems to happen to Jeremiah twice!"<sup>56</sup> On this view, 38.14-23 offers an alternative (and considerably longer) version of Jeremiah's advice to Zedekiah to that given in 37.17. Even if this is correct, however, the interpreter's task must be to explore the message arising from its present arrangement.<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 960.

<sup>52</sup> Volz, *Jeremia*, 335-345; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 201-209, esp. 204; Hyatt, 'Jeremiah', 1076; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 282.

<sup>53</sup> "It is not at all improbable that the king, in his nervous state, did summon the prophet twice." (Hyatt, 'Jeremiah', 1076)

<sup>54</sup> Volz, *Jeremia*, 336; similarly Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 207, and Hyatt, 'Jeremiah', 1078.

<sup>55</sup> So Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion*, 258-259 n.1; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 233-234; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 636-637; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 679; McKane, *Jeremiah*, 968-971; Jones, *Jeremiah*, 455; Clements, *Jeremiah*, 220; cautiously, Keown et al., *Jeremiah* 26 – 52, 222.

<sup>56</sup> Bright, *Jeremiah*, 233.

<sup>57</sup> As is emphasised by Keown et al., *Jeremiah* 26 – 52, 222-223.

We can now consider more closely the verses with which we are here concerned. Whilst the cohesion and integrity of 38.1-3 is unquestioned, considerable debate surrounds vv. 14-23. According to Pohlmann,<sup>58</sup> the original text consisted of vv. 14, 17, 19-22, the purpose of which was to show “daß Jahwe bis zuletzt durch seinen Propheten die Möglichkeit angeboten hatte, der drohenden Katastrophe zu entgehen.”<sup>59</sup> However, while the emphasis is on Zedekiah’s personal salvation, Pohlmann notes that his response to Jeremiah’s message is depicted as having wider significance. Regarding v. 17 he writes:

Es handelt sich um eine an eine Bedingung geknüpfte Heilszusage. Die Erfüllung der Bedingung ist allein Sache des Königs. Entsprechend gilt zunächst die anschließende Heilszusage dem König, dann aber auch ‘dieser Stadt’ (וְהָעִיר הַזֹּאת לֹא תִשְׂרֹף) und abschließend wieder dem König und ‘seinem Hause’.<sup>60</sup>

Indeed, there is a further reference to the king’s ‘house’ in v. 22. Pohlmann is uncertain, however, whether the reference to ‘this city’ in v. 17b should be retained as original, since the fate of Jerusalem is otherwise mentioned only in the redactional vv. 18, 23. We will return to this point shortly.

As for secondary elements, Pohlmann judges the depiction of Jeremiah as fearful of the king (vv. 15-16) to be inconsistent with vv. 7-13 (where Zedekiah acts on his behalf), and at odds with the character portrayal in vv. 19-22. Also problematic is the change in Jeremiah’s demeanour, from being hesitant (v. 15) to insistent (vv. 17-18). Pohlmann concludes that vv. 15-16 have been added in the light of 38.1-6. At first sight, v. 18 appears to be an integral part of Jeremiah’s reply to Zedekiah, but is in fact redundant in the light of vv. 20-21: “Diese zweifache Erörterung der Folgen einer möglichen Weigerung Zedekias kann nicht ursprünglich sein.”<sup>61</sup> Finally, like many scholars Pohlmann deems v. 23 a redactional comment on v. 22: “Ein späterer Bearbeiter vermißte hier die Erwähnung der Söhne des Königs, ferner eine noch

---

<sup>58</sup> See Pohlmann, *Studien*, 84-89, 92.

<sup>59</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 92. He notes that v. 19 “hat kompositions- und erzähltechnisch eine retardierende Aufgabe und ist für die folgenden Ausführungen des Propheten wichtig” (88), while vv. 20-22 “unbedingt erforderlich sind” after v. 19 (89).

<sup>60</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 87; see too 88 n.189.

<sup>61</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 88. Pohlmann seeks to strengthen his case (87-88) by contrasting the ‘purely theoretical’ anticipation of Zedekiah’s refusal to surrender in v. 18, with that in vv. 19-21, where it has a more ‘concrete’ basis in his fear of the Jews. The argument is weak; the shift to greater specificity enables the dialogue to unfold in artistic fashion (see further below).

einmal verdeutlichende Feststellung, daß Zedekia sich nicht retten werde, besonders aber die ausdrückliche Einbeziehung der vollkommenen Zerstörung Jerusalems.”<sup>62</sup>

A somewhat similar approach is taken by Seitz,<sup>63</sup> who sees in ch. 38 material from the Scribal Chronicle and the Exilic Redaction. Belonging to the former are vv. 1-3, the outlook of which is “perfectly consistent with [Jeremiah’s] post-597 counsel”,<sup>64</sup> and vv. 16-22; here too, Jeremiah’s words are “consistent with his earlier statements, though the alternatives are now more pronounced (38.17-18 / 19-22).”<sup>65</sup> Supplementation by ER occurs only in v. 15 (which depicts Zedekiah, rather than the princes, as hostile to Jeremiah), and v. 23, which “does away with the question of alternatives and the possibility of submission.”<sup>66</sup> Thus, while Seitz accepts more of 38.15-23 as original than does Pohlmann, both take vv. 15 and 23 as secondary.<sup>67</sup>

In response, we suggest that the entire passage is best read as a coherent whole. This is not to deny elements of surprise and ambiguity in the text, but rather to see them as contributing to a skilfully narrated story.<sup>68</sup> Thus, Jeremiah’s initial hesitation, and the response which this elicits (vv. 15-16), serve to delay what will in fact be YHWH’s final word to the king, thereby heightening the suspense.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, Zedekiah’s oath, though solemn, is flawed by what it omits; Jeremiah will be protected, but not necessarily heeded. The reader is thereby given a hint

---

<sup>62</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 89; so too Duhm, *Jeremia*, 307; Volz, *Jeremia*, 343; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 54; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 94 n.9. However, Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 207, is undecided on this point.

<sup>63</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 238-239; 261-263. Unlike Pohlmann, Seitz retains v. 16 in the original text (262 n.150).

<sup>64</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 260.

<sup>65</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 262.

<sup>66</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 262. Earlier, however (224), Seitz lists vv. 21-22 among ER material, pressing for “the inevitability of further disobedience and the necessity of a judgment which will bring about the final elimination of the post-597 remnant”. In fact, he acknowledges (257 n.137) that he has ‘modified’ his view on 38.22. However, his conclusion regarding vv. 21-22 has important implications for his overall approach; for it implies that the distinction between SC and ER is not so clear-cut as elsewhere he maintains. SC, it turns out, can sound as ominous a note concerning Zedekiah as ER.

<sup>67</sup> For his part, McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 966, regards v. 22 as “a message of unconditional doom” and therefore incompatible with vv. 17-18.

<sup>68</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 685-686, notes a number of distinctive features in this unit, such as the setting of the dialogue, the oath and the poetic fragment, adding that they “make for a more interesting exchange of opinions between king and prophet and indicate some of the story-teller’s skills” (686). See too Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 364-365.

<sup>69</sup> Pohlmann makes a similar point in regard to v. 19: “v. 19 hat kompositions- und erzähltechnisch eine retardierende Aufgabe” (*Studien*, 88).

of the outcome (v. 24), as well as an echo of the opening statement in 37.2. What, then, of v. 23? Whilst this does indeed 'foreclose' on the conditional hope set out in vv. 17-22, we dispute that this necessarily marks it out as redactional. Two other OT passages may be relevant here.

The first is the story of Micaiah in 1 Kgs. 22, to which reference was made earlier. Here, his initial oracle to Ahab and Jehoshaphat is wholly positive: 'Attack and be victorious, for YHWH will give [Ramoath Gilead] into the king's hand' (v. 15). Reminded to speak only what YHWH tells him, however, Micaiah abruptly changes his message: 'I saw all Israel scattered on the hills, like sheep without a shepherd' (v. 17). At this stage, it is still possible to construe his vision as hypothetical, contingent upon whether the kings go to war or not. Only then does Micaiah announce what YHWH has shown him in a vision; that YHWH has sent a lying spirit to speak through the other prophets, and so lead Israel and Judah to disaster (vv. 19-23).

The second is the account of Samuel's speech to Israel in 1 Sam. 12.1-25. Here, Samuel openly denounces their demand for a king as 'evil' (vv. 12, 17, 20). Now that they have got their wish, however, what of their future? The prophet's message seems to offer hope. If the people and their king serve YHWH, all will be well (vv. 14, 22-24); if they 'rebel against his commands' his hand will be against them (v. 15). Ostensibly, their future is open and conditional upon their obedience. But, as several commentators have noted, the tone of the entire speech is heavily coloured by its closing words: *וְאִם הִרְעוּ תִרְעוּ גַם אֲתֵם גַּם מִלְּכֵכֶם תִּסְפוּ* (v. 25).<sup>70</sup> Whilst formally this does no more than set out a possible future scenario, its placement right at the end of the speech, with no further comment, serves as a broad hint to the reader as to what will happen.

There are of course major differences between these two passages and Jer. 38.14-23. Yet what they all have in common is the use of irony and ambiguity in prophetic speeches which purport to offer their hearers genuinely 'live' options. Micaiah presents two contradictory messages, before revealing that the issue is 'foreclosed'. Samuel depicts obedience and blessing as a viable option, but leaves us in little doubt that it will not happen. It may be, then, that to

---

<sup>70</sup> See D.M. Gunn, *The Fate of King Saul. An Interpretation of a Biblical Story* (JSOT Sup. 14; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980) 65; R.P. Gordon, *1 & 2 Samuel. A Commentary* (LBI; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986) 130.

regard Jer. 38.23 as redactional on the grounds that it ‘forecloses’ what Jeremiah has previously said is to miss the point.

## 2.5. Differentiation in 38.1-3; 14-23: הישבים / היצאים / המלך צדקיהו

However we explain the idea of Jeremiah ‘speaking to all the people’ (38.1) after having been placed in the courtyard of the guard (37.21), his proclamation in 38.1-3 clearly reiterates the simple differentiation we have already encountered in 21.1-10; namely, salvation for היצאים and judgement for הישבים. Jeremiah’s ultimatum in v. 2, הישב בעיר הזאת ימות בחרב ברעב ובדבר, והיצא אל הכשדים יחיה והיתה לו נפשו לשלל, repeats 21.9 almost verbatim, while his declaration in v. 3 that YHWH was giving the city over to the Babylonians summarises 21.4-7.

At first sight, Jeremiah’s message to Zedekiah in vv. 14-23 seems completely consistent with this. He too must choose whether or not to ‘go out’ to the Babylonians (אם יצא תצא . . . ואם לא תצא, vv. 17-18). If he takes the former option, he will ‘have his life’ (והיתה נפשך, v. 17); if he refuses, he will ‘not escape’ (לא תמלט) from the hands of the Babylonians (v. 18). Consequently, according to Keown et al., “it is not a new word, only a reemphasis of the consistent message delivered by the prophet to the king and the people.”<sup>71</sup> In similar vein, Jones writes that “the message (vv. 17-25) is only an amplification of the divine message in its basic form, such as had been proclaimed openly both to the people and to the king.”<sup>72</sup>

In fact, however, the situation is more complicated than this. For one thing, only now is the option of ‘remaining / going out’ presented directly to Zedekiah. Hitherto, Jeremiah has reserved this message for a group identified simply as ‘the people’ (21.8; 38.1), while his word to the king has been purely one of judgement (21.3-7; 32.3-5; 34.2-3; 37.6-10, 17b). As we saw in ch. 2 of our study, this audience-critical distinction emerges most clearly in 21.1-10. Discussing that passage, we noted Brueggemann’s view that the respective messages of judgement and hope were correlated to those two audiences. In response, we argued that YHWH’s wrath is against ‘the city’ rather than any particular group, and that Zedekiah himself is ignored rather than explicitly precluded from the offer of surrender. Nevertheless, the fact remains that he *is* ignored, and this point has remained a constant in Jer. – that is, up until now.

---

<sup>71</sup> Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 224-225.

<sup>72</sup> Jones, *Jeremiah*, 462; similarly, Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 642; Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 366.



This diversity of opinion regarding the fate of Zedekiah may, at one level, reflect competing traditions;<sup>73</sup> within the final form of the book, however, the postponement of the offer of surrender until the final interview is unlikely to be coincidental.<sup>74</sup>

Before considering the significance of this, however, we should make a second observation, which is that Jeremiah's message to Zedekiah is *not* identical with his message to the people. An initial indication of this is the way **אִם יֵצֵא תֵצֵא** varies slightly from the wording in 21.9 and 38.2. Moreover, a close reading of the text shows that Zedekiah is offered rather more than 'bare survival'. The term **לְשִׁלֵּל**, which emphasises the minimalistic nature of the 'life' offered to the citizens of Jerusalem, is omitted; instead, the king is assured that 'it will go well with you' (**וַיֵּטֵב לְךָ**, v. 20). Again, whereas the scope of the promise in 21.9 and 38.2 is wholly individualistic (**וְהָיְתָה לּוֹ נַפְשׁוֹ לְשִׁלֵּל**), for Zedekiah it has a corporate dimension. As Pohlmann noted, his actions will determine the welfare of his entire household (**בֵּיתוֹ**, v. 17), namely his wives and sons (**בָּנָיו וְנָשָׁיו**, vv. 22-23). Especially striking is the assurance that the city itself may be saved (**וְהָעִיר הַזֹּאת לֹא תִשְׂרָף בְּאֵשׁ**, v. 17), reversing earlier statements (21.10; 34.2; 37.10).<sup>75</sup>

The most distinctive aspect of Jeremiah's message to Zedekiah, however, is the way it is subverted in v. 23. The revelation that the king's decision and its consequences are already known to YHWH and his prophet casts an ironic light over all that has gone before. Against Pohlmann and Seitz, we have argued that it is unnecessary to see this verse as redactional; similar ambiguity and subtlety can also be seen on the lips of Samuel and Micaiah. It might, of course, be argued that this ironic interpretation has only been achieved secondarily by the addition of v. 23. This cannot be excluded as a possibility, although the king's failure to promise that he will listen to Jeremiah (v. 16), and the questioning tone of **אִם יֵצֵא תֵצֵא** (v. 17), seem to provide advance clues as to the outcome. Given that we have noticed several verbal and

---

<sup>73</sup> See on this J. Applegate, 'The Fate of Zedekiah: Redactional Debate in the Book of Jeremiah. Part 1', *VT* 48 (1998) 137-160, and 'The Fate of Zedekiah: Redactional Debate in the Book of Jeremiah. Part 2', *VT* 48 (1998) 301-308.

<sup>74</sup> So McConville, *Judgment and Promise*, 114. He adds: "The paradoxical effect of the 'last offer', as it were, with its surface implication that the king's demise is not after all inevitable, is to seal its inevitability. It does so by revealing the real resistance of Zedekiah to the word . . . For all his craven toying with the word of YHWH, he will never hear it."

<sup>75</sup> It might be argued, of course, that these variations in message are readily explained by the fact that it is *the king* who is being addressed. *His* surrender might well achieve for others and for the city what the surrender of ordinary citizens could not; he might even hope to receive slightly preferential treatment.

conceptual links between 38.14-23 and Jeremiah's speech to the remnant in ch. 42, we will want to return to this question after we have looked at the latter passage.

Either way, as it stands, ch. 38 presents what we might call a 'double-differentiation'. To 'the people', Jeremiah reiterates the basic polarity of היצאים and הישבים (vv. 1-3). Those who remain in the city will die; but to those who go out, the promise of 'life as booty' – meagre as it is – still stands. Conversely, to Zedekiah the prophet presents what seems to be a rather more hopeful message; but not without revealing that its rejection by the king is already known.

### 3. Jer. 39[46].15-18

#### 3.1. Text

και προς Ιερεμιαν ἐγενετο λογος κυριου εν τη αὐλη της φυλακης λεγων	15. ואל ירמיהו היה דבר יהוה בהיותו עצור בחצר המטרה לאמר
πορευου και ειπον προς Αβδεμελεχ του Αιθιοπα οὕτως ειπε κυριος ο θεος Ισραηλ. ἴδου ἔγω φερω τους λογους μου ἐπι την πολιν ταυτην εις κακα και οὐκ εις ἀγαθα	16. הלוך ואמרת לעבד מלך הכושי לאמר כה אמר יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל הנני מבי את דברי אל העיר הזאת לרעה ולא לטובה והיו לפניך ביום ההוא
και σωσω σε εν τη ἡμερα ἐκεινη και ου' μη δωσω σε εις χειρας των ἀνθρωπων ὡν συ φοβη ἀπο προσωπου αὐτων	17. והצלתיך ביום ההוא נאם יהוה ולא תנתן ביד האנשים אשר אתה יגור מפניהם
ὅτι σωζων σωσω σε και εν βομφαια οὐ μη πεσης και ἔσται ἡ ψυχη σου εις εὐρεμα ὅτι ἐπεποιθεις ἐπ' ἔμοι φησι κυριος	18. כי מלט אמלטך ובחרב לא תפל והיתה לך נפשך לשלל כי בטחת בי נאם יהוה

#### 3.2. Textual Notes

v. 15. The word order of the formula ואל ירמיהו היה דבר יהוה is unparalleled in Jer., and seems to be emphatic; 'and (but) to *Jeremiah* the word of YHWH came'.<sup>76</sup>

MT והוא עודנו עצור בחצר המטרה, 33.1, >OG; MT plus, possible based on

<sup>76</sup> So Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 268.

v. 16. MT *Ketiv*, מבי; read *Qere*, מביא; the א has dropped out through haplography, due to the following את.

MT והצלתוך ביום ההוא >OG: MT plus; perhaps dittography from והוא ביום ההוא at the start of v. 17.<sup>77</sup> The implied sense is, 'they will be fulfilled before your eyes'.

v. 17. MT ולא נתתן; OG και ου μη δωσω σε = ולא נתתך: OG may reflect a content variant in its *Vorlage*. Other instances of the expression '(not) give into the hand of' in Jer. show a striking correspondence between נתן Niph. and (παρρα)διδωμι passive (21.10; 32[39].4, 24, 25, 36, 43; 34[41].3; 37[44].17; 38[45].3, 18; 46[26].24), and נתן Qal and (παρρα)διδωμι active (22.25; 32[39].3; 38[45].16).<sup>78</sup>

v. 18. MT לשלל; OG εις ευρεμα ('for a prize, a godsend') is a rather loose translation; cf. OG εις σκυλα ('for spoil') in the parallel expression in 21.9.

### 3.3. Exegetical Notes

v. 15. בחצר המטרה: References to Jeremiah 'in the courtyard of the guard' occur also in 32.2, 8; 33.1; 37.21; 38.13, 28; 39.14. The exact nature of Jeremiah's confinement here is unclear; it was evidently preferable to the בית הכלא ('prison house') into which he is thrown by the שרים in 37.15, 18,<sup>79</sup> and may even have entailed some degree of protection. On the other hand, chs. 32 and 33 portray the חצר המטרה negatively, emphasising the aspect of 'confinement' (כלא, 32.2, 3; עצור, 33.1), and attributing Jeremiah's presence there to Zedekiah's irritation at his message (32.3).

v. 16. עבד מלך הכושי has previously appeared in 38.7-13, where he takes the initiative in rescuing Jeremiah from the cistern. עבד מלך is probably a proper name (as in OG, Αβδεμελεχ;

---

<sup>77</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 312; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 210; cautiously, Graupner, *Auftrag*, 127; McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 982. Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 105, suggests it is a gloss referring to the intervening events.

<sup>78</sup> The two exceptions are in 32[39].28 and 34[41].2, where MT reads נתן Qal ptc., while OG reads δοθεισα παραδοθησεται and παραδοσει παραδοθησεται, suggesting a Niph. inf. abs. (הנתן תנתן) as in MT 38.3.

<sup>79</sup> More specifically still, 37.16 states that Jeremiah is brought אל בית הבור ואל ההניוה 'into a dungeon, a vaulted room'; for this sense of בית הבור, see Ex. 12.29.

contrast Targ., (דמלכא עבר); nevertheless, it underlines his role as a palace official,<sup>80</sup> so that his story stands in contrast with the statement that opens the entire narrative: ולא שמע (צדקיהו) ועבריו ועם הארץ אל דברי יהוה.<sup>81</sup> For the foreigner-eunuch motif, see Isa. 56.3-8.

Elsewhere in Jer., בוא (Hiph.) with דבר as object occurs only in 11.8 (ואביא עליהם את כל דברי הברית הזאת) and 25.13 (והבאתי על הארץ ההיא את כל דברי); cf. the much more common בוא + רעה (Hiph.). The sense would seem to be 'to fulfil one's word',<sup>82</sup> as is occasionally expressed by בוא + דבר (Qal); 28.9 (בבוא דבר הנביא יודע הנביא); Jdg. 13.12, 17; Ps. 105.19.

v. 17. והצלתוך: Hitherto, נצל Hiph. as spoken by YHWH has occurred just four times, in two key contexts: 1.8, 19; 15.20, 21.<sup>83</sup> In each case, the beneficiary of the promise is Jeremiah, his adversaries being the people of Judah who will oppose him (כל הארץ, 1.18; העם הזה, 15.20). Subsequently, it will occur only in 42.11, as part of YHWH's conditional promise to the Judean remnant.

The phrase נתן ביד is characteristic of judgement oracles in Jer. The central chapters state that YHWH will give into the hands of the Babylonians 'all Judah' (20.4), Jehoiakim (22.25), Zedekiah (32.4; 34.21), the prophets Ahab and Zedekiah (29.21), Jerusalem (32.3, 24-25; 38.3, 18) and its wealth (20.5). Similar warnings will be made later against Egypt (44.30; 46.24, 26).<sup>84</sup> Only here, however, do we have the negative לא נתן ביד.

The identity of these people is uncertain. Possibly the Judean שרים are in mind;<sup>85</sup> cf. Zedekiah's oath in 38.16 not to give Jeremiah ביד האנשים האלה.

---

<sup>80</sup> "It sounds like the kind of *ad hoc* name given to a slave whose original name no one could pronounce" (Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 289).

<sup>81</sup> As noted by Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 261.

<sup>82</sup> 'lassen in Erfüllung gehen' (Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 210); this is preferable to 'I am sending my words' (Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 227).

<sup>83</sup> נצל Hiph. is used of YHWH in 20.13, where the beneficiaries are 'the needy' (אביון).

<sup>84</sup> Though the identity of the enemy is here less clear; ביד איביו וביד מבקשי נפשו (44.30); עם צפון ביד (46.24). Only in 44.26 (MT plus) are they identified as the Babylonians. Cf. 34.20, where YHWH warns that he will give Judah's leaders and people ביד איביהם.

<sup>85</sup> So Bright, *Jeremiah*, 232; H. Schulte, 'Baruch und Ebedmelech – Persönliche Heilsorakel im Jeremiabuche', *BZ* 32 (1988) 259-260; cautiously, Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 649. Thompson notes that Ebed-Melech had accused the princes of 'acted wickedly' (38.9), though this pertains only to MT; in OG, he directs the accusation against the king.

(MT אשר מבקשים את נפשך). Ebed-Melech's support for Jeremiah, plus the fact that he was a foreigner (and a suspected quisling?), could well make him a target for reprisals. Others believe he feared those Judeans who had deserted to the Babylonians;<sup>86</sup> cf. Zedekiah's confession in 38.19, אני ראג את היהודים אשר נפלו אל הכשדים. Probably, however, the reference is to the Babylonians themselves.<sup>87</sup> For one thing, 39.17 has a striking counterpart in 22.25, ונתתיך ביד, and here, those whom Jehoiachin fears are explicitly identified as הכשדים. Moreover, v. 18, בחרב לא תפל והיתה, seems to set Ebed-Melech's 'rescue' in a context of military conflict.<sup>88</sup> In any case, whatever its original literary context, 39.15-18 must now be read in conjunction with 39.4-14 (note the repetition of ביום ההוא, vv. 10, 17) and 40.1-6, both of which emphasise how Nebuzaradan protected Jeremiah while the Babylonians razed the city and deported its citizens.

v. 18. מלט אמלטך: Although מלט Pi. occurs frequently with a human subject, especially in the idiom מלט את נפש (e.g., 1 Sam. 19.11; 1Kgs. 1.12; Jer. 48.6; Am. 2.14; Ps. 89.49), it is less often predicated of God (Isa. 46.4; Ps. 41.2; 107.20; 116.4; Job 22.30). Especially noteworthy are the parallels with Ps. 41.2, ביום רעה ימלטהו יהוה, which continues with the assurance ואל תתנהו בנפשו איביו (v. 3). The promise מלט אמלטך forms a striking double contrast between Ebed-Melech and Zedekiah; while the king is repeatedly warned that he will not escape (מלט Niph.; 32.4; 34.3; 38.18, 23) from the Babylonians, his servant will 'be escaped' (מלט Pi.) by YHWH.

ובחרב לא תפל: As with ולא תנתן ביד in v. 17, here too we have the sole instance of the negating of a formulaic expression of judgement; נפל בחרב (note the reverse order) occurs in oracles against the people of Judah (19.7; 20.4) and the remnant in Egypt (44.12).

כי בטחת בי: Nowhere else in Jer. is someone said to 'trust in' (בטח ב) YHWH. In the first part of the book, the people of Judah are denounced for trusting in fortified cities (ערי מבצריך, 5.17), deceptive words (דברי השקר, 7.8), the temple (הבית אשר נקרא שמי עליו, 7.14),

<sup>86</sup> So Jones, *Jeremiah*, 466. Carroll's remark, *Jeremiah*, 696 – "as an official of the king Ebed-melech may have had the same enemies as Zedekiah, and his escape after the breaching of city wall may be the point of vv. 17-18" – seems to lean in this direction; but he then dismisses an allusion to 38.19 due to the difference in terminology.

<sup>87</sup> So, cautiously, McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 982. Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 696, is unpersuaded by either view, arguing that the princes could have killed Ebed-Melech already, and that the Babylonians would have had no reason to harm him. The second point somewhat overlooks the treatment of Zedekiah and his sons by the Babylonians in 39.5-7.

<sup>88</sup> So McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 982.

falsehood (שקר, 13.25) and human kind (אדם, 17.5), a list that leads up to YHWH's declaration, ברוך הנבר אשר יבטח ביהוה והיה יהוה מבטחו (17.7). Later chapters will indict Egypt, Moab and Ammon for trusting in Pharaoh (46.25) and in riches (48.7; 49.4). Within the final form of the book, therefore, Ebed-Melech is presented as the only figure who answers to the requirement of 17.7, a textual claim all the more remarkable given his non-Israelite status. Since the use of בטח with reference to YHWH is most prominent in the Psalms,<sup>89</sup> it is not surprising to find it in the psalm-like Jer. 17.5-8.

### 3.4. Coherence and Redaction

In view of its brevity, it is not surprising that the majority of commentators regard 39.15-18 as a unity; either an authentic salvation oracle of Jeremiah,<sup>90</sup> or a late and wholly fictional interpolation.<sup>91</sup> A few, however, have attempted to separate out an authentic kernel from later redaction. Thiel identifies as original the introductory material in vv. 15a, 16α, and the promise מלט אמלטך ובחרב לא תפל (v. 18a); the remainder he assigns to the Deuteronomistic editor (D).<sup>92</sup> This analysis is accepted by Kilpp and Graupner.<sup>93</sup> Underlying their approach, however, is the same flawed methodology that we have discussed in earlier chapters; that is, language is cited as Deuteronomistic which has its roots in Jer. rather than in Dtr.H.<sup>94</sup> Indeed, Graupner designates בי בטחתי as Deuteronomistic despite conceding that “die Wendung ב בטח ist zwar für die dtr. Bearbeiter nicht typisch.”<sup>95</sup> The argument becomes still more precarious when it is claimed that

<sup>89</sup> Of the forty five OT instances where בטח ב / אל / על is used in conjunction with YHWH, God, or some aspect of his character, thirty two occur in the Psalms (4.6; 9.11; 13.6; 21.8; 22.5 [x2], 6; 25.2; 26.1; 28.7; 31.7, 15; 32.10; 33.21; 37.3, 5; 40.4; 52.10; 55.24; 56.4, 5, 12; 62.9; 78.22; 84.13; 86.2; 91.2; 112.7; 115.9, 10, 11; 119.42) and only thirteen elsewhere (2 Kgs. 18.5, 22 [= Isa. 36.7], 30 [= Isa. 36.15]; 19.10 [= Isa. 37.10]; Isa. 26.3, 4; 50.10; Jer. 17.7; 39.18; Zeph. 3.2); see too Isa. 12.2, אל ישועתי אבטח ולא אפחד.

<sup>90</sup> So Volz, *Jeremia*, 348; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 212-213; Weiser, *Jeremia*, 357; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 290-291; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 649.

<sup>91</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 312-313; Mowinckel, *Komposition*, 44 (who assigned it to the C source); Hyatt, ‘Jeremiah’, 1081-1082; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 110-112; Pohlmann, *Studien*, 99; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 696; McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 991-992.

<sup>92</sup> Thiel, *Redaktion* 26 – 45, 56-57.

<sup>93</sup> Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 88-90; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 126-128.

<sup>94</sup> E.g., אשר אתה יגור; והיתה לך נפשך לשלל (21.9; 38.2); הנני מביא את דברי (11.8; 25.13; cf. Jos. 23.15); לרעה ולא לטובה (21.10; 44.27); מפניהם (22.25; cf. Deut. 28.60).

<sup>95</sup> Graupner, *Auftrag*, 127 n.61.

since v. 17a, והצלתיך ביום ההוא, refers back to the ‘redactional’ v. 16a, it too must be secondary – despite the use of והצלתיך in the (poetic) 15.21.<sup>96</sup> Stulman points out that the only clearly Deuteronomistic phrase in 39.15-18 is the MT plus in v. 16, יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל.<sup>97</sup>

A variant of Thiel’s argument has been put forward by Schulte.<sup>98</sup> He agrees that with five separate promises the oracle is overladen, and that some of the language (הלוך ואמרת, והנני מביא את דברי אל העיר הזאת לרעה ולא לטובה, and ובחרב לא תפל) is indeed Deuteronomistic. More particularly, however, Schulte argues that the promises relating to the destruction of Jerusalem (ובחרב לא תפל; והצלתיך ביום ההוא) are shown to be secondary by their irrelevance: “Für Ebedmelech ist . . . im Augenblick seine persönliche Bedrohung durch die Heerführer das eigentliche Problem.”<sup>99</sup> This focus on what he perceives as ‘the real problem’ is for Schulte the decisive criterion. Consequently, he accepts as original not only מלט אמלטך (v. 18) but also the promise לא תנתן ביד האנשים אשר אתה יגור מפניהם (v. 17b), which Thiel, Kilpp and Graupner reject. He also retains the final words והיתה לך נפשך לשלל כי בטחת בי (v. 18b). Schulte’s refusal to automatically delete ‘Deuteronomistic’ language is welcome, but it is by no means certain that Ebed-Melech’s fate was unconnected with that of Jerusalem. Even if it was the שרים (rather than the Babylonians) who posed the threat to him, the chaos (and loss of royal protection?) attending the fall of the city would offer a clear opportunity for settling old scores.

The fact is, however, that all attempts to delineate ‘kernel’ from ‘redaction’ in 39.15-18 on the basis of terminology founder on the sheer profusion of verbal inter-connections with other parts of Jer. that are evident here.<sup>100</sup> We have already noted these separately, but can now list them together: והנני מביא את דברי (cf. 11.8; 25.13); והצלתיך (cf. 1.8, 19; 15.20, 21); האנשים אשר (cf. 22.25); ובחרב לא תפל (cf. 19.7; 20.4; 44.12); והיתה לך נפשך לשלל (cf. 5.17; 7.8; 7.14; 13.25; 17.5; 46.25; 48.7; 49.4);

---

<sup>96</sup> Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 56; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 127. Ironically, Thiel’s ascription of והצלתיך to D undermines his attempt to ground the authenticity of v. 18a in its first-person speech (מלט אמלטך), as he then admits (57).

<sup>97</sup> Stulman, *Prose Sermons*, 111-112. Stulman concludes (112) that “the passage may be secondary from a literary point of view, but there is little basis for associating it with the C corpus.”

<sup>98</sup> Schulte, ‘Persönliche Heilsorakel’, 258-260.

<sup>99</sup> Schulte, ‘Persönliche Heilsorakel’, 259.

<sup>100</sup> A point also noted by Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 111.

21.9; 38.3; 45.5).<sup>101</sup> Schulte's remark about 'die Überfüllung' of the unit is thus in one sense quite correct, but it proves too much. 39.15-18 blends words and phrases from a variety of other passages, which cannot all meaningfully be termed 'Deuteronomistic'. This suggests that we are dealing not with a single redaction of an authentic saying, but rather with a compositional unity – either by Jeremiah, utilising his own prophetic utterances, or by a later author creating a literary pastiche.<sup>102</sup>

### 3.5. Differentiation in Jer. 39[46].15-18: עבר מלך הכושי / העיר הזאת

For all its brevity, 39.15-18 provides arguably the most remarkable salvation oracle to be found in Jer. Against the backdrop of the fall of Jerusalem, anticipated and described in chs. 37 – 39, one person – “a virtually anonymous foreigner”<sup>103</sup> – is promised YHWH's protection and rescue. Brueggemann remarks,

The destruction of Jerusalem is sweeping and comprehensive (vv. 1-10). A critical exception is nonetheless made. Ebed-Melech constitutes an important remnant. The destruction wrought by God through Nebuchadnezzar is not morally indifferent or undifferentiated.<sup>104</sup>

In certain respects, the mode of differentiation in 39.15-18 resembles that which we encountered in 21.1-10 and 38.1-3, namely, that of the 'doomed city / saved individual'. The announcement with which the oracle begins (מבי את דברי אל העיר הזאת לרעה ולא לטובה, v. 16), and the promise with which it concludes (והיתה לך נפשך לשלל, v. 18) unmistakably echo the language of those two earlier passages. The shared historical context, and the absence of any promise of future restoration, might also suggest that the same philosophy of differentiation underlies these three passages.

At the same time, however, in several respects the nature of the polarity in 39.15-18 differs markedly from that in chs. 21 and 38. For one thing, whilst in those two passages 'life as

---

<sup>101</sup> The idiom גתן ביד is so common in Jer. and the OT generally that ולא תגתן ביד can hardly be seen as alluding to any particular passage.

<sup>102</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 696, describes 39.15-18 as “a midrash built out of phrases and motifs from the whole tradition”; cf. Duhm's description of the author as “der Midraschist” (*Jeremia*, 313).

<sup>103</sup> As Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 289, describes Ebed-Melech. Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos*, 112, describes Ebed-Melech as “this faithful outsider”.

<sup>104</sup> Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 374.



booty' is contingent upon 'going out' (יָצָא) to the Babylonians, ch. 39 makes no such demand of Ebed-Melech. Indeed, since the story of his rescue of Jeremiah (38.7-13) follows the prophet's appeal for people to leave the city, the impression given is that he, like Jeremiah, remained (יָשָׁב) in Jerusalem. Instead, according to 39.18 the salvation of this Cushite official is due simply to his trust in YHWH.

Moreover, what he is promised bears only slight resemblance to what was offered to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The assurances, 'I will save you on that day . . . you will not be given into the hands of the men you fear . . . I will surely deliver you . . . you will not fall by the sword', whilst limited to the immediate crisis, are unparalleled in chs. 21 and 38, and render YHWH's promise to Ebed-Melech qualitatively different from that to the יֹצְאִים. Salvation is not simply a function of escaping the doomed city – avoiding the disaster scene, so to speak – but of YHWH's personal protection in the midst of it. Putting this another way, Ebed-Melech's welfare is presented as YHWH's personal pledge (מַלְטָא אִמְלִיךָ . . . וְהִצַּלְתִּיךָ) rather than as a somewhat detached prediction (cf. הִיצָא אֶל הַכַּשְׂדִּים יְחִיָּה, 21.9; 38.2). Together with the commendation בִּי בִטְחָה, these promises give to 38.15-18 a note of divine favour that is wholly absent from 21.8-10 and 38.1-3.<sup>105</sup>

If, then, we are in a different type of configuration to that found in 21.1-10 and 38.1-3, who provides the foil for Ebed-Melech in this judgement / salvation oracle? An obvious reply would be 'this city' (הָעִיר הַזֹּאת, v. 16). With no reference to any who might 'go out' to the Babylonians, Ebed-Melech appears as the one figure who will survive YHWH's wrath coming on Jerusalem. The wording of vv. 17-18, however, suggests a more textured answer. As we have seen, two of the promises – מַלְטָא אִמְלִיךָ and וְלֹא תִנָּתֵן בְּיַד הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה יֹגֵד מִפְּנֵיהֶם – are negations of earlier warnings against Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. Meanwhile, וּבַחֶרֶב לֹא תִפֹּל exempts Ebed-Melech from YHWH's threat to the people of Judah (19.7; 20.4). This cluster of promises allows the figure of Ebed-Melech to take on new significance; the foreign official stands over and against not only his master Zedekiah,<sup>106</sup> but also Jehoiakim and indeed the whole land.

---

<sup>105</sup> Ebed-Melech's relationship to those who 'go out' to the Babylonians in chs. 37 – 39 could be compared to that of the exiles to their counterparts in Judah in chs. 27 – 28; the promises held out offered to each of the latter parties being more impersonal and modest than those held out to the former.

<sup>106</sup> A point of contrast noted by Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 213.

Especially significant in this regard are the words **כי בטחת בי**, emphasised by their final position within the oracle. As we have seen, when read within the wider book this affirmation serves to demarcate Ebed-Melech both from Judeans and foreigners who ‘trust in’ other things (5.17; 7.8, 14; 13.25; 17.5; 46.25; 48.7; 49.4). In particular, 39.18 recalls the promise of 17.7, **ברוך הנבר אשר יבטח ביהוה**. At the start of this dissertation, we referred to the study by Koenen, in which he examines the differentiation of ‘the righteous’ and ‘the wicked’ in salvation and judgement oracles. One passage to which he attends is Jer. 17.5-8.<sup>107</sup> Koenen argues that this was added so as to modify Jeremiah’s prophecy against all Judah in 17.1-4: “Sie gilt allen Gottlosen, nicht jedoch den frommen Jahwe-Verehrern.”<sup>108</sup> He then considers the function of Jeremiah’s confession in 17.14-18:

Die psalmistisch geprägte Konfession vv. 14-18 erscheint im Licht von vv. 5-8 als Explikation der weisheitlichen Lehre dieser Verse. Jeremia wird damit auf einer sekundären Ebene als prototypischer Frommer verstanden und als solcher gerettet, während seine Gegner als Gottlose untergehen.<sup>109</sup>

While this understanding of 17.14-18 may well be valid, however, the fact that within the entire book only Ebed-Melech is actually said to ‘trust in YHWH’ strongly suggests that he too is being presented as a ‘prototypical pious man’.<sup>110</sup> Indeed, this would not be the only way in which 39.15-18 forges parallels between Ebed-Melech and Jeremiah. Some sort of analogy between the two figures is implied by the setting of 39.15-18, sandwiched as it is between the two accounts of Jeremiah’s release (39.11-14; 40.1-6).<sup>111</sup> Moreover, as we noticed earlier, YHWH’s promise **והצלתיה** (v. 17) is otherwise applied only to the prophet himself (1.8, 19; 15.20, 21). This in turn strengthens the argument for seeing the underlying differentiation in 39.15-18 as between Ebed-Melech and the nation; for this is precisely how 1.17-19 and 15.19-20

<sup>107</sup> Koenen, *Heil den Gerechten*, 189-200.

<sup>108</sup> Koenen, *Heil den Gerechten*, 200.

<sup>109</sup> Koenen, *Heil den Gerechten*, 200.

<sup>110</sup> Note too the affinities between the portrait of Ebed-Melech and that of the ‘blessed’ man of the psalms. As well as the language of ‘trust in YHWH’, the promise of rescue (**מלט**) on the day (**ביום ההוא**) when YHWH brings evil (**רעה**) on Jerusalem echoes Ps. 41.2, **ימלטהו יהוה ביום רעה**. Also, just as Ebed-Melech’s salvation follows his rescue of Jeremiah (38.8-13), the promise of deliverance in Ps. 41 is for ‘the one who has regard for the poor’ (**אל דל משכיל**, v. 1).

<sup>111</sup> One should not overlook the parallels between 39.15-18 and Nebuzaradan’s speech in 40.2-4. Both are introduced as divine oracles to Jeremiah, and offer hope to individuals in the context of national judgement; cf., the balancing terms, **מביא** (39.16) and **ויבא** (40.3); **ביום ההוא** (39.17) and **היום** (40.4); **טובה** / **רע** (39.16) and **טוב** / **רע** (40.4).

configure the relationship between Jeremiah and the people of Judah (כל הארץ, 1.18; העם הזה, 15.20).

We might ask, however, what justification there is for reading 39.15-18 within ‘the wider context of the book.’ Or, putting the question another way, if the language of this unit does indeed dialogue with other parts of Jer., what does this imply about its literary origins? To ask the question is of course to suggest one answer; that the oracle to Ebed-Melech was incorporated into the book relatively late. We noted earlier that this view is held by a number of scholars. Evidence for this may lie in the fact that it appears to be ‘out of place’ (cf. the reference to Jeremiah’s confinement, v. 15a). Some have suggested that it has simply been displaced from its original context (either after 38.13<sup>112</sup> or 38.28<sup>113</sup>), but even there it would have a slightly intrusive quality. As Jones remarks, “the fact is that it cannot be closely welded into the main theme of chapters 37 – 45.”<sup>114</sup> Without prejudging the quite separate matter of its authenticity, therefore, there is reason to think that this oracle was added at a time when much of Jer. was already complete, so that allusions to earlier passages may well be intentional.

#### 4. Summary: Differentiation in Jer. 38 – 39

We can now sum up our findings with regard to the issue of differentiation within the first part of the macro-section Jer. 37 – 45. As we have seen, the unit begins with a restatement of the היצאים / הישבים polarity that we encountered in 21.1-10. The report of Jeremiah’s interview with Zedekiah nuances this, however. Whilst the prophet’s message appears to repeat 38.1-3, it turns out on closer inspection to diverge somewhat. Zedekiah may save not only himself, but also his family and indeed the whole city; in addition, the promise ‘it will go well with you’ sounds a note of optimism that is singularly absent in 21.9 or 38.2. At the same time, the invitation begins with a note of doubt (אם יצא תצא, v. 17) and ends by making it clear that the option for Zedekiah is foreclosed.

This being so, we might ask how 38.1-3; 14-23 relates to ch. 21. There, we argued, the question of ‘salvation’ turned on the issue of affiliation to Jerusalem; life and death were

---

<sup>112</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 212-213.

<sup>113</sup> Bright, *Jeremiah*, 229.

<sup>114</sup> Jones, *Jeremiah*, 465.

assigned according to a **היצאים / הישבים** polarity. Since, however, only ‘the people’ were told of this offer, it was ambiguous as to whether Zedekiah could himself be one of the **יצאים**. In ch. 38, we find a different but equally ambiguous picture. The **היצאים / הישבים** polarity is reiterated, and this time Zedekiah is himself invited to ‘go out’; but even before he makes his response, we learn that he will follow the counter-advice of his friends. In both chapters, Zedekiah is differentiated from the rest of ‘the people’

The oracle to Ebed-Melech (39.15-18) echoes the promise of 38.2, but it also exceeds it, and does so towards an individual who has not fulfilled its requirements. Especially when read within the wider context of the book, it suggests that the critical distinction vis-à-vis YHWH’s salvation is in fact **אשר בטח ביהוה / אשר לא בטח ביהוה**. To be sure, the **היצאים / הישבים** and **אשר בטח ביהוה / אשר לא בטח ביהוה** polarities are not mutually exclusive. On the one hand, the issue of trust may be said to undergird the **היצאים / הישבים** distinction since, as we have argued, the issue at stake in ch. 21 is one of affiliation to Jerusalem. On the other hand, two of the objects for which the Judeans are rebuked for ‘trusting in’ (**בטח ב**) in the earlier chapters of Jer. are their ‘fortified cities’ (5.17) and ‘the house of YHWH’ (7.14). Nevertheless, it is clear that the oracle to Ebed-Melech ‘frames the issue’ in a distinctive way. Consequently, it may be read as a claim that even those who were not exiles in 597 (ch. 24) and who did not ‘go out’ in 587 (21.8-10; 38.1-3) might receive divine favour.

## 5. Jer. 42[49].1 – 43.7

### 5.1. Text

<p>και προσηλθον παντες οι ηγεμονες της δυναμεως και Ιωαναν και Αζαριας υιος Μασσαιου και πας ο λαος απο μικρου και εως μεγαλου</p>	<p>1. ויגשו כל שרי החילים ויוחנן בן קרח ויזניה בן הושעיה וכל העם מקטן ועד גדול</p>
<p>προς Ιερεμιαν τον προφητην και ειπαν αυτω πεσετω το ελεος ημων κατα προσωπον σου και προσευξαι προς κυριον θεον σου περι των καταλοιπων τουτων υι καταλειφθησεν ολιγοι απο πολλων καθως οι οφθαλμοι σου βλεπουσι</p>	<p>2. ויאמרו אל ירמיהו הנביא תפל נא תחנתנו לפניך והתפלל בעדנו אל יהוה אלהיך בעד כל השארית הזאת כי נשארנו מעט מהרבה כאשר עיניך ראות אתנו</p>
<p>και αναγγειλατω ημιν κυριος ο θεος σου την οδον η πορευσομεθα εν αυτη και λογον ον ποιησομεν</p>	<p>3. ויגד לנו יהוה אלהיך את הדרך אשר נלך בה ואת הדבר אשר נעשה</p>

<p>και ειπεν αυτοις Ιερεμιας ηκουσα ιδου  εγω προσευξομαι προς κυριον θεον υμων  κατα τους λογους υμων και εσται ο λογος  ον αν αποκριθησεται κυριος αναγγελω  υμιν ου μη κρυσω αφ' υμων ρημα</p>	<p>4. ויאמר אליהם ירמיהו הנביא שמעתי הנני מתפלל  אל יהוה אלהיכם כדברייכם והיה כל הדבר אשר  יענה יהוה אתכם אניד לכם לא אמנע מכם דבר</p>
<p>και αυτοι ειπαν τω Ιερεμια εστω κυριος εν  ημιν εις μαρτυρα δικαιον και πιστον ει μη  κατα παντα τον λογον ον αν αποστειλη σε  κυριος προς ημας ουτως ποιησομεν</p>	<p>5. והמה אמרו אל ירמיהו יהי יהוה בנו לעד אמת  ונאמן אם לא ככל הדבר אשר ישלחך יהוה אלהיך  אלינו כן נעשה</p>
<p>και εαν αγαθα και εαν κακον την φωνην  κυριου του θεου ημων ου ημεις  αποστελλομεν σε προς αυτον ακουσομεθα  ινα βελτιον ημιν γενηται οτι ακουσομεθα  της φωνης κυριου του θεου ημων</p>	<p>6. אם טוב ואם רע בקול יהוה אלהינו אשר אנו שלחים  אתך אליו נשמע למען אשר ייטב לנו כי נשמע בקול  יהוה אלהינו</p>
<p>και ενενηθη μετα δεκα ημερας εγενηθη  λογος κυριου προς Ιερεμιαν</p>	<p>7. ויהי מקץ עשרת ימים ויהי דבר יהוה אל ירמיהו</p>
<p>και εκαλεσε τον Ιωαναν και τους  ηγεμονας της δυναμεως και παντα τον  λαον απο μικρου και εως μεγαλου</p>	<p>8. ויקרא אל יוחנן בן קרח ואל כל שרי החילים אשר  אתו ולכל העם למקטן ועד גדול</p>
<p>και ειπεν αυτοις ουτως ειπε κυριος</p>	<p>9. ויאמר אליהם כה אמר יהוה אלהי ישראל אשר  שלחתם אתי אליו להפיל תחנתכם לפניו</p>
<p>εαν καθισαντες καθισητε εν τη γη ταυτη  οικοδομησω υμας και ου μη καθελω και  φυτευσω υμας και ου μη εκτιλω οτι  αναπεπαυμαι επι τοις κακοις οις εποιησα  υμιν</p>	<p>10. אם טוב תשבו בארץ הזאת ובניתי אתכם ולא  אהרס ונשעתי אתכם ולא אתוש כי נחמתי אל הרעה  אשר עשיתי לכם</p>
<p>μη φοβηθητε απο προσωπου βασιλεως  Βαβυλωνος ου υμεις φοβεισθε απο  προσωπου αυτου φησι κυριος οτι μεθ' υμων  εγω ειμι του εξαירεισθαι υμας και σωζειν  υμας εκ χειρος αυτου</p>	<p>11. אל תיראו מפני מלך בכל אשר אתם יראים מפניו  אל תיראו ממנו נאם יהוה כי אתכם אני להושיע אתכם  ולהציל אתכם מידו</p>
<p>και δωσω υμιν ελεος και ελεησω υμας  και επιστρεψω υμας εις την γην υμων</p>	<p>12. ואתן לכם רחמים ורחם אתכם והשיב אתכם אל  אדמתכם</p>
<p>και ει λεγετε υμεις ου μη καθισωμεν εν τη  γη ταυτη προς το μη ακουσαι φωνης  κυριου</p>	<p>13. ואם אמרים אתם לא נשב בארץ הזאת לבלתי שמע  בקול יהוה אלהיכם</p>
<p>οτι εις γην Αιγυπτου ειςελευσομεθα και  ου μη ιδωμεν πολεμον και φωνην  σαλπιγγος ου μη ακουσωμεν και εν αρτοις  ου μη πεινασωμεν και εκει οικησομεν</p>	<p>14. לאמר לא כי ארץ מצרים נבוא אשר לא נראה  מלחמה וקול שופר לא נשמע וללחם לא נרעב ושם  נשב</p>

<p>δια τουτο ακουσατε λογον κυριου ουτως ειπε κυριος εν υμεις δωτε το προσωπον υμων εις Αιγυπτον και εισελθητε εκει κατοικειν</p>	<p>15. <u>ועתה לכן שמעו דבר יהוה שארית יהודה כה אמר יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל אם אתם שום תשמון פניכם לבא מצרים ובאתם לגור שם</u></p>
<p>και εσται η ρομφαια ην υμεις φοβεισθε απο προσωπου αυτης ευρησει υμας εν Αιγυπτω και ο λιμος ου υμεις λογον εχετε απο προσωπου αυτου καταλημψεται υμας εν Αιγυπτω και εκει αποθανεισθε</p>	<p>16. <u>והיתה החרב אשר אתם יראים ממנה שם תשיג אתכם בארץ מצרים והרעב אשר אתם דאנים ממנו שם ידבק אתריכם מצרים ושם תמותו</u></p>
<p>και εσονται παντες οι ανθρωποι και παντες οι αλλογενεις οι θεντες το προσωπον αυτων εις γην Αιγυπτου ενοικειν εκει εκλειψουσιν εν ρομφαια και εν λιμω και ουκ εσται αυτων ουθεις σωζομενος απο των κακων ον εγω επαγω επ' αυτους</p>	<p>17. <u>ויהיו כל האנשים אשר שמו את פניהם לבוא מצרים לגור שם ימותו בחרב ברעב ובדבר ולא יהיה להם שריד ופליט מפני הרעה אשר אני מביא עליהם</u></p>
<p>οτι ουτως ειπε κυριος καθως εσταξεν ο θυμος μου επι τους κατοικουντας Ιερουσαλημ ουτως σταξει ο θυμος μου εφ' υμας εισελθοντων υμων εις Αιγυπτον και εσεσθε εις αβατον και υποχειριοι και εις αραν και εις ονειδισμον και ου μη ιδητε ουκετι τον τοπον τουτον</p>	<p>18. <u>כי כה אמר יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל כאשר נתך אפי יחמתי אל יושבי ירושלם כן תתך חמתי עליכם בבאכם מצרים והייתם לאלה ולשמה ולקללה ולחרפה ולא תראו עוד את המקום הזה</u></p>
<p>α ελαλησε κυριος εφ' υμας τους καταλοιπους Ιουδα μη εισελθητε εις Αιγυπτον και νυν γνοντες γνωσεσθε</p>	<p>19. <u>דבר יהוה עליכם שארית יהודה אל תבאו מצרים ידעו תדעו כי העידתי בכם היום</u></p>
<p>οτι επονηρευσασθε εν ψυχαις υμων αποστειλαντες με λεγοντες προσευξαι περι ημων προς κυριον και κατα παντα α εαν λαληση σοι κυριος ποιησομεν</p>	<p>20. <u>כי התעתים בנפשותיכם כי אתם שלצחם אתי אל יהוה אלהיכם לאמר התפלל בעדנו אל יהוה אלהינו וככל אשר יאמר יהוה אלהינו כן הגד לנו ועשינו</u></p>
<p>και ουκ ηκουσατε της φωνης κυριου ης απεστειλε με προς υμας</p>	<p>21. <u>ואגד לכם היום ולא שמעתם בקול יהוה אלהיכם ולכל אשר שלחני אליכם</u></p>
<p>και νυν εν ρομφαια και εν λιμω εκλειψετε εν τω τοπω ου υμεις βουλευσθε εισελθειν κατοικειν εκει</p>	<p>22. <u>ועתה ידע תדעו כי בחרב ברעב ובדבר תמותו במקום אשר הפצתם לבוא לגור שם</u></p>
<p>και εγενηθη ως επαυσσαστο Ιερεμιας λεγων προς τον λαον τους παντας λογους κυριου ους απεστειλεν αυτον κυριος προς αυτους παντας τους λογους τουτους</p>	<p>1. <u>ויהי ככלות ירמיהו לדבר אל כל העם את כל דברי יהוה אלהיהם אשר שלחו יהוה אלהיהם אליהם את כל הדברים האלה</u></p>
<p>και ειπεν Αζαριας υιος Μαασαιου και Ιωαναν υιος Καρηε και παντες οι ανδρες</p>	<p>2. <u>ויאמר עזריה בן הושעיה ויוחנן בן קרח וכל האנשים הזדים אמרים אל ירמיהו שקר אתם מדבר לא שלחך יהוה אלהינו לאמר לא תבאו מצרים לגור</u></p>

οί είπαντες τω Ιερεμια λεγοντες ψευδη ούκ άπεστειλε σε κυριος προς ήμας είπειν μη είσελθητε είς Αίγυπτον οίκειν έκει	שם
άλλ' ή Βαρουχ υίος Νηριου συμβαλλει σε προς ήμας 'ίνα δως ήμας είς χειρας των Χαλδαιων του θανατωσαι ήμας και άποικισθηναι ήμας είς Βαβυλωνα	3. כי ברוך בן נריה מסית אתך בנו למען חת אתנו ביד הכשדים להמית אתנו ולהגלות אתנו בכל
και ούκ ήκουσεν Ιωαναν και παντες οί ήγεμονες της δυναμεως και πας ο λαος της φωνης κυριου κατοικησαι έν γη Ιουδα	4. ולא שמע יוחנן בן קרח וכל שרי החילים וכל העם בקול יהוה לשבת בארץ יהודה
και έλαβεν Ιωαναν και παντες οί ήγεμονες της δυναμεως παντας τους καταλοιπους Ιουδα τους άποστρεψαντας κατοικειν έν τη γη	5. ויקח יוחנן בן קרח וכל שרי החילים את כל שארית יהודה אשר שבו מכל הגוים אשר נדחו שם לגור בארץ יהודה
τους δυνατους και τας γυναικας και τα λοιπα και τας θυγατερας του βασιλεως και τας ψυχας άς κατελιπε Ναβουζαρδαν μετα Γοδολιου υίου Αχικαμ και Ιερεμιαν τον προφητην και Βαρουχ υίον Νηριου	6. את הגברים ואת הנשים ואת השף ואת בנות המלך ואת כל הנפש אשר הניח נבוזראדן רב שבחים את גדליהו בן אחיקם בן שפן ואת ירמיהו הנביא ואת ברוך בן נריהו
και είσηλθωσαν είς Αίγυπτον οτι ούκ ήκουσαν της φωνης κυριου και είσηλθωσαν είς Ταφνας	7. ויבאו ארץ מצרים כי לא שמעו בקול יהוה ויבאו עד תחפנחס

## 5.2. Textual Notes

### Chapter 42[49]

v. 1. MT הושעיה בן יזניה: LXX<sup>B,A</sup> Αζαριας υίος Μαασαίου; LXX<sup>Q</sup> Αζαριας υίος Ωσαίου; LXX<sup>V</sup> Ιεζονιας υίος Ωσαίου. Cf. the variants in 43.1: “LXX setzt an beiden Stellen als *Vorlage* voraus עזריה בן מעשיה.”<sup>115</sup> With most commentators, we follow OG as pointing to an original עזריה בן הושעיה.

v. 2. MT בעדנו >OG: MT probably represents a conflate text.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>115</sup> Ziegler, *Beiträge*, 83; similarly Stulman, *Other Text*, 151. But as far as the patronymic is concerned, Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 273, comments that “there is no way to decide between the readings.”

<sup>116</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 17.

v. 6. MT *Ketiv* אנו (cf. *Qere* אנהנו) is generally seen as a late form.<sup>117</sup>

v. 9. MT אלהי ישראל אשר שלחתם אתי אליו להפיל תחנתכם לפניו >OG: MT plus; probably a composite of elements from vv. 2, 6 and 20.<sup>118</sup>

v. 10. MT אם שוב תשובו ('if returning you will dwell'); OG Εαν καθισσαστεσ καθισητε ('if indeed you will remain') = אם ישוב תשובו. OG is supported by the versions and accepted by most scholars.<sup>119</sup> Holladay prefers MT, arguing that "it is possible to have an infinitive absolute of one verb and a finite form of a second verb related by word-play";<sup>120</sup> he thus translates, 'If you change your mind and stay . . .'. This is an attractive reading, but it may have been *secondarily* influenced by the statement in 41.17 that the Jews already intended to go to Egypt. Cautiously, we accept ישוב as the more original reading.

MT נחמתי; OG ἀναπεπαυμαι: If נחם Niph. is understood to mean 'grieve, be sorry for' (Gen. 6.7; 1 Sam. 15.11), then OG ('I have ceased from') yields a significantly different sense. Tov notes that the use of (ἀνα)παυμαι for נחם is characteristic for the reviser of OG Jer., who "probably rendered forms of נחם as if they were derived from נח . . . If so, he made an erroneous revision."<sup>121</sup> Possibly the translator wanted to avoid the idea of God 'repenting'. Others argue that נחם (lit., 'take a deep breath') here means 'relent, change course' (Isa. 57.6; Jer. 4.28; 18.8; 26.3; Ezek. 24.14; Zech. 8.14) thus reducing the difference with OG.<sup>122</sup> In almost all these latter references, however, a future scenario is in mind, whereas in Jer. 42.10 (as in Gen. 6.7; 1 Sam.

---

<sup>117</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 320; according to Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 274, it is the only example in biblical Hebrew.

<sup>118</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 54.

<sup>119</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 321; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 218; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 251; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 664; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1032; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 716; see too *GKC* §19i.

<sup>120</sup> Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 274, 300; similarly, *DIHGS* §101. rem.1. However, some of the examples they cite are disputable. Thus, אסף אסיפם (Jer. 8.13; cf. אסף אסף, Zeph. 1.2) may be a word-play involving כף and אסף (so too McKane, *Jeremiah 1*, 189), but see to the contrary *GKC* §113w, n.3.

<sup>121</sup> Tov, *Septuagint Translation*, 51.

<sup>122</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 321: "handelt es sich um den psychologischen Übergang vom Gefühl des Zorns zu dem des Mitleids und der Abneigung gegen ferneres Dareinschlagen"; similarly Bright, *Jeremiah*, 255 ('I relent with regard to'); McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1030 ('I am no longer minded'); Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 300 ('retract'); Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 390 ('change course').



15.11) YHWH is reviewing some past action. Arguably, therefore, נחמתי here has an emotive sense – ‘sorry about’, if not ‘sorry for’.<sup>123</sup>

v. 11. MT להושיע אתכם ולהציל אתכם; OG του ἐξαπρῆσθαι ὑμας και σωζειν ὑμας: If ἐξαπρῆσθαι (‘pull out’, ‘rescue’) here renders ישע Hiph., it is the only time in the entire OT that it does so. It is frequently used, however, for נצל Hiph. (‘tear away’, ‘rescue’). Thus, OG appears to witness to the same wording as MT, but in a different order.

v. 12. MT והשיב . . . ורחם . . . ואתן; OG δωσω . . . ἐλεησω . . . ἐπιστρεψω; Targ. ואתין וירחם . . . : After the initial ואתן, MT uses third-person verb forms; the versions all consistently use the first-person. A provisional judgement in favour of MT might be made on the basis that it is easier to account for the versions modifying the *Vorlage* than for MT doing so; either they read the verbs as infinitive absolutes, i.e., רחם and השוב,<sup>124</sup> or / and they resisted the notion of Nebuchadnezzar showing mercy.<sup>125</sup> The MT reading is also supported, however, by the use of נתן רחמים elsewhere in the OT (Gen. 43.14; Deut. 13.18; 1 Kgs. 8.50; Neh. 1.11; Ps. 106.46; Dan. 1.9). In each case, the subject of נתן רחמים is YHWH, and in each case except Deut. 13.18, his compassion involves moving other people (often captors of some sort) to show benevolence. Twice, the nature of this human benevolence is described more precisely: Gen. 43.14, ושלח לכם, and 1 Kgs. 8.50, ורחמים. These verses correspond to MT Jer. 42.12, where ואתן לכם (subject: YHWH) is defined by והשיב אתכם ורחם (subject: Nebuchadnezzar).

MT והשיב; OG ἐπιστρεψω: Both texts read the verb as שוב (‘restore, return’). An alternative pointing השיב (Hiph. ישב) is supported by Targ. (ויתיב) and Vulg. (*et habitare vos faciam*), and is preferred by some scholars.<sup>126</sup> But there seem no compelling reason to ignore the

---

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Bright, *Jeremiah*, 256; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 666.

<sup>124</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 322; D. Barthélemy, *Critique Textuelle de l'Ancien Testament. 2. Isaïe, Jérémie, Lamentations* (OBO 50.2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986) 748; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1034. Bright, *Jeremiah*, 256, Pohlmann, *Studien*, 132, and Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 666 n.6, believe that OG may have been right to read the *Vorlage* this way. The fact that השיב has a *yodh*, however, might argue against this as an explanation for the confusion, and suggest instead that the *Vorlage* was in fact השב. On the other hand, if והשיב אתכם ורחם is to be seen as an adverbial complement to רחמים, the use of the conjunction before רחם and השיב would argue against their being infinitive absolutes. See *DIHGS* §102-103.

<sup>125</sup> Volz, *Studien*, 283.

<sup>126</sup> E.g., Duhm, *Jeremia*, 322; Volz, *Studien*, 283; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 118; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1035.

agreed reading of MT and OG,<sup>127</sup> which – given the location of the remnant on the border of Judah (41.17) – makes good sense. The Hiph. is best taken as permissive, i.e., ‘he will *allow* you to return’.<sup>128</sup>

vv. 13-14. MT לאמר / לאמר / לאמר / לאמר >OG: MT is awkward, and the shorter text preferable.

v. 15. MT שום אתם שום תשמון; OG Εαν ὑμεις δωτε: While in other respects this verse shows MT expansion (i.e., the addition of לבא), on this point OG has probably confused the final letters of אתם and שום.<sup>129</sup>

v. 16a. MT ארץ >OG: MT plus (cf. v. 16b).

v. 17. OG παντες οι αλλογενεις (= וכל זרים) >MT: The reading is odd, though several scholars have connected it with the MT plus כל האנשים הזרים in 43.2. Janzen proposes that זרים was an early marginal note on 42.17; this was incorporated into the Hebrew text tradition at 43.2, whilst in the OG *Vorlage* it was corrupted to זרים and added at 42.17.<sup>130</sup>

MT ובדבר >OG (also in v. 22): MT plus; see notes on 21.9 and 38.2.

MT שריד >OG: MT plus.<sup>131</sup> OG also uses a participial form of (ανα)σωζω for פליט in 44.14, 28; 50.28, and 51.50.

MT לבוא and OG γη are both probably plusses.<sup>132</sup>

v. 18. MT ואפי וחמתי; OG ο θυμος μου: Since θυμος can represent either אפ or חמה, either might be secondary here. Most commentators take אפי as the later term,<sup>133</sup> but חמה (fem.) would seem to require the fem. נתכה rather than the masc. נתח.<sup>134</sup>

---

<sup>127</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 218; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 251; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 65 n.8; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 666; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 274; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 716. Pohlmann, *Studien*, 132 n.404, leaves the question open.

<sup>128</sup> On the permissive use of the Hiphil, see *IBH* §157.

<sup>129</sup> Stulman, *Other Text*, 152, is undecided what lay in the *Vorlage* here.

<sup>130</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 65; but see the response of McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1036-1037.

<sup>131</sup> See too Tov, *Septuagint Translation*, 100; Stulman, *Other Text*, 152.

<sup>132</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 54.

<sup>133</sup> So Janzen, *Studies*, 54; Stulman, *Other Text*, 153; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1037; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 276.

<sup>134</sup> Unless this is simply a case of a feminine noun taking an uninflected verb. For examples, see *GBH 2*, §150k.

MT לאלה ולשמה; OG εἰς ἄβατον και ὑποχειριοι: Since ἄβατος ('a remote place') normally translates שממה, it probably does so here, rather than rendering אלה ('oath, curse').<sup>135</sup> We then have to consider ὑποχειριοι, 'minions, subjects';<sup>136</sup> *hap. leg.* in LXX Jer., but cf. Bar. 2.4, και ἔδωκεν αὐτους ὑποχειριους πασαις ταις βασιλειαῖς. Tov believes that in both places the term underlying ὑποχειριος was probably זועה, pointing out that this was a constant problem to the translators (each of its six occurrences is rendered differently).<sup>137</sup> He suggests as the *Vorlage* of Jer. 42[40].18, הייתם לשממה ולזועה ולקללה ולחרפה.

v. 19. MT יהוה דבר; OG ἁ ἐλάλησε κυριος: Both MT and OG read awkwardly. The use of דבר Pi. to introduce or sum up a prophetic oracle is well attested in the OT,<sup>138</sup> but a bare יהוה דבר is unparalleled. Moreover, the *qatal* form of the verb to start the sentence is highly abrupt. One solution is to read יהוה דבר זה (as in. Zech. 4.6);<sup>139</sup> cf. Targ. (גזירת פתגמא דיין עליכון) and Vulg. (*verbum domini super vos*). The loss of זה by haplography is easily explicable, given the ending of v. 18, המקום הזה. However, OG ἁ ἐλάλησε implies אשר דבר.<sup>140</sup> *GKC* notes the Jeremic expression אשר היה דבר יהוה אל (14.1; 46.1; 47.1; 49.34), where אשר assumes an absolute sense, 'this is that which'.<sup>141</sup>

MT יהוה דבר >OG: Cf. Deut. 4.26. Duhm believed that this was MT plus;<sup>142</sup> however, scribal error through homoiarchton (כי ה) seems more probable.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>135</sup> The term ἄβατος is mostly limited in the LXX to Jer., where it almost always translates שממה / שממה. Tov, *Septuagint Translation*, 46-47, notes twelve instances of this equivalence in Jer. b.

<sup>136</sup> On the absolute use of this term, see Tov, *Septuagint Translation*, 132 n.15.

<sup>137</sup> Tov, *Septuagint Translation*, 132 n.16.

<sup>138</sup> E.g., כי יהוה דבר (1 Kgs. 14.11; Isa. 1.2; Joel 4.8), זה הדבר אשר דבר יהוה (Isa. 16.13; 37.22) and הוא אשר (Ex. 16.23; Lev. 10.3). See too אשר דבר יהוה עליכם (הזה) in Jer. 10.1 and Am. 3.1.

<sup>139</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 323; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 118.

<sup>140</sup> See Stulman, *Other Text*, 153.

<sup>141</sup> *GKC* §138b n.2.

<sup>142</sup> "In der OG spricht Jer sachlich als Berater des Volkes, im MT theologisch nach der Theorie, die sich das spätere Judentum über den Untergang des alten Volkes zurechtgemacht hat." (Duhm, *Jeremia*, 324).

<sup>143</sup> So Janzen, *Studies*, 118; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 275. Stulman, *Other Text*, 153, is undecided.

v. 20. MT *Ketiv* התעתים בנפשתיכם; OG ὅτι ἐπονηρευσασθε ἐν ψυχαις ὑμῶν: The *Ketiv* is impossible, and most follow *Qere*, התעתם<sup>144</sup> (Hiph. תעה, ‘to err’). התעתם is probably one of several “inwardly transitive or intensive Hiphils”,<sup>145</sup> all of which have a moral quality, e.g., יטב, תעב, חטא (see Prov. 10.17 for an intransitive use of תעה Hiph). By understanding the preposition as ‘ב of price’ (as in Jer. 17.21), most scholars render the phrase in some such way as ‘you have wandered at the cost of your lives’.<sup>146</sup> OG, however, suggests הרעתם, ‘you did evil (in yourselves)’. Duhm considered this the original text, though his reasoning shows a strongly anti-theological bias.<sup>147</sup> More probably, OG has substituted a term for one that was obscure.<sup>148</sup>

MT כי אתם שלחתם; OG ἀποστειλαντες: OG may reflect an inf. cst., לשלח אתי (see Gen. 34.7; 1 Sam. 14.33; Jer. 12.17) or a participle שלחם.<sup>149</sup> But it is not unusual for OG to translate a finite verb with a participle (Ex. 12.37; 15.18; Jdg. 4.16).<sup>150</sup>

MT כן הנגר לנו >OG: Probable MT plus, influenced by ויגר לנו (v. 3) and כן נעשה (v. 5).<sup>151</sup>

v. 21. MT ואגר לכם היום and אלהיכם ולכל >OG: MT plus, influenced by v. 20.<sup>152</sup>

v. 22. MT ידע תדעו כי >OG: MT plus; secondary expansion from v. 19.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Not (Duhm, *Jeremia*, 324, and some editions of *BHS*) התעתם. See the corrigenda in R. Wonneberger, *Understanding BHS. A Manual for the Users of the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (SB 8; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1990) 75. התעתם is the *Qere* reading in V<sup>p</sup>, which gives as the *Ketiv* התעתים.

<sup>145</sup> *GKC* §53d (italics theirs).

<sup>146</sup> E.g., Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 220 (“ihr habt fehlerhaft gehandelt um den Preis eures Lebens.”); Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 665; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 246. However, Ehrlich, *Randglossen*, 348, and McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1038, see YHWH as its object. Volz, *Jeremia*, 358, follows Vulg. (*deceperitis animas vestras*) by translating ‘you have deceived your own souls,’ but this requires a highly unusual use of ב.

<sup>147</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 324; OG is also preferred by Condamin, *Jérémie*, 281.

<sup>148</sup> So Volz, *Jeremia*, 359; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 301.

<sup>149</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 324, and apparently Volz, *Jeremia*, 385 (“santet und sagtet”).

<sup>150</sup> Stulman, *Other Text*, 153, reads שלחתם for the *Vorlage*, translating (156) ‘[when] you sent me’

<sup>151</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 54; also Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 276. McKane (*Jeremiah 2*, 1039) remarks that כן הנגר לנו “disturb an original continuity between יהוה ואשר יאמר יהוה and ועשינו.”

<sup>152</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 54; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 276; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1039; Stulman, *Other Text*, 153.

<sup>153</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 54; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 276.

In addition to the witness of MT and OG, we also have a fragmentary text of 43.2-10 in *4QJer<sup>d</sup>*. Although reconstructions of this text are uncertain at various points,<sup>154</sup> it is clear that it mostly agrees with the text reflected by OG (e.g., the short forms of the names; יוחנן [MT + בן קרח], lines 2 and 3; נבוזרדן [MT + רב שבחים], line 5), but at some points agrees with MT (e.g., כל [> OG], line 6;<sup>155</sup> ארץ [> OG], line 6; בידך [OG εὐ σεαυτω], line 7).

v. 2. MT האנשים הזדים אמרים; OG οἱ ἀνδρες οἱ εἰπαντες . . . λεγοντες: Concerning אמרים, not only is the use of a participle to introduce direct speech unusual, but the plural form is inconsistent with the opening ויאמר (though it agrees with the number of people specified in the verse).<sup>156</sup> OG οἱ εἰπαντες points to האמרים, but this still conflicts with the opening ויאמר; moreover, since OG λεγοντες implies an original לאמר,<sup>157</sup> we would then have the syntactically awkward האנשים האמרים אל ירמיהו לאמר. McKane concludes that both MT and OG are expansionary,<sup>158</sup> and posits ויאמר עזריה בן הושעיה ויוחנן בן קרח וכל האנשים אל ירמיהו for the *Vorlage*. A clue to a possible alternative lies in MT הזדים, 'insolent' (>OG). We noted above Janzen's suggestion that OG οἱ ἀλλογενεις in 42.17 and MT הזדים here are both misreadings of a single marginal gloss, הזורים, 'foreign'.<sup>159</sup> Building on this, we could follow the suggestion that

<sup>154</sup> Tov is more ready than Janzen to identify points of agreement between *4QJer<sup>d</sup>* and MT; but even Janzen, whilst affirming the "familial allegiance" (*Studies*, 183) of the Greek *Vorlage* and *4QJer<sup>d</sup>*, surmises that "it represents a slightly different branch of the Egyptian family." (*Studies*, 184). See also G.J. Brooke, 'The Book of Jeremiah and its Reception in the Qumran Scrolls', in Curtis & Römer, *Book of Jeremiah*, 187.

<sup>155</sup> Tov, 'Three Fragments', 539, includes this in his reconstruction, "based on calculations of space"; for the same reason, Janzen, *Studies*, 183, prefers to omit it.

<sup>156</sup> In any case, we should probably not expect ancient Hebrew writers to be any more consistent in their grammar than present-day English writers; see *DIHGS* §26 rem.5.

<sup>157</sup> Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 218; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 275; *pace* Stulman, *Other Text*, 157.

<sup>158</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1050-1051.

<sup>159</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 65; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 275. Janzen adds that 43.2 "may well have stood opposite 42.17, in the next column of the manuscript."

where MT now reads אמרים, the *Vorlage* read המרים ‘obstinate’;<sup>160</sup> we would then have a natural word-pair, הזדים והמרים.<sup>161</sup>

v. 3. MT מסית אתך; OG συμβαλλει σε: Elsewhere, LXX translates סות Hiph. (‘entice, incite’) with ἀπαταω (‘trick’) or ἐπισειω (‘shake at, threaten’). However, συμβαλλω has a wide semantic range, including ‘to set / pit one person against another.’<sup>162</sup>

vv. 4, 5. MT יוחנן בן קרח; OG Ιωαναν; 4QJer<sup>d</sup> יוחנן: In both places, the Qumran text supports reading the name without בן קרח; its spelling also differs slightly from MT.

v. 5. It will be helpful here to compare the readings of MT, OG and 4QJer<sup>d</sup> (line 4); the latter, which is poorly preserved, has been reconstructed in two quite different ways.<sup>163</sup>

MT: אשר שבו מכל הגוים אשר נדחו שם לגור בארץ יהודה

OG: τους ἀποστρεψαντας κατοικειν εν τη γη<sup>164</sup>

= *Vorlage*: אשר שבו לגור בארץ

4QJer<sup>d</sup> (Janzen):<sup>165</sup> [אשר שבו לגור בארץ] [מצרים]

4QJer<sup>d</sup> (Tov):<sup>166</sup> [אשר שבו מכל הגוים אשר] [נדחון] שם

OG non-representation of אשר נדחו שם מכל הגוים strongly suggests its absence from the *Vorlage*, especially since it also lacks the near-identical phrase in 40.12.<sup>167</sup> There is no clear

<sup>160</sup> Volz, *Jeremia*, 358; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 218; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 275.

<sup>161</sup> Quite unconvincing is P.A.H. de Boer’s view, ‘Some Remarks Concerning and Suggested by Jeremiah 43.1-7’, in C. Van Duin (ed.), *Selected Studies in Old Testament Exegesis* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 115-116, that הזדים here means ‘excited’ rather than ‘impudent’.

<sup>162</sup> Cf. *Hdt.* 3.32, σ. σκυμνον λεοντος σκυλακι κυνος.

<sup>163</sup> These reconstructions are inevitably conjectural, with only the final *mem* being certain. Preceding that is the barest tip of a downward stroke, which could be a *yodh* (Janzen) or *shin* (Tov). At the end of the previous word, or the word before that, is what might be the tail of a *tsadeh* (Janzen) or *resh* (Tov).

<sup>164</sup> LXX<sup>B,S</sup>. LXX<sup>A</sup> adds Ιουδα, agreeing with MT.

<sup>165</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 182-183; similarly, McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 1053; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 276.

<sup>166</sup> Tov, ‘Three Fragments’, 538-540, and *DJD* 15, 203. Tov’s annotation in *DJD* 15, 203, indicates that he views the ש (in שם) and the ר (in אשר) as ‘possible’. So too Brooke, ‘Book of Jeremiah’, 187: “It seems that in Jer. 43.5 4QJer<sup>d</sup> was closer to the MT than to the LXX which lacks a phrase at this point.”

<sup>167</sup> Janzen, *Studies*, 53; also Duhm, *Jeremiah*, 325; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 276; Stulman, *Other Text*, 157.

motive for deliberate omission,<sup>168</sup> and no obvious cause of haplography. τους ἀποστρεψαντας is not a literal rendition of אשר שבו (= οἱ ἀπεστρεψαν) but is unlikely to reflect a content variant in the *Vorlage*. MT יהודה is a typical plus over OG.

Determining the text of *4QJer<sup>d</sup>* is less straightforward. Both Janzen's and Tov's reconstructions have their merits, but the former (= OG *Vorlage* + מצרים) seems more probable, since it is doubtful whether the lacuna can contain all the wording that Tov proposes.<sup>169</sup> In fact, Tov concedes that לגור בארץ מצרים is possible, but objects that it "would create a contextually difficult text."<sup>170</sup> The problem is that כל שארית יהודה אשר שבו לגור בארץ מצרים (Janzen) is most naturally rendered as 'the remnant of the Jews, who had returned (in order) to go to Egypt', an obviously implausible statement. However, perhaps we should see אשר שבו as parenthetical, and take לגור to complement יוחנן יוחנן.

v. 6. MT הגברים ('men'); OG τους δυνατους ἀνδρας ('strong men'): OG appears to have read הגברים as הגבורים 'strong'.<sup>171</sup>

MT בנות המלך ('daughters of the king'): de Boer argues<sup>172</sup> that this is a corruption of בית המלך ('the court / household of the king'); the *yodh* could easily have been mistaken for a *nun*, so producing בנת, the short (non-plene) form of 'daughters'.

v. 7. MT ארץ > OG: MT is supported by *4QJer<sup>d</sup>* and is to be preferred.<sup>173</sup> MT ער is more likely to be secondary; normally OG renders it with ξως.

---

<sup>168</sup> So Volz, *Jeremia*, 359; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 220. Pohlmann, *Studien*, 154 n.522, leaves the question open.

<sup>169</sup> "Q has a lacuna here, which cannot contain the MT plus, but which fills out nicely with G text." (Janzen, *Studies*, 183).

<sup>170</sup> Tov, *DJD 15*, 204; 'Three Fragments', 539.

<sup>171</sup> See Ziegler, *Beiträge*, 101.

<sup>172</sup> de Boer, 'Some Remarks', 119.

<sup>173</sup> So McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1054; Tov, *DJD 15*, 205; contra Janzen, *Studies*, 183.

### 5.3. Exegetical Notes

42.2. התפלל בעדנו: Carroll sees here a striking contrast with earlier passages (7.16; 11.14; 14.11) where Jeremiah is forbidden to intercede.<sup>174</sup> However, McKane notes that ‘intercession’ is here for direction, rather than for well-being.<sup>175</sup> See also 1 Sam. 12.23, where Samuel pledges to ‘intercede’ (התפלל בעד) for the people and to teach them ‘the way’ (דרך).

v. 3. הרבר: Either ‘the thing, that which’; or ‘the word’, if it is the oracular message as such, rather than the directions contained in it, that is in mind. הדרך אשר נלך בה, ‘the way in which we should go’, is probably intended literally, in the light of 41.17. Elsewhere in the OT, the phrase הדרך אשר הלך occurs sixteen times (Gen. 35.3; 42.38; Deut. 1.31, 33; 8.2; Josh. 3.4; 24.17; Jdg. 2.17; 18.6; 1 Sam. 9.6; 1 Kgs. 13.9, 12, 17; 2 Kgs. 21.21; Neh. 9.12, 19), and only in Jdg. 2.17 and 2 Kgs. 21.21 does it have a metaphorical use.

v. 5. יהי יהוה בנו לעד אמת ונאמן: The phrase עד אמת ונאמן, ‘faithful and true witness’, occurs only here in the OT; עד אמת occurs otherwise only in Prov. 14.25 (cf. עד אמונים, Prov. 14.5). For בנו לעד to have the sense ‘a witness *against* (us)’, see Num. 5.13; Deut. 31.19, 26; Josh. 24.27; Mic. 1.2. However, we also have here a further echo of the 1 Sam. 12 passage, where in response to Samuel’s challenge עד יהוה בכם, the people affirm simply עד (1 Sam. 12.5).

Formally impressive, the people’s promise has the unmistakable nature of “rhetorical overkill”.<sup>176</sup> As Nicholson notes, “the people’s solemn undertaking . . . already alerts the reader to expect the subsequent conflict between the community and the prophet”.<sup>177</sup> The overtones of 1 Sam. 12 may point in the same direction.

v. 10. ובניתי אתכם ולא אהרס ונטעתי אתכם ולא אתוש: This language is paradigmatic in Jer. (cf. 1.10; 12.14-17; 18.7-9; 24.6; 31.28; 45.4), but the form in which it occurs here is particularly close to 24.6, which uses the same verbs in the same order: ובניתם ולא אהרס ונטעתים ולא אתוש.<sup>178</sup>

נחמתי: See our discussion in ‘Textual Notes’.

---

<sup>174</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 715.

<sup>175</sup> McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 1041.

<sup>176</sup> Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 299.

<sup>177</sup> Nicholson, *Jeremiah* 26 – 52, 142. Duhm, *Jeremia*, 323, also sees in v. 5 a hint that the people had already decided to go to Egypt.

<sup>178</sup> Taylor, ‘Problem of Placement’, 91.



v. 11. אל תיראו מפני מלך בבל . . . כי אתכם אני להושיע אתכם ולהציל אתכם: The language of this salvation oracle is otherwise restricted in Jer. to two distinct audiences; to Jeremiah himself (כי אתך אני להושיעך; 1.19; כי אתך אני להצילך; 1.8; אל תירא מפניהם כי אתך אני להצילך) and to the *Diaspora* (כי אתך אני להושיעך) (אל תירא עבדי יעקב . . . כי אתך אני להושיעך) (30.10-11 = 46.27; cf. תושע יהודה בימיו; 23.6; וממנה יושע; 30.7). The only other recipient of an oracle involving Hiph. is Ebed-Melech (39.17).

הציל מיר. Elsewhere, the expression usually denotes an act of deliverance involving military victory or escape. Here, however, resistance is out of the question, and escape to another land forbidden. Instead, as v. 12 explains, YHWH will ‘rescue’ his people precisely by causing Nebuchadrezzar to be compassionate.<sup>179</sup> Compare Josh. 24.10, where YHWH reminds Israel of how Balaam had intended to curse them, before adding, ולא אביתי לשמע לבלעם ויברך, ברוך אתכם ואצל אתכם מידו. YHWH thus ‘rescues’ Israel from a curse by forestalling it. Also significant is Gen. 32, where, anticipating Esau’s wrath (v. 6), Jacob prays for help: הצילני נא מיד אחי מיר עשו (v. 12). His hopes seem to lie either in a quick escape (vv. 7-8), or in placating Esau with a gift (v. 21). In the event, however, Esau receives his brother warmly (33.10), and in this we are probably meant to see God’s answer to Jacob’s prayer.

v. 12. ואתן לכם רחמים: See our discussion in ‘Textual Notes’.

והשיב אתכם אל אדמתכם: Following the reading reflected in MT and OG here, some commentators have suggested that the wording betrays a later exilic perspective.<sup>180</sup> This is unnecessary, but there does seem to be a further echo of 24.6, והשבתיים על הארץ הזאת.

v. 15. שארית יהודה: This is the regular designation of the Judean community in this section of the narrative (40.11, 15; 42.19; 43.5; 44.12, 28); it occurs nowhere else in the OT. Until now, it has been used quite objectively to describe the ‘poor people’ (העם הדלים) whom Nebuzaradan left (שאר, Hiph.) with Gedaliah (39.10), supplemented by Ishmael and his men (40.7-8) and those who returned from other lands (40.11-12). From now on, however, it will carry heavily pejorative overtones. In this passage, it seems to counter-balance ישבי ירושלם (v. 18).

<sup>179</sup> As Thiel remarks, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 64, “v. 12 präzisiert die Zusage.”

<sup>180</sup> Bright, *Jeremiah*, 256; Jones, *Jeremiah*, 477.

v. 19. **כי העידתי בכם היום**: Jeremiah's words echo those of Moses to the Israelites in Deut. 4.26 (**העידתי בכם היום את השמים ואת הארץ**), assuring the people of the dire consequences of idolatry.

v. 20. **התעתם בנפשתיכם**: See our discussion in 'Textual Notes'.

#### Chapter 43

v. 3. **כי ברוך בן נריה מכית אתך בנו**: Baruch's appearance here is wholly unexpected, as is the charge that he is behind Jeremiah's counsel; previously (32.12-14; 36.4-19) he has been presented in a subservient role to the prophet. Arguments that he is introduced here as a literary device, possibly representative of a particular readership,<sup>181</sup> are less convincing than that the allegation was actually made for reasons that are now unclear.

v. 5. **אשר שבו**: The reference is clearly to those who had returned to Judah from other nations (40.12); this is made explicit in the MT plus, **מכל הגוים אשר נדחו שם**, but is also implied in OG.<sup>182</sup> The *identification* of **כל שארית יהודה** with the returnees from other lands is puzzling; we would expect it also to include the original Mizpah community (cf. v. 6b).<sup>183</sup> Strictly speaking, however, this would require **אשר שבו**.

v. 6. **את הנכרים ואת הנשים ואת הטף**: Standing in apposition to the preceding **כל שארית יהודה**, and with no initial **ו**, the syntax equates the first four groups with the returnees from other lands in v. 5.<sup>184</sup> However, **ואת כל הנפש אשר הניח נבוזראדן את גדליהו** clearly establishes the members of the Mizpah community as a separate group. Clearly (as the textual variants show), the wording and syntax of vv. 5-6 have become somewhat muddled in the course of transmission; nevertheless, the overall picture is clear enough.

---

<sup>181</sup> See, e.g., Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 722-723. W. Brueggemann, '“The Baruch Connection”: Reflections on Jer. 43.1-7', *JBL* 113 (1994) 413, treats 'Baruch' as representative of "the scribal-Deuteronomistic circles who enlisted Jeremiah's poetic-Yahwistic discernment for their own purposes".

<sup>182</sup> This is worth emphasising, since McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 1053, attaches great significance to the MT plus: "The group around Jonathan (*sic!*) is made to consist not only of those taken from Mizpah by Ishmael and rescued by Jonathan (*sic!*), but also of those whose return from neighbouring countries is reported at 40.11f." To support his argument, however, McKane also has to delete **אשר שבו**.

<sup>183</sup> This is indeed how Pohlmann, *Studien*, 154, interprets MT. See too Bright's translation, *Jeremiah*, 252: "Johanan . . . took the whole remnant of Judah: those who had returned to settle in the land of Judah from the various countries to which they had been scattered; the men, the women, and the children . . ."

<sup>184</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 325; see too McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 1050, and *RSV*.

#### 5.4. Coherence and Redaction

That 42.1 marks the start of a new episode is clear from a number of factors.<sup>185</sup> As fast-moving drama gives way to speech-dominated material, Jeremiah mysteriously reappears (42.1). As we will see, exactly where the section ends is less certain. From a narrative point of view, however, the obvious conclusion is v. 7, where having rejected YHWH's final word, the Jews are found once more in Egypt, their former land of slavery.

The setting (vv. 1-9) describes how the people ask Jeremiah to 'intercede' (התפלל, vv. 2, 4) for them, in order to obtain YHWH's direction. When he assents to their request, they swear to obey unreservedly whatever YHWH says. Although this interchange is recounted at some length (cf., the much briefer accounts in 21.2; 37.3), we need not suspect secondary expansion; in the light of their subsequent rejection of the oracle (43.2-3), it is more likely that the narrator wants to cast their request in an ironic light.<sup>186</sup>

The oracle (vv. 10-16) falls into two parts, each comprising a conditional clause (אם שוב תשוב, v. 10 and לא . . . ואם, v. 13) with a corresponding promise or warning. The first part (vv. 10-12) centres on the theme of living (שב), which forms an *inclusio* (תשוב, v. 10a; השיב, v. 12).<sup>187</sup> Nevertheless, these verses are not one-dimensional. First, YHWH assures the people of his own favour, underlining this with the startling remark that he has 'repented' (נחם, v. 10) from his anger. Secondly, he promises to save the people from the king of Babylon (v. 11) and cause him to show them mercy (v. 12).<sup>188</sup>

---

<sup>185</sup> Kremers, 'Leidensgemeinschaft', 127, and Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 119, see the previous section as ending at 41.15; however, the story of Johanan's rescue of the hostages clearly ends in v. 18.

<sup>186</sup> As Nicholson, *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 142, notes, "the people's solemn undertaking . . . already alerts the reader to expect the subsequent conflict between the community and the prophet." Duhm also sees in v. 5 a hint that the people had already decide to go to Egypt (*Jeremia*, 323).

<sup>187</sup> This holds true irrespective of whether we emend שוב to ישוב in v. 10. On the pointing השיב (v. 12) presupposed here, see our discussion in 'Textual Notes'.

<sup>188</sup> How useful it is to describe the בנה / הרס / נטע / נתש refrain (v. 10; cf. 1.10; 18.7-9; 24.6; 31.28; 45.4) and the expression אתן לכם רהמים (v. 12) as 'Deuteronomistic' (so Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 125-127; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 64-65) is questionable. On the first point, Weippert, *Prosareden*, 197-198, shows that outside Jer., the pairs בנה / הרס and נטע / נתש occur (individually) only in post-Jeremianic and non-Deuteronomistic contexts. The expression נתן רהמים occurs also in Gen. 43.14, Neh. 1.11, and Dan. 1.9.

In the second half of the oracle (vv. 13-16), *ישב* is again the *leitmotiv*. The remnant might decide not to ‘live in this land’ (לֹא נִשְׁבַּ בְּאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת, v. 13), but to flee to Egypt to escape war and famine, and ‘live there’ (וְשָׁם נִשְׁבַּ, v. 14). Such hopes are refuted in v. 16; especially striking is the final *תִּמְתּוּ* וְשָׁם נִשְׁבַּ, counterbalancing וְשָׁם נִשְׁבַּ (v. 14).<sup>189</sup> Granted, v. 15 is repetitive, and interrupts an otherwise smooth flow from v. 14 to v. 16. Without it, vv. 10-14, 16 form an oracle comprising two parts of almost equal length, with ‘living / remaining’ its consistent theme.<sup>190</sup>

Some scholars have questioned the place of vv. 11-12 in this section. Wanke sees them (along with vv. 15, 17-18) as part of a redactional strand in which salvation is unconditional.<sup>191</sup> By contrast, in vv. 10, 13-14, 16 salvation is contingent upon remaining in the land. But this is unconvincing; the function of vv. 11-12 is to elucidate and reinforce the message of v. 10. It is a bizarre hermeneutic that detaches vv. 11-12 from this mooring and then claims that they lack a conditional clause.<sup>192</sup> Pohlmann argues that vv. 11-12 disrupt the two *אם* clauses of vv. 10 and 13.<sup>193</sup> Indeed, vv. 11-12 themselves conflict, for why should YHWH need to ‘rescue’ the people from Nebuchadrezzar, if the latter is well-disposed towards them?<sup>194</sup> But, as we argued earlier, without v. 12 the promise of v. 11 would be meaningless. As it is, these verses affirm that YHWH will ‘rescue’ his people by causing Nebuchadrezzar to be compassionate.

A significant shift occurs in vv. 17-18. Whereas v. 16 predicts ‘war and famine’ in a somewhat matter of fact fashion, vv. 17-18 refer to ‘war, famine and plague’ which they interpret in explicitly theological terms, i.e., as aspects of YHWH’s wrath.<sup>195</sup> The language

---

<sup>189</sup> Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 121-122, also notes how v. 16 counterbalances v. 14.

<sup>190</sup> According to Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 277, “the basic response of Jeremiah to the delegation can be isolated in vv. 9-12”, since these verses deal with the point at issue, the people’s fear of the Babylonians. By contrast, vv. 13-22 derive from ER. But the *אם* of v. 10 virtually demands the *אם לֹא* of v. 13. Duhm, *Jeremia*, 322, saw vv. 13-14, 19-21 as containing the only authentic material in this chapter.

<sup>191</sup> Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 120-124.

<sup>192</sup> We should also note that the promise of v. 10, though contingent on the people’s response, is also grounded in YHWH’s independent volition: כִּי נַחֲמֶתִי אֶל הָרָעָה אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתִי לָכֶם.

<sup>193</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 132.

<sup>194</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 132; likewise, Duhm, *Jeremia*, 322, and McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1034. In any case, v. 12 does not assert that the king *is* well-disposed towards the remnant, but that he *will be* so; we could paraphrase, ‘I will show you compassion *in that* he will show you compassion’.

<sup>195</sup> As Pohlmann, *Studien*, 144, correctly observes.

strongly resembles that found in ch. 44; the warning **ולא יהיה להם שריד ופליט** (v. 17) is repeated almost verbatim in 44.14, while the analogy between YHWH's wrath on Jerusalem and on the remnant (v. 18) finds a parallel in 44.13. Notable too is the switch to third person speech in v. 17 (**כל האנשים**). All this may suggest that vv. 17-18 are redactional comment,<sup>196</sup> possibly from a Deuteronomistic source.<sup>197</sup> At the same time, since the rest of the sermon clearly presents going to Egypt as disobedience to YHWH (vv. 13, 19), a declaration that doing so would issue in his wrath is hardly incongruous. We may conclude that in vv. 17-18 we have a different voice to that in vv. 10-16, but not necessarily a different speaker.

In vv. 19-22, we have a problem in that Jeremiah rebukes the people for rejecting YHWH's word before they have actually replied. Some scholars have transposed these verses with 43.1-3,<sup>198</sup> but **לא תבאו מצרים** (43.2) clearly presupposes **אל תבאו מצרים** (42.19). Duhm took v. 22 as redactional, and for vv. 19-21 followed the shorter text of OG,<sup>199</sup> but even OG presupposes **ולא שמעתם בקול יהוה**. Wanke regards the words framed by **ידע תדעו** (vv. 19b, 22a) as redactional, precisely because they anticipate the flight to Egypt;<sup>200</sup> however, even the material he retains includes the description of Egypt as **מקום אשר הפצתם** (ה) **לבוא לנו** (v. 22b). Pohlmann regarded vv. 19-21 as a distinct redactional layer, added to prepare us for "die unerwartet ablehnende Reaktion gegenüber Jeremia"<sup>201</sup> in 43.1ff. But again, the people's protest, **לא תבאו מצרים** (43.2), makes little sense without Jeremiah's explicit command **אל תבאו מצרים** (42.19).<sup>202</sup> In fact, in historical terms it is quite plausible that Jeremiah correctly anticipated the reaction of his audience.<sup>203</sup> Certainly, this is how the text as it stands represents him. More importantly, however, Jeremiah's declaration in

<sup>196</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 322-323; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1045 (though by ascribing v. 16 to the same redactor, both scholars obviate the distinction between vv. 16 and 17-18); Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 120-122 (who sees vv. 17-18 as from the same hand as vv. 11-12, 15); contra Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 63, who sees v. 17 as the sole authentic kernel in the entire sermon.

<sup>197</sup> Though this is disputed by Jones, *Jeremiah*, 474-475.

<sup>198</sup> Volz, *Jeremia*, 357-358, 361; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 218-220; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 252, 256. Less plausible still is Holladay's proposal, *Jeremiah 2*, 275, to read 42.19-21, 18 and 22 (in that order) after 43.3.

<sup>199</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 323-324.

<sup>200</sup> Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 123.

<sup>201</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 143.

<sup>202</sup> As Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 124, notes.

<sup>203</sup> Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 667; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 252-253; see too Bright, *Jeremiah*, 256.

vv. 19-22, so far from being a surprise, actually fulfils the reader's expectations. As we have seen, the 'rhetorical overkill' of the people's words in vv. 2-6 prepares us for a negative response to his message, while even within the body of the sermon, the tone has from v. 13 become progressively more ominous.<sup>204</sup> As was the case in 38.17-23, therefore, in 42.10-22 we see Jeremiah subverting his own message of conditional salvation.

43.1-7 reports the hostile reaction of the people to Jeremiah's message, and their decision to go to Egypt. In narrative terms, 43.7 clearly brings the entire story to an end, with their arrival in Tahpanhes. At the same time, in several respects 43.5-7 stand apart from 42.1 – 43.4, showing more in common with 40.7 – 41.18. The focus reverts from speech to action, and Jeremiah recedes once more into the background (in v. 6 he seems almost to be an afterthought). Moreover, after the explicitly theological tenor of 42.1 – 43.4,<sup>205</sup> 43.5-7 assumes a more restrained tone; in 43.6, אשר הניח נבוזראדן רב שבחים את גדליהו recalls the subtle criticism of Ishmael's actions in ch. 41. The wording of 43.5, ויקח יוחנן בן קרח וכל שרי החילים את כל שאריה, closely resembles 41.16a, and in both verses the 'remnant' is then defined in more detail (41.16b; 43.6). Most significant of all, in 41.16 and 43.5 the remnant appear to be subject to the actions of Johanan's men.<sup>206</sup> By contrast, 42.1, 8; 43.2, 4 depict the two groups as equal partners in seeking and then rejecting Jeremiah's advice.<sup>207</sup>

Whilst certainty is impossible, these stylistic and conceptual variations between 40.7 – 41.18; 43.5-7 on the one hand, and 42.1 – 43.4 on the other, probably reflect different literary sources. Thus Seitz sees in 43.1-3 the conclusion of the Scribal Chronicle, while vv. 4-6 stem from the Exilic Redaction: "At the literary level, Jer. 43.5-7 goes to great pains to portray the comprehensiveness of the contingent fleeing to Egypt . . . All Judah is there, and all are

---

<sup>204</sup> Cf. Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 277: "Developing the redactional motif at work in 21.7 and especially 24.8-10, Jer. 42.13-22 reverses Jeremiah's words of promise as it anticipates a disobedient decision . . . to flee to Egypt."

<sup>205</sup> Cf. Wanke's comment on 43.4: "Solcher Kommentar ist innerhalb der übrigen Erzählungen nirgends zu beobachten. Ihrem Stil entspricht es viel eher, sich auf die Mitteilung der Gespräche . . . und die Beurteilung des Verhaltens der handelnden Personen dem Leser zu überlassen." (*Untersuchungen*, 126).

<sup>206</sup> Pace de Boer, who claims that "the verb לקח indicates that those who are taken with them are carried away; not, however, that the carrying away takes place against their will" ('Some Remarks', 118).

<sup>207</sup> See Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 126 n.26: "Der deuteronomistischen Bearbeitung entspricht auch gut die Ausdehnung des aktiven Personenkreises auf das ganze Volk (v. 4). Demgegenüber nennen 43.2, 5 nur die Heerführer. Die Verantwortung nur einzelnen Personen aufzubürden, liegt nicht im Sinne der deuteronomistischen Theologie, der es um das Volksganze geht."

disobedient.”<sup>208</sup> Similarly, Pohlmann argues that the editor has combined a story of how Johanan’s group fled to Egypt (40.7 – 41.18) with one that told how ‘all the people from the smallest to the greatest’ came to Jeremiah to seek direction. This, he believes, also solves the puzzle of why in 42.1 the people ask Jeremiah to intercede for them, after the remark in 41.17 that they had already decided to go to Egypt.<sup>209</sup> In fact, Pohlmann’s view that 42.1ff. originally made no mention of Johanan’s contingent is questionable, requiring him to delete the references to the military officers in 42.1, 8 as glosses.<sup>210</sup> A more probable conclusion is that 40.7 – 41.18 is *historically* continuous but not *literarily* continuous with 42.1ff.<sup>211</sup> That is to say, the accounts are drawn from different sources, and use different terminology for the parties involved, but the parties are in reality the same and the events sequential.

Finally, we should note that 42.1 – 43.7 displays a number of parallels, verbal and conceptual, with 38.15-23. The remnant, like Zedekiah, invoke YHWH in an oath in seeking his direction (יהי יהוה בנו לעד אמת, 42.5; חי יהוה אשר עשה לנו את הנפש הזאת, 38.16), while Jeremiah’s promise, לא אמנע מכם דבר (42.4), echoes the king’s solemn אל תכחד ממנו דבר (38.14). The remnant, like Zedekiah, seem braced for bad news (אם טוב ואם רע, 42.6; cf. again אל תכחד ממני אל דבר, 38.15), but vow to obey ‘so that it may go well with us’ (למען אשר ייטב לנו, 42.6), thereby echoing Jeremiah’s וייטב לך (38.20). Jeremiah’s message to each party is to submit to the Babylonians, with אם ישוב תשבו (42.10, following OG) corresponding structurally to אם יצא תצא (38.17). Fear of the consequences of doing so is anticipated, in both cases with the unusual term דאנ (38.19; 42.16). At the same time, it is the counter-balancing negative clause, אם לא (38.18,

<sup>208</sup> Seitz, *Theology in Conflict*, 278. See too de Boer, ‘Some Remarks’, 120. By contrast, Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 119-131, treats 43.1-7 as part of the literary unit 41.16 to 43.7, but concedes that there is redactional supplementation in 43.4, 5b and 6a.

<sup>209</sup> Pohlmann, *Studien*, 124-125. Pohlmann is highly critical of the ‘psychological’ explanations of scholars like Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 218-219.

<sup>210</sup> Key to Pohlmann’s argument is v. 8: ויקרא אל יוחנן בן קרח ואל כל שרי החילים . . . ולכל העם. Whereas קרא ל means ‘summon, assemble’, he argues, קרא אל means ‘call to’, “wenn man sich in Rufnähe oder Sichtweite aufhält und direkter Kontakt möglich ist.” (*Studien*, 128). Since ten days passed before YHWH’s word came to Jeremiah (v. 7), he probably had to summon the people to hear it; thus, קרא ל is more appropriate than קרא אל. But this semantic distinction is questionable, since קרא אל can also mean ‘summon, gather together’ (2 Sam. 9.2; 14.33; 2 Kgs. 4.22, 36; 6.11; 7.10; 10.19).

<sup>211</sup> Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion*, 282, refers to “an overlapping of two documents, of which the first (closing with ch. 41) gives a condensed account of the migration to Egypt, while the second (ch. 42) relates in amplified detail Jeremiah’s unavailing opposition to the resolve of the military leaders.”

21; 42.13) which dominates his message, which ends by anticipating a negative response (38.21-23; 42.19-22).

### 5.5. Differentiation in 42.1 – 43.7: שארית יהודה / ישבי ירושלים

Both in OG and MT, the literary arrangement of Jer. is such that Jeremiah's message to the Judean remnant contains the final salvation oracle to be addressed to a group within the borders of Judah (just! – cf. 41.17); those that follow in MT (46.27-28; 50.4-5; 20) will address an exiled audience. As we have seen, in 42.10-22 the alternatives of salvation and judgement are configured around the issue of where the people will live (ישב). If they remain in their own land, they are assured of YHWH's mercy (רחמים, v. 12). If, however, they go to live in Egypt, the hardships they hope to avoid will follow them, and they will suffer YHWH's judgement.<sup>212</sup> In terms of the options presented to this group, we thus have a straightforward distinction between הישבים בארץ הזאת and הישבים בארץ מצרים.

This by itself, however, does not actually differentiate one Judean group from another. Rather, it simply provides a set of what Koenen referred to as 'Deuteronomistic alternatives', where a group or nation has to choose between two courses of actions. In this sense, the אשר עבר / אשר לא 'polarity' of ch. 42 is similar to the אשר עבר / אשר לא polarity of ch. 27. As was the case there, Jeremiah here envisages his audience responding *as one*. This is clear from the fact that they are consistently described in plural terms, either second person (ואם אמרים אתם . . . ואם שוב תשבו . . . , vv. 10, 13) or third person (כל האנשים אשר שמו את פניהם) (v. 17), and are conceived as thinking and speaking in the first person plural (לא נשב בארץ הזאת . . . כי ארץ מצרים נבוא . . . ושם נשב) (vv. 13-14). This *unitary* view of the group is maintained even when the narrator indicates their diversity: ולא שמע יוחנן בן קרח וכל שרי החילים וכל העם בקול יהוה (43.4). Granted, the matter then becomes more complex, with Johanan and his officers *taking* (לקח, v. 5) the rest of the people (who include Jeremiah and Baruch) off to Egypt; a source-critical explanation seems most likely here.

The language of Jeremiah's address does, however, point to a highly significant form of inner-Judean differentiation. We noted earlier that throughout this narrative, the group are

---

<sup>212</sup> It may be significant that Jeremiah uses the term ישב in relation to Egypt when he is voicing the thoughts of the remnant (vv. 13, 14), but גור when he is voicing his own perspective (vv. 15, 17, 22).



regularly referred to as שארית יהודה, 'the remnant of Judah'. Now this designation recalls, but does not repeat, the phrase used in 24.8 for those upon whom YHWH will bring disaster, i.e., שארית ירושלים, 'the remnant of Jerusalem'. This hint of a distinction between the two groups suddenly becomes explicit with YHWH's warning in 42.18: כאשר נתך אפי וחמתי על יושבי ירושלים. כן תתך חמתי עליכם. The polarity being created as Jeremiah addresses this group, therefore, is between the שארית יהודה / יושבי ירושלים of chs. 21 and 24, and the present שארית יהודה.

This distinction is reflected in several ways. Firstly, we saw in chapter two how, in 24.8, the שארית ירושלים is defined more precisely as הנשארים בארץ הזאת והישובים בארץ מצרים. That is to say, for the remnant of Jerusalem the two locations ('this land' and 'Egypt') stand in parallel; those living in either place will suffer YHWH's wrath. For the remnant of Judah, on the other hand, 'this land' and 'Egypt' are alternatives; to flee to Egypt will indeed incur judgement, but to remain in Judah will result in salvation. Consequently, the 'Deuteronomistic alternatives' in 42.10-22 polarise what was in ch. 24 a single entity.

Secondly, the manner in which YHWH's judgement and salvation are here described indicates that the remnant of Judah are – for the moment – distinct from *both* groups in ch. 24. As noted above, the promises והשיב אתכם (v. 10) and ובניתי אתכם ולא אהרס ונשעתי אתכם ולא אתוש (v. 12) form a double echo of YHWH's words to the exiles in 24.6. The remnant of Judah have the opportunity to participate in the blessings promised to the *Golah* community in Babylon. At the same time, they are warned that those who go to Egypt will die בחרב ברעב (v. 17; cf. 24.10) and will be לאלה ולשמה ולקללה ולחרפה (v. 18; cf. 24.9). These formulae do of course occur elsewhere in Jer., but the probability of an allusion to 21.4-7 and 24.8-10 is strengthened by the way in which YHWH explicitly compares the way he will deal with these Judeans with the way he dealt with the people of Jerusalem: כאשר נתך אפי וחמתי על יושבי ירושלים (42.18). Consequently, the text represents the שארית יהודה as distinct from, but capable of identifying with, the שארית ירושלים and the גלות יהודה.

The links with 24.6 do not exhaust the richness of the salvation promise in 42.10-12. As noted earlier, the exhortation אל תיראו מפני מלך בבל . . . כי אתכם אני להושיע אתכם ולהציל אתכם (v. 11) is applied otherwise in Jer. only to the prophet and the *Diaspora*. The assurance ואתן לכם רחמים (v. 12) is unparalleled in Jer. Both in their tone and content, therefore, these verses far exceed earlier promises of mere survival (21.9; 38.20), or even the hope of a viable community (27.12-18), that are offered to those who submit to the Babylonian yoke. The point

is worth noting, not least because Seitz is content to allocate all this material without further distinction to the Scribal Chronicle.<sup>213</sup> It is, indeed, arguable that they all stem from a common source, but it should not be assumed that they present a uniform message. The voice that we hear in 42.10-12 sounds a note of hope for the remnant that is much more akin to that sounded for the exiles in ch. 24 and for the prophet himself earlier in the book.<sup>214</sup>

The polarity of *ישבי ירושלם / שארית יהודה* becomes more ambiguous, however, when we explore the rationale underlying YHWH's offer of salvation. On the one hand, the fact that the 'remnant of Judah' is distinct from the 'remnant of Jerusalem' suggests that YHWH is willing to show compassion to the former precisely because they are a separate group. On the other hand, YHWH himself presents a startlingly different explanation: *כי נחמתי אל הרעה אשר עשיתי לכם* (42.10). Hope is possible because YHWH has relented from further disaster. There may, indeed, be a hint here of a theology that comes to expression in Isa. 40.1-2; salvation is open to those who have experienced judgement. Whether or not this thought is present in Jer. 42.10, however, it is clear that YHWH's offer of salvation is grounded in how he himself views the disaster he has brought. But, of course, the reference to *אשר עשיתי לכם* has the effect of blurring the distinction between 'the remnant of Judah' and 'the remnant of Jerusalem'; both alike, apparently, have experienced judgement. Consequently, the textual construal of the 'remnant of Judah' in 42.10-22 fluctuates between differentiating them from their counterparts in Jerusalem and Babylon, and seeing them as representative of Judah as a whole.

## 6. Jer. 45.1-5 [51.31-35]

### 6.1. Text

<p>31. ὁ λογος ὃν ἐλάλησεν Ἰερεμίας ὁ προφητῆς πρὸς Βαρουχ υἱὸν Νηριου ὅτε ἔγραφε τοὺς λόγους τοὺτους ἐν βιβλίῳ ἀποστοματος Ἰερεμίου ἐν τῷ ἐνιαυτῷ τῷ</p>	<p>1. הדבר אשר דבר ירמיהו הנביא אל ברוך בן נריה בכתבו את הדברים האלה על ספר מפי ירמיהו בשנה הרבעית ליהויקים בן יאשיהו מלך יהודה לאמר</p>
---	--

<sup>213</sup> On 42.10-12 Seitz writes: "Consistent with the prophet's counsel in the post-597 years (Jeremiah 27 – 29), especially as recorded prior to the events of 587 (Jeremiah 37 – 38), the leaders of the remnant are exhorted not to fear the Babylonians." (*Theology in Conflict*, 277; see too 291).

<sup>214</sup> This point is noted by Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 665-666: "This remnant, like the one in Babylon, was being offered the same promise of renewal and restoration . . . But in a negative way it became clear, as it was declared positively elsewhere, that the future lay with the exiles in Babylon (chs. 24, 29) and not with those who fled to Egypt or those who remained in the land."

τεταρτω τω Ιωακιμ υιω Ιωσια βασιλεως Ιουδα	
32. οὕτως εἶπε κυριος ἐπι σοι Βαρουχ	2. כה אמר יהוה אלהי ישראל עליך ברוך
33. ὅτι εἶπας οἰμμοι οἰμμοι ὅτι προσεθηκε κυριος κοπον ἐπι πονον μου ἐκοιμηθην ἐν στεναγμοις ἀναπαυσιν οὐχ εὖρον	3. אמרת אוי נא לי כי יסף יהוה יגון על מכאבי ינעתי באנחתי ומנוחה לא מצאתי
34. εἶπον αὐτῶ οὕτως εἶπε κυριος ἴδου οὐς ἐγὼ ὠκοδομησα ἐγὼ καθαίρω και οὐς ἐγὼ ἐφυτευσα ἐγὼ ἐκτιλλῶ	4. כה תאמר אליו כה אמר יהוה הנה אשר בניתי אני הרס ואת אשר נטעתי אני נתש ואת כל הארץ היא
35. και συ ζητησεις σεαυτῶ μεγαλα μη ζητησης ὅτι ἴδου ἐγὼ ἐπαγῶ κακα ἐπι πασαν σαρκα λεγει κυριος και δῶσω την ψυχην σου εἰς εὖρεμα ἐν παντι τοπῶ οὐ εἰς βαδισσης ἐκει	5. ואתה תבקש לך גדלות אל תבקש כי הנני מביא רעה על כל בשר נאם יהוה ונתתי לך את נפשך לשלל על כל המקמות אשר תלך שם

## 6.2. Textual Notes

v. 2. MT אלהי ישראל >OG: MT plus.

v. 3. OG ὅτι = כי >MT: Probably lost through haplography (repetition of ך from ברוך).<sup>215</sup> An initial כי would be normal in this type of clause; cf. כה אמר יהוה . . . כי אמרתם . . . כה אמר יהוה in 29.15, 21.

MT ינעתי, 'I have grown weary'; OG ἐκοιμηθην (Aor. Pass. κοιμῶ), 'I have gone to sleep': *BHS* suggests that OG is a corruption of ἐκοπωθην (Aor. Pass. κοπω, 'grow weary'), but Ziegler points out that κοπω occurs only twice in LXX, both times in very late texts (Ecc. 10.15; Jud. 13.1).<sup>216</sup> Ziegler also notes that while the alternative form κοπιῶ is used for יגע in Jer. 51[28].58; Lam. 5.5, and Ps. 6.7 (ἐκοπιῶσα ἐν τῷ στεναγμῷ μου), ἐκοπιῶσα could hardly have been confused with ἐκοιμηθην; we should thus either posit יצעתי (spread out, lay [down]) in the *Vorlage* or assume a rather free translation.<sup>217</sup> The latter seems more probable.

<sup>215</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 335; Volz, *Jeremia*, 371; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 226; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 184; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 133; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 744; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 683 n.1.

<sup>216</sup> Ziegler, *Beiträge*, 35.

<sup>217</sup> Ziegler, *Beiträge*, 35; the latter option is favoured by McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 1098.

v. 4. MT ואת כל הארץ היא >OG: MT plus.<sup>218</sup> As it stands, this is clearly intended as an interpretative gloss, ‘that is, the whole earth’ (for this rendition of הארץ, see below). Although the use of את with a subject is grammatically awkward, it is not unparalleled where the subject is in apposition to a direct object (cf. 1 Kgs. 2.32, את אבנר בן נר . . . ויהרגם בחרב; Ezek. 14.22, הרעה אשר הבאתי על ירושלם . . . את כל אשר הבאתי עליה).<sup>219</sup> Emendation may therefore be unnecessary.<sup>220</sup>

MT נשעתי . . . בניתי; OG ἐγὼ φάκοδομῆσα . . . ἐγὼ ἐφύτευσα: Since OG renders the Hebrew participles with finite verbs, the personal pronouns are grammatically unnecessary, and thus emphatic. However, this is probably the implied sense of בניתי and נשעתי in MT also.<sup>221</sup>

### 6.3. Exegetical Notes

v. 1. אשר דבר ירמיהו הנביא אל: The structure of this introductory formula occurs elsewhere in Jer. only in 51.59: אשר צוה ירמיהו הנביא את שריה. Noting other similarities between 45.1-5 and 51.59-64, and the fact that Baruch and Seraiah were brothers, Wanke argues that these two passages were originally transmitted together as an independent tradition.<sup>222</sup> He may, however, have overstated the parallels, which can in any case be explained in other ways.

הדברים האלה: The question of what ‘these words’ denote is a *crux interpretum*. Clearly, the ensuing מפי ירמיהו בשנה הרבעית ליהויקים בן יאשיהו מלך יהודה relates them to

<sup>218</sup> So Bright, *Jeremiah*, 184; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 307; McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 1096; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 744; however, Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 133, argues that OG omitted the phrase because of its obscurity.

<sup>219</sup> See further *DIHGS* §94, and rem. 6-7: “It seems more sensible to regard את accompanying subjects as (mildly) focussing or emphatic.”

<sup>220</sup> Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 226, and Volz, *Jeremia*, 371, suggest emending to אני מחריב or אחריב (‘I will lay waste’). Volz then suggests that ואת כל הארץ אחריב originally followed v. 5bα, הגני מביא רעה על כל בשר. G.R. Driver, ‘Linguistic and Textual Problems: Jeremiah’, *JQR* 28 (1937-1938) 122-123, emends to אני מכה (‘I will smite’); cf. Rudolph, *Jeremiah*, 226 (אכה). But Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 133, finds all such proposals too involved.

<sup>221</sup> So Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 310.

<sup>222</sup> Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 134, 140-142; his proposal is viewed sympathetically by Schulte, ‘Persönliche Heilsorakel’, 259. But see Graupner’s reply, *Auftrag*, 166-171.

Baruch's scroll (ch. 36), and many scholars accept this as the original meaning.<sup>223</sup> One difficulty with this is that since ch. 36 does not actually cite the contents of the scroll, a logical antecedent for האלה הדברים is lacking.<sup>224</sup> This problem is solved if we accept Rietzschel's thesis that ch. 45 originally stood at the end of ch. 20 (note the repetition of יגון in 20.18 and 45.3), so that האלה הדברים referred to the scroll as contained in chs. 1 – 20.<sup>225</sup> In its present context, however, האלה הדברים seems to require a more immediate referent. Consequently, many view יהודה . . . as redactional and relate האלה הדברים to the preceding narrative of chs. 37 – 44.<sup>226</sup> It has even been argued that the phrase denotes the oracles against the nations that immediately follow,<sup>227</sup> though of course this can apply only to Jer. MT. We will return to this question below (§5.4).

v. 3. אמרה: The prefacing of a prophetic message with the citation formula '(because) you said . . . ' often indicates that the cited words are in some way reprehensible; whether because they are arrogant (Isa. 14.13; 28.15; 37.24; Ezek. 27.3; 35.10), cynical (Mal. 3.14), despairing (Ezek. 33.10; cf. 37.11), or because they misconstrue reality (Jer. 29.15; Ezek. 11.5). Baruch's complaint will also earn a degree of censure.

אוי נא לי: The cry אוי לי is usually a response to national calamity, interpreted as divine judgement (Num. 21.29; 1 Sam. 4.7; Isa. 3.9; Jer. 4.13; 13.27; Hos. 7.13; Lam. 5.16).<sup>228</sup> Conversely, in 15.10 Jeremiah's אוי לי אמי כי ילדתני arises from the opposition of his compatriots. Indirectly, he also implicates YHWH (cf. 15.18b), since it is his preaching of YHWH's word that has caused this opposition. Here, however, Baruch directly attributes his suffering to YHWH (כי יסוף יהודה).

<sup>223</sup> E.g., Volz, *Jeremia*, 371; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 227; Weiser, *Jeremia*, 383-384; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 185; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 84-85; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 683; Lundbom, 'Expanded Colophons', 100-101 (but see now his commentary, below); Jones, *Jeremiah*, 482.

<sup>224</sup> Noted by Graupner, *Auftrag*, 164.

<sup>225</sup> Rietzschel, *Urrolle*, 127-131; so too Lundbom, *Jeremiah*, 94 (cf. Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 308-309).

<sup>226</sup> So Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 226; Duhm, *Jeremia*, 334-335; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 165 (though seeing האלה הדברים as itself secondary). S. Mowinckel, *Prophecy and Tradition: The Prophetic Books in the Light of the Study of the Growth and History of the Tradition* (ANVAO II, Hist. – Filos. Klasse, 1946 No. 3; Oslo: 1946) 45, suggested that the reference was to the entire book.

<sup>227</sup> So Ehrlich, *Randglossen*, 153; Seitz, 'Canonical Shape', 21-23. Neither find it necessary to delete the historical note in v. 1b; Seitz argues that a retrospective reference to Baruch's scroll is perfectly appropriate, since (according to 36.2) it included YHWH's words to the nations.

<sup>228</sup> Isa. 6.5 is the only exception. In Jer. 4.31, אוי נא לי is uttered by Jerusalem.

יגון . . . מכאוב . . . אנחה: Found mostly in exilic and post-exilic poetic texts, these terms are especially characteristic of individual laments; for אנחה ('sighing'), see Pss. 6.7; 31.11; 38.10; 102.6; Lam. 1.22; Job. 3.4, 24; for יגון ('sorrow, grief'), see Pss. 13.2; 31.11; for מכאוב ('pain'), see Pss. 38.17; 69.26; Lam. 1.12, 18.<sup>229</sup> In addition, יגון occurs twice in the laments of Jeremiah (8.18; 20.18). The language is too general to permit conclusions as to the cause of Baruch's suffering (see further §5.4 below). Duhm attributed Baruch's 'pain' to the fate of his people, and his 'sorrow' to his own circumstances,<sup>230</sup> but whether such a clear distinction between these terms can be supported is doubtful.<sup>231</sup> Graupner argues that the terminology signifies "ein bestimmtes Geschehen, das Gerichtshandeln Jahwes, oder die Reaktion derer, die das Gericht erlebt haben";<sup>232</sup> however, this overlooks Pss. 13 and 31, where there is no obvious sense of divine judgement.

מנוחה: This is normally translated 'rest'<sup>233</sup> (as in Ru. 1.9; 2 Sam. 14.17; 1 Kgs. 8.56; Isa. 28.12), i.e., relief from the turmoil just described. But מנוחה often means 'resting place' (e.g., Gen. 49.15; Num. 10.33; Deut. 12.9; Ps. 132.14; Isa. 11.10; 32.18), and when Baruch's complaint is read in the light of his forced migration to Egypt (43.4-7) and YHWH's promise to give him his life על כל המקמות אשר תלך שם (v. 5), this overtone may also be intentional.

<sup>229</sup> The stereotypical nature of this language in no way counts against its authenticity. For such a view vis-à-vis the laments in Jer., see G. Hölscher, *Die Profeten. Untersuchungen zur Religionsgeschichte Israels* (Leipzig; J.C. Heinrichs' sche Buchhandlung, 1914) 396-399; E. Gerstenberger, 'Jeremiah's Complaints: Observations on Jer. 15.10-21', *JBL* 82 (1963) 393-408; A.J.H. Gunneweg, 'Konfession oder Interpretation im Jeremiabuch', *ZTK* 67 (1970) 412-414; Carroll, *Chaos to Covenant*, 107-130 cf. 151. But conventional language is not *de facto* inauthentic. See J. Bright, 'Jeremiah's Complaints: Liturgy or Expressions of Personal Distress?', in Durham and Porter (eds.), *Proclamation and Presence*, 189-214; also Diamond, *Confessions*, 190; U. Mauser, *Gottesbild und Menschwerdung. Eine Untersuchung zur Einheit des Alten und Neuen Testaments* (BHT 43; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1971) 78 n.1; J.L. Crenshaw, 'The Human Dilemma and the Literature of Dissent', in D.A. Knight (ed.), *Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament* (The Biblical Seminar; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990) 236-237.

<sup>230</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 335; similarly Peake, *Jeremiah & Lamentations* 2, 211; A. Weiser, 'Das Gotteswort für Baruch. Jer. 45 und die sogenannte Baruchbiographie', in A. Weiser (ed.), *Glaube und Geschichte im Alten Testament und andere ausgewählte Schriften* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1961) 323.

<sup>231</sup> See Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 226 ("ein Unglück nach dem andern kommt über mich"); McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 1097.

<sup>232</sup> Graupner, *Auftrag*, 174.

<sup>233</sup> E.g., Duhm, *Jeremia*, 335 ('Ruhe'); Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 226 ('Ruhe'); Bright, *Jeremiah*, 184; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 307; McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 1096; Keown et al., *Jeremiah* 26 – 52, 270.

v. 4. תאמר אליו (כה): The command for Jeremiah to speak *to* Baruch disrupts the discourse structure of vv. 2-3, in which Jeremiah is addressing Baruch directly; it is probably secondary.<sup>234</sup>

אשר בניתי אני הרס ואת אשר נטעתי אני נתש: This is the final instance of the ‘build, plant’ refrain in Jer. (cf. 1.10; 12.14-17; 18.7-9; 24.6; 31.28; 31.38-40; 42.10).<sup>235</sup> Since in OG the oracle stands near the end of Jer., the use of these verbs in 1.10 and 51.34 creates a neat *inclusio* for the entire book.

The clause is doubly ambiguous. Firstly, *what* has YHWH built and planted? Many scholars assume that the allusion is to Israel / Judah;<sup>236</sup> cf. YHWH’s declaration to Israel in 2.21, ‘I planted you’ (ואנכי נטעתיך), and his description of Judah as ‘my house’ (ביתי, 12.7) and ‘my vineyard’ (כרמי, 12.10). On the other hand, in 1.10 and 18.9 the language of building and planting is applied to other nations; and in 25.31 YHWH’s ‘fold / habitation’ (נוהו) includes the whole earth (cf. v. 31).

Secondly, how should we understand the participles (cf. the finite and infinite verbs in previous instances of this refrain)? Do they refer to what YHWH is / has been doing, or anticipate a judgement still to come?<sup>237</sup> In OG, the setting of this oracle at the end of the book suggests the former; v. 4 interprets all that we have witnessed thus far, especially the overthrow of Judah and dispersal of its people as narrated in chs. 44 – 51. In MT, however, the ensuing OAN allow the participles to have a forward-looking aspect, and thereby also support an international interpretation of אשר בניתי . . . אשר נטעתי.

---

<sup>234</sup> So Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 226; Volz, *Jeremia*, 371; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 226; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 184; Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 133; Janzen, *Studies*, 134; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 744; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1096; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 161; contra A. Van Selms, ‘Telescoped Discussion as a Literary Device in Jeremiah’, *VT* 26 (1976) 99-103; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 309. Having emended v. 3a to כי אמר ברוך, Duhm, *Jeremia*, 335, is able to retain כה תאמר אליו in v. 4.

<sup>235</sup> For analysis of the different occurrences of this refrain, see Taylor, ‘Problem of Placement’, 89-92.

<sup>236</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 336; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 186; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 684; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1097; Schulte, ‘Persönliche Heilsorakel’, 262; Carolyn J. Sharp, ‘The Call of Jeremiah and Diaspora Politics’, *JBL* 119 (2000) 426-427.

<sup>237</sup> Scholars generally take the latter view; indeed, such a reading is often used to support a pre-587 date for the oracle (see too McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1100, and Graupner, *Auftrag*, 173). But note Thiel’s response: “doch beachte die Partizipialformulierungen!” (*Redaktion 26 – 45*, 87). Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 416, interprets these verbs as embracing “the present and immediate future”.

כל הארץ: This can be understood either as ‘the whole earth’, or ‘all the land’.<sup>238</sup> The latter is more usual in Jer. (1.18; 4.20; 8.16; 12.11; 15.10; 23.15; 25.11; 40.4), but in several places the context shows the whole world to be in view; e.g., 4.27 (note the השמים / הארץ contrast in v. 23); 50.23; 51.25, 41, 49. On balance, a global sense seems likely here; if the glossator wanted to identify Judah as the referent, we might have expected ואת כל יהודה היא. This may therefore represent a reinterpretation of v. 4a,<sup>239</sup> but we have seen that . . . אשר נטעתי . . . אשר בניתי is a semantically flexible phrase in the Jer. tradition.

v. 5. תבקש לך גדלות: Various interpretations have been offered of the ‘great things’ Baruch was seeking. Plausible suggestions include his social / political advancement,<sup>240</sup> or simply his personal security amidst YHWH’s judgement.<sup>241</sup> The text (intentionally perhaps) scarcely permits a specific answer, though the collocation of בקש and לא מצא (v. 3) suggests we relate גדלות to מנוחה. P.A.H. de Boer has argued that since גדלות elsewhere signifies YHWH’s ‘wonderful deeds’ (e.g., Deut. 10.21; Job. 5.9; Ps. 106.21), what Baruch was ‘seeking’ was an act of deliverance for Judah (cf. 21.2).<sup>242</sup> There is no reason to think that בקש here has intercessory significance,<sup>243</sup> but in any case de Boer’s proposal comes to grief on the particle

<sup>238</sup> For the former, see Keil, *Jeremia*, 172; Duhm, *Jeremia*, 336; Peake, *Jeremiah & Lamentations 2*, 211; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 226; Weiser, *Jeremia*, 383; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 85; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 683; McKane, *Jeremiah 2*, 1097. For the latter, see Volz, *Jeremia*, 371; Hyatt, ‘Jeremiah’, 1103; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 184; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 307; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 744; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 270; *DCH 1*, s.v. ארץ, 389. Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 416, is unsure.

<sup>239</sup> “It would seem that here are clear traces of a redactional struggle over the scope of the destruction prophesied in this oracle.” (Sharp, ‘Call of Jeremiah’, 427).

<sup>240</sup> So Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 745; Lundbom, ‘Expanded Colophons’, 101; cautiously, Streane, *Jeremiah 282*; Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion*, 347; Muilenburg, ‘Baruch the Scribe’, 237; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 684; Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 415 n.103. Cf. Duhm, *Jeremia*, 335: “Es war für ihn . . . der als ספר in Ägypten wohl nicht leicht Verdienst fand, die Zukunft dunkel genug, dazu hatte ihm wenigstens einmal (s. 43.3) die jüdische Kolonie ihre Abneigung deutlich ausgesprochen.”

<sup>241</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 227: “Immer hatte er von Vernichtung und Tod, von Krieg and Gefangenschaft zu schreiben; war es da verwunderlich, wenn ihn die Sorge um sein eigenes Schicksal umtrieb?” Similarly, Peake, *Jeremiah & Lamentations 2*, 211; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 310; Jones, *Jeremiah*, 483; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 177.

<sup>242</sup> So P.A.H. de Boer, ‘Jeremiah 45, verse 5’, in *Selected Studies*, 124-126; Schulte, ‘Persönliche Heilsorakel’, 261. But as de Boer acknowledges (125), גדלות can have other meanings, as in Ps. 12.4 (‘proud boasts’) and Jer. 33.3 (‘inscrutable facts’).

<sup>243</sup> An assumption made by de Boer, ‘Jeremiah 45 Verse 5’, 126; Schulte, ‘Persönliche Heilsorakel’, 261, and also Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 227. It is ironic that after criticising others for their eisegesis of v. 4, de Boer (126) interprets it as “a reaction to a prayer of Baruch which has not been preserved.” (italics mine).



לך;<sup>244</sup> that this denotes some form of self-concern is clearly implied by the ‘I – you’ logic of vv. 4-5, *אני הרס . . . ואתה אשר בניתי*.

*הנני מביא רעה*: Whilst the participles in v. 4 can be seen as retrospective, the use here of *הנני* points strongly in the direction of a future sense.<sup>245</sup>

*על כל בשר*: Although in a few instances *כל בשר* is shown by its context to refer solely to Israel / Judah (Jer. 12.12; Ezek. 20.48; 21.4, 5; Joel. 2.28), for the most part it has genuinely universal significance (Gen. 6.12, 13, etc; Isa. 40.5; 66.16; Jer. 25.31; 32.27; Job. 12.10; 34.15), which is probably how it should be understood here.<sup>246</sup> In this way, 45.5 forms a neat *inclusio* with the reference to worldwide judgement in 36.2 (*ועל כל הגוים*) and (in MT), anticipates the OAN that follow.

*ונתתי לך את נפשך לשלל*: This represents a slight variant on the previous form of the promise, *ונתתי לך (לך) נפשו(נפשך) לשלל* (21.9; 38.2; 39.18). It might be argued that the more personal *ונתתי לך* is appropriate in a context where YHWH is addressing his faithful servant, but the same could be said of 39.18, where he speaks to Ebed-Melech. There is, however, no basis for viewing the relationship of 45.5 to the earlier passages as one of ‘authentic prototype’ and ‘redactional copies’.<sup>247</sup>

#### 6.4. Coherence and Redaction

As with 39.15-18, most commentators view 45.1-5 as for the most part a literary unity.<sup>248</sup> Redaction is generally thought to be limited to v. 1b (see below), the prophetic formula

---

<sup>244</sup> de Boer’s claim, ‘Jeremiah 45 Verse 5’, 126, that this is an ‘ethical dative’ is clutching at straws.

<sup>245</sup> *GKC* §116p; *GBH* 2, §121e.

<sup>246</sup> So Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 226-227; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 227; Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 85; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 748; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 310; Schulte, ‘Persönliche Heilsorakel’, 261; Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 416; Sharp, ‘Call of Jeremiah’, 427; contra Duhm, *Jeremia*, 336 (whose citation of Isa. 66.23 is hardly decisive); B. Gosse, ‘Jérémie XLV et la Place du Recueil d’Oracles Contre les Nations dans le Livre de Jérémie’, *VT* 40 (1990) 148.

<sup>247</sup> So Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 86; Schulte, ‘Persönliche Heilsorakel’, 261-262; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 163 n.12.

<sup>248</sup> The essential authenticity of the oracle is also widely accepted; see Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 226; Duhm, *Jeremia*, 336; Volz, *Jeremia*, 371; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 227; Condamin, *Jérémie*, 294; Hyatt, ‘Jeremiah’, 1102; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 185; Kremers, ‘Leidensgemeinschaft’, 138; van Selms, ‘Telescoped Discussion’, 100; Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 308; Schulte, ‘Persönliche Heilsorakel’, 260-261; Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 86-87;

in v. 4a, and the MT plus in v. 4b, ואת כל הארץ היא. In particular, the internal coherence of vv. 3-5 is rarely questioned. Wanke has shown that these verses possess a *formal* unity (both in literary structure and metrical balance) and also a unity of *contents* (YHWH's declaration answering to Baruch's lament).<sup>249</sup>

Admittedly, a greater degree of redaction is detected by Thiel,<sup>250</sup> who sees the original core as comprising Baruch's lament (v. 3), the messenger formula in v. 4, and the two clauses in v. 5 which are directly relevant to Baruch: ואתה תבקש לך גדלות אל תבקש, and ונתתי לך את נפשך לשלל על כל המקומות אשר תלך שם. D has added all of vv. 1, 2 (where the messenger formula is 'out of place'), 4 (where the terms נחש, נטע, הרס, בנה are typical of D) and the internationalising והנני מביא רעה על כל בשר נאם יהוה in v. 5. Schulte also sees this last phrase as secondary, since it broadens the scope of the (original) v. 4,<sup>251</sup> while Sharp argues that v. 4 is secondary since it narrows the scope of the (original) v. 5.<sup>252</sup> There is no need here to rehearse the debate about the 'Deuteronomistic' nature of the language in v. 4, but we should note Thiel's admission concerning the way that salvation for Baruch is 'editorially' contrasted with judgement for the world: "Diese wirkungsvolle Kontrastierung erscheint an dieser Stelle als sachgemäß und als geschickt und organisch in den Kontext eingefügt, so daß wie selten sonst der Eindruck der Einheitlichkeit entsteht."<sup>253</sup> So organic, indeed, that one suspects the contrast was there from the beginning.<sup>254</sup>

---

Graupner, *Auftrag*, 172-173. However, for Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 135-136, the generality of Baruch's lament, and the lateness of its vocabulary, point in the opposite direction; see too Seitz, 'Canonical Shape', 22 ("this redactionally composed and placed chapter"). Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 746, is agnostic.

<sup>249</sup> Wanke, *Untersuchungen*, 134-135. Volz, *Jeremia*, 371, also calls attention to the poetic metre of vv. 3-5.

<sup>250</sup> Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 82-88. Hyatt, 'Jeremiah', 1102 sees D redaction in v. 1b, 4, 5b, while Kremers, 'Leidensgemeinschaft', 129 n.16, deletes v. 2 as superfluous and pedantic.

<sup>251</sup> Schulte, 'Persönliche Heilsorakel', 261.

<sup>252</sup> Sharp, 'Call of Jeremiah' 427; she also accepts Thiel's view that v. 4 interrupts the focus on Baruch.

<sup>253</sup> Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 88.

<sup>254</sup> Moreover, as McKane points out, *Jeremiah* 2, 1106, Thiel's argument suffers from inconsistency: "It is difficult to discern why the word-string ונתתי לך נפשך לשלל should be accepted as a Jeremianic prototype for D passages with ונתתי לך נפשך לשלל or the like, whereas the series build / demolish, plant / uproot (v. 4) should be denied the status of a Jeremianic prototype in what is the most poetic part of the oracle." For further criticisms of Thiel's argument, see Graupner, *Auftrag*, 161-163.

The main problem, of course, relates to the placement of the oracle, and thus to the historical note in v. 1b which links it to Baruch's writing of the scroll in the year 604. As we saw earlier, many scholars accept the accuracy of this dating.<sup>255</sup> It is argued that the very incongruity of v. 1b speaks in its favour, for why would such a reference be added to a passage that otherwise has no obvious connection with ch. 36?<sup>256</sup> Moreover, vv. 4-5 imply that judgement is still to come.<sup>257</sup> Naturally, the question then is why the oracle has been placed where it has.<sup>258</sup> This is explained, variously, as due to Baruch's modesty,<sup>259</sup> as his personal testimony (*Denkmal*) to God's grace,<sup>260</sup> or to the truth of the prophetic word,<sup>261</sup> as a mark of honour to Baruch by his editors,<sup>262</sup> or as an appropriate conclusion to Baruch's *Leidensgeschichte* of Jeremiah. According to Muilenburg, "it belonged with ch. 36, certainly, but it belonged even more profoundly at the point where he had completed the record of Jeremiah's trials and rejections, the end of the *via dolorosa* he had been fated to walk with the prophet."<sup>263</sup>

Others, however, reject an original connection between ch. 45 and the writing of the scroll. Apart from the difficulty v. 1b creates for the words *הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה*, Baruch's despair (v. 3) is thought to be unlikely as early as 604, when Judah's repentance was still hoped for: "Diese Klage bereits ein gerütteltes Maß leidvoller Erfahrungen voraussetzt und so auf einen viel

---

<sup>255</sup> E.g., Volz, *Jeremia*, 371; Peake, *Jeremiah & Lamentations 2*, 209-210; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 227; Weiser, 'Gotteswort', 322-323; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 185; van Selms, 'Telescoped Discussion', 100-101; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 683; Jones, *Jeremiah*, 482.

<sup>256</sup> So Weiser, 'Gotteswort', 322; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 308; Jones, *Jeremiah*, 482. The same point is made by Seitz, 'Canonical Shape', 20, who, however, views the whole chapter as redactional.

<sup>257</sup> Volz, *Jeremia*, 372; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 227; Weiser, 'Gotteswort', 322.

<sup>258</sup> Of those who accept the integrity of v. 1b, only Bright, *Jeremiah*, lxxvii, believes that ch. 45 originally stood next to ch. 36. Most accept that its present position is original.

<sup>259</sup> Peake, *Jeremiah & Lamentations 2*, 209.

<sup>260</sup> "Und so setzt er mit der Mitteilung dieses an ihn gerichteten Gottesspruchs nicht so sehr seiner eigenen Schwachheit als der göttlichen Gnade ein Denkmal, die ihn durch Not und Tod hindurchrettete." (Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 228).

<sup>261</sup> So Weiser, 'Gotteswort', 329: "seine eigenhändige Unterschrift . . . mit dem er noch einmal an die Seite seines Meisters tritt als Zeuge für die Wahrheit und den Bestand der Gottesworte".

<sup>262</sup> Kessler, 'Jeremiah 26-45 Reconsidered', 87.

<sup>263</sup> Muilenburg, 'Baruch the Scribe', 236; cf. Volz, *Jeremia*, 373: "Es ging dem Meister selbst wie dem Jünger".

späteren Zeitpunkt als 605 verweist”, writes Thiel.<sup>264</sup> Consequently, some argue that the period immediately before or after the fall of Jerusalem is a more plausible setting.<sup>265</sup> Thiel himself suggests that Baruch uttered this lament when he was taken off to Egypt (43.4-7), and that this was in fact its original setting in the book.<sup>266</sup> Duhm and Skinner situate it after his arrival in Egypt; according to Skinner, “it reads . . . like a farewell oracle, perhaps even a death-bed charge.”<sup>267</sup>

In response, it must again be said that the language of v. 3 is too general to allow us to assign it with confidence to *any* particular event in Baruch’s life. By the same token, however, there is no reason to judge it inappropriate to the setting given in v. 1b.<sup>268</sup> On balance, it would seem that the ‘mainstream’ explanation is to be preferred; namely, that v. 1b accurately witnesses to the original setting of the oracle, which has achieved its present position secondarily.<sup>269</sup> For interpretative purposes, however, the question is somewhat sterile. If Baruch’s lament was originally prompted by his forced migration to Egypt, it has been secondarily connected with the writing of the scroll; and if it was originally connected with the writing of the scroll, it has secondarily been connected with the flight to Egypt. Ultimately, Taylor’s verdict must be accepted as correct: “Whereas the superscription functions as one hermeneutic guide, the reader is given many other hermeneutic clues which suggest that the

---

<sup>264</sup> Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 87.

<sup>265</sup> For the former view, see Schulte, ‘Persönliche Heilsorakel’, 260-261; Graupner, *Auftrag*, 172-173. For the latter, see Giesebrecht, *Jeremia*, 226; Hyatt, ‘Jeremiah’, 1102.

<sup>266</sup> Thiel, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 87-88. A similar view is adopted by Graupner, *Auftrag*, 172-173, 181-182, who, however, argues that *historically* the oracle belongs shortly before 587.

<sup>267</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 334-335; Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion*, 346.

<sup>268</sup> According to Bright, *Jeremiah*, 185, “it is quite possible that as (Baruch) heard the awful words of judgment which Jeremiah dictated to him . . . he became so oppressed by the horrors that the future had in store that all hope and joy died within him.” (similarly Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 309). Such a comment should certainly be recognised as speculative, but is not to be simply dismissed as ‘psychologising’ (as it is by Taylor, ‘Problem of Placement’, 80; Seitz, ‘Canonical Shape’, 20) – as if Baruch had no psychology. In fact, as Seitz also points out (20), redactional theories such as those which delete the historical note in v. 1b are no less ‘psychologising’.

<sup>269</sup> There is little to be said for retaining *בשנה הרבעית* but deleting *את הדברים האלה על ספר מפי ירמיהו* ליהויקים בן יאשיהו מלך יהודה. As Thiel remarks, *Redaktion 26 – 45*, 84, “die starke Entsprechung zu 36.1,4 macht es notwendig, 1b als Ganzes zu beurteilen.”

historical referentiality is coded or symbolic in this chapter, so that a solely historical reading is inadequate."<sup>270</sup>

### 6.5. Differentiation in Jer. 45.1-5: ברוך בן נריה / כל בשר

Our final example of inner-Judean differentiation within Jer. has striking parallels (though also important differences) with that found in 39.15-18. Just as Ebed-Melech will be saved when YHWH brings disaster upon 'this city', so Baruch is singled out from divine judgement on Judah and indeed all humanity. He too is promised his life 'as booty'. At the same time, however, the tone and content of the promise is more restrained than that given to the Ethiopian. Notably absent are any assurances that YHWH will 'rescue' and 'save' him (cf. 39.17-18). Indeed, according to Gunneweg, "Kap. 45 kein Heilswort für Baruch enthält, sondern die Abweisung seiner Klage."<sup>271</sup> For Baruch, as for Jeremiah, "bleibt nur noch die eine Hoffnung, die eigentlich keine Hoffnung ist, mit dem Leben davon zu kommen, Leben unter dem Zorn des Deus absconditus, den diese Gerechten dennoch nicht verdient haben."<sup>272</sup> Only slightly more positive is the verdict of Carroll: "a moment of hope (strictly delimited) is allowed to penetrate the utter gloom. Communal devastation cannot be avoided, but in all the great slaughter named individuals survive as the booty of war."<sup>273</sup>

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to miss the salvific elements in YHWH's address to Baruch. As the first-person form of the promise *ונתתי לך את נפשך לשלל* (v. 5) implies, Baruch will keep his life due to YHWH's personal attention; the fact that this promise is valid *על כל שם* (v. 5b) emphasises this fact. For Baruch as for Ebed-Melech, what is at stake is not simply escape but the ongoing watchful protection of YHWH.

From whom is Baruch differentiated? The semantic fluidity of ch. 45 means that several answers are possible. Read in its immediate literary context, the announcement of judgement in

---

<sup>270</sup> Taylor, 'Problem of Placement', 94.

<sup>271</sup> Gunneweg, 'Konfession oder Interpretation', 415 n.64.

<sup>272</sup> Gunneweg, 'Konfession oder Interpretation', 415.

<sup>273</sup> Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 749. Contrast the optimism of Clements, *Jeremiah*, 243: "This positive and reassuring message at first glance appears to be little enough. On reflection, however, we can see it has a wealth of meaning . . . Life itself is a precious gift and always provides a fundamental opportunity for the knowledge and service of God."

v. 4 has application to the Judean remnant now in Egypt. It is from this group, therefore, that Baruch is singled out. Consequently, when read as a whole chs. 42 – 45 present a form of ‘double differentiation’ comparable to that in chs. 38 – 39. There, a choice is given to the people of Jerusalem; those who leave the city will live, but those who stay will die (38.1-3). The subsection concludes, however (39.151-8) with a salvation oracle for Ebed-Melech, for whom such issues are immaterial. Likewise, 42.9-18 sets two alternatives before the Judean remnant; to stay in the land will result in YHWH’s blessing, but to go to Egypt will ensure his wrath. This latter scenario is confirmed in ch. 44. In ch. 45, however, we find that even among the fugitives to Egypt, an exemption will be made. Not only so, but by concluding with the assurance that Baruch will have his life as booty *על כל המקמות אשר תלך שם*, ch. 45 expressly sets aside the issues of staying (*ישב*) and going (*בוא*) which were so central to ch. 42. In contrast to the Judean remnant, where Baruch goes is utterly irrelevant.

When read within the wider book, the differentiation of Baruch from the Judean remnant in Egypt brings to an end a series of exemptive moves by YHWH. After the indiscriminate judgement of chs. 1 – 20, it suddenly emerges that there is, after all, a future for the 597 exiles (ch. 24). Although that particular configuration leaves no hope for any of Zedekiah’s people, during the siege of Jerusalem Jeremiah announces that those who ‘go out’ to the Babylonians will save their lives. In turn, that analysis seems to preclude hope for anyone else, but after the deportations of 587, the poor of the land and the returnees from the surrounding nations form a community. To this group, Jeremiah holds out the prospect of hope if they stay in the land. Now that community too has disobeyed by going to Egypt, but Baruch is singled out from among them.<sup>274</sup>

At the same time, the language of 45.3-5 implies that Baruch (like Ebed-Melech) is being aligned with the figure of Jeremiah – who, of course, also stands over against the whole nation. Their solidarity in opposition to the Judean remnant has, of course, already been signalled in the preceding narrative, when the people accuse Baruch of ‘inciting’ Jeremiah against them (43.3). Moreover, the verbal and conceptual links we have observed between

---

<sup>274</sup> The relationship of the promise to Baruch to the wider picture of the book is noted by Taylor: “The promise is here given to one who is no longer a member of a group for which hope is still held out, that is, the group that remained in the land after the first exile (cf. 42.10), and those who are a part of the Babylonian exile (cf. 24.6). For the reader of ch. 45, the more comprehensive promises of future hope and salvation (cf. 31.4ff.) echo but faintly at this point.” (‘Problem of Placement’, 93).

Baruch's lament in 43.3 and those of Jeremiah can scarcely be coincidental. As O'Connor notes, both individuals express 'woe' (אָרִי נָא לִי; cf. 15.10), and complain of sorrow (יָגִין, 8.18; 20.18), pain (מִכְאוֹב; cf. כָּאֵב, 15.18) and weariness (יָגַע; cf. לָאֵה, 20.9). Both attribute their suffering to YHWH (יִסְרָף יְהוָה; cf. 15.18; 20.7-8). To both individuals, YHWH replies with a rebuke (45.4; 12.5; 15.19) and uses language similar to that of the call narrative (45.4; 1.10; 15.20).<sup>275</sup>

This being so, we might conclude that Baruch, like Jeremiah, is paradigmatic of the righteous sufferer. According to Brueggemann, "that Baruch finds 'no rest' means that he has gotten the consequence appropriate to the wicked, but he himself is a righteous, obedient man. Thus, the complaint of Baruch voices a question of theodicy".<sup>276</sup> Taking up this last point, Clements suggests that, historically speaking, the *personae* of Jeremiah and Baruch articulate the outlook of a pious 'inner-community' among the *Diaspora* Jews:

If there was no hope at all for those who had fled to Egypt (42.22) then it would follow that even these two loyal worshippers taken there unwillingly could have no individual hope. Would this not then have been deeply unfair of God to deal with such loyal and righteous individuals wholly in terms of the two communities to which they now belonged? . . . The prophecy addressed to Baruch by Jeremiah in 45.4-5 deals with this issue . . . Baruch is presented here as representative of all the loyal Jewish citizens carried unwillingly into an alien and hostile world.<sup>277</sup>

At the same time, the fact that Baruch, unlike Ebed-Melech, is given no word of commendation should be taken seriously. Taylor may therefore be correct to see Baruch as typifying the 'disobedient righteous sufferer':

Even though the reader is not told why Baruch merited divine favour, the structure of the narrative may suggest that Baruch, like Ebed-melech, is rewarded because of his faith and obedience to the divine word. On the contrary, it could be argued that the lack of a merit clause in Baruch's oracle suggests that Baruch was given the promise despite the absence of the 'truth' that Ebed-melech had. In any case, these men representing the faithful (or perhaps in the case of Baruch, the faithful servant who is presently so locked up in his own pain that he is not acting in faith) provide a telling foil to the flagrantly disobedient multitudes who will necessarily come under judgment.<sup>278</sup>

---

<sup>275</sup> O'Connor, *Confessions*, 96.

<sup>276</sup> Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 415; cf. Taylor, 'Problem of Placement', 89.

<sup>277</sup> Clements, *Jeremiah*, 242-243. Alternatively, Seitz, 'Canonical Shape', 16-18, concludes that "Ebed-Melech and Baruch are types modelled on Caleb and Joshua in the canonical movement of the Book of Jeremiah. All four figures are contrasted with the generations of which they were a part" (17-18). For Seitz, the textual emphasis on Baruch as 'scribe' (סֹפֵר) indicates that he (like Caleb and Joshua) represents a new form of leadership among the scattered people, in which prophecy gives way to *tôrâh*.

<sup>278</sup> Taylor, 'Problem of Placement', 93.

## 7. Summary: Differentiation in Jer. 42 – 45

Jer. 42 – 45, like chs. 38 – 39, presents a complex and shifting picture of inner-Judean differentiation. 42.10-22 utilises the ‘exiles in Babylon / remnant of Jerusalem’ polarity of 24.1-10, but configures the ‘remnant of Judah’ as a distinct entity who, by their actions, can align themselves with either group. At the same time, YHWH’s reference to ‘the disaster I have brought upon *you*’ (42.10) places them in continuity with their compatriots, and their pre-determined rejection of Jeremiah’s message renders the offer hypothetical. The placement of the oracle to Baruch (45.1-5), promising him YHWH’s protection wherever he goes, serves to differentiate him from the remnant of Judah with whom he has come to Egypt, but v. 5 also distinguishes him from ‘all flesh’ upon whom YHWH is bringing disaster. In this way, Baruch, like Ebed-Melech, is configured alongside Jeremiah, standing over against an evil nation.



## Chapter 5. Undifferentiated Salvation: Jer. 30 – 31

### 1. Introduction

We have now examined how the concept of inner-Judean differentiation is interpreted by three distinct units in Jer. 21 – 45. Before turning to draw conclusions from this study, however, some brief comments are in order concerning two chapters in Jer. 21 – 45 which we have so far overlooked. We noted in our first chapter that Jer. 1 – 20 presents a message of undifferentiated judgement; as we will now show, Jer. 30 – 31 provides a counter-balancing pole, with prophecies of undifferentiated salvation. It should be emphasised that what is said here is intended as no more than a sketch of these two chapters.

### 2. Jer. 30 – 31 as a Literary Unit

With their forward-looking perspective and dramatic message of salvation, including what for many is the high point of OT theology (the new covenant prophecy in 31.31-34), the so-called ‘Book of Consolation’ has been described as “the pivotal centre” and “the functional centre” of Jer.<sup>1</sup> Granted, scholars differ as to its scope; some restrict the title to chs. 30 – 31,<sup>2</sup> while others apply it to all of chs. 30 – 33.<sup>3</sup> There are, certainly, marked differences between the first two chapters (mostly poetic, and with a strongly ahistorical quality; Jeremiah is wholly absent) and the latter two (almost entirely prose, and set in the context of the Babylonian siege; Jeremiah is central throughout). On the other hand, chs. 30 – 31 and 32 – 33 can be seen as counterbalancing each other; both include YHWH’s promise of a ‘covenant’ (ברית חדשה, 31.31;

---

<sup>1</sup> Clements, *Jeremiah*, 8, and Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos*, 78, respectively.

<sup>2</sup> So Duhm, *Jeremia*, 237; C. Levin, *Die Verheißung des neuen Bundes in ihrem theologieggeschichtlichen Zusammenhang ausgelegt* (FRLANT 137; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985) 159; Jones, *Jeremiah*, 339; G. Fischer, *Das Trostbüchlein. Text, Komposition und Theologie von Jer. 30 – 31* (SBB 26; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1993); Becking, ‘Book of Consolation’, 148; Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 82; Parke-Taylor, *Formation*, 300. Applegate, ‘Peace, Peace’, 74, speaks of “a sharp disjunction between the end of ch. 31 and the beginning of 32 in terms of literary form and theme.”

<sup>3</sup> So Bright, *Jeremiah*, 284; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 551; M. Biddle, ‘The Literary Frame Surrounding Jeremiah 30.1 – 33.26’, *ZAW* 100 (1988) 409-413; McConville, *Judgment and Promise*, 92-95; M.A. Sweeney, ‘Jeremiah 30 – 31 and King Josiah’s Program of National Restoration and Religious Reform’, *ZAW* 108 (1996) 569; Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos*, 78; Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 264; Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1 – 20*, 97.

ברית עולם, 32.40), with its declaration, ‘I will be their God and they will be my people’ (31.33; 33.38).<sup>4</sup> Also unifying them is the phrase *שוב שבות* (‘render a restoration’). Though it is found elsewhere in the OT, Bracke observes that “by far the greatest concentration of occurrences is found in Jeremiah 29 – 33”,<sup>5</sup> adding that “while the phrase is used initially in Jer 29.14, the promises of which it is a part are not developed until Jer 30.3, where *šûb šēbût* is used in the heading of Jer 30 – 33.”<sup>6</sup> Consequently, Biddle is probably right to speak of all four chapters possessing a certain unity “at the secondary level”.<sup>7</sup> Here, however, we shall focus on the accepted core of the Book of Consolation, chs. 30 – 31, and highlight four features of the text which emphasise the comprehensiveness of their vision of salvation.

### 3. Undifferentiated Salvation in Jer. 30 – 31

#### 3.1. The Inclusion of Israel and Judah

Given the predominant Judean focus of Jer., one of the most striking features of the Book of Consolation is its affirmation that both Israel and Judah will share in YHWH’s restoration. True, only the introduction (30.3-4) and the new covenant prophecy (31.27-34) mention both kingdoms together. Elsewhere, we have two oracles addressed to ‘Israel’ (31.3-6, 21-22), four to ‘Israel / Jacob’ (30.5-7, 10-11; 31.7-9, 10-14), two to Judah (31.23-24, 38-40) and one to Zion (30.12-17).<sup>8</sup> This audience variation has often been explained by the hypothesis that 30.5 – 31.22 contains authentic oracles addressed to the former northern kingdom, supplemented with (post-) exilic material incorporating Judah into YHWH’s promises (cf. the

---

<sup>4</sup> Other terms common to both sections are *סלח*, ‘forgive’ (31.34; 33.8; elsewhere only in 5.1, 7; 36.3; 51.20); *עלה ארכה*, ‘bring healing’ (30.17; 33.6; elsewhere only in 8.22); *רפא*, ‘heal’ (30.17; 33.6) and *מוסר* / *יסר*, ‘discipline’ (30.11; 31.18; 32.33). MT heightens the counterbalancing of chs. 30 – 31 and 32 – 33 with its second ‘creation guarantee’ passage (33.19-26 >OG; cf. 31.35-37).

<sup>5</sup> Bracke, ‘Reappraisal’, 236. The phrase occurs in 29.14; 30.3, 18; 31.23; 32.44; 33.7, 11, 26.

<sup>6</sup> Bracke, ‘Reappraisal’, 236. We might also note that the phrase *עוד (לא)* (‘once more; no longer’) finds one third of its fifty-four Jeremianic instances in chs. 30 – 33.

<sup>7</sup> Biddle, ‘Literary Frame’, 410.

<sup>8</sup> There may also be a reference to Judah in 30.18, if the ‘city’ (*עיר*) is Jerusalem, and *ארמון* the royal palace. However, these identifications are uncertain (see Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 561).

suggestion in *BHS* that ואל יהודה in 30.4 is secondary).<sup>9</sup> The theory is not without its merits, although its proponents differ in their assessments of how much is authentic; in any case, ‘Israel’ (30.10; 31.2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 21) and ‘Jacob’ (30.7, 10, 18; 31.7, 11) may actually signify the entire *Diaspora*, as they do frequently in later biblical literature (Isa. 40.27; 41.8; 43.1; 49.5; cf. Ps. 79.7; 147.19).<sup>10</sup> Two points, however, should be noted. Firstly, even if we isolate the ‘Israel / Jacob’ material from the ‘Judah / Zion’ material, there is no hint of mutual polemicising.<sup>11</sup> Secondly, within the final form of the text, there is the unambiguous expectation of both kingdoms reunited under YHWH’s blessing (as in 3.18; 50.4, 33).

### 3.2. The Non-specific Nature of the *Diaspora*

Whereas ch. 29 is (at least initially) addressed to the community exiled to Babylon in 597, chs. 30 – 31 are consistently ambiguous regarding the identity and location of their audience. In 30.10, YHWH pledges to rescue his people from ‘a distant place’ (רחוק) and from ‘the land of their captivity’ (ארץ שבים), even though he has scattered them ‘among all the nations’ (בכל הגוים, v. 11). 31.8 anticipates their return from ‘a land of the north’ (ארץ צפון) and ‘the ends of the earth’ (ירכתי הארץ), while in 31.16, YHWH assures Rachel that her children will return from ‘an enemy land’ (ארץ אייב). We might note that 30.10-11 and 31.8 describe the place of *Diaspora* both as a singular (רחוק, ארץ שבים, ארץ צפון) and a plural (בכל הגוים,

<sup>9</sup> See (with variations) Duhm, *Jeremia*, xiii; Volz, *Jeremia*, 284-302; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 159; Weiser, *Jeremia*, 273-275; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 284-285; Böhmer, *Heimkehr und neuer Bund*, 81-85; B.S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1979) 351; Lust, ‘Gathering and Return’, 132-133; N. Lohfink, ‘Der junge Jeremia als Propagandist und Poet. Zum Grundstock von Jer. 30 – 31’, in Bogaert, *Le Livre de Jérémie*, 351-368; Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 156; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 552; Unterman, *Repentance to Redemption*, 38-51; Clements, ‘Prophet of Hope’, 123-141; T. Odashima, *Heilsworte im Jeremiabuch. Untersuchungen zu ihrer vordeuteronomistischen Bearbeitung* (BWANT 125; Stuttgart, 1989) 130, 305; Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 102-103, 133-172; Sweeney, ‘Jeremiah 30 – 31’, 569-583; Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1 – 20*, 98.

<sup>10</sup> Duhm, *Jeremia*, 239; Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 113-114.

<sup>11</sup> Note Rudolph’s remark, *Jeremia*, 165, on the application of the term ‘Ephraim’ to Israel in 31.9: “dieses Vorrecht Efraims wird hier nicht (wie 2 Sam. 19.44; LXX 1 Chr. 5.1f.) gegen Juda ausgespielt, das außerhalb des Blickfelds bleibt, sondern den anderen Völkern gegenüber betont (vgl. 7a.; 2.3; 3.19)”. Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 110-187, argues that while the Jacob, Rachel and Ephraim texts (30.5-7, 18-21; 31.15-22) anticipate the resettlement of Samaria and Judah, the Zion texts (31.6, 10-14) interpret the repopulation of Samaria merely as a prelude to its people coming to worship in Jerusalem. If this is correct, we would have to reckon with some tension between the different redactional layers over the centrality of Jerusalem, but the pan-Israel nature of YHWH’s salvation would not be in dispute.

(ירכתי הארץ). The expression ירכתי הארץ in 31.8 is probably plural only in form; in 6.22, it parallels ארץ צפון. But what of the juxtaposition of בכל הגוים with ארץ שבים? Whilst בכל הגוים may denote a plurality of exilic locations,<sup>12</sup> it is possible that the writer is using a plural idiom with a single referent; this is the case in 46.27-28, where the same promise follows the oracle against Egypt, and we suggested earlier that in 29.14, מכל הגוים ומכל המקומות may represent the application of a stock phrase to Babylon, rather than to a wider *Diaspora*. In 30.10-11, however, even if only one location is in mind, it is certainly not specified.<sup>13</sup>

Similarly, although chs. 30 – 31 refer to Israel's enemies, none are actually identified. Again, there is some variation as to whether *an* enemy or *several* enemies is in view. 30.16 lists 'all who devour you' (כל אכליך), 'all your enemies' (כל צריך), 'those who plunder you' (שאסיד), and 'all who loot you' (כל בזיך), while 30.20 refers to 'all who oppress him' (כל לחציו). A single oppressor is implied, however, in 31.10-14, where YHWH will redeem Jacob 'from the hand of one stronger than he' (מיד חזק ממנו, v. 11); here, the other nations serve merely as witnesses to YHWH's salvation (31.10).

### 3.3. The Personification of Israel

As noted above, the significance of the names 'Jacob', 'Ephraim' and 'Rachel' in chs. 30. – 31 has often been sought in terms of their historical referents, i.e., as cyphers for the former northern kingdom. At least as significant, however, is how these personifications function at a poetic level. For one of the most striking features of the Book of Consolation is its use of individual metaphors for its addressees.

Dominant among these is 'Jacob'. The name first occurs in 30.5-7, where כל גבר ידיו על (v. 5) gives way to the corporate ועת צרה היא ליעקב וממנה יושע (v. 7b). Similarly, whilst the promise כי הנני מושיעך מרחוק ואת זרעך מארץ שבים (30.10b) differentiates between the exiles

<sup>12</sup> "The dispersion, therefore, is broader than Babylon." (Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 94). Rudolph, *Jeremiah*, 161, explains the plural by noting that, according to 2 Kgs. 17.6, the Israelites were dispersed to various Mesopotamian lands.

<sup>13</sup> Thus, Volz, *Jeremiah*, 288, 290, and Rudolph, *Jeremiah*, 161, take 30.10-11 to refer to the Israelite exiles in Assyria, while Bright, *Jeremiah*, 284-285, sees it as addressed to Judean exiles in Babylon.

and their children, these same people are in the same verse addressed as ‘Jacob’ (v. 10a, c).<sup>14</sup> In 31.7, Jacob is equated with the *שארית ישראל*, whom YHWH will save; while in 31.11, the statement *פדה יהוה את יעקב וגאלו מיד חזק ממנו* is followed in vv. 12-14 by third person plural forms (*ובאו ורננו*).<sup>15</sup> In addition, the people are depicted as ‘Ephraim’. In 31.9, the parallelism with ‘Israel’ (*כי הייתי לישראל לאב ואפרים בכרי הוא*) shows the entire nation to be in view, while in 31.18-19, Ephraim’s confession (*אפרים מתנודד*, v. 18) prompts YHWH’s affirmation, *הבן יקיר לי אפרים* (v. 20).

There are also two contrasting female metaphors for the scattered people. Twice, they are described as a *בתולה*, an image that is itself semantically fluid; this *בתולה* is YHWH’s virgin bride,<sup>16</sup> dancing with tambourines (31.4), and also his wayward daughter (31.21-22). Conversely, in 30.17 the speaker of the preceding lament is described by her foes as a *נדה*. The participle of *נדה* (Niph.) usually denotes ‘exile, fugitive’,<sup>17</sup> but as the following *דרש אין לה* implies, the picture here is more personal; this one whom YHWH has severely chastised resembles an unloved, rejected woman.

In short, the trope of a single human figure is one of the primary means by which Israel / Judah is conceptualised in chs. 30 – 31.<sup>18</sup> Although these personifications allow the people to be ‘seen’ variously (as humiliated, wayward, pure, etc.), they also serve to emphasise their unity, and undermine internal differentiations among them.

<sup>14</sup> Alternatively, in 30.10 ‘Jacob’ may be the patriarch himself, with ‘your seed’ the present exiles (cf. 31.15-17, which addresses ‘Rachel’ concerning her ‘children’). In this case, the thought is that God’s promise to Jacob is applicable to his descendants.

<sup>15</sup> In MT 30.18 the equation of patriarch and people is weakened by the phrase *אהלי יעקב* (cf. Num. 24.5; Mal. 2.12); however OG *ἐγὼ ἀποστρεφῶ ἀποικίας Ἰακώβ* may reflect a *Vorlage* that read *שב שבוה יעקב*, thus retaining the ‘Jacob’ metaphor.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Jer. 2.2, though here the term *כלולה* is used. See further J. Schmitt, ‘The Virgin of Israel: Referent and Use of the Phrase in Amos and Jeremiah’, *CBQ* 53 (1991) 365-387, who argues that in Jer. 31 ‘virgin’ denotes the capital city (Samaria) – which in turn, however, “may stand for that whole kingdom, indeed for the whole exiled people of Israel.” (386).

<sup>17</sup> E.g., *נדה ישראל* (Isa. 11.12; 56.8; Ps. 147.2), *נדה מואב* (Isa. 16.4), *הנדהים בארץ מצרים* (Isa. 27.13) and *הנדהים* (Isa. 16.3). The singular *נדה* is used as a collective for ‘exiles’ in Mic. 4.6 and Zeph. 3.19.

<sup>18</sup> Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 150, sees the *Grundtext* of chs. 30 – 31 as alternating between poems using the names of the patriarchs, and poems employing second fem. sing. address. Whatever the merits of this analysis, it illustrates the prominence of *singular* address.

### 3.4. The Listing of Groups

In contrast to the point just made concerning personification, several oracles in chs. 30 – 31 emphasise the indiscriminating nature of YHWH's salvation by highlighting the social diversity of the restored community. In 31.8, for example, the 'great company' (קהל גדול) whom YHWH will bring back expressly includes vulnerable members of society; 'the blind and the lame' (עור ופסח),<sup>19</sup> 'the pregnant and the one giving birth' (הרה וילדת). In 31.13, despite the differences between MT and OG,<sup>20</sup> the picture is clearly one of young women, young men and old men rejoicing together. Again, 31.24 anticipates YHWH's renewed blessing of both urban and rural communities, even though here too we have some divergence between MT and OG.<sup>21</sup> Whilst these are all conventional social categories,<sup>22</sup> the listing of them, along with the term יחדו (31.8, 24; MT 31.13) clearly indicates the broad scope of YHWH's salvation.<sup>23</sup> This significance of this listing of groups increases when we recall that earlier in Jer., the same rhetorical technique expresses the comprehensiveness of Judah's sin and YHWH's judgement.

In fact, the only possible instance of an inner-Israelite distinction within the Book of Consolation comes in 30.23-24. Following an oracle of salvation for Jacob (30.18-22), 30.23 declares that YHWH's wrath will break upon 'the wicked' (הרשעים). But who exactly are these

---

<sup>19</sup> MT is preferable to OG  $\epsilon\upsilon \epsilon\sigma\tau\eta \phi\alpha\sigma\epsilon\alpha$  = במוער פסח. McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 790, describes the Greek translation as "eccentric", but the mistake may have arisen in the transmission of the *Vorlage* (so Volz, *Jeremia*, 286).

<sup>20</sup> MT יחדו וזקנים וזקנים וזקנים; OG  $\chi\alpha\rho\eta\sigma\sigma\upsilon\tau\alpha\iota \pi\alpha\rho\theta\epsilon\nu\sigma\iota \epsilon\upsilon \sigma\upsilon\tau\alpha\gamma\omega\gamma\eta \nu\epsilon\alpha\nu\iota\sigma\alpha\omega\kappa \kappa\alpha\iota \pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\upsilon\tau\alpha \chi\alpha\rho\eta\sigma\sigma\upsilon\tau\alpha\iota$  = תשמחנה בתולות בקהל בחרים וזקנים יחדו. Preferring OG are Duhm, *Jeremia*, 247; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 164; McKane, *Jeremiah* 2, 788; preferring MT are Volz, *Jeremia*, 280; Becking, 'Book of Consolation', 157. Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 571, maintains that both texts read equally well.

<sup>21</sup> MT יחדו יחדו וכל ערי יהודה וכל ערי יהודה וכל ערי יהודה; OG  $\kappa\alpha\iota \epsilon\nu\sigma\iota\kappa\upsilon\sigma\upsilon\tau\epsilon\varsigma \epsilon\nu \pi\omicron\lambda\epsilon\sigma\iota\upsilon \text{Iou}\delta\alpha \kappa\alpha\iota \epsilon\nu \pi\alpha\sigma\eta \tau\eta \gamma\eta \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon \alpha\mu\alpha$  = וישבו בערי יהודה ובכל ארצו יחדו. Since MT makes יהודה ובכל ארצו the subject of וישבו, the lack of a verb for the ensuing אכרים is awkward, though not impossible (Volz, *Jeremia*, 282; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 168). Also difficult is MT אכרים ונסעו בעדר; LXX<sup>α,σ</sup>, Targ., Vulg., support an emendation to ונסעי, 'those who set out with' (for a construct followed by ב, see *GKC* §130a), but a finite verb is supported by OG,  $\kappa\alpha\iota \acute{\alpha}\rho\theta\eta\sigma\epsilon\tau\alpha \epsilon\nu \pi\omicron\iota\mu\omega\phi$ ; this could mean 'he will set out' (= ויסע) or 'he shall be lifted up' (= ונשא); for the latter, see Volz, *Studien*, 237, who attributes the translator's misunderstanding "auf Hörfehler beim Diktat".

<sup>22</sup> See especially the paralleling of עור ופסח (2 Sam. 5.6, 8; Job. 29.15; Isa. 35.5-6).

<sup>23</sup> Not wholly persuasive is the argument of B. Bozak, *Life 'Anew': A Literary-Theological Study of Jer. 30 – 31* (Rome: Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1991) 169, that "by the explicit mention of women as included in the assembly (31.8) and as responsible for the return (31.31-22), as well as by the repeated use of feminine address, Israel was reminded of the fact that she was composed not only of males but of females."

people? Elsewhere in Jer., הרשעים signifies the arrogant in Judean society who oppress the poor (e.g., 5.26; 12.1), while in the almost identical 23.19-20,<sup>24</sup> it is clearly ‘the prophets’ who are in view. Consequently, several scholars have concluded that an inner-Judean group is also in view here.<sup>25</sup> However, הרשעים can also denote other nations (Jer. 12.14; Ezek. 21.34; Ps. 9.18 // גוים), and the context suggests that this is the sense here also;<sup>26</sup> the previous salvation oracle announced YHWH’s punishment on Israel’s ‘oppressors’ (לחץ, 30.20; cf. v. 16), while the promise that ‘their leader will be from among them’ (ממנו, 30.21) implies that their present leaders are foreigners.

Consequently, Jer. 30 – 31 present a message of undifferentiated salvation that stands in complete contrast to the proclamation of indiscriminate judgement in Jer. 1 – 20. The people of Judah and Israel are now a single entity, differentiated only *externally* from the other nations. Keown et al. observe:

Whatever the details of the history of redaction of these chapters . . . in their final form the contents have been ‘loosened from their original historical moorings’. All of Israel and Judah, whether exiled in the eighth century B.C., the sixth century B.C., or not at all, and all of their descendants, hope in God through these promises. The distinctions present in chs. 2, 24 and 29 will have no significance in their future.<sup>27</sup>

This interpretation need be qualified in just one respect. Whatever else may be said about the prophecy of the new covenant (31.29-34), its most notable aspect from the standpoint of the present study is the way it combines theologies of differentiation and undifferentiation. The reference to the exodus (v. 32) establishes the basic perspective: Like their ancestors under Moses, all the people (Israel *and* Judah, v. 31) have been brought out of captivity, and now stand on the edge of a covenant relationship with YHWH. In this sense, the entire nation is ‘saved’. Just here, however, is the point of discontinuity. The covenant that YHWH will make with them

<sup>24</sup> In 30.23 MT reads מתגורר (cf. מתחולל, 23.19) and adds חרון.

<sup>25</sup> For Duhm, *Jeremia*, 243, “die ‘Gottlosen’, die schlechten Elemente in Judenschaft (vgl. 1 Mak. 9.73), müssen erst durch den grossen Gottessturm beseitigt werden, bevor die vollkommene Zeit kommen kann.” Similarly, Volz, *Jeremia*, 279; K.-F. Pohlmann, *Die Ferne Gottes. Studien zum Jeremiabuch. Beiträge zu den ‘Konfessionen’ in Jeremiabuch und ein Versuch zur Frage nach dem Anfängen der Jeremiatradition* (BZAW 179; Berlin & New York: de Gruyter, 1989) 94; Bozak, *Life Anew*, 68; Parke-Taylor, *Formation*, 88-89; Koenen, *Heil den Gerechten*, 78 n.7.

<sup>26</sup> So Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 163; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 280; Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 563; Odashima, *Heilsworte*, 53; Brueggemann, *Exile and Homecoming*, 279; Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 181-182; with less certainty, Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 585.

<sup>27</sup> Keown et al., *Jeremiah 26 – 52*, 85; the quotation is from Childs, *Introduction*, 351.

will be *unlike* that which he made with their forefathers, precisely because of its individualism. Hence, this passage brings together the totalising ‘they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest’ (v. 34) and the differentiating ‘everyone will die for his own sin’ (v. 29).<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> M. Weinfeld, ‘Jeremiah and the Spiritual Metamorphosis of Israel’, *ZAW* 88 (1976) 35-39, sees a reformulation of the deuteronomistic ‘principle of retribution’ as one of the characteristics of the new covenant as formulated by Jeremiah and Ezekiel. “The generation of the destruction bore in its consciousness the fact that whereas its forefathers, who had sinned, lived happily (see Jer. 44.17-18), itself was suffering for their transgressions” (35).



## Chapter 6. Conclusions

### 1. Summary of Findings

Having now completed our analysis of the three textual units, chs. 21 – 24, 27 – 29, and 37 – 45, we can summarise our findings regarding the issue of differentiation in regard to salvation and judgement.

Chs. 21 – 24 configure the people by viewing them through three separate ‘lenses’. In the last of these (24.1-10), YHWH promises spiritual and physical restoration for the exiles in Babylon, but annihilation and dispersal for Zedekiah’s people in Jerusalem. The latter statement, however, has already been qualified in 21.1-10, where Jeremiah announces disaster for the inhabitants of Jerusalem but survival for any who go out to the Babylonians. At the same time, the entire vision of 24.1-10 is modified and relativised by the broader perspective of 23.1-8; here, YHWH pledges to restore his scattered people to their land but to punish their leaders.

In chs. 27 – 29, the text common to MT and OG provides a more complex analysis, with two intersecting polarities. On the one hand, the contrast between Jeremiah’s modest offer of life to the non-exiles (ch. 27) and his assurance of YHWH’s blessing and future restoration of the exiles (ch. 29) serves to differentiate these two communities. On the other hand, both audiences are differentiated internally between the prophets and the rest of the people; the prophets are rhetorically marginalised, and singled out for death or some other form of punishment. The MT plus of 29.16-20, however, disturbs this integrated analysis by repeating the message of disaster for Zedekiah and his people from 24.7-10, thereby radicalising the contrast between the two communities.

The first part of the narrative Jer. 37 – 45 begins by restating the polarity between those who stay in the city and those who surrender (cf. 21.8-10). This, however, is then qualified twice. Jeremiah’s message to Zedekiah (38.14-23) extends the promise of personal survival to cover the entire city, thereby undermining the basic principle of 21.1-10. Meanwhile, Ebed-Melech is assured not only of survival, but also of YHWH’s personal protection (39.15-18), despite remaining in the city. In the second part of the narrative, Jeremiah promises the ‘remnant of Judah’ YHWH’s blessing if they stay in the land, but disaster if they flee to Egypt (42.10-22); in this way, they are differentiated from ‘the remnant of Jerusalem’ in ch. 24. The narrative ends, however (45.1-5), with Baruch in Egypt being assured of YHWH’s gift of life.

It will be noticed from this overview that ‘differentiation’ can take one of two forms. On the one hand, there are passages in which certain individuals are (for one reason or another) exempt from YHWH’s plan of salvation or judgement on the community in general. Thus, those who surrender to the Babylonians, as well as Ebed-Melech and Baruch, will survive in a context of national disaster, while in chs. 27 – 29, the prophets Hananiah, Ahab, Zedekiah and Shemaiah are specifically excluded from YHWH’s saving actions. On the other hand, there are passages where differentiation involves what we might call ‘dual action’; that is, YHWH announces his intention to save one group and to punish another. This is the case in 23.1-8 (salvation for the people but judgement for the leaders) and in 24.1-10 (salvation for the exiles but judgement for those in Jerusalem).

## **2. Conclusions**

### **2.1. The Prominence of the Concept of ‘Differentiation’**

As if to bridge the twin poles of undifferentiated judgement in chs. 1 – 20, and undifferentiated salvation in chs. 30 – 31, the three literary units that we have investigated in this dissertation present a veritable kaleidoscope of inner-Judean distinctions. As we noted earlier, two of the ‘Jehoiakim’ passages (chs. 26 and 36) that help to structure this macro-section serve a transitional role in this respect, since they emphasise how certain groups and individuals respond positively to the prophetic word. Nevertheless, the announcement of judgement within them remains unqualified. When we come to chs. 21 – 24, 27 – 29, and 37 – 45, however, the picture changes dramatically, as one group or individual is distinguished from another in respect to YHWH’s plans of judgement and salvation. Indeed, we have argued that the very literary structure of each of these units serves to foreground the concept of differentiation. The prominence of the basic concept of ‘differentiation’ is, of course, in line with our expectation at the start of our study.

### **2.2. The Diversity of Differentiation**

At the same time, our study has revealed remarkable variety and flexibility in the *forms* of inner-Judean differentiation. The point here is not merely the number of different polarities that are represented; rather, it has to do with how they interact hermeneutically with each other.

This interaction takes different forms. In part, it involves what may be called ‘nuancing’. The unqualified promise of restoration for the 597 exiles in 24.4-7, for example, is reiterated in ch. 29, but made more precise by the exclusion of the prophets from YHWH’s salvific plans. Similarly, the unmitigated warning of disaster for Zedekiah and his people in 24.8-10 is nuanced slightly by the option of surrender and life in 21.8-10; 38.1-3. In both cases, the second passage affirms what has been said about the group in general, but introduces certain exceptions – the lens, so to speak, is more close-up.

When chs. 27 – 29 are viewed as a whole, however, we find an interaction of two polarities more aptly described as ‘intersecting’. On the one hand, the differentiation is between the exiled and non-exiled Judeans; on the other hand, within both communities we see a dichotomy between ‘prophets’ and ‘people’. To use our previous metaphor, it is as if one lens has been superimposed over another.

The most complex form of interaction between different modes of differentiation might be termed ‘reconfiguration’. That is to say, one polarity *partially* overlaps with another. The verbal similarity between YHWH’s promise to restore his people **מכל הארצות אשר הרחתי אתם שם** (23.3), and his threat to make the people of Jerusalem a horror **בכל המקומות אשר אדיחם שם** (24.9) suggests there is also some conceptual overlap – i.e., judgement followed by restoration – yet as we have seen, these two passages configure the nation in fundamentally different ways (‘leaders and people; ‘exiles and non-exiles’), and operate with different presuppositions, making any attempt to synthesise them problematic, if not impossible. Likewise, the ‘prophet / people’ dichotomy in chs. 27 – 29 echoes that of ‘leaders / people’ in 23.1-4, but strikes a different note in depicting the people as active partners with the prophets.

Perhaps the most striking instance of ‘reconfiguration’ occurs in the two personal oracles of 39.15-18 and 45.1-5. As we have seen, the historical setting of the former, and the wording of YHWH’s promise, **והיתה לך נפשך לשלל**, suggests that Ebed-Melech is being differentiated from ‘this city’ like others who are given this promise (38.1-3). At the same time, however, the promise **והצלתך** and the affirmation **כי בטחת בי** forge links with earlier material in Jer., and place Ebed-Melech in a new conceptual category, that of the faithful man aligned against the nation. Likewise, in its immediate context the oracle to Baruch exempts him from the rest of the Judean remnant with whom he has come to Judah; yet his lament, **אוי נא לי כי יסף יהוה יגון על**, **מכאבי**, presents him as a Jeremiah-type figure, also standing against the whole land of Judah. In

both cases, one mode of differentiation gives way to another. To describe the book of Jeremiah as ‘complex’ and ‘kaleidoscopic’ is no new insight; our study of concepts of differentiation in chs. 21 – 45 simply gives fresh evidence of the truth of such descriptions.

However we account for this range and interplay of distinctions (a point we will return to below), it is clear that Jer. 21 – 45 as a whole witnesses to the inadequacy of any one of them. Here again, the metaphor of the lens may be helpful. Each mode of differentiation provides a way of seeing the Judean community of the early sixth century in theological terms; yet the complexity of that community, like any other, resists definition by a single lens. In this respect, the ‘differentiations’ of Jer. 21 – 45 (like the ‘undifferentiations’ of Jer. 1 – 20 and 30 – 31, for that matter) function like other theological categories; there is always a degree of ‘slippage’ between category and reality. Particularly clear evidence of this emerges in chs. 42 – 43; here, Jeremiah configures ‘the remnant of Judah’ as a wilful, disobedient mass (43.4), yet the following verses indicate that they were a disparate group (including children, as well as Baruch and Jeremiah) under the control of Johanan’s men. Whilst this does not *invalidate* Jeremiah’s configuration of them, it does indicate its *limits*.<sup>1</sup>

### 2.3. The Diversity of Rationales

Throughout our dissertation, we have sought not only to show how different groups and individuals are distinguished from another, but also to explore the rationale underlying each differentiation. As our point of departure, we referred to Koenen’s study, in which he focuses on oracles of salvation and judgement that are *ethically* grounded, rather than (for example) those where the people’s future rests on their action in a specific situation, or simply on YHWH’s sovereign decision. These latter two categories could be termed, respectively, ‘conditional’ and ‘unconditional’.<sup>2</sup> Our own research has shown that in Jer. 21 – 45, the rationale for the allocation of salvation or judgement is more complex than this.

In the first place, rarely is the rationale for judgement the inverse of the rationale for salvation. We have seen that censure is passed on Israel’s ‘shepherds’ for abusing the ‘flock’

---

<sup>1</sup> N.K. Gottwald, *The Politics of Ancient Israel* (LAI; Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, 2001) 5, refers to “the realization that every telling of history is a fresh construal and that the political past embraces more than any single telling is capable of grasping.”

<sup>2</sup> These are my terms rather than Koenen’s, but they seem to express the distinctions he is making.

(23.1-2), on Hananiah and Shemaiah for threatening the community with falsehood (28.15-16; 29.31-32), and on Ahab and Zedekiah for committing 'folly in Israel' (29.23). In each case, the basis for judgement is clearly 'ethical'. Although the reason for YHWH's wrath against Jerusalem is rarely stated in the texts we have examined, these have to be read in the light of chs. 1 – 20, which repeatedly indict the people for their unfaithfulness. On the other hand, only in the case of Ebed-Melech is salvation unambiguously grounded in someone's 'ethical' profile. Usually, it rests either upon obedience to YHWH in a specific situation, or upon his free initiative. In the latter case, there may be different reasons for that initiative: YHWH's promise of restoration in 23.1-4 is linked to his prior relationship with the people, while his favour to the exiles in 24.4-7 appears wholly gratuitous.

At the same time, we have seen that 'ethical', 'conditional' and 'unconditional' are not watertight categories. The oracles of restoration (24.4-7; 29.10-14) contain elements of contingency, since they require the people to seek YHWH; and even if this is *facilitated* by his gift of a new heart, it is not *enforced*. The primary logic of the promise of restoration in 23.1-4 is also unconditional; YHWH will save his flock because it is *his* flock. But, we may ask, are not their shepherds also YHWH's flock? Implicitly, there does seem to be an ethical dimension to the rationale for the people's salvation, even if only to the extent that they are not guilty of the sins of their leaders.

The line between 'conditional' and 'ethical' is also blurred. The option of life for those who go out to the Babylonians (21.8-10; 38.1-3) rests on an acceptance of YHWH's judgement on Jerusalem. In its own way, this could be interpreted as an 'ethical' act, even an act of 'trust', especially since the Judeans were previously denounced for 'trusting in' their cities (5.17) and the temple (7.14). Similarly, the requirement that the Judeans 'serve' the king of Babylon (27.1-18) and that the exiles 'build, plant and multiply' (29.5-7) is simultaneously a requirement for submission and obedience to YHWH; indeed, to oppose such a message constitutes 'rebellion against YHWH'. In short, the 'unconditional' is partly conditional, and the 'conditional' partly ethical.

Not only in the forms of differentiation, then, but also in their underlying logic, we find in Jer. 21 – 45 a diversity that defies systematisation; and here too, one may argue that this is necessary to convey the complexities of Judah's experience. Indeed, according to Biddle, "the case could be made that the argument of the book lies in the contention that God's relationship

with God's people defies resolution and systematization."<sup>3</sup> Guilt is universal, but not equal. People need a new relationship with YHWH, but they also need new leaders. Restoration is an act of grace from which some may still be excluded because of their conduct. Ebed-Melech will be protected because of his trust, while Baruch will be protected in spite of his self-concern.

Placing such diverse perspectives in a wider OT context, Duguid comments:

Many people . . . looked to the past and sought to identify the sins (and the sinners) that had brought them into exile . . . Similar thoughts are also at work in other biblical documents of the exilic and post-exilic period, such as the Deuteronomistic History. That each comes to different conclusions as to the causes and future remedies of the exile shows that history and its analysis is a complex and multi-faceted affair, especially when it comes to the apportionment of blame.<sup>4</sup>

#### 2.4. Implications for the Work of Pohlmann and Seitz

At the start of our study, we saw how Pohlmann and Seitz have interpreted the concept of differentiation in Jer. 21 – 45 as evidence for theories of the book's composition. We believe that our research has important implications for the arguments of both scholars.

Implications for the Work of Pohlmann: It will be remembered that according to Pohlmann, the dominant voice in the final form of Jer. is that of the *golaorientierte Redaktion*, represented most clearly by 21.10 and 24.1-10. The purpose of this redaction, Pohlmann argued, was to show that only those who could trace their lineage to the exiles of 597 were entitled to be considered YHWH's people in post-exilic Judah. Our observations, however, put a serious question mark against this reading of the book. For one thing, in between Pohlmann's two 'programmatic' passages we hear another voice expressing hope for a general *Diaspora* (minus their leaders). By its very nature, this has the conceptual capacity to accommodate the 'remnant of Jerusalem' who in ch. 24 still await YHWH's judgement, and the 'remnant of Judah' who choose to flee to Egypt. Furthermore, the oracles to Ebed-Melech and Baruch articulate YHWH's blessing upon two individuals who were not among the 597 exiles. Any reading of Jer. in its present form must allow these passages (to say nothing of chs. 30 – 31) to relativise the perspective of ch. 24.

---

<sup>3</sup> Biddle, *Polyphony and Symphony*, 40. In similar vein, Stulman, *Order Amid Chaos*, 187, argues that the absence of conceptual uniformity in Jer. "attests in the first place to the wild and undomesticated God who refuses to be imprisoned by any closed system . . . And so, there is no cover-up in Jeremiah".

<sup>4</sup> Duguid, *Leaders of Israel*, 2.

This being so, Pohlmann's claim that Jer. 24 was designed as a piece of propaganda by a post-exilic Judean faction also needs to be reconsidered. If this *were* its intent, one would have to argue either that its editors overlooked the way it is relativised by 23.1-8, 39.15-18 and 45.1-5 (and all of chs. 30-31), or that all these other passages were added even later. There is also the problem, which we noted earlier, of explaining why fourth century Jews were so particular about tracing their lineage to the 597 exile. We suggest, however, that to read ch. 24 in absolute terms is to violate its intent, which is to predict YHWH's judgement on Jerusalem, but not to write off these people and their descendants forever. The fact that even its supposed counterpart in 21.1-10 modifies its extreme language suggests as much.

Implications for the Work of Seitz: As we discussed in our opening chapter, Seitz has put forward a modified account of Pohlmann's thesis, in which he argues that Jer. 21 – 44 contains two different redactional layers; that of the 'Scribal Chronicle', and that of the 'Exilic Redaction'. According to the former (which Seitz believes reflects the viewpoint of Jeremiah himself), the Judean exiles held no special privilege over their compatriots at home. Both could hope for YHWH's favour, provided they submitted to the Babylonians. The Exilic Redaction, however, has supplemented and edited this material in order to show that the disobedience and downfall of Zedekiah and his people was inevitable from the outset.

Our study suggests that Seitz's argument is flawed in two respects. Firstly, at certain points it fails to take account of important textual evidence. Seitz identifies Jeremiah's question in 27.17, עבדו את מלך בבל וחינו למה תהיה העיר הזאת חרבה, as encapsulating the outlook of SC, despite the fact that this is MT plus. At the same time, he attributes all of 29.10-14, 16-19 to ER, despite the fact that *some* of this material is also MT plus. In this way, Seitz seems to be blurring important distinctions in the history of the development of the text. Secondly, Seitz tends to 'flatten' the variety of perspectives that we have seen represented in these chapters. We have argued, for example, that whilst at one level 21.8-10, 27.12-18 and 42.10-12 all convey a 'submit and live' message, the concepts underlying them are actually quite different. Similarly, we have shown that, even setting aside the MT plusses, Jeremiah's message to the exiles in ch. 29 has a significantly more positive tone than that to the Judean community in ch. 27.

All this is not necessarily to dismiss the notion of a 'Scribal Chronicle' (or something like it). It does mean, however, that the outlook of such a document (and prophet) would have been more nuanced than Seitz implies. If, for the sake of argument, we accept the contours of

SC that Seitz proposes, the Jeremiah depicted in it proclaimed a restrained message of hope for the Judean community (ch. 27), but a much richer promise to the exiles (ch. 29); bare survival for the inhabitants of Jerusalem in 587 (21.8-10), but the possibility of divine restoration for those left in the land after 587 (42.10-12). There is, indeed, no reason in principle why the same individual could not have adopted each of these positions, but it is important to identify the conceptual thread that unifies them; not simply ‘submitting to the Babylonians’, but rather experiencing the reality of YHWH’s judgement. This would explain why the promises to the exile community in ch. 29 and to the ‘remnant of Judah’ in ch. 42 are so much fuller and richer than those to the Judeans in ch. 27 and 21.8-10.

This notion of the *necessity of experienced judgement* is not new. Earlier in our study, we noted how Kilpp accounted for the pro-*Golah* outlook of ch. 24: “geht es nicht an erster Stelle um den Wohnort, sondern um das eingetroffene bzw. nicht eingetroffene Gericht”.<sup>5</sup> Concerning YHWH’s statement כִּי נִהְמַתִּי in 42.10, Thompson remarks that “the judgment that had already fallen had satisfied the divine demands resulting from the broken covenant. Nothing further was required, and the future held hope of better things.”<sup>6</sup> It also comes to expression in the MT plus of 29.16, where YHWH announces his wrath against the community in Jerusalem, אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִצְאוּ . . . בְּנוּלָה. The importance of this concept in the OT prophets more generally has been explored by T.M. Raitt, who concludes that “the people’s accountability for their sin together with God’s attitude and intention toward them are radically shifted when the exile becomes a fact. The punishment itself creates an entirely new situation”.<sup>7</sup> Turning to Jer., Raitt continues:

In [the] Jeremianic deliverance passages טוֹב refers to the quality within an episode of the divine plan . . . Although it is not yet said as in Isa. 40:2 that ‘her time of service is ended’ or ‘her punishment accepted’ so that the moment of deliverance is in the present, a time of salvation for the future is assured.<sup>8</sup>

We are not, of course, suggesting that every polarity in Jer. 21 – 45 turns on the concept of ‘experienced judgement’; it clearly plays no part in the prophecy of 23.1-8, concerning the

---

<sup>5</sup> Kilpp, *Niederreißen*, 38.

<sup>6</sup> Thompson, *Jeremiah*, 666.

<sup>7</sup> T.M. Raitt, ‘Jeremiah’s Deliverance Message to Judah’, in J.J. Jackson & M. Kessler (eds.) *Rhetorical Criticism. Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (PTMS 1; Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1974) 171.

<sup>8</sup> Raitt, ‘Jeremiah’s Deliverance Message’, 172.



shepherds and the flock, nor in the individual oracles to Ebed-Melech and Baruch. The results of our investigation do suggest, however, that this concept more than any other in Jer. 21 – 45 influences the assigning of salvation or judgement to different groups, before culminating in the announcement of undifferentiated salvation to the entire *Diaspora* in chs. 30 – 31.

## Bibliography

Abegg, M.G., Jr.

- 1997 s.v. 'צמח', in W.A. VanGemeren (ed.), *NIDOTTE*, Vol. 4 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 815-817.

Abegg, M.G., P.W. Flint, and E. Ulrich (eds.)

- 1999 *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible. Translated and with Commentary* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark).

Ackroyd, P.R.

- 1968 *Exile and Restoration. A Study of Hebrew Thought of the Sixth Century B.C.* (London: SCM).
- 1987 'The Temple Vessels: A Continuity Theme', in P.R. Ackroyd (ed.), *Studies in the Religious Tradition of the Old Testament* (London: SCM) 46-60.

Aejmelaeus, A.

- 1993 'The Function and Interpretation of ׀ in Biblical Hebrew', in A. Aejmelaeus (ed.), *On the Trail of the Septuagint Translators. Collected Essays* (Kampen: Kok Pharos) 166-185.

Allen, L.C.

- 1976 *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah*, NICOT (London: Hodder & Stoughton).

Applegate, J.

- 1997 'Jeremiah and the Seventy Years in the Hebrew Bible, inner-Biblical Reflections on the Prophet and His Prophecy', in A.H.W. Curtis and T. Römer (eds.), *The Book of Jeremiah and Its Reception* (Leuven: Leuven University Press). 91-110.
- 1997 "'Peace, Peace, When There is No Peace.'" Redactional Integration of Prophecy of Peace Into the Judgement of Jeremiah', in A.H.W. Curtis and T. Römer (eds.), *The Book of Jeremiah and Its Reception* (Leuven: Leuven University Press). 51-90.
- 1998 'The Fate of Zedekiah: Redactional Debate in the Book of Jeremiah', Part 1, *VT* 48:137-160.
- 1998 'The Fate of Zedekiah: Redactional Debate in the Book of Jeremiah', Part 2, *VT* 48:301-308.

Auld, A.G.

- 2002 'Counting Sheep, Sins and Sour Grapes: The Primacy of the Primary History?', in A.G. Hunter and P.R. Davies (eds.), *Sense and Sensitivity. Essays on Reading the Bible in Memory of Robert Carroll*, JSOT Sup. 348 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002) 63-72.

- Baillet, M., J.T. Milik, and R. de Vaux  
 1962 *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert of Jordan, Vol. 3. Les 'Petites Grottes' de Qumran. Textes* (Oxford: Clarendon).
- Baker, D.W.  
 1980 'Further Examples of the Waw Explicativum', *VT* 30:129-136.
- Baldwin, J.G.  
 1964 'Šemaḥ as a technical term in the Prophets', *VT* 14:93-97.
- Barr, J.  
 1989 "'Determination" and the Definite Article in Biblical Hebrew', *JSS* 34:307-335.
- Barstad, H.M.  
 1996 *The Myth of the Empty Land. A Study in the History and Archaeology of Judah During the 'Exilic' Period*, SOF. Sup. xxviii (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press).
- Barthélemy, D.  
 1986 *Critique Textuelle de L'Ancien Testament. 2. Isaïe, Jérémie, Lamentations*, OBO 50.2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht).
- Baumann, E.L.  
 1929 'שוב שבות', Eine exegetische Untersuchung', *ZAW* 47:17-44.
- Becking, Bob  
 1994 'Jeremiah's Book of Consolation: A Textual Comparison. Notes on the Masoretic Text and the Old Greek Version of Jeremiah 30-31', *VT* 44:145-169.
- Begg, C.  
 1980 'The Literary Criticism of Deut. 4.1-40. Contributions to a Continuing Discussion', *ETL* 56:10-55.
- Berlin, A.  
 1984 'Jeremiah 29. 5-7: A Deuteronomic Allusion', *HAR* 8:3-11.
- Berridge, J.M.  
 1970 *Prophet, People and the Word of Yahweh. An Examination of Form and Content in the Proclamation of the Prophet Jeremiah*, BST 4 (Zurich: EVZ Verlag).
- Biddle, M.E.  
 1988 'The Literary Frame Surrounding Jeremiah 30.1-33.26', *ZAW* 100:409-413.  
 1996 *Polyphony and Symphony in Prophetic Literature: Rereading Jeremiah 7-20*, SOTI 2 (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press).

Block, Daniel I.

- 1997 *The Book of Ezekiel Chapters 1–24*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans).

de Boer, P.A.H.

- 1954 'Etude sur le Sens de la Racine QWH', *Oudtestamentische Studiën* 10 (225-246).
- 1991 'Jeremiah 45, Verse 5', in C. van Duin (ed.), *Selected Studies in Old Testament Exegesis*, *Oudtestamentische Studiën* 27 (Leiden: Brill) 122-128.
- 1991 'Some Remarks Concerning and Suggested by Jeremiah 43.1-7', in C. van Duin (ed.), *Selected Studies in Old Testament Exegesis*, *Oudtestamentische Studien* 27 (Leiden: Brill) 113-121.

Böhmer, S.

- 1976 *Heimkehr und neuer Bund. Studien zu Jeremia 30–31*, GTA 5 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht).

Bozak, B.A.

- 1991 *Life 'Anew': A Literary-Theological Study of Jer. 30–31* (Rome: Pontificio Instituto Biblico).

Bracke, John. M.

- 1985 'šûb š'bât: A Reappraisal', *ZAW* 97:233-244.

Brettler, M.Z.

- 1999 'Predestination in Deuteronomy 30:1-10', in L.S. Schearing and S.L. McKenzie (eds.), *Those Elusive Deuteronomists. The Phenomenon of Pan-Deuteronomism*, JSOT Sup. 268 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press) 177-196.

Bright, J.

- 1965 *Jeremiah. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 21 (New York: Doubleday).
- 1970 'Jeremiah's Complaints: Liturgy or Expressions of Personal Distress?', in J.I. Durham and J.R. Porter (eds.), *Proclamation and Presence: Old Testament Essays in Honour of Gwynne Henton Davies* (Richmond: John Knox) 189-214.

Brooke, G.J.

- 1997 'The Book of Jeremiah and Its Reception in the Qumran Scrolls', in A.H.W. Curtis and T. Römer (eds.), *The Book of Jeremiah and Its Reception* (Leuven: Leuven University Press) 183-205.

Brotzman, E.R.

- 1994 *Old Testament Textual Criticism. A Practical Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker).

Brown, F., S.R. Driver, and C.A. Briggs

- 1996 *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon. With an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson).

Brueggemann, W.

- 1994 'The "Baruch Connection": Reflections on Jeremiah 43.1-7'. *JBL* 113:405-420.  
1998 *A Commentary on Jeremiah. Exile and Homecoming* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans).

Butterworth, M.

- 1992 *Structure and the Book of Zechariah*, JSOT Sup. 130 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press).

Calvin, J.

- 1852 *Commentaries on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah and the Lamentations*, Vol. 1, J. Owen (ET) (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society).  
1852 *Commentaries on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah and the Lamentations*, Vol. 3, J. Owen (ET) (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society).

Carley, K.W.

- 1974 *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, CBC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Carroll, R.P.

- 1981 *From Chaos to Covenant. Uses of Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah* (London: SCM).  
1986 *Jeremiah. A Commentary*, OTL (London: SCM).  
1992 'The Myth of the Empty Land', in D. Jobling and T. Pippin (eds.), *Ideological Criticism of Biblical Texts* (Atlanta: Scholars Press) 79-93.  
1997 'Deportation and Diasporic Discourses in the Prophetic Literature', in J.M. Scott (ed.), *Exile. Old Testament, Jewish and Christian Conceptions* (Leiden: Brill) 63-85.  
1999 'The Book of J: Intertextuality and Ideological Criticism', in A.R. Diamond, K.M. O'Connor and L. Stulman (eds.), *Troubling Jeremiah*, JSOT Sup. 260 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press) 220-243.

Cazelles, H.

- 1981 'La Vie de Jérémie dans Son Contexte National et International', in P.-M. Bogaert (ed.), *Le Livre de Jérémie. Le Prophète et Son Milieu, Les Oracles et Leur Transmission* (Leuven: Leuven University Press) 21-39.

Childs, B.S.

- 1979 *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Minneapolis: Fortress).

- Clements, R.E.
- 1988 *Jeremiah. A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching, Interpretation* (Atlanta: John Knox).
  - 1996 'Jeremiah 1–25 and the Deuteronomistic History', in R.E. Clements (ed.), *Old Testament Prophecy: From Oracles to Canon* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox) 107-122.
  - 1996 'Jeremiah: Prophet of Hope', in R.E. Clements (ed.), *Old Testament Prophecy: From Oracles to Canon* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox) 123-141.
- Clines, D.J.A. (ed.)
- 1993-2002 *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew, Vol. 1-5* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press).
- Clines, D.J.A., and D.M. Gunn
- 1976 'Form, Occasion and Redaction in Jeremiah 20', *ZAW* 88:390-409.
- Condamin, A.
- 1936 *Le Livre de Jérémie. Traduction et Commentaire, Études Bibliques*, 3rd ed. (Paris: J. Gabalda et Cie).
- Craigie, P.C.
- 1976 *The Book of Deuteronomy, NICOT* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans).
- Craigie, P.C., Kelley P.H., and J.F. Drinkard
- 1991 *Jeremiah 1–25, WBC* (Dallas: Word).
- Crenshaw, J.
- 1990 'The Human Dilemma and the Literature of Dissent', in D. A. Knight (ed.), *Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press) 235-258.
- Cross, F.M.
- 1975 'The Evolution of a Theory of Local Texts', in F.M. Cross and S. Talmon (eds.), *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press) 306-320.
- Curtis, A.H.W., and T. Römer (eds.)
- 1997 *The Book of Jeremiah and Its Reception, BETL 128* (Leuven: Leuven University Press).
- Dahood, M.
- 1977 'Word and Witness. A Note on Jeremiah 29.23', *VT* 27:483.
- Dearman, J. Andrew
- 1990 'My Servants the Scribes. Composition and Context in Jeremiah 36', *JBL* 109:403-421.

- Diamond, A.R.  
 1987 *The Confessions of Jeremiah in Context. Scenes of Prophetic Drama*, JSOT Sup. 45 (Sheffield: JSOT Press).
- Dietrich, E.L.  
 1925 *Die endzeitliche Wiederherstellung bei den Propheten*, BZAW 40 (Giessen: Töpelmann)
- Dijkstra, M.  
 1983 'Prophecy By Letter (Jeremiah 29. 24-32)', *VT* 33:319-322.
- Driver, G.R.  
 1937-38 'Linguistic and Textual Problems: Jeremiah', *JQR* 28:97-129.
- Driver, S.R.  
 1895 *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark).  
 1908 *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah* (London: Hodder & Stoughton).
- Duguid, Iain M.  
 1994 *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel*, VT Sup. 56 (Leiden: Brill).
- Duhm, B.  
 1901 *Das Buch Jeremia*, KHAT 11 (Tübingen & Leipzig: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck]).
- Ehrlich, A.B.  
 1912 *Randglossen zur Hebräischen Bibel: Textkritisches, Sprachliches und Sachliches. 4. Jesia, Jeremia* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs).
- Eissfeldt, O.  
 1964 *Einleitung in das Alte Testament: Unter Einschluß der Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen, Sowie der apokryphen- und pseudepigraphenartigen Qumran – Schriften. Entstehungsgeschichte des Alten Testaments*. 3rd ed. (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck]).
- Elliger, K., and W. Rudolph (eds.)  
 1997 *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 5th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft).
- Embry, E.M.  
 1978 'Tree, Plant, Root, Branch', in C. Brown (ed.), *NIDNTT*, Vol. 3 (Exeter: Paternoster) 865-870.
- Emmerson, Grace I.  
 1992 *Isaiah 56–66*, OTG (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press).

Feldman, Louis.H.

- 1997 'The Concept of Exile in Josephus', in J.M. Scott (ed.), *Exile. Old Testament, Jewish and Christian Conceptions* (Leiden: Brill) 145-172.

Fischer, G.

- 1993 *Das Trostbüchlein. Text, Komposition und Theologie von Jer. 30–31*, SBB 26 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk).

Fishbane, M.

- 1985 *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon).

Fretheim, T.E.

- 1997 s.v. 'נכר', in W.A. VanGemeren (ed.), *NIDOTTE*, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 108.

Gerstenberger, E.

- 1963 'Jeremiah's Complaints: Observations on Jer. 15.10-21', *JBL* 82:393-408.

Gesenius, W.

- 1910 *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar as Edited and Enlarged by the Late E. Kautzsch*. 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon).

Giesebrecht, F.

- 1894 *Das Buch Jeremia, übersetzt und erklärt*, HAT 3.2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht).

Godley, A.D (ed.).

- 1921 *Herodotus. With an English Translation. Vol.1. Books 1 & 2*, LCL (London: Heinemann)

Goldman, Y.

- 1992 *Prophétie et Royauté Au Retour de l'Exil. Les Origines Littéraires de la Forme Massorétique Du Livre de Jérémie*, OBO 118 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht).
- 1997 'Juda et Son Roi Au Milieu Des Nations. La Dernière Rédaction Du Livre de Jérémie', in A.H.W. Curtis and T. Römer (eds.), *The Book of Jeremiah and Its Reception* (Leuven: Leuven University Press) 151-182.

Gordon, R.P.

- 1986 *1 & 2 Samuel. A Commentary*, LBI (Grand Rapids: Zondervan)

Gosse, B.

- 1990 'Jérémie XLV et la Place Du Recueil d'Oracles Contre les Nations dans le Livre de Jérémie', *VT* 40:145-151.



- Gottwald, N.K.
- 1985 *The Hebrew Bible. A Socio-Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress).
- 2001 *The Politics of Ancient Israel*, LAI (Louisville: Westminster John Knox).
- Graf, K.H.
- 1862 *Der Prophet Jeremia* (Leipzig: T.O. Weigel).
- Graupner, A.
- 1991 *Auftrag und Geschick des Propheten Jeremia. literarische Eigenart, Herkunft und Intention vordeuteronomistischer Prosa im Jeremiabuch*, BTS 15 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag).
- Greenberg, M.
- 1983 *Ezekiel 1–20. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 22a (New York: Doubleday).
- 1997 *Ezekiel 21–37. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 22a (New York: Doubleday).
- Gunn, D.M.
- 1980 *The Fate of King Saul. An Interpretation of a Biblical Story*, JSOT Sup. 14 (Sheffield: JSOT Press).
- Gunneweg, A.J.H.
- 1970 'Konfession oder Interpretation im Jeremiabuch', *ZTK* 67:395-416.
- R.D. Haak
- 1992 *Habakkuk*, VT Sup. 44 (Leiden: Brill).
- Habel, Norman. C.
- 1995 *The Land is Mine. Six Biblical Land Ideologies*, OBT (Minneapolis: Fortress).
- HaCohen, Aviyah
- 1994 '4QJer<sup>a</sup> – A Pre-Massoretic Text?' *Textus* 17: 7-8.
- Hardmeier, C.
- 1990 'Jer. 29, 24-32 – "eine geradezu unüberbietbare Konfusion?" Vorurteil und Methode in der exegetischen Forschung', in E. Blum, C. Macholz and E.W. Stegemann (eds.), *Die Hebräische Bibel und ihre zweifache Nachgeschichte. Festschrift für Rolf Rendtorff zum 65. Geburtstag* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag) 301-317.
- Harrison, R.K.
- 1979 *Jeremiah and Lamentations. An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC (Leicester: IVP).

Hayman, A.P.

- 1995 'The "Original Text": A Scholarly Illusion', in J. Davies, G. Harvey and W.G.E. Watson (eds.), *Words Remembered, Texts Renewed. Essays in Honour of John F.A. Sawyer*, JSOT Sup. 195 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press) 434-449.

Hayward, R.

- 1987 *The Targum of Jeremiah. Translated, with a Critical Introduction, Apparatus and Notes*, The Aramaic Bible, Vol. 12 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark).

Herrman, S.

- 1965 *Die Prophetischen Heilserwartungen im Alten Testament. Ursprung und Gestaltwandel*, BWANT 5 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer).
- 1990 *Jeremia. Der Prophet und das Buch*, EF 271 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft).

Hitzig, F.

- 1866 *Der Prophet Jeremia Erklärt*, KHAT (Leipzig: Hirzel).

Hobbs, T.R.

- 1984 'Some Remarks on the Composition and Structure of the Book of Jeremiah', in L.G. Perdue and B.W. Kovacs (eds.), *A Prophet to the Nations. Essays in Jeremiah Studies* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns) 175-191.

Hoffman, Y.

- 1995 'The Deuteronomist and the Exile', in D.P. Wright, D.N. Freedman and A. Hurvitz (eds.), *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish and Near Eastern Ritual, Law and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns).

Holladay, W.

- 1974 *Jeremiah: Spokesman Out of Time* (Philadelphia: United Church Press).
- 1986 *Jeremiah 1. A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 1-25*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress).
- 1989 *Jeremiah 2. A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 26-52*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress).

Hölscher, G.

- 1914 *Die Profeten. Untersuchungen zur Religionsgeschichte Israels* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs).

Houston, W.

- 1993 'What Did the Prophets Think They Were Doing? Speech Acts and Prophetic Discourse in the Old Testament', *Biblical Interpretation* 1,2:167-188.

- Hyatt, J. Philip
- 1951 'The Deuteronomic Edition of the Book of Jeremiah', *VSH* 1:71-95.
  - 1956 'The Book of Jeremiah', in G. Buttrick (ed.), *Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. 5 (New York: Abingdon) 777-1142.
  - 1966 'The Beginning of Jeremiah's Prophecy', *ZAW* 78:204-214.
- Janzen, J.G.
- 1973 *Studies in the Text of Jeremiah*, HSM 6 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).
- Jones, D.R.
- 1992 *Jeremiah*, NCB (London: Marshall Pickering).
- Joüon, P.
- 1996 *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew, Vols. 1 and 2. Translation of 'Grammaire de l'Hébreu biblique' (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1923). ET: T. Muraoka, SB 14.2 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute).*
- Keil, C.F.
- 1872 *Biblischer Kommentar über den Propheten Jeremia und die Klagelieder*, BKAT (Leipzig).
- Keown, G.L., P.J. Scalise, and T.G. Smothers
- 1995 *Jeremiah 26–52*, WBC (Dallas: Word).
- Kessler, M.
- 1968 'Jeremiah 26–45 Reconsidered', *JNES* 27:81-88.
- Kilpp, N.
- 1990 *Niederreißen und aufbauen: Das Verhältnis von Heilsverheißung und Unheilsverkündigung bei Jeremia und im Jeremiabuch*, BTS 13 (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag).
- Klein, R.
- 1974 *Textual Criticism of the Old Testament. From the Septuagint to Qumran* (Philadelphia: Fortress).
- Koenen, K.
- 1994 *Heil den Gerechten – Unheil den Sündern! Ein Beitrag zur Theologie der Prophetenbücher*, BZAW 229 (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter).
- Konkel, A.H.
- 1997 s.v. 'מסנר', in W.A. VanGemeren (ed.), *NIDOTTE*, Vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 995-997.

- Kremers, H.
- 1953 'Leidensgemeinschaft mit Gott im Alten Testament. Eine Untersuchung der „biographischen“ Berichte im Jeremiabuch', *Ev. T* 13:122-140.
- Lalleman-de Winkel, H.
- 2000 *Jeremiah in Prophetic Tradition. An Examination of the Book of Jeremiah in the Light of Israel's Prophetic Traditions*, CBET 26 (Leuven: Peeters).
- Lemke, W.
- 1966 'Nebuchadrezzar, My Servant', *CBQ* 28:45-50.
- Levin, C.
- 1985 *Die Verheißung des neuen Bundes in ihrem theologiegeschichtlichen Zusammenhang ausgelegt*, FRLANT 137 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht).
- Liddell, H.G., and R. Scott
- 1940 *A Greek-English Lexicon. New rev. ed.* S. Jones and McKenzie (eds.), (Oxford: Clarendon).
- Lohfink, N.
- 1981 'Der junge Jeremia als Propagandist und Poet: Zum Grundstock von Jeremia 30–31', in P.-M. Bogaert (ed.), *Le Livre de Jérémie. Le Prophète et Son Milieu, les Oracles et Leur Transmission* (Leuven: Leuven University Press) 351-368.
- Long, B.O.
- 1976 'Reports of Visions Among the Prophets', *JBL* 95:355-365.
- 1981 'Social Dimensions of Prophetic Conflict', *Semeia* 21:31-53.
- Lundbom, J.R.
- 1975 *Jeremiah. A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric*, SBLDS 18 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press).
- 1986 'Baruch, Seraiah, and Expanded Colophons in the Book of Jeremiah', *JSOT* 36:89-114.
- 1999 *Jeremiah 1–20. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 21a (New York: Doubleday).
- Lust, J.
- 1981 "'Gathering and Return" in Jeremiah and Ezekiel', in P.-M. Bogaert (ed.), *Le Livre de Jérémie. Le Prophète et Son Milieu, les Oracles et Leur Transmission* (Leuven: Leuven University Press) 117-142.
- Lust, J., E. Eynikel, and K. Hauspie (eds.)
- 1992/1996 *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint, Parts 1 and 2* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft).

- Malamat, A.  
 1951 'Jeremiah and the Last Two Kings of Judah', *PEQ* 83:81-87.
- Marchant, E.C (ed.).  
 1923 *Xenophon. Memorabilia & Oeconomicus. With an English Translation*, LCL (London: Heinemann)
- Marshall, I. Howard  
 1978 *The Gospel of Luke. A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Exeter: Paternoster)
- Martens, Elmer A.  
 1987 'Narrative Parallelism and Message in Jeremiah 34-38', in C.A. Evans and W.F. Stinespring (eds.), *Early Jewish and Christian Exegesis. Studies in Memory of William Hugh Brownlee* (Atlanta: Scholars Press) 33-49.
- Martínez, F.G. (ed.)  
 1994 *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated. The Qumran Texts in English*, ET: W.G.E. Watson (Leiden: Brill).
- Mason, R.  
 1994 *Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Joel*, OTG (Sheffield: JSOT Press).
- Mauser, U.  
 1971 *Gottesbild und Menschwerdung. Eine Untersuchung zur Einheit des Alten und Neuen Testaments*, BHT 43 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr).
- May, H.G.  
 1942 'Towards an Objective Approach to the Book of Jeremiah: The Biographer', *JBL* 61:139-153.
- Mayes, A.D.H.  
 1987 *Deuteronomy*, NCB (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans)
- McConville, J.G.  
 1993 *Judgment and Promise. An Interpretation of the Book of Jeremiah* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns).  
 1994 'Jeremiah', in D.A. Carson, R.T France, J.A. Motyer and G.W. Wenham (eds.), *New Bible Commentary* (Leicester: IVP) 671-708.
- McEvenue, S.  
 1972 'The Composition of Jeremiah 37.1 to 44.30', in W.C. van Wyk (ed.), *Studies in Wisdom Literature* (Pretoria: OTWSA) 59-67.

McKane, W.

- 1986 *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah 1–25*, ICC 1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark).
- 1996 *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah 26–52*, ICC 2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark).

McKenzie, S.L., and Howard N. Wallace

- 1983 'Covenant Themes in Malachi', *CBQ* 45:549-563.

Meier, Samuel A.

- 1992 *Speaking of Speaking. Marking Direct Discourse in the Hebrew Bible*, VT Sup. 46 (Leiden: Brill).

Min, Y.-J.

- 1977 *The Minuses and Pluses of the LXX Translation of Jeremiah as Compared with the Massoretic Text*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Jerusalem: Hebrew University).

Mowinckel, S.

- 1914 *Zur Komposition des Buches Jeremias*, Videnskapsselskapets Skrifter. II. Hist.-Filos. Klasse 5 (Kristiania: Jacob Dybwad).

Muilenburg, J.

- 1970 'Baruch the Scribe', in J.I. Durham and J.R. Porter (eds.), *Proclamation and Presence: Old Testament Essays in Honour of Gwynne Henton Davies* (Richmond: John Knox) 215-238.

Nicholson, E.W.

- 1970 *Preaching to the Exiles. A Study of the Prose Tradition in the Book of Jeremiah* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell).
- 1975 *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah 26–52*, CBC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Niditch, S.

- 1983 *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition*, HSM 30 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press).

E. Nielsen

- 1953 'The Righteous and the Wicked in Habbaquq', *ST* 6:54-78.

Odashima, T.

- 1989 *Heilsworte im Jeremiabuch. Untersuchungen zu ihre vordeuteronomistischen Bearbeitung*, BWANT 125 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer).

von Orelli, C.

- 1905 *Der Prophet Jeremia. Übersetzt und ausgelegt*, KKANT (München: E. Otto)

- Otto, E.  
 1985 'Die Theologie des Buches Habakkuk', *VT* 35:274-295.
- Overholt, T.W.  
 1968 'King Nebuchadnezzar in the Jeremiah Tradition', *CBQ* 30:39-48.  
 1970 *The Threat of Falsehood. A Study in the Theology of the Book of Jeremiah*, SBT Second Series 16 (London: SCM).
- O'Connor, K.M.  
 1988 *The Confessions of Jeremiah. Their Interpretation and Role in Chapters 1–25*, SBLDS 94 (Atlanta: Scholars Press).
- Pardee, D.  
 1982 *Handbook of Ancient Hebrew Letters. A Study Edition*, SBL Sources for Biblical Study 15 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press).
- Parke-Taylor, G.H.  
 2000 *The Formation of the Book of Jeremiah. Doublets and Recurring Phrases*, SBLMS (Atlanta: Scholars Press).
- Paterson, J.  
 1962 'Jeremiah', in M. Black and H.H. Rowley (eds.), *Peake's Commentary on the Bible* (London/Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson & Sons) 537-562.
- Peake, A.S.  
 1911 *Jeremiah and Lamentations Vol. II. Jeremiah XXV to LII, Lamentations*, Century Bible (Edinburgh: T&T Clark).
- Perdue, L.G., and B.W. Kovacs (eds.)  
 1984 *A Prophet to the Nations. Essays in Jeremiah Studies* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns).
- Pietersma, A.  
 1985 'Septuagint Research: A Plea for a Return to Basic Issues', *VT* 35: 296-311.
- Pohlmann, K.F.  
 1978 *Studien zum Jeremiabuch. Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach der Entstehung des Jeremiabuches*, FRLANT 118 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht).  
 1988 *Die Ferne Gottes – Studien zum Jeremiabuch. Beiträge zu den „Konfessionen“ im Jeremiabuch und ein Versuch zur Frage nach den Anfängen der Jeremiatradition*, BZAW 179 (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter).
- Preuschen, E.  
 1895 'Die Bedeutung von שׁוֹב שְׁבוּת im Alten Testamente', *ZAW* 15:1-74.

- Propp, W.H.  
 1993 'That Bloody Bridegroom (Exodus 4.24-26)', *VT* 43:495-518.
- Rabin, C., S. Talmon, and E. Tov (eds.)  
 1997 *The Hebrew University Bible: The Book of Jeremiah* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press).
- Rackham, H (ed.).  
 1926 *Aristotle. The Nicomachean Ethics. With an English Translation*, LCL (London: Heineman).
- von Rad, G.  
 1966 *Deuteronomy. A Commentary* (London: SCM).
- Rahlfs, A. (ed.)  
 1979 *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft).
- Raitt, T.M.  
 1974 'Jeremiah's Deliverance Message to Judah', in J.J. Jackson and M. Kessler (eds.), *Rhetorical Criticism. Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg*, PTMS 1 (Pittsburgh: Pickwick) 166-185.
- Reimer, D.J.  
 1993 *The Oracles Against Babylon in Jeremiah 50-51. A Horror Among the Nations* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press).  
 1997 s.v. 'צִדְקָה', in W.A. VanGemeren (ed.), *NIDOTTE*, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 744-769.
- Rendtorff, R.  
 1998 *The Covenant Formula. An Exegetical and Theological Investigation*, Old Testament Studies (Edinburgh: T&T Clark).
- Rietzschel, C.  
 1966 *Das Problem der Urrolle. Ein Beitrag zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Jeremiabuches* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlaghaus, Gerd Mohn).
- Roberts, B.J.  
 1951 *The Old Testament Text and Versions. The Hebrew Text in Transmission and the History of the Ancient Versions* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press).
- Rofé, A.  
 1989 'The Arrangement of the Book of Jeremiah', *ZAW* 101:390-398.
- Rosenberg, J (ed.)  
 1987 'Jeremiah and Ezekiel', in R. Kermode and F. Alter (eds.), *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (London: Fontana) 184-206.



Rubinger, Naphtali J.

- 1977 'Jeremiah's Epistle to the Exiles and the Field in Anathoth', *Judaism* 26: 84-91.

Rudolph, W.

- 1947 *Jeremia*, HAT 12 (Tübingen: Mohr).  
1966 *Hosea*, KAT (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlaghaus, Gerd Mohn).

Schmid, K.

- 1996 *Buchgestalten des Jeremiabuches. Untersuchung zur Redaktions - und Rezeptionsgeschichte von Jer. 30-33 im Kontext des Buches*, WMANT 72 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag).

Schmitt, John J.

- 1991 'The Virgin of Israel: Referent and Use of the Phrase in Amos and Jeremiah', *CBQ* 53:365-387.

Schulte, H.

- 1988 'Baruch und Ebedmelech – Persönliche Heilsorakel im Jeremiabuche', *BZ* 32:257-265.

Seebass, H.

- 1970 'Jeremias Konflikt mit Chananja. Bemerkungen zu Jer. 27 und 28', *ZAW* 82:449-452.

Seidl, T.

- 1977 *Texte und Einheiten in Jeremia 27-29*, ATSAT 2 (Munich: Eos St Ottilien).

Seitz, C.R.

- 1985 'The Crisis of Interpretation Over the Meaning and Purpose of the Exile', *VT* 35:78-97.  
1989 'The Prophet Moses and the Canonical Shape of Jeremiah', *ZAW* 101:3-27.  
1989 *Theology in Conflict. Reactions of the Exile in the Book of Jeremiah* (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter).

Sharp, Carolyn J.

- 2000 'The Call of Jeremiah and Diaspora Politics', *JBL* 119:421-438.

Sisson, Jonathan Paige

- 1986 'Jeremiah and the Jerusalem Conception of Peace', *JBL* 105:429-442.

Skinner, J.

- 1922 *Prophecy and Religion. Studies in the Life of Jeremiah* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Smelik, K.A.D.

- 1996 'Letters to the Exiles. Jeremiah 29 in Context', *SJOT* 10:282-295.

Smith, D.L.

- 1989 'Jeremiah as Prophet of Nonviolent Resistance', *JSOT* 43:95-107.  
1989 *The Religion of the Landless. The Social Context of the Babylonian Exile* (Bloomington, IN: Meyer Stone).

Smith, M.S.

- 1990 *The Laments of Jeremiah and Their Contexts. A Literary and Redactional Study of Jeremiah 11-20*, SBLMS 42 (Atlanta: Scholars Press).

Smith-Christopher, D.L.

- 1997 'Reassessing the Historical and Sociological Impact of the Babylonian Exile (597/587-539 BCE)', in J.M. Scott (ed.), *Exile. Old Testament, Jewish and Christian Conceptions*, JSJ Sup.56 (Leiden: Brill) 7-36.

Soderlund, S.

- 1985 *The Greek Text of Jeremiah. A Revised Hypothesis*, JSOT Sup. 47 (Sheffield: JSOT Press).

Soggin, J. Alberto

- 1975 'Jeremiah 29.8b', in J. Alberto Soggin (ed.), *Old Testament and Oriental Studies*. BO 29 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute) 238-240.

Sommer, Benjamin D.

- 1999 'New Light on the Composition of Jeremiah', *CBQ* 61:646-666.

Sperber, A. (ed.)

- 1962 *The Latter Prophets According to Targum Jonathan. The Bible in Aramaic. Based on Old Manuscripts and Printed Texts*, Vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill).

Steiner, Richard.C.

- 1996 'The Two Sons of Neriah and the Two Editions of Jeremiah in the Light of Two ATBASH Code-Words for Babylon', *VT* 46:74-84.

Stipp, H-J.

- 1996 'Zedekiah in the Book of Jeremiah: On the Formation of a Biblical Character', *CBQ* 58:627-648.

Streane, A.W.

- 1885 *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Together with the Lamentations*, CBSC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Stulman, L.

- 1986 *The Other Text of Jeremiah. A Reconstruction of the Hebrew Text Underlying the Greek Version of the Prose Sections of Jeremiah with English Translation* (Lanham: University Press of America).
- 1986 *The Prose Sermons of the Book of Jeremiah. A Redescription of the Correspondances with the Deuteronomistic Literature in the Light of Recent Text-Critical Research*, SBLDS 83 (Atlanta: Scholars Press).
- 1998 *Order Amid Chaos. Jeremiah as Symbolic Tapestry*, BS 57 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press).

Sturdy, J.V.M.

- 1980 'The Authorship of the "Prose Sermons" of Jeremiah', in J.A. Emerton (ed.), *Prophecy. Essays Presented to Georg Fohrer on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday, 6 September 1980* (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter) 143-150.

Sweeney, Marvin. A.

- 1996 'Jeremiah 30-31 and King Josiah's Program of National Restoration and Religious Reform', *ZAW* 108:569-583.

Swetnam, J.

- 1965 'Some Observations on the Background of Tsadik in Jeremias 23.5a', *Biblica* 46:29-40.

Talmon, S.

- 1970 'The Old Testament Text', in P.R. Ackroyd and C.F. Evans (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Bible, Vol. 1. From the Beginnings to Jerome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 159-199.

Taylor, M.A.

- 1987 'Jeremiah 45. The Problem of Placement', *JSOT* 37:79-98.

Thiel, W.

- 1973 *Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 1-25*, WMANT 41 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag).
- 1981 *Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 26-45. Mit einer Gesamtbeurteilung der deuteronomistischen Redaktion des Buches Jeremias*, WMANT 52 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag).

Thomas, D. Winton

- 1934 'The Root ידע in Hebrew', *JTS* 35:298-306.
- 1952 'A Note on מועדיים in Jeremiah 24.1', *JTS* (New Series) 3:55.
- 1961 'The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament', in H.H. Rowley (ed.), *The Old Testament and Modern Study. A Generation of Discovery and Research* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) 238-263.

Thompson, J.A.

1980 *The Book of Jeremiah*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans).

Thompson, J.A., and E.A. Martens

1997 s.v. 'שׁוֹב', in W.A. VanGemeren (ed.), *NIDOTTE*, Vol. 4 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 55-59.

Tov, E.

1976 *The Septuagint Translation of Jeremiah and Baruch: A Discussion of an Early Revision of the LXX of Jeremiah 29–52 and Baruch 1:1-3:8*, HSM 8 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press).

1979 'Exegetical Notes on the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the LXX of Jeremiah 27 (34)', *ZAW* 91:73-93.

1981 'Some Aspects of the Textual and Literary History of the Book of Jeremiah', in P.-M. Bogaert (ed.), *Le Livre de Jérémie. Le Prophète et Son Milieu, Les Oracles et Leur Transmission* (Leuven: Leuven University Press) 147-167.

1984 'Did the Septuagint Translators Always Understand Their Hebrew Text?', in E. Tov (ed.), *The Greek and Hebrew Bible. Collected Essays on the Septuagint* (Leiden: Brill) 203-218.

1985 'The Literary History of the Book of Jeremiah in the Light of Its Textual History', in J.H. Tigay (ed.), *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press) 211-237.

1992 *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress).

1992 'Three Fragments of Jeremiah from Qumran Cave 4', *RQ* 15 (4 Oct.):531-541.

Ulrich, E., et al.

1997 *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert of Jordan, Vol. 15, Qumran Cave 4. 10: The Prophets* (Oxford: Clarendon).

Unterman, J.

1987 *From Repentance to Redemption. Jeremiah's Thought in Transition*, JSOT Sup. 54 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press).

van Selms, A.

1976 'Telescoped Discussion as a Literary Device in Jeremiah', *VT* 26:99-112.

Volz, P.

1920 *Studien zum Text des Jeremia* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs).

1928 *Der Prophet Jeremia*, KAT 10 (Leipzig: Deichert).

Waltke, B.K.

1989 'Aims of Old Testament Textual Criticism', *WTJ* 51:93-108.

Waltke, B.K., and M.O. O'Connor

1990 *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns).

Wanke, G.

- 1971 *Untersuchungen zur sogenannten Baruchschrift*, BZAW 122 (Berlin: De Gruyter).

Weinfeld, M.

- 1972 *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).  
1976 'Jeremiah and the Spiritual Metamorphosis of Israel', *ZAW* 88:17-56.

Weippert, H.

- 1970 'Jahwekrieg und Bundesfluch in Jer. 23.1-7', *ZAW* 82:396-409.  
1973 *Die Prosareden des Jeremiabuches*, BZAW 132 (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter).

Weiser, A.

- 1960 *Das Buch des Propheten Jeremia*, NGB 20/21, 4th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht).  
1961 'Das Gotteswort für Baruch. Jer. 45 und die sogenannte Baruchbiographie', in A. Weiser (ed.), *Glaube und Geschichte im Alten Testament und Andere ausgewählte Schriften* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht) 321-329.  
1961 *Introduction to the Old Testament*, ET: D.M. Barton (London: Darton, Longman & Todd).

Welch, A.C.

- 1951 *Jeremiah. His Time and His Work* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell).

Wells, Roy D.

- 1999 'The Amplification of the Expectations of the Exiles in the MT Revision of Jeremiah', in A.R. Diamond, K.M O'Connor and L. Stulman (eds.), *Troubling Jeremiah* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press) 272-292.

Wessels, W.J.

- 1991 'Jeremiah 24.1-10 as a Pronouncement of Hope?' *OTE* 4:397-407.

Westermann, C

- 1960 'Die Begriffe für Fragen und Suchen im Alten Testament', *KD* 6:2-30.

Westermann, C, and R. Albertz

- 1992 s.v. 'גלה, glh, to uncover', in E. Jenni and C. Westermann (eds.), *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Vol. 1, ET: M.E. Biddle (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson) 314-320.

Wevers, J.W.

- 1969 *Ezekiel*, NCB (London: Nelson).

Whitley, C.F.

- 1954 The Term Seventy Years Captivity, *VT* 4:60-72.  
1957 The Term Seventy Years – A Rejoinder, *VT* 7:416-418.

Wilson, R.R.

- 1980 *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress).

Wolff, H.W.

- 1961 'Das Kerygma des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerks', *ZAW* 73:171-186.

Yaure, L.

- 1960 'Elymas - Nehelamite - Pethor', *JBL* 79:297-314.

Zevit, Z.

- 1969 'The Use of Ebed as a Diplomatic Term in Jeremiah', *JBL* 88:74-77.

Ziegler, J.

- 1952 *Beiträge zur Ieremias – Septuaginta*. Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen: Philologisch-Historische Klasse, Vol. 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht).  
1957 *Ieremias, Baruch, Threni, Epistula Ieremiae. Septuaginta*, *Vetus Testamentum Graecum* 15 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht).

Zimmerli, W

- 1982 'Visionary Experience in Jeremiah', in R Coggins, A. Philipps and M. Knibb (eds.), R Coggins, A. Philipps and M. Knibb (eds.), *Israel's Prophetic Tradition. Essays in Honour of Peter R. Ackroyd* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 95-118.

Zobel, H.J.

- 1975 s.v. 'גלה', *galah*, in G.J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, Vol. 2, ET: J.W. Willis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 476-488.