
OLD TESTAMENT

PROPHETIC LITERATURE

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INTRODUCTION TO OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETIC LITERATURE

I. The Covenants

Central to the ministry and message of the prophets were the covenants God had made early in Israel's history. In particular, the prophets serve within the framework of the Mosaic covenant that grows out of the broader Abrahamic covenant.

Covenant-making between two or more parties in the ancient Semitic world was a common institution. Modern scholarship has found that the book of Deuteronomy (the Mosaic Covenant) closely follows the structure of second-millennium covenants (especially Hittite covenants).

"The idea of a covenant between a deity and a people is unknown from other religions and cultures. *** It seems that the covenantal idea was a special feature of the religion of Israel, the only one to demand exclusive loyalty and preclude the possibility of dual or multiple loyalties."

–Moshe Weinfeld, *Encycl. Judaica*

In this historical context of the covenants, God's prophets will be seen in the true light of being **covenant messengers**.

- They come as God's spokesmen calling the wayward vassal back to the terms of the original, Mosaic covenant.
- They threaten the stipulated curses for rebellion, and offer the carrot of the blessings for their fealty to the Sovereign God (Jer 35:15; see Lev 26 and Deut for the terms of the covenant).

The prophets' addresses are often formulated in the style of a lawsuit (Hebrews = *rib*) for breaking the treaty: admonitory speeches, a call for the original covenant witnesses (e.g., Isa 1:2), warnings, denunciations, and pleadings.

–Note how Malachi couches his message in the terms of a legal cross-examination.

An understanding of these covenants is essential to understanding the prophetic office and standpoint.

A. Theological Covenants as articulated by the Westminster Confession:

Covenant of works: life upon condition of perfect obedience is promised to mankind through Adam, with threat of death for disobedience. Upon Adam's failure to keep God's covenant, God promises a Redeemer (Gen 3:15) who comes as the Second Adam, Jesus Christ.

Covenant of redemption: the Father and Son determine to call a people, rewarding the Son for his perfect obedience to the will of the Father (Isa 53:10,11; John 6:37-39; 17:4ff.; Eph 1:5; 1:9-12)

Covenant of grace: the Son enters a covenant with an elect people to save them (Gal 3:16; 2:20)

B. Biblical Covenants

In the Jewish mind, the great covenants come at the three critical stages of human history, each with an attending sign:

Covenant Purpose	Sign
1) <u>Creation</u>	the Sabbath [Gen 1-2:3; Exo 31:16-18; cf. Jer 31:35-37]
2) <u>Covenant renewal of mankind</u>	rainbow [Gen 9:1-17]
3) the <u>organizing of God's people</u>	circumcision [Gen 17]

1. The Covenants

a. **Noahic Covenant** (Genesis 6:18 = re-"establish"-ment of an apparently pre-existing covenant; Genesis 9:8-17)

b. **Abrahamic Covenant** (Genesis 12, 13, 15, 17, 22)

The unconditional enablement of this promissory covenant is expressed in Genesis 18:19:

"For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."

continued with Isaac (Gen 17:15-21; 26:2-5, 24)

continued with Jacob/Israel (Gen 25:23; 27:27-29; 28:3-4, 13-15; Malachi 1:2-3)

c. **Mosaic Covenant** (Exodus 19-24, esp. 19:5-6; Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy, esp. chapters 28-30);

(cf. K. A. Kitchen, *Ancient Orient and Old Testament*, pp. 90-102)

(Gal 3:17 = Mosaic Covenant did not replace Abrahamic!)

Palestinian Covenant? (Deut 29-30): NO

d. **Davidic Covenant** (2 Sam 7:15-16; 1 Chron 17:9-14; Psa 89:3-4, 20-37)

e. **New Covenant** (Jer 31:31-34; 32:41; Ezek 36:24-32, 37:24-27; cf. Lev 26:40-45 and Deut 30:1-10. Cf. Matt 26:28, Luke 22:20; Heb 8,9)

2. Of special importance to the study of the OT prophets are the biblical covenants with Abraham, Moses, and David.

a. The covenants with Moses and David are based on the covenant with Abraham, which is foundational.

- Significantly, these three primary covenants do not all share a similar structure.
- The **Mosaic Covenant is an “obligatory”** covenant and parallels the ancient **“suzerain/vassal” treaty** wherein the vassal is bound to his lord under threat of curse for treason and with promise of protection and other benefits for obedience (Exo 19:7,8; 24:3-8).
- On the other hand, the **Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants may be called “promissory,”** paralleling ancient land-grant (or “royal grant”) treaties in which a sovereign would bestow gifts upon individuals who had distinguished themselves in faithful service.
- The terms of the former obligatory covenant are conditional, whereas the promissory covenants are unconditional.
- Still, this must be qualified by saying that, since the Mosaic Covenant grew out of the foundational and unconditional Abrahamic covenant, the particular terms which stem from the overarching promises to Abraham must also be fulfilled. At the same time, the promised blessings through the Mosaic Covenant were not unconditionally guaranteed to ancient Israel as the sole recipient in the same exclusive way the promises were granted to Abraham or David.

–I.e., the ultimate promises through Moses seem to be unconditional, whereas the party itself (theocratic Israel) is never unconditionally guaranteed to be the recipient of the promises. Note all the conditional “if clauses” of the Mosaic Covenant.

b. The **Abrahamic Covenant** is specifically defined in Genesis 12:2-3,7; 13:14-17; 15:5-7, 13-20; 17:4-8; 18:18-19; 22:16-18.

We believe the following to be true concerning the promises of the Abrahamic covenant:

–they are sure to be fulfilled:

“...do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. ¹³ For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, ¹⁴ saying, “Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you.” ¹⁵ And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. ... ¹⁷ Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath, ¹⁸ that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. (Heb 6:12-18)

–they were not fulfilled in biblical times:

³⁹ And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, ⁴⁰ God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. (Heb 11:13, 39-40; cf. 10:36; 12:28)

–they will be fulfilled at the resurrection

(Matt 22:31-32; believing Gentiles included cf. Rom 9:6-13, 24,30; 11:11-24)

II. The Theocracy

The kingdom promised in the covenants and in the prophets has been called the theocracy.

–The etymology of that word comes from theos (God) and kratos (power, might); cf. democracy, or bureaucracy.

The word “theocracy” was first used by Josephus (*Contra Apion* 2:17):

“Now there are innumerable differences in the particular customs and laws that are among all mankind, which a man may briefly reduce under the following heads: Some legislators have permitted their governments to be under monarchies, others put them under oligarchies, and others under a republican form; but our legislator [Moses] had no regard to any of these forms, but he ordained our government to be what, by a strained expression, may be termed a theocracy, by ascribing the authority and the power to God, and by persuading all the people to have a regard to him.”

It is important that we distinguish the formal theocracy from God's universal sovereignty.

- God is completely sovereign over all his creation, which is his eternal kingdom (Psa 103:19; Psa 145; Dan 4:34-35).
- The special providence he has shown by visibly governing Israel has been called his mediatorial kingdom. Most references to "the kingdom" in the prophets refer to the mediatorial or messianic kingdom.

Be familiar with these elements of the theocracy:

A. God is the supreme national lawgiver.

Deut 4:13-14; 12:32

This legislation includes both religious and civil laws.

B. God appoints representative rulers directly.

- Before the formal kingdom: the patriarch
- Moses, Joshua, the judges, Saul, David, Solomon, David's line, Jeroboam, Jehu
- Priests, Aaron and his line

C. God defines duties of the rulers.

- kings, Deut 17:14-20
- priests, Lev, etc.
- judges, Deut 16:18-20

D. God's presence is seen among the people.

The people of Israel saw the “shekinah” of God.

–The term “shekinah” is not used in the OT, but in other Jewish writings.

–Its etymology comes through the Aramaic (*shekinah*) from the Hebrew word, שָׁכַן *shakan*, which means “to dwell, to sit,” and its meaning is associated with the term “glory,” referring to the Lord

Zech 2:5,10,11: 5 ‘For I,’ says the LORD, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’ “ ... “ Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming, and I will dwell in your midst,” says the LORD. ¹¹ “Many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and they shall become My people. And I will dwell in your midst.

(see also Rom 9:4,23,24; Hebrews 9:5 [cf. 1:3]; 2 Peter 1:17,18, “majestic glory”)

“Shekinah” is related to the NT term σκηνώω (*skēnoō*). vb. to dwell, to live, to shelter.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. ... ²² But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light. (Rev 21:3, 22-23)

The “shekinah” has an interesting history:

- seen on Sinai (Exo 19:16, etc.)
- seen with the Hebrews in the wilderness (Neh 9:19)
- seen in the tabernacle (Exod 40:34)
- seen in the temple (2 Chron 7:1)

- departed with the Babylonian Captivity:
 - 6th year of Jehoiachin's captivity (ca. 590 BC; Ezekiel 1:2; 8:1)
 - Zedekiah's wickedness, Jer 52:1-3
 - priests' wickedness, Ezek 8:5-18
 - Ezekiel's vision (Ezek 8:3; 11:24-25):
 - Ezekiel 8:4, glory in temple
 - Ezekiel 9:3; 10:4, glory moves from cherubim to threshold
 - Ezekiel 10:18-19, glory moves over cherubim at east gate
 - Ezekiel 11:23, glory moves from city to east, Mount of Olives
- the Shekinah glory **to return** from the same direction (Ezek 43:1-7; Zech 14:4; Acts 1:11)
- not seen in Zerubbabel's or Herod's temples

“It was the belief of the Jews that the glory of the Lord did not dwell in the Most Holy Place in the second temple. –The Talmud (*Yoma* 9b) explains this on the ground that God only dwells in the tents of Shem; not of Japheth, of whom Cyrus was a descendant.–This was deplored, and the promises of more intimate fellowship to be enjoyed by the Church in the Messianic age are in the Targum all made to predict the presence of the Shekinah (as in Ezek 43:7, 9; Hag 1:8; 2:9; Zech 2:10).”

–J. T. Marshall, “Shekinah,” *Hastings Dictionary of the Bible*, 4:489

E. God gave direct revelation and direction to the nation.

1. choosing of leaders, see (B) above
2. making decisions:
 - helping the judges, Deuteronomy 17:8-9; Numbers 5:16-28
 - helping in military decisions, 1 Samuel 30:7-8 (ctr. 1 Sam 28:6)

3. mode of direction:

- written law
- direct voice (Num 12:7)
- dreams and visions
- Urim and Thummim
- prophets

The Israelites recognized that they lived in a theocracy, where God was king (Gideon in Judges 8:23; cf. 1 Sam 8:7; 12:12, 14-15). The theocracy, as defined here requires the personal and visible presence of God and will not be restored/fully realized until the return of Jesus the Messiah to the earth.

III. The Prophetic Office

A. Terms used

Only I Chronicles 29:29 uses all three OT terms for a prophet:

“²⁹ Now the acts of King David, first and last, indeed they are written in the book of Samuel the *seer*, in the book of Nathan the *prophet*, and in the book of Gad the *seer*....”

1. נָבִיא – *nabhi'* (306X), “prophet”

FUNCTION Perhaps from Akkadian *nabu*, “speak; to call.” Some make it an ecstatic term, related to Arabic *nb'*, “bubble forth.”

In its usage in the OT it means “spokesman (for God),” one who “speaks forth” [compare Aaron’s relation to Moses, and Moses’ to God (Exo 4:10-17; esp. 7:1,2)]. It implies a close relation to God (Abraham in Gen 20:7). Cf. Nathan the prophet as “mouth of God” in 1 Kings 8:15 (2 Sam 7).

“And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh...” -Exo 7.1-2

2. רֹאֶה *ro'eh* (12X), “seer”

MODE From *ra'ah*, “see.” –An early popular term, used mostly of Samuel (1 Sam 9:9), who was also called a *ayb1n6 nabhi'* (3:20) and a “man of God” (9:6). –Samuel uses the word of other prophets (10:5). –Revelation is obtained by seeing (Isa 30:10).

3. חֹזֶה *chozeh* (17X), “seer”

MODE From *chazah*, “see, behold.” –Parallel with *ro'eh* in Isa 30:10. –Used of Amos 8 times. –Related to word “vision” (several forms of noun, ca. 52 times).

4. אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים *ish elohim* (ca. 75X), “man of God”

CHARACTER See discussion in *TDOT* 1:233-35.

–Used of many prophets: Moses (Deut 33:1), Samuel (1 Sam 9:6), David (2 Chronicles 8:14), Elijah (1 Kings 17:18), Elisha (2 Kings 4:7), Shemaiah (1 Kings 12:22), Igdaliah (Jer 35:4), anonymous (1 Sam 2:27; 1 Kings 13, 20:28; 2 Kings 23:16; 2 Chron 25:7-9). It is interesting that this term never refers to the OT literary prophets.

The term must be idiomatic, since “man of Yahweh” is never found.

The emphasis is on his mission as a divine representative and announcer (cf. angel in Judg 13:3; cf. vv. 8, 16).

5. προφήτης *prophétés* (ca. 150X in NT), “prophet”

This is the primary Greek term for prophet and is commonly used in the LXX and NT (Eph. 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:28).

B. Function of the prophets

For the function of OT/NT prophets, see Walter Kaiser, *Back toward the Future*, p. 79:

1. Edification
2. Instruction
3. Conviction
4. Prediction

OT Prophets were to be God's mouthpieces in revealing not so much the future, but God's will: "Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets." –Amos 3:7

Occasionally God's revelation was directed to the Gentiles, notably through Jonah, but also in Abraham, a proto-prophet ("Now therefore, restore the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live." –Gen 20:7); compare Noah, the "preacher of righteousness."

- * The prophetic function was to summon covenanted members of the theocracy to allegiance to the **Mosaic covenant**.

–Note Malachi's final admonition which closes the message, not only of the prophets, but of the whole first testament: "Remember the Torah of my servant Moses, whom I commanded at Horeb concerning laws and judgments for all Israel" (Malachi 4:4).

–The prophetic message flows out of Moses and the Pentateuch even as the apostles' message of the established New covenant flows from Jesus and the gospel accounts.

From a more historically technical perspective, Meredith Kline emphasizes the prophets as **treaty messengers**, sent by the great king to demand loyalty from his vassals (*By Oath Consigned*, pp. 51–52).

In this regard, Vangemeren says that Samuel is the prophetic model who serves as the bridge between the Mosaic/Joshua era that failed to subjugate the promised land, and the beginning of the mediatorial theocracy (p. 28).

–Elijah will be the first main "covenant prosecutor" in indicting the monarch and people for breach of the covenant.

–John the Baptist will be the last great Mosaic covenant spokesman.

Sometimes there were many prophets (as Samuel's group, 1 Sam 10:5; 19:20; or during the divided kingdom), sometimes few prophets (1 Sam 3:1; Amos 8:11,12).

C. Types of prophets

Canonical prophets (to be studied during this semester)

Non-literary and/or Non-canonical OT prophets:

- 11th BC: Samuel (1 Sam 1-25)
- Nathan (2 Sam 7:2)
- Gad (1 Sam 22:5)
- 10th BC: Ahijah informs Jeroboam (1 Kings 11, 14)
- Shemiah tells Rehoboam not to invade Israel; Shishak's invasion (1 Kings 12:22-24; 2 Chronicles 12:15)
- Iddo, history of Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijah (2 Chronicles 9:29; 12:15; 13:22)
- 9th BC: Azariah son of Oded, helps Asa's reform (2 Chronicles 15:1-8)
- Hanani rebukes Asa for Benhadad alliance, imprisoned (2 Chronicles 16:7-10)
- Elijah (1 Kings 17 - 2 Kings 2)
- Elishah (1 Kings 19 - 2 Kings 13)
- Micaiah, opposed by false prophet Zedekiah, opposes Ahab going to the Ramoth-Gilead battle (1 Kings 22; 2 Chron 18)
- Jahaziel predicts Jehoshaphat's victory over Ammon and Moab (2 Chron 20:14ff; Psa 83)
- Eliezer opposes Jehoshaphat's and Ahaziah's ships at Ezion-Geber (2 Chron 20:37)
- Jehoiada rears and counsels Joash (2 Chron 23-24)
- Zechariah son of Jehoiada, stoned by Joash (2 Chronicles 24:20-22, pbly. same as in Matthew 23:35 and Luke 11:51)
- 8th BC: Zechariah instructs Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:5)
- Oded tells Pekah to release 200,000 Jewish captives (2 Chronicles 28:9-15)
- 7th BC: Huldah the prophetess warns Josiah of judgments (1 Kings 22:14-20 = 2 Chronicles 34:22-28)

Hilkiah, Josiah's high priest, finds the book of the law in the temple
(1 Kings 22-23)

6th BC: Uriah predicts Babylonian captivity, killed by Jehoiakim (Jer 26:20-23)

false prophet Hananiah, opposes Jeremiah under King Zedekiah
(Jer 28)

. . . in addition, many unnamed "men of God"

D. The prophetic test

To determine true prophets from false ones, the people were to apply two primary tests:

1) did the spokesman lead the people to false gods, and

2) did his predictions come true?

1. Truthfulness and obedience: True prophets led people to the exclusive worship of Yahweh and obedience to his law; false prophets would lead people to worship other gods

Deuteronomy 13:1-5; "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, ² "and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods' -- which you have not known -- 'and let us serve them,' ³ "you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

No miracles, signs, or astounding predictions could overcome this first rule (Isa 8:20).

2. True Predictions: The predictions of true prophets would always come true. --False prophets could not guarantee fulfillment of their predictions

Deuteronomy 18:15-22; ²⁰ "But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.' ²¹ "And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' ²² "When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him."

–Occasionally, true prophets made short-term prophecies as an earnest in connection with their long-range prophecies (e.g., Zech 9:1-6 ctr. vs.9).

False prophets would lead the people to false gods (as Baal's prophets in 1 Kings 18), were sometimes deceived by a lying spirit (as Zedekiah in 1 Kings 22), or were sometimes impostors (as Hananiah in Jer 28).

- Even true prophets did not always understand fully or appreciate God's message (Samuel weeping for Saul; Samuel observing David's brothers; Nathan telling David to build the temple; man of God out of Judah disobeying God's command; the old prophet misleading the man of God; Jonah discouraged when Nineveh repented).
- But in the case of true prophets, God corrected their mistake so that their message was clear in the end.

E. The prophetic state

- Some take the prophetic state to be psychologically abnormal, a “prophetic frenzy,” or even serious mental illness.
- Compare the story of Wen-Amon in *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, Vol 1, p. 18.
- The following Scriptures are often used:

Numbers 11:24-29

Numbers 24:3-4, 15-16

1 Samuel 10:9-13

1 Samuel 19:20-24

Ezekiel 3:15

Ezekiel 3:22 – 4:8

Daniel 7:28

Acts 10:10: Peter in “*extasis*”

There is no evidence in these cases for ecstasy as normally understood. Rather, it appears that these are cases of close communion with God, accompanied by God's compulsive revelations to them (as with Balaam).

Knowing that ancient cultures have tolerated and protected the insane, modernism has supposed that the prophetic office itself, apart from a prophetic state, implied social maladjustment or madness (Hosea 9:7).

–For further study, see L. Wood, “Ecstasy and Israel’s Early Prophets,” *Bulletin of the ETS*, 9:3 (1966), 125-37, who discusses the references in Numbers and in 1 Samuel; see also in the same issue R. L. Alden, “Ecstasy and the Prophets,” pp. 149-56.

F. The prophetic call

See Isa 6; Jer 1; Amos 7:14-16

The prophets knew their office and place, and spoke with authority, “Thus says the Lord.”

The canonical prophets were “men” who “were moved along by the Holy Spirit,” who therefore “spoke from God” (2 Pet 1:21, Greek).

IV. **Difficulties in Interpreting the Prophets**

“[The prophets] have a queer way of talking, like people who, instead of proceeding in an orderly manner, ramble off from one thing to the next, so that you cannot make head or tail of them what they are getting at” (in VanGemeren, 72).

A. Applying literal interpretation

The message of the prophets should be interpreted in a normal or literal fashion.

The first step must be to take the prophet’s words in their simplest meaning, recognizing figures of speech. Yet one must find a balance between over-literalness on one hand, and undue allegory on the other.

For reasonable guidelines, see Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, pp. 89-96; J.B. Payne, “Introduction,” *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*; also G. N. H. Peters, *TK*, Prop. 4.

Classic Amillennialists like Augustine and Calvin tend to interpret historic places and names figuratively. Even literalistic dispensationalists are not immune; see their treatment of the figures of speech in Isa 14, or Henry Ironside on Ezekiel 47:1-5.

While undue allegory is often practiced, some ignore plain figures of speech employed in the OT. The importance of these figures is emphasized in all modern books on hermeneutics, and was thoroughly discussed by such older writers as T.H. Horne, *Introduction to the Scriptures*, Vol. 2, Part 1, pp. 444-92, and E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*.

A current area of debate is the extent of these figures of speech, and the question as to which terms should be included. For example, should Zion, Israel, and Jerusalem be understood as literal or symbolic in OT prophecies?

B. Near and far prophecies

- Some prophecies seem to be speaking of events near to the time of the prophets; others seem to refer to events associated with the first coming of Christ, or to his future second coming. Some prophecies seem to apply to more than one event: one near, another farther away.

Isaiah 61:1-2: “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ² To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God...”

Isaiah 7:14-16: “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. ¹⁵ “Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ “For before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings.

C. Promise vs predictions

- How are clustered “near” and “far” fulfillments related to each other and to the original prophecy?

Rather than always looking for fulfillment of explicit eschatological predictions, interpreters should remember to see prophetic revelation as unfolding promises. These promises may be multi-dimensional, but in the Hebrew prophet’s eye, they were generally one package with little or slight emphasis on the temporal.

D. Prophecies of the Messiah

- How does one recognize which OT passages are speaking of the Messiah, as opposed to some other person or group? –This is especially difficult when we consider the prophecies of both glory and of suffering (cf. Luke 24:26; 1 Pet 1:10-12).

The “apotelesmatic” nature of prophecy (perspective gaps) telescopes events together that, in reality, are hundreds or thousands of years apart.

Examples:

- prophecies of the Messiah’s first and second coming
- Isaiah 61:1-2; cf. Luke 4:17-19
- Joel 2:28-31; cf. Acts 2:16-21, 33; 3:18-21

The Book of JONAH

I. Historicity of Jonah

This is an important question. The historicity of the book is often denied, even by otherwise conservative scholars (e.g., Leslie Allen in the NIC on Jonah, pp. 175-81, approved on the cover by F. F. Bruce, and Peter Craigie, also). See G. Archer for a defense of the book's historicity.

1) Historicity is assumed by the book itself; no mention of allegory, parable, or interpretation; rather, the Hebrew form of historical narrative (waw-consecutive) introduces the story

2) assumed by Jews; see Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 9:10:1-2. Even Philo, the supreme Jewish allegorist, tried his hardest to explain the fish as a literal creature: "De Jonae Oratione," 16:21.

3) Jonah is mentioned in 2 Kings 14:25 as an historical character

2 Kings 14:23,25 Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, ... restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hepher.

4) affirmed by Christ:

Jonah in fish, Matthew 12:39-40; (16:4)

preaching of Jonah, Matthew 12:41; Luke 11:30, 32

II. Method of Interpretation

A literal interpretation of the book is necessary if the book is indeed historical (see above).

Many writers prefer a symbolic or parabolic interpretation. Rationalists find the story difficult to believe. However, the miracles in Jonah are no more stupendous than those found in other books. Also, Philo, the supreme allegorist, tried hard to give a literal interpretation to the fish (*De Jonae Oratione*).

Others see an internal literary structure which might suggest a parabolic form (deliberate parallelisms, irony, closing question of 4:11). See Craigie's *Commentary on the Minor Prophets*, Vol. 1, p. 213.

Our approach is to view it as a literal story to show God's concern for lost nations and the importance of obeying His commands. Jonah's self-pity is dwarfed by God's interests in maintaining and blessing his creation.

In addition, Jesus used the account of Jonah to illustrate his own preaching, and Jonah's experience as an illustration of his own resurrection—deliverance out of the midst of judgment.

III. **Date — ca. 760 BC**

Some critics date Jonah to the days of Ezra-Nehemiah as a protest against narrow-minded Jewish exclusivism. Others take it as pseudepigraphal and coming from the post-exilic period. Their primary argument is

—the “universalism” of the book, which they claim to be a later development in Jewish theology. However, note the spirit of Genesis 12:3 and of Isa 56:7.

—also, the past tense of 3:3 (but try English past perfect, “... has been a city ...”), Aramaisms, and a contrastive style with Hosea's

However, the description of Nineveh as the center of empire, and the specific mention in 2 Kings 14:25 of Jonah as ministering during the reign of Jeroboam II, place Jonah in the first half of the 8th century BC.

A. Historical background starting with the reign of Jeroboam II (793-753 BC):

1. Great prosperity for Israel, 2 Kings 14:25, 28
2. Assyria strong; soon to be stronger: Tiglath-Pileser III invades Israel in 734-32 BC; Samaria destroyed in 722 BC by Shalmaneser V and Sargon II
3. Although there is no secular record of Nineveh's repentance, this is not a surprise but expected
 - 773-55 BC = time of weak emperor; Assyrians are fighting the encroaching mountain tribes (Urartu) which had come within 100 miles of Nineveh
 - 765 BC = plague
 - 15 Jun 763 BC = total solar eclipse
4. Nineveh was destroyed 150 years later, 612 BC

The Aramaisms in Jonah are not evidence for a later date, since Aramaic was the *lingua franca* of the Near East in Jonah's time. Cf. Isaiah 36:11 and 2 Kings 18:26, which describe the situation in 701 BC.

IV. **Composition**

A. Unity: some critics view the Psalm (chpt.2) as a later interpolation

B. Style

1. Sparse on background detail, which keeps the main thrust of the story from being lessened. A pseudepigraphal writer would have been tempted to add extra background color of a foregone era.
2. Familiar with the Psalter. See chart in H.L. Ellison commentary on Jonah in *EBC*, 364

C. Literary Design

1. Parallels: The first two chapters parallel the last two chapters in certain themes/actions: (see Dorsey, *Literary Structure of the OT*, p. 296, for a more detailed comparison of the symmetrical halves of the book).

Chpt. 1 & 3

Commission

Witness to Gentiles

Deliverance of Gentiles

Chpt. 2 & 4

Jonah's Spiritual/Physical Crisis

Jonah's Prayer of Despair

2. Chiasm of chpt. 1, focusing on the central element of proper fear: see Dumbrell's chart from *The Faith of Israel*, p. 167

V. **Outline of Jonah** (Homiletic Outlines)

Ch. 1 Jonah's call and flight	("Rebellion"	"Protesting")
Ch. 2 Psalm from the fish's belly	("Repentance"	"Praying")
Ch. 3 Nineveh's repentance	("Recommissioning"	"Preaching")
Ch. 4 Jonah's lesson	("Resentment"	"Pouting")

(George L. Robinson produced the above "P" outline)

VI. Points of Interest

For an interesting history of Nineveh and its rediscovery by one of the archaeologists involved, see Andre Parrot, *Nineveh and the OT*, 2nd ed., 1955.

God's Four Providential Preparations: fish, gourd, worm, wind

Jonah is cast in the image of the archetypal Northern prophet, **Elijah**:

Both men flee a hard assignment, both faced with death, both fall into deep sleep, both sit under a tree and ask to die, both associated with a forty-day activity.

A. Chapter 1:

1. Jonah 1:2; Told to arise, Jonah keeps going down, down, down
2. Jonah 1:3; Tarshish (melt, smelt) = Tartessus in Spain (Herodotus)? Or perhaps now thought to be in Sardinia, since 9th-century inscriptions have been found there. See Isaiah 66:19 as an indication of its being “far out”
3. Jonah 1:5; Note how the sailors, representative of the Gentile world in setting the theme of this book, move toward God from “animal fear” to awe of the prophet (10), to reverence of God (16). This is largely in response to God’s word.
4. Jonah 1:9; recognition of Abrahamic identity (Genesis 14:13)
5. Jonah 1:12; a ray of compassion in his self-sacrifice for the poor idolatrous Gentiles
6. Jonah 1:17; cf. stories in Harry Rimmer, *The Harmony of Science and Scripture*, 188-89; also R.K. Harrison, *OTI*, pp. 907-08. But ctr. Allen *NIC*, 176

B. Chapter 2:

1. Jonah will be fitted for his mission through his own personal experience of Repentance and forgiveness!

Many allusions to the Psalms (69:2; 30:3; 124:4; 42:5; 116:17-18)

The personal God Yahweh is mentioned in all but two verses! (5-6a)

2. Jonah 2:4, 7: “temple”; cf. 2 Chron 6:29-31

C. Chapter 3:

1. Jonah 3:3; 3-day journey; cf. Genesis 10:12, Nineveh a great city; see D. J. Wiseman in *ZPEB* Jonah 4:442b; 8 miles of wall, enough to encompass 120,000+ people, and 60 miles of circumference around suburbia
2. Jonah 3:4; Jonah out of the fish; cf. Parrot 24-26; symbol #200 in Labot
3. Jonah 3:4; conditional threat; see J. B. Payne, *The Theology of the Older Testament* 423

“‘Forty days’ and ‘overthrow’ in verse 4 connote, respectively, the flood and the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah. Yet the verb overthrow, which reminds us of the fate of the cities of the plain, is essentially neutral, pointing simply to a change in the condition of a person or object. Ironically, in this prophetic announcement of doom there is thus the nuance of repentance as a possibility; this is confirmed by the later movement in the chapter.” Dumbrell. *The Faith of Israel*, p. 171

4. Jonah 3:6; king of Nineveh; may be “mayor” of city; or may be one of the Assyrian emperors of the period: Adad-nirari III, Shalmaneser IV, Ashur-dan III, or Ashur-nirari V
5. Jonah 3:9; God’s free grace; cf. Jonah 4:11

D. Chapter 4:

1. Jonah 4:2; reason for Jonah’s flight in Ch. 1; this is a reference to the covenantal creed of Exod 34:6; Jonah cannot comprehend this goodness of God, especially extended to such “sinners” as the Ninevites
2. Jonah 1:17; 4:4-8; God’s all-powerful and all-reaching providence; a second chance of service for the unworthy
3. Jonah 4:4, 9; Note the change of divine name between Yahweh and Elohim
4. Jonah 4:11; The book concludes as it began—with the revelation of God’s word
Mercy (רַחֲמִים) for His creation

A population of 120,000 is very probable for a walled city within 8 miles of a wall.

“God is the initiator of crises in human experience, and God resolves them. We are dependent upon a grace which cannot be anticipated or expounded, just as it cannot be measured.” –Dumbrell, 172

“A Jonah lurks in every Christian heart, whispering his insidious message of smug prejudice, empty traditionalism, and exclusive solidarity.” —Leslie Allen, *NICOT*

The Book of Amos

Prophet from Judah to Israel, middle of 8th century BC

I. Date

Amos 1:1 mentions the chronological setting.

Uzziah of Judah, 790-739 BC, sole ruler 767-750 BC; son and co-regent after 750 BC, Jotham, not named

Jeroboam II of Israel, 793-753 BC, sole ruler 782-753 BC

earthquake unknown today (remembered in Zechariah 14:5, ca. 500 BC), but he prophesied two years before the quake (Amos 8:8; 9:1-6) as a judgment. Yigal Yadin says records at Hazor imply a quake about 760 BC

Possible allusion to a solar eclipse in 8:9,10; eclipses occurred in 784 and 763

Thus, Amos's date is near the middle of the 8th century, perhaps just after Jonah's ministry in Israel (2 Kings 14:25; cf. 15:1).

II. Conditions in Israel

Reign of Jeroboam II; great prosperity, but great wickedness, and judgment soon coming

Continuation of idolatry instituted by Jeroboam I in Dan and Bethel (2 Kings 14:24; cf. 1 Kings 12:29); Jeroboam II built magnificent steps to the temple in Dan—Amos 3:14; 4:4-5

Period of great conquest and prosperity (2 Kings 14:25, 28)—Amos 6:1-6

Period of moral corruption—Amos 3:9-10, 14

“As their economic well-being and national strength continued to foster their security, an internal decay was eating at their vitals. It was primarily moral because it involved a basic violation of the covenant established by God at Sinai.” – McComiskey in *EBC*, p. 269

III. The Prophet Amos

A. Name = עֲמוֹס *‘amos* (“burden, load”); not same as Amoz (אֲמוֹץ *‘amots*), father of Isaiah (Isaiah 1:1)

Lived in Tekoa, Judah, 10 miles south of Jerusalem, 5 miles southeast of Bethlehem, a village named for a descendant of Caleb (1 Chronicles 2:18, 24) —Amos 1:1; 7:12.

Tekoa means “trumpet” and was a lookout city (cf. Jeremiah 4:5) on the ridge overlooking the approaches to Jerusalem.

Earlier, Jehoshaphat had a great victory there against Moab and Ammon (2 Chron 20:20).

Not originally a prophet or the son of a prophet Amos 1:1

His own testimony, Amos 7:14-15: “I was no prophet, nor was I a son of a prophet, but I was a sheep breeder and a tender of sycamore fruit.¹⁵ Then the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to My people Israel.’”

Thus a “missionary” to the north from Tekoa of Judea; cf. Jonah’s being sent forth

Brave in the face of opposition, Amos 7:10-17

Stern prophet of righteousness (curse on Amaziah the false prophet) Amos 7:17

Good classical Hebrew — lyrical like another shepherd, David

Many “nature” and “country” references and figures

Amos 2:13 – “a cart pressed down”

Amos 3:5, 12 – shepherding

Amos 4:2, 9; – fishhooks and gardening

Amos 5:8 – the Pleiades and Orion

Amos 6:12 – plowing

Amos 7:1 – locusts

Amos 8:8 – quake

Amos 9:9 – sifting grain

Amos 9:13-14 – reaping and harvesting

IV. Outline of Amos

A. Judgments against many nations, Ch. 1-2

Six foreign cities; climax with impending judgment on the covenant people of Judah and Israel. Judgment introduces the book's message; this will be balanced by the theme of restoration at the end. Significantly, the gentile nations that did not escape God's justice will also be involved in the ultimate restoration (Amos 9:9-12), a fact that implies God's covenant mercies being extended beyond elect Israel (Amos 3:2).

Notice the "international" sins mentioned, whereas Israel is more accused of "social" sins, related to covenant Law.

The high accountability of Judah on account of its privilege under the Davidic covenant ("Zion" vs. the "Carmel" of the Baal prophets, 1:2) calls for a blast against Israel's southern neighbor and serves as a reminder to Israel of covenant obligations.

Numerical Collocation = a linguistic device for emphasis: "3 → 4" = "far too many"

E.g., Amos 1:3: "Thus says the LORD: "For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment."

Also, Amos 1:6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6. Cf. in Proverbs 6:16; 30:15, 18, 21, 24, 29

Judgments fulfilled:

Damascus, 2 Kings 10:32-33; 16:9

Gaza, the "outpost of Africa and the door of Asia" Jeremiah 47; Obadiah 11; 2 Chron 21:16-17; it served as a slave trading center

Tyre, in the time of Alexander the Great, who sold 30,000 citizens

Edom is at the crux of judged nations; cf. Obadiah 14 (Assyrians, Nabataean Arabs, Romans)

Ammon, Amos 1:13; Ezekiel 25:1-7

Moab, Ezekiel 25:1-7 —desecration of the dead

Judah, 2 Chron 36:14-21 — failure to be an international witness

Israel, 2 Kings 17:1-18

Amos 2:6-8 —abuse of law, of the poor, of religion

B. Three judgment sermons (“oracles”) against Israel, Ch. 3-6

1. Sermons have a formulaic pattern, “Hear this word . . . therefore”

Ch. 3

Ch. 4

Ch. 5-6

2. Notes:

- a. Amos 3:2; responsibilities of election and [fore]knowledge defined

“You only have I known of all the families of the earth; Therefore, I will punish you for all your iniquities.”

- b. Amos 3:6; Tekoa means “trumpet”
 - c. Amos 3:7-8; ministry of prophets; illustration of nature of office of prophet: compulsion to be His spokesman
 - d. Amos 3:15; 200 ivory plaques found in the storeroom of Samaria
 - e. Amos 4:1-3; “The [Very] First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women”
 - f. Amos 4:13; God the Creator, בָּרָא bara’
 - g. Amos 4:4-5; 5:21-23; false and empty worship (cf. Judah, Isaiah 1:11-16)
 - h. Amos 5 = Funeral lament for Israel in the midst of the festival
 - i. Amos 5:5 = pun based on sound: “Gilgal to the gallows; Bethel be bedeviled!” (per Moffatt)
 - j. Amos 5:15 = key verse; “Hate evil, love good; Establish justice in the gate. It may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.”
 - k. Amos 5:18; the day of Yahweh
 - l. Amos 5:24; Poetic imagery used in the U.S. civil rights movement

“But let justice run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream.”

- m. Amos 6:8; God’s oath—captivity; cf. 5:27
 - n. Amos 6:13; assonance: “L”s and “H”s

C. Five visions of judgment against Israel, Ch. 7 - 9:10

1. locusts, Amos 7:1-3
2. fire, Amos 7:4-6
3. plumb line, Amos 7:7-9
 - interlude, Amos and Amaziah, Amos 7:10-17
4. ripe fruit, Ch. 8
 - solar eclipse, Amos 8:9-10 (784 BC or 763 BC)
5. the Lord by the altar, Amos 9:1-10

Some notes:

Amos 7:17; personal prophecy against Amaziah

*Amos 8:2; pun: “ripe fruit” = קִיץ *qayits*; “end” = קֵץ *qetz*

* The land is “over-ripe” for judgment, implying that the end is near.

Amos 8:11; ultimate famine of the Word of God

‘Behold, the days are coming,’ says the Lord GOD, “That I will send a famine on the land,
Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the LORD.’

Amos 9:9; purpose of captivity

D. The theocracy to be restored, Amos 9:11-15

James cited this passage during the Apostolic Council in Acts 15:16-18, perhaps from the LXX (except the LXX does not say “after these things”; the LXX follows the MT, “in that day”), or from a Hebrew version not preserved in the MATTHEW

Amos 9:11-15	Acts 15:16-18
¹¹ "On that day I will raise up The tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, And repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, And rebuild it as in the days of old; ¹² That they may possess the remnant of Edom, And all the Gentiles who are called by My name," Says the LORD who does this thing. ¹³ "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, And the treader of grapes him who sows seed; The mountains shall drip with sweet wine, And all the hills shall flow with it. ¹⁴ I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. ¹⁵ I will plant them in their land, And no longer shall they be pulled up From the land I have given them," Says the LORD your God.	¹⁶ 'After this I will return And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And I will set it up; ¹⁷ So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, Says the LORD who does all these things.' ¹⁸ "Known to God from eternity are all His works.

Probably the Hebrew text of Amos that James was familiar with agreed with the LXX, rather than with today's Masoretic Text, since there is a very small change needed in the Hebrew letters of the MT to generate the LXX rendering, and also since there was no objection by the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem at the time (see *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament: A Complete Survey* by Gleason L. Archer Jr. and Gregory Chirichigno, 155).

Following the LXX and James in Acts 15, the variant reading of Amos 9:12 would require the verb:

יִדְרְשׁוּ *yidreshu* (“they will seek”) instead of today’s MT,

יִרְשׁוּ *yireshu* (“they will possess”),

and a subject: אָדָם *adam* (“mankind”) for

אֶדוֹם *edom* (“Edom”).

To show that James was not spiritualizing the text, see Allan A. MacRae in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. 110 (1953), 309-320. Also see *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament: A Complete Survey* by Gleason L. Archer Jr. and Gregory Chirichigno, 155.

An important conclusion from this understanding is that neither James nor the NT record follows an allegorizing hermeneutic in interpreting the OT.

The Book of HOSEA

Prophet to Israel, second half of 8th century BC

I. Date

Hosea 1:1 mentions the prophet as ministering during the reigns of the following:

Uzziah, 790-739, sole ruler 767-750 BC

Jotham, 750-731 BC, sole ruler 739-735 BC

Ahaz, 735-715 BC, sole ruler 731-715 BC

—fall of Samaria, 722 BC, in reign of Ahaz of Judah

Hezekiah, 715-686 BC, sole ruler 715-695 BC

and Jeroboam II of Israel, 793-753 BC, sole ruler 782-753 BC

From these, we conclude that Hosea lived between 753 and 715 BC, which is at least 38 years. He thus ministered in the second half of the 8th century. Perhaps he lived in Judea after 722 BC; cf. his concern for Judah, 1:7, 11; 4:15.

II. Hosea the Prophet

Hosea probably was a native Israelite.

- knowledge of Israel's geography—Hosea 5:1; 6:8-9; 12:12; 14:6-8
- uses "Ephraim" 37 times
- "our king" for king of Israel, Hosea 7:5

Hosea's prophetic CALL is among the least ceremonial of the prophets. God simply speaks to Hosea, directing him to live out in his home life what God was experiencing in His relations to Israel. Initially, Hosea does God's Word before he is prepared to speak God's Word.

"I have heard, over the years, many preachers and many sermons, and they are almost all forgotten; but on a few occasions I have met men and women of great spiritual stature and profound Christian character, and the memory of them has remained printed indelibly on my mind." —Peter Craigie commenting on Hosea

Hosea had a sad domestic life, marked by his love for his unfaithful wife Gomer.

Hosea's relationship with Gomer has led some to think there was a moral problem (Hosea 1:2; 3:1). They cite Deuteronomy 24:1-4 and Leviticus 21:13-14 regarding priests. There is no statement that Hosea was a priest; some have even suggested that he was a baker (cf. Hosea 7:4-8). Perhaps this is an illustration of the OT gospel of love surpassing the constraints of the ceremonial law.

There are two major questions surrounding the marriage:

(1) Was his marriage literal or allegorical?

(2) Was Gomer's harlotry before or after her marriage?

III. **Suggested Chronological Outline of Events Based on Chpt. 1-3**

(This outline follows the analogy of God's relation to now promiscuous Israel, Hosea 5:4.)

- A. God instructs Hosea to marry Gomer, without necessarily referring to her character. Hosea 1:2 is understood as an indirect quote, a "proleptic" reference (perspective of hindsight).

The final phrase of verse 2 also could be taken to mean that Gomer herself was FROM children of adultery—she could well have been chaste at the time of her marriage (= explicative *waw*, = "viz.").

- B. Hosea marries Gomer and has one child.
- C. The Lord instructs Hosea in naming this child, as he does for the next two children.
- D. Gomer has two more children, quite possibly from adulterous unions (cf. Hosea 5:7; 2:4,5).
- E. Gomer leaves Hosea for a life of sin.
- F. Hosea, perhaps at this time, writes parts of chapters one and two, realizing that God in effect commanded him to take an adulterous wife and illegitimate children.
- G. Gomer sinks into worse adultery and slavery (Hosea 3:2).
- H. God instructs Hosea to love Gomer again (cf. 3:1), a cultic prostitute, perhaps as late as 15-20 years after the initial marriage
- I. Hosea buys Gomer from slavery and takes her again, humbled, to his home.
- J. Hosea completes his prophecy.

IV. Outline of Hosea

A. Hosea's marriage, Ch. 1-3

1. Hosea's first stage of marriage—Hosea 1:1-9

Names: “Gomer,” no known significance (possibly “completion”)

Jezreel, “God sows” (Hosea 1:11)

—the place where Jehu killed Ahab's sons (2 Kings 10:1-14, 30;
line of Jehu ended in 2 Kings 15:8-12).

Lo-Ruhamah, לֹא רַחֲמָה *lo' ruchamah* <— *racham*, “not having been
shown mercy, unloved”

Lo-Ammi לֹא עַמִּי , *lo' ammi*, “not my people” (ctr. Exodus 6:7)

“And the final terror of judgment is not that of a God active against mankind, but that of a God who has ceased to be concerned with mankind. Hidden within this judgment theme lies the nucleus of the meaning of human life. Life finds its meaning and fulfillment in relationship with God, who is the giver of all life.” —
Craigie on Hosea

2. Hosea's marriage renewal—Hosea 3:1-3

Emphasis on love in vs. 1

15 pieces of silver

1.5 homers of barley (1 homer = ca. 5 bushels); cf. Zechariah 11:12, which =
price of a male slave

3. Significance of Hosea's marriage, Hosea 1:10 - Ch. 2; and 3:4-5

Hosea's marriage and remarriage to Gomer were to illustrate God's relation to Israel:

a. punishment, Hosea 2:2-13; 3:4 (cf. v. 3)

—formal divorce declaration in Hosea 2:2

“Bring charges against your mother, bring charges; For she is not My wife, nor am I her
Husband!”

b. restoration and blessing, Hosea 1:10-11; 2:14-23; 3:5; prob. preached after
732 BC when judgment appeared imminent

—Hosea 1:10 promises future fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise (Gen 32:12; 22:17) of a multitudinous seed when the population of Israel was about 200,000; also, not just “people,” but “sons of God”

Hosea 1:10 “Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass In the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not My people,’ There it shall be said to them, ‘You are sons of the living God.’”

—ctr. historical perspective of Nehemiah 9:22-24, 2Chron 1:9

c. Hosea 2:14-15 = CRUX of Chpt. 1-3, where Yahweh woos Israel again

1) New Marriage (Hosea 2:16,17); cf. Malachi 2:14-16; Prov. 2:17

2) New Covenant (Hosea 2:18-20)

Hosea 2:16 “And it shall be, in that day,” Says the LORD, “That you will call Me ‘My Husband,’ And no longer call Me ‘My Master,’ ¹⁷ For I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, and they shall be remembered by their name no more.

¹⁹ “I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; ²⁰ I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the LORD.

3) New Names of Hope (Hosea 2:21-23)

d. Hosea 2:18 = return to peace in creation

¹⁸ In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, with the birds of the air, and with the creeping things of the ground. Bow and sword of battle I will shatter from the earth, to make them lie down safely.

B. **Hosea’s messages, Ch. 4-14**

The arrangement of the remaining chapters has appeared disconnected to western students. David Dorsey (*Literary Structure of the OT*, p. 265) believes “The book appears to comprise seven larger units arranged in an overall symmetry, with each of these units, in turn, exhibiting its own artful internal organization.”

Dorsey's Chiastic Outline of Hosea

- A** Israel is God's wayward wife, but he will cause her to return home (Hosea 1:1 – 3:5)
- B** Condemnation of Israel's spiritual prostitution and idolatry (Hosea 4:1 – 5:7)
 - C** Condemnation for social corruption and vain sacrifice (Hosea 5:8 – 6:11a)
 - D** CENTER: Israel has not returned at God's call (Hosea 6:11b – 7:16)
 - C'** Condemnation for social corruption and vain sacrifice (Hosea 8:1 – 9:7b)
- B'** Condemnation of Israel's spiritual prostitution and idolatry (Hosea 9:7c – 10:15)
- A** Israel is God's wayward son; God invites his return home (Hosea 11:1 – 14:9)

V. Predictive Prophecy in Hosea

Hosea contains an abundance of predictive prophecy. Many of the isolated prophecies and statements in Hosea are arranged topically here.

- A. A test case: the downfall of the house of Jehu, fulfilled when Shallum assassinated Zechariah in 752 BC (2 Kings 15:8-12)—Hosea 1:4
- B. General prophecies of judgment, curses for breaking the covenant—e.g., Hosea 6:7; 7:5,7; 8:1,12

Hosea 6:7; “But like men (viz., “like Adam”) they transgressed the covenant; There they dealt treacherously with Me.”

- C. Specific prophecies of Israel's judgment

- the nation's fall predicted, after losing battles and a siege—e.g., Hosea 3:4; 11:5; 13:16 (Hebrews 14:1)
- dispersion—Hosea 9:17; 12:9

- D. Restoration predicted

- 1. The Lord redeems—Hosea 6:2; 13:14; cf. 3:2 and 7:13

Hosea 6:1 “Come, and let us return to the LORD; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up.”

Hosea 13:14 “I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O Death, I will be your plagues! O Grave, I will be your destruction!”

2. National repentance—Hosea 5:15; 10:12

Hosea 5:15; I will return again to My place till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.”

Hosea 10:12; Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the LORD, Till He comes and rains righteousness on you.

3. Return to land—Hosea 1:11; 11:10-11

4. **Davidic kingdom reestablished**—Hosea 3:5; cf. 1:11

5. Israel to flourish—Hosea 14:6-8

6. Permanent faithfulness to Yahweh—Hosea 2:16-25

E. Predictions concerning Judah

1. sin—Hosea 5:5

2. judgment—Hosea 12:2 (last longer, Hosea 1:7)

3. punishment similar to Israel’s—Hosea 8:14

4. reunion with Israel—Hosea 1:11

F. Primary passages predicting **the restored theocratic kingdom** and blessing in the coming age:

Hosea 1:10-11; 2:14-23; 3:4-5; 6:2; 11:10-11; 13:14; 14:4-8

VI. **NT Use of Hosea**

A. Hosea 1:10 and 2:23 are quoted in Romans 9:25 and 1 Peter 2:10. These passages state that those who are not God’s people will be God’s people.

Most commentators say the NT reinterprets these passages to refer not to the northern tribes, but to the Gentiles. But the NT passages can be better understood when the same meaning is given to the verses there as they have in the OT. Paul and Peter can be speaking of the conversion of Israel at the last day, with the “vessels of mercy” being Israel, and the “vessels of wrath” being her historical enemies and oppressors. See Battle, “Paul’s Use of the OT in Rom 9:25-26,” *Grace Theological Journal* 2:1 (Spring, 1981), 115-29.

B. Hosea 10:8, quoted in Luke 23:30; Revelation 6:16. The cry that the mountains would cover the wicked to hide them from God’s judgment.

- C. Hosea 11:1, quoted in Matthew 2:15. This quotation takes God's statement that he took "his son" out of Egypt, referring to Israel under Moses, and applies it to Jesus coming out of Egypt as a young boy. This quotation requires Israel to be understood as a type of Jesus, as the "son" of God (Exod 4:22). It is a case of historical "corporate solidarity," not an explicit Messianic prediction.

Hosea 11:1; "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son.

Matthew 2:14; "When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt,¹⁵ and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son."

- D. Hosea 13:14, quoted in 1 Corinthians 15:55. This is the promise that God will be the plague of death and the destruction of Sheol. Paul links it to the resurrection on the last day.

Hosea 13:14; "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O Death, I will be your plagues! O Grave, I will be your destruction!"

1 Corinthians 15:54-57; "Death is swallowed up in victory."⁵⁵ "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

VII. **Hosea 6:2, Possibly Alluded to in 1 Corinthians 15:4**

Hosea 6:1; "Come, and let us return to the LORD; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. ² After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight."

1 Corinthians 15:3; "For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures...,

◆ OT Teaching of the Bodily Resurrection

- Job 19:25-26
- Ezekiel 36; Valley of Dry Bones
- Isaiah 26:19ff.; ctr. v. 14
- Daniel 12:2

The Book of MICAH

Prophet to Judah, second half of the eighth century B.C.

I. Date

Micah 1:1, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah; Jeremiah 26:18-19 links to Hezekiah (Micah 3:12)

Jotham, 750-731 BC, sole ruler 739-735 BC

Ahaz, 735-715 BC, sole ruler 731-715 BC

Hezekiah, 715-686 BC, sole ruler 715-695 BC

Thus, the minimum range is 731-715 BC, probably longer, since active during the reigns of both Jotham and Hezekiah

Unlike Isaiah, who mentions the invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BC, there are no historical allusions to this event in Micah—only prophecies of Sennacherib's coming (esp. Ch. 1)

Other internal date indicators:

Micah 5:10, horses and chariots gotten by Uzziah, implies reign of Jotham (cf. 2 Chron 26:11-15)

Micah 6:7,16; human sacrifice; Omri & Ahab, implies reign of Ahaz (2 Kings 16:3)

Micah 4:1-3; similarity to Isaiah 2:2-4; and 4:5, similarity to Isaiah 2:5; same ideas, not word for word; = links to contemporary ministry of Isaiah (Note: Moresheth-Gath was not far from Isaiah's hometown)

Conclusion: ministered over a long period, before and after the fall of Samaria in 722 BC. May have been silent during that immediate period, since the event was not emphasized.

II. The Prophet Micah

(meaning "Who Is Like Yah?" cf. Micah 7:18)

Micah 7:18: Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage?

Isaiah's earlier contemporary; these two prophets of the latter VIII will share similar themes and imagery.

While Isaiah will minister more to the royal court in Jerusalem, Micah's ministry was more to all the inhabitants of Judah.

Micah 1:1, same name (shorter form) as another Micaiah in 1 Kings 22:8; cf. Jeremiah 26:18 where Jeremiah refers to this writing prophet (Micah 3:12) by the longer name "Micaiah"

Micah 1:1, lived in Moresheth of Gath, in the Shephelah (*McMillan Bible Atlas*, #143)

Micah 3:8, filled with the Holy Spirit (as opposed to the false prophets)

III. **Historical Background**

Major event: growing power of Assyria, and their conquest of Samaria (*McMillan Bible Atlas*, 144-145)

Critical time for Judah: not to be swallowed up into the Assyrian empire, and yet not to make other alliances which would compromise her

A. Assyria's progress:

1. ca. 745 BC, receive tribute from Israelite king Menahem
2. 732 BC, Ahaz sends a bribe to Assyria to defeat Pekah and Rezin; Tiglath-Pileser III invades Galilee
3. 722 BC, Shalmaneser V destroys Samaria; brother Sargon II carries out deportation
4. 712 BC, additional Assyrian invasion to bring restless Palestine into line
5. ca. 704 BC, Hezekiah rebels against the new Assyrian king Sennacherib, son of Sargon II, by withholding tribute
6. 702 BC, Sennacherib deposes Babylonian revolutionary Merodach-Baladan
7. 701 BC, Sennacherib invades Judah and does great damage; however, Hezekiah is not captured (2 Kings 18-19; Isaiah 36-37)
 - great bloodshed
 - over 200,000 Jews carried away captive
 - trapped Hezekiah in Jerusalem (*ANET* 287-88)
 - The time of Sennacherib's losing 185,000 troops may be this invasion that he chronicles, or else a related one (2 Kings 18:17-19; 19:9).

8. 671 BC, Esarhaddon, son of Sennacherib, conquers Egypt
9. perhaps ca. 650 BC, Ashurbanipal temporarily imprisons Manasseh after brief revolt

B. Temporary threat to Judah from Israel and Syria

especially ca. 732 BC; see (2) above

C. Beginnings of Babylon's growth:

1. Merodach-baladan, late 8th century, early 7th century; often rebels against Sargon and Sennacherib
2. 689 BC, Sennacherib destroys Babylon
3. Esarhaddon rebuilds Babylon
4. ca. 650 BC, Shamash-Shum-Ukin of Babylon, brother of Ashurbanipal, revolts, perhaps joined by Manasseh; is defeated by Ashurbanipal
5. 626 BC, Nabopolassar achieves Babylonian independence
6. 612 BC, Babylonians help to destroy Nineveh
7. 609 BC, Josiah killed by Egyptians trying to help Babylon
8. 605 BC, Battle of Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar begins captivity of Judah

IV. **Emphases of Micah**

- A. Present corruption (Micah 3:8) and coming judgment (Micah 3:12)
- B. Israel's glorious future (Micah 4:1-8)
- C. God's sovereignty (Micah 1:3,4) and His ethical standards (Micah 6:8) as opposed to pragmatic religion
- D. Predictions

"No prophet of the OT exceeds Micah in the proportion of predictions respecting Israel's future and the advent of the Messiah and His kingdom" (Freeman, *Introduction to OT Prophets*, 217).

- ** The book is about 70% predictive, mainly long-term prophecies; only Zephaniah has a greater proportion of prediction (89%), most of which are short-term.

V. Outline of Micah

A. Oracles

It is possible to divide Micah into three oracles, each starting with the word “Hear” (Micah 1:2; 3:1; 6:1). Each section portrays the nation’s

- present corruption
- impending judgment
- glorious restoration

B. Chiastic Outline

Dorsey’s chiastic outline captures these themes (p. 299):

A Coming defeat and destruction (Micah 1:1-16)

B Corruption of the people (Micah 2:1-13)

C Corruption of leaders (Micah 3:1-12)

D Center: Glorious future restoration under Yahweh’s rule
(Micah 4:1 – 5:15)

C’ Corruption of leaders (Micah 6:1-16)

B’ Corruption of the people (Micah 7:1-7)

A’ Future reversal of defeat and destruction (Micah 7:8-20)

C. Content Outline

1. Sins and judgments of Israel, Ch. 1-3

a. Judgment of the cities, Ch. 1

(a lament over impending, unavoidable judgment)

- 1) Micah 1:2-3; judgment of Palestine paradigms the judgment on the rest of the world

Micah 1:2; “Hear, all you peoples! Listen, O earth, and all that is in it! Let the Lord GOD be a witness against you, The Lord from His holy temple. ³ For behold, the LORD is coming out of His place; He will come down and tread on the high places of the earth. ⁴ The mountains will melt under Him ...,”

- 2) Micah 1:6; fall of Samaria
- 3) Micah 1:8-9; sorrow for Judah, Jerusalem
- 4) Micah 1:8-16; Sennacherib's approaching destruction (*McMillan* #154)

Note puns on the names of the cities in vv. 10-15 (translations in Farrar, *Minor Prophets*, 130-31; Moffat in Robinson, 104-05). All of these towns are named among the 46 cities Sennacherib says he destroyed.

Most are puns of sense; some of sound:

Gath — “tell” (same pun in 2 Sam 1:20)

Beth-le-aphrah = “house of dust”

Shaphir = “fair, beautiful”

Zaanan = “going forth, departure”

Beth-ezel = “house at one's side”

Maroth = “bitterness”

Lachish -> לָרֶכֶשׁ *la-rekesh*, “chariot”

Moreseth-Gath = “betrothed” (Keil); farewell gift from father to daughter

Achzib = “deceptive, disappointing”

Mareshah = “possession”

Adullam = “retreat, refuge”

b. Sin and judgment of Judah, Ch. 2-3

- 1) Micah 2:1-11, sin of Judah

Micah 2:1-2 – unchecked depravity

Micah 2:6, 11 – intolerance of the truth; cf. John 8:45

- 2) Micah 2:12-13, preview of restoration that comes by the “Breaker of battles” (Micah 2:13)

Cf. Eph. 2:14; Eph. 4:8 (Christ has “...led captivity captive...”)

¹³ The one who breaks open will come up before them; They will break out, pass through the gate, and go out by it; Their king will pass before them, with the LORD at their head.”

Pusey's commentary on the Minor Prophets summarizes this section (II:37) and cites a midrash (synagogue commentary) on the identity of the "Breaker":

"The image is not of conquest but of deliverance. *** From this passage, the "Breaker-through" was one of the titles of the Christ known to the Jews, as One Who should be "from below and from above" also; and from it they believed that "captives should come up from Gehenna, and the Shechinah," or the Presence of God, "at their head." He then, Who shall break the way, the King and Lord Who shall go up before them, shall be the Good Shepherd"

3) Micah 3:1-8, Judah's sin, and Micah's mission against the false prophets

4) Micah 3:9-12, judgment against Jerusalem

Micah 3:12 quoted in Jeremiah 26:18-19, a canonical reference that saved Jeremiah's life

Jeremiah 26:17; Then certain of the elders of the land rose up and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying:

¹⁸ "Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Zion shall be plowed like a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, and the mountain of the temple like the bare hills of the forest.'"

¹⁹ "Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah ever put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and seek the LORD's favor? And the Lord relented concerning the doom which He had pronounced against them. But we are doing great evil against ourselves."

Note the implication for early recognition of Micah's canonicity

Note how classic amils like Laetsch wrest the context of Micah 3:12-4:1:

–Micah 3:1-12 = "Israel Led into Sin and Destruction"

Amil Interpretation { –Micah 4:1ff. = "Glorification of the Church"

c. **Israel's deliverer from Bethlehem, Ch. 4-5**

1) Micah 4:1-8, coming kingdom in "the last days"

Micah 4:3-7 ctr. Joel 3:10

Micah 4:5, suggestion of no total kingdom control; hence, rule of the rod of iron; cf. Revelation 2:26-27, Psalm 2:8-9

- 2) Micah 4:10; Babylonian captivity when not yet seen as a threat
- 3) Micah 4:11-13; war against Jerusalem leads to victory; perhaps Armageddon (cf. Zechariah 13,14), although J.B. Payne thinks not; rather, he says it is intertestamental conflict leading up to the birth of Messiah in Micah 5:2
 - “many,” not “all”
 - this passage may lead into the first advent of Micah 5:2
- 4) Ch. 5, the Messiah and the conquering remnant

v. 2, note the expression מִמֵּי אֲלֹמִים *mime`olam*, “from ancient days,”
`olam taking its meaning from the context

Micah 5:2 “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”³ Therefore He shall give them up, Until the time that she who is in labor has given birth”

v. 3, perhaps a reference to Mary in the canonical flow of Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14, 9:6, etc. Note imagery of Micah 4:9,10

d. **Yahweh’s controversy with Israel, Ch. 6 - 7:6**

- 1) Micah 6:1-5; God’s previous blessings

This passage introduces a lawsuit against God’s people (vss. 1-5); the sentence is passed in vv. 13-15

- 2) Micah 6:6-8; Key verse of Micah on “true religion”

Micah 6:6 “With what shall I come before the LORD, And bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, With calves a year old? ⁷ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, Ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

⁸ He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?”

- 3) Micah 6:9 - 7:3, 6; sins aggravated

Micah 7:6 is cited by Jesus in Matthew 10:35. Micah 7:6; “For son dishonors father, Daughter rises against her mother, Daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; A man’s enemies are the men of his own household.”

e. Israel's glorious future, Micah 7:7-20

vv. 7-10 = return out of future Babylonian exile

v. 13, desolation (after AD 70?)

v. 15, new epoch of miracles

v. 18, a personal wordplay on the prophet's name

v. 19, forgiveness of sin

Micah 7:18 “Who is a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. 19 He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.”

The word “subdue” is found in God’s charge to man in Gen 1:28, and it sometimes is translated “tread upon” in the sense of conquest (Psa 47:3). Compare the Gen 3:15 promise of the woman’s seed crushing the head of the serpent.

v. 20, Abrahamic covenant fulfilled

Micah 7:20 “You will give truth to Jacob and mercy to Abraham, Which You have sworn to our fathers From days of old.”

Introduction to ISAIAH

יְשַׁעְיָהוּ = “salvation of the Lord”

Prophet to Judah, second half of the eighth and beginning of the seventh century BC.

I. The Prophet Isaiah

Isaiah 1:1, son of Amoz (אַמּוֹץ ‘amots), not Amos (עַמּוֹס` amos); Amoz and Amos were contemporaries

Jewish tradition: Amoz was the brother of King Amaziah (d. 767 BC), and both were sons of King Joash (d. 796 BC); thus, Isaiah would be a grandson of King Joash and a cousin of King Uzziah.

Isaiah was a native of Jerusalem with high social standing and easy access to the court and the king, especially during the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah.

Isaiah was married; his wife was called the “prophetess” (Isaiah 8:3). He had two sons, Shear-Jashub (Isaiah 7:3) and Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (Isaiah 8:1).

The prophet is mentioned often in 2 Kings, 3 times in 2 Chronicles, and 16 times in Isaiah (Ch. 1-39).

Isaiah had a distinct prophetic call, emphasizing the holiness of God (Ch. 6).

II. Date of Isaiah

Isaiah 1:1 lists these kings:

Uzziah (sole reign ended 750 BC, died 739 BC)

Jotham

Ahaz

Hezekiah (start of reign 715 BC, co-regent with Manasseh 695 BC, died 686 BC)

Isaiah 37:37-38 records the death of Sennacherib, 681 BC

According to tradition, martyred under Manasseh by being sawn in two (cf. 2 Kings 21:16; see “Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah,” Ch. 5, in Charlesworth, *The OT Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 2, 163-64; a Jewish writing probably from the 2nd century

BC); this apparently is in view in Hebrews 11:37; the tradition asserted by Justin Martyr and Tertullian

Thus, the date for Isaiah's ministry is ca. 740-680 BC, approximately 60 years

In late 2015, the discovery of Hezekiah's royal seal was published. Astoundingly, a clay seal of "Isaiah the prophe[t]" was discovered in early 2019 just 10 feet away from the find of the Hezekiah seal.



III. Historical Background

(see under Micah)

Note especially items #2, 4-7, and item #1 under the Babylonians

Isaiah's advice throughout this turbulent and difficult period was isolation for Judah (nonalignment), coupled with trust in Yahweh and loyalty to Him. Although battered and reduced, Judah was able to weather the storm of Assyria and, for a time, remain as the only independent nation in the area.

IV. Authorship and Unity of Isaiah

A. Some references for further study

- J.A. Alexander, *Prophecies of Isaiah* (1847)
- F. Delitzsch, "Isaiah," *Imperial Bible Dictionary*, III, 158-171 (1886)
- G. L. Robinson, "Isaiah," *ISBE*, III, 1495-1508 (1929)
- O.T. Allis, *The Unity of Isaiah* (1954)
- E. J. Young, *Studies in Isaiah* (1954); *Introduction to the OT*, pp. 202-11 (1958); *Who Wrote Isaiah?* (1958); and his commentary on Isaiah, vol. III, Appendix. I, "The Authorship of Isaiah," pp. 538-49 (posthumous, 1972)
- Rachel Margalioth, *The Indivisible Isaiah* (1964)
- Gleason L. Archer, *A Survey of OT Introduction*, pp. 317-39
- R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the OT*, pp. 764-95 [but calls "Cyrus" text a gloss, pp. 794-95] (1969)
- Victor Buksbazen, *The Prophet Isaiah* (1971)
- J. Ridderbos, *Isaiah* (Bible Student's Commentary; 1985)

B. History of critical discussion

Virtually all held to the unity and genuineness of Isaiah until J. C. Doderlein, *Esaias* (1775), who suggested two parts, Ch. 1-39 and Ch. 40-66. This view spread through Germany.

Ernst F. K. Rosenmueller suggested that parts of Ch. 1-39 are late also; e.g., Ch. 13-14 (ca. 1800). An example of this approach—T. K. Cheyne, who denied Ch. 12-13, 15-16, 23-27, 33 as being written by Isaiah (1888). Other scholars have noted that the similarities between the two parts, rather than fragmenting the first part, actually argue for the book's unity (e.g., Archer, pp. 332-33).

- * **Bernard Duhm** (1892) divided Isaiah into three parts: Ch. 1-39, Ch. 40-55 ("Deutero-Isaiah"), and Ch. 56-66 ("Trito-Isaiah"). In general, this view has been retained by critical scholars to this day.

This critical view was popularized in England and America by A. B. Davidson and G. A. Smith (1904).

During these years, many conservatives defended the unity of Isaiah (see list above). Some held a mediating position; e.g., Franz Delitzsch, *Isaiah* (1st ed. 1866, 4th ed. 1889); he preferred and argued for the unity of the book, but said the issue was unimportant: "If we only allow that the prophet really was a prophet, it is on no essential consequence to what age he belonged" (II, 138; but stronger in *Imperial Bible Dictionary* article "Isaiah").

C. Critics' Arguments for dividing Isaiah

(see S. R. Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the OT* (1897), pp. 236-43)

1. Historical setting seems different in Isaiah's second half:
 - a. Jerusalem ruined: Isaiah 44:26; 58:12; 61:4; 63:18; 64:10-11
 - b. now suffering under the Babylonians: Isaiah 42:22, 25; 43:28 (marg.); 47:6; 52:5
 - c. return to Jerusalem is imminent: Isaiah 40:2; 46:13; 48:20
 - d. warm concern for the captives:

Isaiah 40:21, 26, 28; 43:10; 48:8; 50:10-11; 51:6, 12-13; 58:3-14

2. Literary style is different:

- arguments in Driver, *LOT* 238-42

cf. Y. T. Radday, "Two Computerized Statistical-Linguistic Tests Concerning the Unity of Isaiah," *JBL* 89 (Sep 1970) 319-24; Radday notes that pronominal suffixes on nouns occur much more frequently in Ch. 40-66 than in Ch. 1-35, and concludes that there were different authors

- but note comments of Archer (331-32) regarding Milton, Goethe, and Shakespeare

3. Theological emphases are different:

Isaiah 1-39	Isaiah 40-66
God majestic	larger and fuller conception of God: God is infinite
affirms theology	reflects on and argues from theology
remnant idea prominent	remnant idea not prominent
messianic king	righteous servant

4. "Anachronism" of Cyrus the Persian mentioned by name: Isaiah 44:28 – 45:7

Cyrus ruled 550-530 BC, 150 years after Isaiah

This point is forceful even with R. K. Harrison, who takes it as a gloss (pp. 794-95)

but note other specific or precise predictions in the OT:

captivity by Babylon in the first part of Isaiah

Messiah's birth in Bethlehem, Micah 5:2

King Josiah to demolish altar in northern kingdom; named in 1 Kings 13:1-2,
fulfilled 300 years later in 2 Kings 23:15-16

D. Evidence for a unified and genuine Isaiah

(see E. J. Young, Appendix I in his Isaiah commentary, vol. 3)

1. EXTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS

- a. Strongest possible tradition of Jews and Christians: "2500 years of agreement"
admitted by A. B. Davidson, G. A. Smith,

b. No evidence or tradition of a separate man who wrote “Deutero-Isaiah”

Remarkable, since he would be the world’s “greatest prophet”

Why would the work of the great “Deutero-Isaiah” be assigned to an otherwise “obscure” prophet from the 8th century?

c. Statement of Ecclesiasticus 48:17-25

Isaiah 48:18-25 In his days Sennacherib invaded and sent Rabshakeh; he lifted his hand against Zion, and boasted loudly in his arrogance. ¹⁹ Then their hearts and hands trembled; they felt the pangs of a woman in labor, ²⁰ but they called on the merciful Lord, stretching out their hands towards him. Swiftly the Holy One heard them from heaven and delivered them by the agency of Isaiah; ²¹ he struck the camp of the Assyrians, and his Angel annihilated them. ²² For Hezekiah did what is pleasing to the Lord, and was steadfast in the ways of David his father, enjoined on him by the prophet Isaiah, a great man trustworthy in his vision. ²³ In his days the sun moved back; he prolonged the life of the king. ²⁴ In the power of the spirit he saw the last things; he comforted the mourners of Zion, ²⁵ he revealed the future to the end of time, and hidden things long before they happened.

Upholds Isaiah as a historical prophet contemporary with Hezekiah

Ecclesiasticus dated ca. 180 BC

d. Text Form of Dead Sea Isaiah scroll

1QIsa^a, ca. 125 BC

Isaiah 40 starts on the last line of the page; no division from the end of Ch. 39

There is a three-line break between Ch. 33 and 34; W. H. Brownlee suggests a two-part work, with many parallels between Ch. 1-33 and 34-66; this would imply unity of authorship. See R. K. Harrison, “The History and Literary Criticism of the OT, *Biblical Criticism: Historical, Literary, and Textual* (Zondervan, 1978), p. 32.

e. NT attributes all parts of the book to Isaiah as a person

John 12:38-39, 41 ← Isaiah 6:9-10; 53:1 (= I & II Isaiah)

(II Isaiah) John 12:38-41 ³⁸ that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: “Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”

(I Isaiah) ³⁹ Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: ⁴⁰ “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with *their* eyes,

Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.”

⁴¹ These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

(III Isaiah) Rom 10:20 <— Isaiah 65:1

Rom 10:20; But Isaiah is very bold and says: “I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me.”

Isaiah is named and quoted 23 times in the NT (Young, *Intro.*, p. 206)

2. ARGUMENTS FROM THE INTERNAL PLAN OF THE BOOK

a. Isaiah shows unity of plan and cohesiveness

(See Young, *Isaiah*, III, 540-46)

(See Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel*, pp. 98-100, 107-108 ☺)

—each of the three sections of the book has a dominant emphasis on Isaiah’s interest in the fate of Jerusalem; this integrating factor introduces i) the entire book, ii) II Isaiah, and iii) III Isaiah. It is woven through each section. It concludes the book in the last chapter.

*

—Dumbrell (p. 99) cites B. S. Childs, who suggests that II Isaiah (40-55) is the interpretation and elaboration of I Isaiah (1-39), and that III Isaiah (56-66) is the elaboration of II Isaiah.

b. Isaiah 36-39 itself shows an historical transition

Ch. 36-37 — Assyria

Ch. 38-39 — Babylon

c. The Cyrus prophecy is consonant with divine prediction

cf. 1 Kings 13:2 (Josiah)

The Cyrus prophecy forms an integral part of the argument in Isaiah only if predictive of the distant future (cf. Allis, *Unity of Isaiah*, Ch. 4-5).

d. Many connections of thought between Ch. 1-39 and Ch. 40-66

many “Babylon” references in Ch. 1-39; e.g., Ch. 13-14, 21

many “Palestine” references in Ch. 40-66, so many that most now believe “III Isaiah” was written from Palestine; e.g., Palestinian flora and fauna, idolatry, temple, sacrifice.

- e. Much evidence of style similarity; differences are related to subject and time of writing

(see G. L. Robinson, “Isaiah,” *ISBE* 3:1505-06; see especially R. Margalioth, *The Indivisible Isaiah*)

- 1) “Isaiah’s style differs widely from that of every other OT prophet, and is as far removed as possible from that of Ezekiel and the post-exilic prophets.”
- 2) “for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken it”—three times in Isaiah (Isaiah 1:20; 40:5; 58:14); nowhere else in the OT
- 3) “streams of water” — 2 times (Isaiah 30:25; 44:4 [Hebrews]); nowhere else in the OT
- 4) emphatic reduplication (Isaiah 2:7-8; 6:3; 8:9; 24:16, 23 / 40:1; 43:11, 25; 48:15; 51:12 / 57:19; 62:10)
- 5) “the Holy One of Israel” — in all parts (12 times in Ch. 1-39, 13 times in Ch. 40-66); appropriate for Isaiah (cf. 6:3)
- 6) “highway” — 2 times in Ch. 1-39, 5 times in Ch. 40-66
- 7) “remnant” — 14 times in Ch. 1-39, 3 times in Ch. 40-66
- 8) “Zion” — 10 times in Ch. 1-39, 10 times in Ch. 40-66
- 9) “pangs of a woman in travail” — 4 times in Ch. 1-39, 3 times in Ch. 40-66

V. Text of Isaiah

1QIsa^a shows basic agreement with the Hebrew MATTHEW. There are a few differences. The RSV followed the DSS over the MT in 13 places. Millar Burrows voted for several of those changes; now he has doubts about many of them (Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, pp. 305, 314). The NRSV returned to the MT in several cases.

For a close comparison of the DSS text with the MT, see J. R. Rosenbloom, *The Dead Sea Isaiah Scroll* (Eerdmans, 1970); note his conclusions on pp. 81-84.

VI. Summary historical outline of Isaiah

- A. First epoch: death of Uzziah (739 BC)—the need for a prophet: Judah’s sins and Isaiah’s call, Ch. 1-6

B. Second epoch: reign of Ahaz (735-715 BC), Ch. 7-27

1. Book of Immanuel, Ch. 7-12
2. Prophecies against the nations, Ch. 13-23
3. Isaiah's apocalypse, Ch. 24-27

C. Third epoch: first 15 years of Hezekiah (715-701 BC), Ch. 28-39

1. Warnings, judgments, blessings for God's people, Ch. 28-35
2. Historical interlude (cf. 2 Kings 18-20), Ch. 36-39

D. Fourth epoch: last 15 years of Hezekiah (701-686 BC), Ch. 40-66

1. Babylonian exile and deliverance, Ch. 40-48
2. Salvation through the Lord's Servant, Ch. 49-55
3. Sins of Judah, Ch. 56 - 59:15
4. Zion's Redeemer and kingdom, Isaiah 59:16 - Ch. 66

VII. **Prophetic Scheme of Isaiah**

Isaiah 1-12	History and Eschatology
Isaiah 13-23	History
Isaiah 24-27	Eschatology
Isaiah 28-33	History
Isaiah 34-35	Eschatology
Isaiah 36-39	History
Isaiah 40-55	Eschatology
Isaiah 56-66	History and Eschatology

“... eschatology builds upon prior history and projects a historical fulfillment. The Book of Isaiah takes the salvation history bound up with the original choice of Jerusalem and turns it into a magnificent concept of a populated city of God.” —Dumbrell, *Faith of Israel*, p. 111

The Book of ISAIAH

I. First Epoch: Death of Uzziah, Ch. 1-6

Isaiah 6:1 = 739 BC

This section (1–6) provides the need for a prophet and God’s provision in sending Isaiah. It thus introduces the book. At the chiastic heart of the first two sections (chpt 1-12) is the sending of the prophet.

In the light of this grim introduction on Jerusalem, be sure to note how the closing of the book of Isaiah portrays a New Jerusalem (Isa 66) through God’s restorative work. This promised ending is foretold in Isaiah 1:26:

“I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning.
Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city.”

A. Judah’s Sins and Judgment, Ch. 1-5

Hence, the need for a prophet

1. Internal arrangement of Isaiah 1-5:

- a. Chpt 1 = Call to Repentance centering on vs. 16-20
- b. Chpt 2-4 = Pride and Judgment, centering on judgment in chpt 3 but promising restoration and exaltation in Isaiah 2:2 and Isaiah 4:2
- c. Chpt 5 = Song of the Vineyard revealing God’s sovereignty and man’s humiliation in the center (Isaiah 5:15-17)

2. Themes of chapters 1-5:

- a. hypocritical worship of God, Isaiah 1:11-17
- b. idolatry, Isaiah 2:8
- c. oppression, Isaiah 3:13-15
- d. decline of the nation, Isaiah 3:1-12, 16-26; 4:1,4; 5:13-23
- e. vanity of ornaments, Isaiah 3:18-23 (cf. LXX translation procedure)
- f. the punishing army, Isaiah 5:24-30
- g. parable of the vineyard (sin & judgment), 5:1-7 (cf. Matthew 21:33-45)

- h. only a remnant left, Isaiah 1:9
- i. the gospel invitation, Isaiah 1:18
- j. day of Yahweh; shake the earth, Isaiah 2:12-22
- k. promise of renewal through the future “Branch,” Isaiah 1:26; 2:2-4; 4:2-6

B. Isaiah’s call, Ch. 6

—God provides a prophet to call the people to obedience and holiness

- a. Isaiah 6:1, exalted Lord

an enthronement festival?

- b. Isaiah 6:2, seraphim = “burning ones”

cf. cherubim, or living creatures, Ezekiel 1:5-14; Revelation 4:6-8

- c. Isaiah 6:3, DSS has two “holies”

holiness, the great theme of Isaiah

- d. Isaiah 6:8, missionary spirit

LXX avoids plurality of deity and translates, “...And who will go for Us?” to “...who will go to this people?”

Three-point sermon: “Woe, Lo, Go”

- e. Isaiah 6:9-13, hardening ministry; ctr. Isaiah 32:3 where eyes/ears are opened but still a remnant, v. 13

- * most quoted OT text in NT (found in Matt 13:14; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; Acts 28:25-27; cf. Rom 9:18 and 2 Cor 2:14-16)
- * Acts 28:25 credits this passage to the Holy Spirit
- * John 12:41 context has Son of God in view

II. **Second Epoch: Reign of Ahaz, Ch. 7-27**

Isaiah 7:1; 735-715 BC

This major portion consists of three large sections. The backdrop is the threat of Israel and Syria from the north, and the growing threat of Assyria. During the reign of Ahaz, the Assyrians invaded and then totally conquered the northern kingdom of Israel (732, 722 BC).

A. **The [unified] Book of Immanuel, Ch. 7-12**

This important and beautiful section of Isaiah comes from ca. 733 BC, when Tiglath-Pileser III was expanding his power westward. Syria and Israel were leading the resistance to Assyria.

1. **The virgin birth prophecy, Isaiah 7:1-17**

- a. Isaiah 7:1, 4-6; situation (2 Kings 16:5-8)
- b. Isaiah 7:3; Fuller was outside the city
- c. Isaiah 7:8; dissolution of Ephraim/Israel as a people within 65 years

733 BC + 65 years = 668 BC

during Ashurbanipal (669-633 BC); Ashurbanipal = “Osnappar” in Ezra 4:10 (cf. 2 Kings 17:24, unnamed); he is credited with the thorough mixing of populations

many see problems, try to link 65 years to the age of Rezin or of Pekah (cf. 8:4); e.g., R. L. Harris, “Isaiah,” *ZPEB* III, 324, says it is Rezin’s 65th year of age (see below)

- d. Isaiah 7:10-17; the sign controversy: cf. Luke 2:22-35 where Simeon calls Jesus “a sign” (Luke 2:34; cf. Luke 2:40, 52)
- e. Isaiah 7:12, tempt God; Deuteronomy 6:16; cf. Matthew 4:7
- f. Isaiah 7:13, switch to plural **you** (in vs. 14) = the nation, “house of David”

but singular again in v. 16; cf. house of David, Matthew 1:20

“virgin,” *ḥm6l4i5`almah*, 7 times in OT, never married: Genesis 24:43; Exodus 2:8; Ps 68:25 (cf. Ps 46:1 —see NASB; 68:25, *`alamoth*, musical instruments?); Prov. 30:19 —see K&D; Song 1:3; 6:8

cf. masc. form in 1 Sam. 17:56; cf. 20:22

= “unmarried girl,” Old Eng. “maiden”; assumed to be a virgin

Other words like אִשָּׁה ‘*ishah* and בְּתוּלָה *bethulah* do not necessarily indicate a young maiden; *bethulah* could be married or could be an old woman (cf. *bethulah* in Joel 1:8, young widow)

Only ‘*almah* denotes an unmarried maiden; hence this choice of words is deliberate. The Offspring of this unmarried young woman would therefore be either 1) illegitimate, or 2) a miracle sign Child

LXX translated Isaiah 7:14 using *parthenos*, a Greek technical term for virgin (never married); NT does the same in Matthew 1:23 (note context in Matthew [1:25] where the virgin idea is prominent)

(more discussion in Hengstenberg, *Christology of the OT*, I, 416-424 (1854); Young *Isaiah*, I, 286-89; Hindson’s *Isaiah’s Immanuel*)

“Immanuel,” עִמָּנוּאֵל ‘*immanu’el*, “With us [is] God”; cf. Isaiah 8:8, 10

- a) Isaiah 7:15; “poor food” (ctr. v. 22ff.); from pastureland, not tilled
- b) Isaiah 7:16-17; before the Messiah is a reasoning child, two things:
 - Rezin and Pekah gone
 - Assyria to invade Judah

The place of Mahershalalhashbaz in parallel relation to this prophecy (8:1-4) seems to have been an additional revelation made to Isaiah at a different time, although the natural point of reference from the perspective of Ahaz might be a child born of a contemporary maiden.

Two views relating the “near” and “far” features of this prophecy:

- (1.) R. Laird Harris: vv. 16-17 are 2 fulfillments separated by time. Vs. 16 is Rezin and Pekah in 732 BC, and vs. 17 is Sennacherib in 701 BC.

“The passage thus declares that before the Messiah Immanuel is born of a virgin and is weaned, the Assyrian will come and depopulate the land. . . . Isaiah did not set a date, for he did not know the date. Elsewhere he speaks of the coming wonderful king of David’s line without giving the time. The coming of the Rod of Jesse is prophesied (11:1) in close succession to the downfall of the Assyrians (10:24-34). Isaiah was only to know that at an unspecified time the Messiah would come, and he warns Ahaz to mend his ways, because before the Messiah would come, the Assyrians would invade and bring tragedy greater than the division of Ephraim from Judah. Actually, there is no information that this invasion came before the days of

Sennacherib in 701 BC, thirty years after the prophecy was given. It could not in any case refer to a child of Ahaz or of Isaiah.” (“Isaiah,” *ZPEB*, III, 324)

- (2.) A. A. MacRae: vv. 15ff. is one unified event of prophecy, i.e., Assyria’s invasion of Israel in 732 BC.

(differs from Harris to make the Assyrian invasion of v. 17 that of 732 BC, not 701 BC)

“In his rejoinder (vv. 13, 14) Isaiah expressed a strong rebuke, not simply to Ahaz, but to the entire house of David, of which Ahaz was a very unsatisfactory representative. He spoke to the whole house of David, giving assurance that it would not always have such unworthy representatives as Ahaz, but that God Himself would provide, as the true head of the house of David, One born of a virgin, whose name can properly be called Immanuel (“God with us”).

“In vv. 15ff, the prophet turned his attention away from the house of David as a whole and back to Ahaz. No statement had been made as to when Immanuel would come. On the assumption that He might be born immediately, the time required for His growth was used as a measuring stick to show how soon God would cause Ahaz’s faithless scheme to produce results quite different from what he had expected. Supposing that the child were to be born right at that time, before he would reach the age when he could make simple choices, the two kings who were menacing Judah would have disappeared (v. 16), and the great depopulation caused by the Assyrian invasion would have resulted in a situation where crops that require human labor would be greatly diminished

“Thus v. 14 pointed to a single event that would occur 700 years later whereas vv. 15ff described the situation that would develop in the immediate future.” (“Prophets and Prophecy,” *ZPEB*, IV, 899, 902)

2. **God’s use of Assyria, Isaiah 7:18 - Ch. 10**

This topic has already been introduced in Ch. 7; now Isaiah further develops Assyria’s relationship to God and to Israel, and how God will finally destroy Israel’s enemies and rule through the Messiah, Immanuel.

- a. Isaiah 7:18-25; Assyrian invasion brings judgment on Judah
- b. Ch. 8, more immediate judgment
 - 1) Assyrian conquest starts soon; will reach Judah “up to the neck” (v. 8)
 - 2) Isaiah 8:6; “waters of Shiloah (שִׁלּוֹחַ *shiloach*),” = spring used for Hezekiah’s Siloam Tunnel

- 3) Isaiah 8:7; River = Tigris, near Nineveh
 - 4) Isaiah 8:8-10; opponents can touch Immanuel's Land only by permission
 - 5) Isaiah 8:18; Isaiah's two children have symbolic names: Shearjashub and Mahershalalhashbaz
- c. Isaiah 9:1-7; promised time of blessing when light replaces gloom
- 1) vv. 1-2, cf. Matthew 4:14-17
 - 2) vv. 6-7, Messiah and his kingdom (note antecedent in Isaiah 7:14)

Deity and Humanity of Immanuel is balanced in the symmetry of the four titles in 9:6

“Wonderful. . .” cf. Angel of the Lord in Judges 13:18

“Counselor,” cf. 11:2

“the mighty God,” cf. 10:21 (57:15)

“everlasting Father,” cf. Ps 103:13; ctr. Isaiah 57:15

“prince of peace” = King of Salem

- 3) v. 7 = outgrowth of Davidic Covenant and protoevangelium of Genesis 3:15
- d. Isaiah 9:8 - Ch. 10; judgment through and upon Assyria
- 1) Isaiah 10:5-12; note God's sovereignty and theodicy (cf. Habakkuk)
 - 2) Isaiah 10:20-22; only a “remnant returns” to God, fulfilling the symbol of Isaiah's son, Shearjashub, Isaiah 7:3

3. **The Messiah and his kingdom, Ch. 11-12**

- a. Isaiah 11:1; branch of Jesse; cf. Isaiah 4:2

shoot → tree cut; cf. Matthew 3:10; ctr. 2 Samuel 23:5

Matthew 2:23, Nazarene; branch = נֶצֶר *netser*

- b. Isaiah 11:2-5; qualifications to rule

- 1) v. 2, Spirit distinct from Messiah (cf. Isaiah 61:1)

—seven-fold blessing? cf. Revelation 4:5

2) v. 4, *breath of His lips

** **NT citations, 2 Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 19:15***, indicate that this prophecy is yet future

(Ps 2:9; Revelation 2:27)

He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,
And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. – Isaiah 11:4

And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the
breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. –
2 Thess 2:8

Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the
nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. – Revelation 19:15

c. Isaiah 11:6-9; nature in harmony (cf. Rom 8:22)

Calvin in his commentary recognizes the fulfillment of this passage in the animal kingdom after the return of Christ, but he says that the passage “chiefly means” that Christians of all different temperaments or dispositions will live harmoniously in the church.

On the other hand, Amillennialist Young states that the passage refers to literal animals in the new heavens and new earth (cf. Isa 65:17-25; 66:22-24).

d. Ch. 12, psalm of praise in the kingdom

4. **Symmetrical Structure of the Book of Immanuel**

A Ch. 7 promise: Messiah’s birth

B Ch. 8 judgment (by Assyria)

C Ch. 9 promise: Messiah’s birth and kingdom

B¹ Ch. 10 judgment (on Assyria)

A¹ Ch. 11-12 promise: Messiah’s kingdom

B. Prophecies Against the Nations, Ch. 13-23

Babylon, Ch. 13-14:23, holds first place in judgment, not Assyria! And the fall of Babylon in chpt 21 is the central focus of this [broader] section of prophecies against the nations, chpt 13-27. (See Dorsey outline, p. 221.)

1. Ch. 13, note apocalyptic language in vv. 6, 9-13

Isaiah 13:16, cf. Ps 137

Isaiah 13:17; accuracy about the Medes, an “inorganic element,” proves a divine source of prediction

Isaiah 13:20; desolation; see Urquhart, *Wonders of Prophecy*, 138-50;
“Bedouins shrink from it in superstition” –Delitzsch

2. Isaiah 14:4-20; doom of king of Babylon, or “Who was Lucifer?”

- Young: “Babylonian dynasty conceived as an ideal person”
- Satan?

per Tertullian, Origen, Gregory the Great, etc.

cf. Ezekiel 28; Luke 10:18

Old Scofield Bible: “Lucifer, ‘day-star,’ can be none other than Satan”; New Scofield agrees, calling Lucifer “the real though unseen ruler of the successive world powers”

v. 12, הֵלֵל *helel*, “shining one,” from *halal*, shine

KJV, “Lucifer” follows the Vulgate

ASV, “day-star”

NASB, NIV, “morning star”

“The exposition of this passage, which some have given, as if it referred to Satan, has arisen from ignorance, for the context plainly shows that these statements must be understood in reference to the King of the Babylonians. But when passages of Scripture are taken up at random, and no attention is paid to the context, we need not wonder that mistakes of this kind frequently arise.” –Calvin *Commentary on Isaiah*. Calvin goes on to call the Satan interpretation “inventions and useless fables.”

- Better to take Lucifer within context as king of Babylon, perhaps Belshazzar (Isaiah 14:19,31), recognizing the poetic language. He is a counterfeit messiah (cf. 2 Pet 2:19 and Revelation 22:16).

For a fascinating comparison between the false king of Isaiah 14 and God's Servant of Isaiah 53, see Dorsey's *The Literary Structure of the OT*, pp. 230-31.

3. Assyria, Isaiah 14:24-27

4. Philistia, Isaiah 14:28-32 (fulfilled 711 BC, 701 BC)

v. 28: the death of Ahaz dates this prophecy to 715 BC

5. Moab, Ch. 15–16 (fulfilled 722 BC)

Destroyed by Shalmaneser V and Sargon II

- a. Isaiah 16:4-6; Moabites hide Jews, or Jews hide Moabites, or both? cf. Revelation 12:6,14

v. 5, throne of David to provide refuge

- b. Isaiah 16:14, three years from when?

3 years from the death of Ahaz would be ca. 712 BC; but Moab was destroyed in 722 BC; Young suggests a different date for v. 14 (725 BC)

6. Damascus, Ch. 17

Mostly fulfilled in the Assyrian conquest of 732 BC

7. Ethiopia, Ch. 18

8. Egypt, Ch. 19-20

- a. Isaiah 19:4; great variety of interpretations of the “cruel master over Egypt”:

various Assyrian rulers

various Egyptian tyrants

four world kingdoms (Young)

little horn of Daniel 7

- b. Isaiah 19:16-25; future theocratic kingdom

c. Isaiah 20:1; synchronism

Sargon II (721–705 BC), great campaign against Ashdod in 712 BC

“Tartan” = king’s viceroy, military title (NIV “supreme commander”), cf. 2 Kings 18:17

Isaiah 20:2-4; Isaiah naked and barefoot

only recorded unusual action of this prophet

a 3-year sign

perhaps fulfilled in 712 BC by Sargon

perhaps fulfilled in 682 BC, when Esarhaddon carried away captives from Egypt

9. Babylon, Isaiah 21:1-10

again, after Isaiah 13–14:23; 20

“wilderness by the sea”

a. v. 1, sea = “great plain watered by a mighty river (cf. Gen 11:2; Isa 23:13; 27:1 — cf. Nile: Isaiah 19:5)” –Young

b. v. 2, defeated by Elam, Persia, and Media

c. v.5, last orgy in Babylon, perhaps Belshazzar’s feast

d. v. 9, repeated in Revelation 14:8; Isaiah 17-18

10. Edom, Isaiah 21:11-12

= Dumah, Genesis 25:14

11. Arabia, Isaiah 21:13-17

Modern Jordan and the west side of Saudi Arabia

12. Jerusalem, Ch. 22

“valley of vision,” vv. 1, 5

a. vv. 1-14, to be destroyed; sin of complacency

b. vv. 15-25, treasurer Shebna to be exiled, replaced by Eliakim (cf. Isaiah 36:3, 22; 37:2)

Perhaps Shebna was demoted to “scribe,” or perhaps this is another Shebna

Cf. Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, I, 129-31, who shows this position to be the highest under the king, “master of the palace”

13. Tyre, Ch. 23

- a. v. 16, harlot, commercialism; cf. Nahum 3:4; Revelation 18:3
- b. vv. 15–18, 70 years, then holiness

wide variety of interpretations:

Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre for 13 years and captured it (though the wealth and ships moved away; cf. Ezekiel 29:17-18). 70 years = time from the Neo-Babylonian Empire to the beginning of the Persian Empire (Delitzsch, pp. 416-421)

Perhaps a gap after v. 15; v. 16 period in between; v. 17 future kingdom

C. **Isaiah’s Apocalypse, Ch. 24-27**

This section is unique in that many verses are clearly eschatological. There are many similarities to the NT book of Revelation. There are few “near” references, and there is little historical background.

- 1. Ch. 24, judgment on the earth, and the reign of Yahweh
 - a. vv. 5,6, breach of covenant brings fiery judgment
 - b. v. 22, fits with millennium? cf. Revelation 20:3
- 2. Ch. 25, institution of the kingdom
 - a. v. 6, banquet feast—Rev 19
 - esp. v. 8 cf. Ps 116:8; 1 Corinthians 15:54,26; Revelation 21
 - b. vv. 10-12, Moab an example of all enemies; as Edom in Ch. 34
- 3. Ch. 26, song in the kingdom
 - a. v. 11, judgment by fire
 - b. v. 12, sovereignty; cf. Phil 2:13
 - c. v. 14, wicked dead viewed as a group

- d. v. 19, resurrection of the righteous dead (“they” = Lord’s “dead ones”; Hebrew says “my dead ones will rise”)

*contrast v. 14 where wicked dead are not raised

- e. v. 20, protection during time of God’s wrath

perhaps related to Revelation 12:1-6; 13:1 (Isaiah 27:1, serpent)

- f. v. 21, perhaps parousia of Revelation 1:7

4. Ch. 27, regathering of Israel

- v. 1, “Shalyat” - seven-headed serpent in Ugaritic lore¹

In that day the Lord with His severe sword, great
and strong,
Will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent,
Leviathan that twisted serpent;
And He will slay the reptile that is in the sea. (Isa 27:1, NKJV)



- ♦ esp. vv. 12-13; last trump/feast of trumpets. Cf. trumpet of 1 Corinthians 15:52;
1 Thessalonians 4:16

D. Third Epoch: First 15 years of Hezekiah, Ch. 28-39

—715-701 BC

1. Warnings, judgments, blessings for God’s people, Ch. 28-35

- a. Ch. 28, Ephraim’s bad example to Judah, and its coming destruction

- 1) vv. 7-10, drunkenness destroys discernment
- 2) vv. 9,10, mocking of Isaiah’s pedagogic style of preaching
- 3) v. 11, “tongues” of judgment (promised curse of Deut 28:49) replace the simplicity of Isaiah’s simple teaching; = meaning of 1 Corinthians 14:21-22

See O.P. Robertson’s interpretation of strange tongues in connection with
1 Corinthians 14: *Westminster Journal*, 38:43

¹ “The Poem of Baal” says the goddess Anath crushed the seven heads of Shalyat, a boast which is contrasted with the God of Israel in Psalms as “You broke the heads of Leviathan in pieces,” Ps 74:14.

- 4) vv. 14-22, God is the best ally
 - 5) v. 16, cornerstone (allusion to Ps 118:22); NT reference: Rom 9:33; 10:11; 1 Pet 2:6
- b. Ch. 29, Jerusalem's coming siege and deliverance
- 1) vv. 1-4, siege

"Ariel" = perhaps "Lion of God"
 - 2) vv. 5-8, deliverance from enemies
 - 3) vv. 9-16, their sin
 - 4) vv. 17-24, final righteousness

possibly fulfilled in 701 BC, invasion of Sennacherib; but probably eschatological; cf. Zechariah 14; Luke 21; Revelation 12; end of chapter seems to fit with final kingdom
- c. Ch. 30-31; denunciation of Egyptian alliance (as in Ch. 28)
- 1) Isaiah 30:1-14; sin involved
 - 2) Isaiah 30:15-33; deliverance for remnant
 - 3) Isaiah 31:1-3; Egypt's helplessness
 - 4) Isaiah 31:5; Passover protection; cf. Matthew 23:37 cf. Isaiah 30:15
 - 5) Isaiah 31:4-9; Yahweh to protect Jerusalem
- d. Ch. 32: kingdom blessings after destruction
- v. 1, king and princes; cf. 1 Corinthians 6:2; Revelation 20:4-6
- future kingdom; vv. 1-5, 15-18
- * v. 3, second advent vs. first advent of Isaiah 6:10
- e. Ch. 33: destruction of Assyria and salvation of Jerusalem
- cf. Isaiah 10:5-34
- Isaiah 33:22 = three divinely sanctioned spheres of coordinated rule
- f. Ch. 34: day of vengeance on Edom

vv. 8-17, animals to take over forever

Note. Edom used here as an example, as Moab in Isaiah 25:10-12

g. Ch. 35: messianic blessings

v. 3, cf. Hebrews 12:12

vv. 5-6, Matthew 11:2-6

v. 10, cf. Revelation 7:17

2. **Historical interlude, Ch. 36-39**

—Ongoing threat of Exile

—701 BC, cf. 2 Kings 18-20

More than an interlude, this historical section is the centerpiece of Isaiah, showing the transition from imperial Assyria to the spiritual-political threat of Babylon. Babylon in the Book of Isaiah is structurally juxtaposed against Jerusalem, which is meant to be God's holy witness in the world.

a. Dealings with Assyria, Ch. 36-37

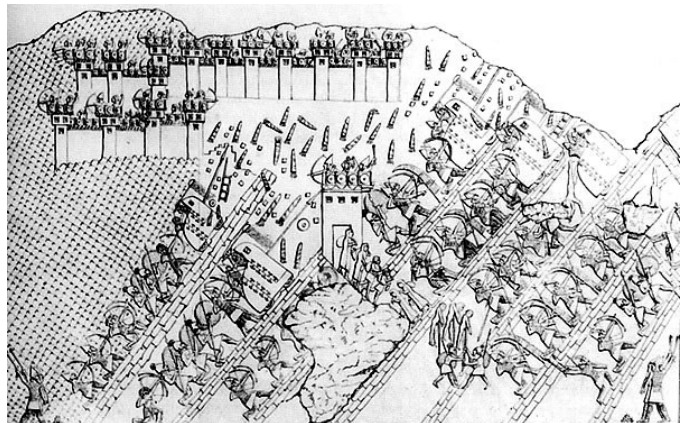
Sennacherib's campaign in Judea (see under historical background in Micah)

- 1) Isaiah 36:2; the Rabshakeh, NIV: "field commander"
- 2) Isaiah 36:11; Aramaic = the lingua franca, not yet known by most Jews
- 3) Isaiah 37:7; Isaiah's prophecy: Sennacherib to hear a rumor of war from back home; returns to be killed later by the sword, v. 38
- 4) Isaiah 37:8; Sennacherib's campaign against all fortified cities

Pictures of the Lachish campaign,
ANEP #371-74, line drawings in *ANE*
#100-02

Good discussion and suggested order
of events, Oswalt *Isaiah*, pp. 11-13

- 5) Isaiah 37:14-20; Hezekiah's prayer



6) Isaiah 37:36-38; death of Sennacherib, *ANET*, p. 288

b. Dealings with Babylon, Ch. 38-39

1) Ch. 38: Hezekiah's illness, ca. 700 B.C.

v. 5, given 15 years more; 11 years co-regent with Manasseh

v. 8, sign of the sundial

vv. 10–20, Hezekiah's praise

vv. 18-19, intermediate state; *sheol* = uncertain place of dead; cf.
2 Corinthians 5:1-4

2) Ch. 39: visit from the Babylonian envoys

v. 1, Merodach-baladan

Discussion in Leon Wood, p. 363, n. 78

721-710 BC, ruled Babylon

703-702 BC, ruled Babylon again

After 702 BC, "he continued his opposition to Assyrian control as a refugee in Elam. It was likely during this time that he sought the support of Judah by means of this embassy."

vv. 6-7, Babylonian captivity predicted; Jewish eunuchs in Babylon

v. 8, Hezekiah's shortsighted reaction

vv. 6-8, provides transition to second half of Isaiah

E. **Fourth epoch: last 15 years of Hezekiah, Ch. 40-66**

—701-686 BC

With the ultimate doom of Jerusalem at the hands of the Babylonians predicted at the end of chapter 39, and with Hezekiah's response, "There will be peace and security in my time," Isaiah turns his attention away from his own contemporaries to those Israelites who will suffer in the future, and to the remnant who will finally be delivered and restored. This change in perspective has led many to posit two authors. But in its context, this new outlook in Isaiah is eminently proper.

1. Babylonian exile and deliverance, Ch. 40-48

a. note on the Lord's servant

= Key theme in chapters 40-55

references that contain the term, together with suggested interpretation; starred passage (*) indicates a major Messianic passage:

Isaiah 41:8-9	Israel
*Isaiah 42:1-9	Messiah
Isaiah 42:19	Israel
Isaiah 43:10	Israel
Isaiah 44:1-2, 21	Israel
Isaiah 44:26	Isaiah (but cf. 43:10; 42:19)
Isaiah 45:4	Israel
Isaiah 48:20	Israel
*Isaiah 49:1-6	Messiah (as head of Israel)
*Isaiah 50:4-10	Messiah
*Isaiah 52:13–Ch. 53	Messiah

Problem: sometimes “the servant” is plainly Israel (Isaiah 41:8-9)

but in some cases, the NT indicates Jesus is Isaiah's servant (Isaiah 52:13 – Ch. 53)

Isaiah 53 is cited 10 times in the NT: Matthew 8:17; Luke 22:37; John 12:38; Acts 8:32; Romans 10:16; 15:21; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 2:22, 24, 25

Solution: not just one servant, but one of two or perhaps three—Israel, Messiah, perhaps Isaiah himself

Compare other examples of varying identities of God's servants:

Jeremiah 27:6	Nebuchadnezzar
Jeremiah 46:27-28	Jacob (nation)

Ezekiel 37:24-25	Jacob & “David” (=Messiah)
Haggai 2:23	Zerubbabel
Zechariah 3:8	Branch of David
Malachi 4:4	Moses

see progression in Isaiah 49:3-6: Israel → Messiah, the true Prince of God

*Isaiah 53 can hardly refer to Israel, who was being punished for sin; and the remnant’s punishment was not vicarious. The NT requires a messianic interpretation: the term *paiv (pais)* in Acts 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30 should be translated “servant,” not “child” (cf. Bruce Acts, p. 193). Note how Peter identifies this “Servant” with a “prophet like Moses,” Acts 3:22.

b. contents of Ch. 40-48

1) Ch. 40, consolation from the sovereign God:

sovereign in power (Isaiah 40:12, 22), wisdom (Isaiah 40:13, 14, 26), and mercy (Isaiah 40:2, 11)

a) v. 2, punishment is fulfilled

b) v. 3, theme of John the Baptist

cf. Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6; Matthew 3:1-3

2) Ch. 41, God the source of deliverance

a) vv. 8-10, servant Israel not to fear

b) vv. 21-24, idols worthless

c) v. 25, deliverer from the north (Cyrus); cf. Jeremiah 50:3

Isaiah 41:25; “I have raised up one from the north, And he shall come; From the rising of the sun, he shall call on My name...”

3) Ch. 42, the two servants contrasted

a) vv. 1-9, the righteous servant: Messiah

b) vv. 18-25, ctr. the blind and deaf servant: Israel

Israel's image is in keeping with God's revelation of them in Isaiah 6:9,10.
Contrast the righteous Servant whose ear is open (Isa 50:5).

4) Ch. 43-45, the servant Israel's delivery under Cyrus

some eschatological references—Isaiah 43:5-7, 19-21, 25; 44:3; 45:17, 23

- a) Isaiah 44:3; possible Pentecostal reference
- b) Isaiah 44:3; "For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring."
- c) Isaiah 44:26; servant appears to be Isaiah (see note above)
- d) Isaiah 44:24 - 45:7; the Cyrus prophecy



Cyrus named in advance—Isaiah 45:3-4, 11 (fulfilled in Ezra 1)

See Allis, *Unity of Isaiah*, Ch. 4-5

God shown to be the only true God; e.g., Isaiah 44:6; 45:5, 22

150 years after this prophecy, God fulfilled it in the career of Cyrus the Persian, who destroyed the Babylonian empire, and permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem and reestablish their temple worship. An outstanding contemporary source is the Cyrus Cylinder (536 BC; *ANET* 315-16; picture in New *ISBE* 1:847).

- 5) Ch. 46-47, Babylon's useless idols, and fall
- 6) Ch. 48, God to deliver Israel for his glory, not for their righteousness
 - a) vv. 1-11, for God's glory
 - b) v. 14, Babylon destroyed
 - c) v. 15, Cyrus implied
 - d) *v. 16, the Trinity (cf. Isa 63.9-10)

Isaiah 48:16; "Come near to Me, listen to this:

From the first I have not spoken in secret,

From the time it took place, I was there.

And now the Lord God has sent Me, and His Spirit." (NASB)

- e) vv. 18-19, Retrospection on conditionality of Mosaic covenant

This section of Isaiah (ch. 40-48) shows that God's servant Israel does not deserve salvation or the promised theocratic kingdom, but also that God will bring these blessings anyway. It thus leads logically to the next section, which answers the question, "How can God justly bless this disobedient servant?" The answer lies in the suffering righteous servant of the Lord, the Messiah (ch. 49-55), who acts as the new Israel on behalf of Israel.

2. **Salvation through the Lord's righteous servant, Ch. 49-55**

a. **Messiah's appointment and humiliation, Ch. 49-50**

1) Isaiah 49:1-6; important servant section

Is the servant both Israel and Christ, or Christ as representative of Israel? (see note above)

SERVANT

- Redeems Israel – Isaiah 49:5-6
- From the womb – Isaiah 49:1, 5
- Epitome (corporate solidarity) of everything Israel should have been
- a) Isaiah 49:3; "And He said to me, 'You are My servant, O Israel, In whom I will be glorified.' ... 5 " And now the LORD says, Who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, So that Israel is gathered to Him (For I shall be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, And My God shall be My strength), 6 Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

perspective transition: Israel → Messiah; cf. "righteous vs. deaf servant" of Ch. 42: Messiah, Israel

- b) Isaiah 49:4; cf. 42:4; cf. Jesus' crucifixion in Ch. 50, 53
- c) Isaiah 49:6, "Light of Gentiles" cf. Acts 13:47
- d) Isaiah 49:7-13; results of Messiah's work

v. 8 cited in 2 Cor 6:2; "accepted time" = Year of Jubilee

Isaiah 49:8; "Thus says the LORD: "In an acceptable time I have heard You, And in the day of salvation I have helped You; I will preserve You and give You As a covenant to the people, To restore the earth, To cause them to inherit the desolate heritages;

⁹ That You may say to the prisoners, ‘Go forth,’ To those who are in darkness, ‘Show yourselves.’”

e) Isaiah 49:14-26; resulting confidence of Israel

vv. 15-16, God’s love for Israel

vv. 22-23, “Jewish supremacy”

f) Isaiah 50:1-3; God looks for a redeemer

g) Isaiah 50:4-10; another important servant passage

Messiah to be the Redeemer

Isaiah 50:5, “The Lord GOD has opened My ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn away.”

Interpretations: 1. cf. Psalm 40:6 (LXX) in Hebrews 10:5-7 = obedient heart vs. “deaf servant” of Ch. 42

OR 2. ctr. ear piercing of Exodus 21:6 = dedicated servant

v. 6: “shame and spitting” cf. Matthew 26:67; 27:30; back Matt 27:26; John 19:1

note: “my cheeks,” Hebrews לְחִי *lechi*, “jaw, cheek”; implies beard for Jesus

Christ shows no sin or rebelliousness throughout

b. Promised deliverance to Jerusalem, Ch. 51 - 52:12

Isaiah 51:3; Eden’s return promised (cf. Ezek 28:13)

This deliverance is based upon the work and sacrifice of the righteous servant of Yahweh.

tribulation, then glory; e.g., Isaiah 51:17, 22; 52:4, 7-10

Isaiah 52:11; principle applied in 2 Cor 6:17 (cf. Haggai 2:12-14)

Isaiah 52:11; Depart! Depart! Go out from there, Touch no unclean thing; Go out from the midst of her, Be clean, You who bear the vessels of the LORD.”

c. **The suffering servant, Isaiah 52:13 - Ch. 53**

- 1) “servant” — Isaiah 52:13; 53:11

This is the last servant passage in Isaiah. **This Servant is the Messiah (not Israel) because

- a) He is righteous; Isaiah 53:11
- b) He suffers vicariously; Isaiah 53:4,5,8,10-12
- c) KNOW { the antecedent Servant passage (Ch. 49-50) flows easily into this same identity
- d) the NT shows a Messianic fulfillment (10X)
 - i. Isaiah 52:13,15 (Isaiah 56:3-5) cf. interest of the eunuch in Acts 8:33-35

“sprinkle many nations” vs. “astonish many nations” in the LXX

The servant will be “high and lifted up.” This phrase appears only in Isaiah and typically refers to God. Comparing Isaiah 50:52:13 with Isaiah 50:6:1, O. P. Robertson notes that the apostle John can say that Isaiah himself beheld the glory of Jesus upon the throne:

- ii. **John 12:37-41** But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, ³⁸ that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: “Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?” ³⁹ Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: ⁴⁰ “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with their eyes, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.”
⁴¹ These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

- iii. Isaiah 53:4-5; cf. Matthew 8:16,17

- 2) Isaiah 53:9, 11; righteous; OT concept of righteous includes faithfulness to covenant, resulting in deliverance for covenant people, in spite of their unworthiness (cf. Ps 71, 143)
- 3) Isaiah 52:14; 53:2-5, 7-12; suffering; fulfilled in passion of Christ; see NT references above
- 4) Isaiah 52:15; (probably) Isaiah 53:4-6, 8, 10-12, vicarious suffering; leads to forgiveness and blessing on sinners; not appropriate for Isaiah himself or for the faithful remnant of Israel

5) Isaiah 52:13, 15; reward for the suffering servant (vv. 10,12 are proof texts for “covenant of redemption”)

6) Isaiah 53:10-12

Isaiah 53:11; cf. DSS, LXX, NIV (“... to see the light of life” = resurrection)

How is this suffering servant passage fulfilled? —in Isaiah? Israel? Sacral kingship (cf. Sigmund Mowinckel, or Harris “Isaiah,” *ZPEB* 3:326)? Messiah?

Messiah is best; by process of elimination, by context, by exact fulfillments (e.g., Isaiah 52:14; 53:2, 5, 7, 9)

d. Israel’s future restoration, Ch. 54-55

1) Isaiah 54:4-8; cf. Hoses 2-3; = wife motif in vs. 5

2) Isaiah 54:9-10; “covenant of peace”

compared to Noah’s (Isaiah 24:5,6)

Covenant in Isaiah

- Davidic Isaiah 55:3
- New Covenant Isaiah 59:21; 61:8
- 3) Isaiah 54:11-13; kingdom blessings for future; cf. language of Revelation 21:10-27
- 4) Ch. 55; Gospel of Isaiah: appeal to repent and to receive these blessings

Fulfillment of Davidic Covenant (Isaiah 55:3) leads to removal of the curse

3. The sins of Judah, Ch. 56 - 59:15 (this section begins Isaiah III for the critics)

- = a call to return home from exile
- note Sabbath emphasis, Isaiah 56:2-8; 58:1,13-14

Sabbath keeping = a sign of belonging to the covenant community (Isaiah 56:6) in exile in the face of the loss of ceremonies

- Isaiah 56:7; OT universal appeal to all nations: “house of prayer for all peoples”

4. Zion's Redeemer and his kingdom, Isaiah 59:16 - Ch. 66

- a. Isaiah 59:16-21; Yahweh himself provides salvation

New Covenant language: Isaiah 59:21

Paul is familiar: Ephesians 6 cf. Isaiah 59:17, 49:2, 52:7

- b. Ch. 60-62; description of promised kingdom (millennial)

Some Bibles: Ch. 59 — “judgments on Israel”

Ch. 60 — “blessings on the church”

Isaiah 61:1; Baptism of Jesus (cf. Acts 10:38); cf. Isaiah 42:1

Two advents in view here, cited in Luke 4:17-20

Isaiah 62:4; Beulah and Hephzibah

- c. Isaiah 63:1-6; Yahweh's day of vengeance

esp. v. 2; cf. Joel 3; Revelation 14:20; 19:11-16

- d. Isaiah 63:7 - Ch. 64; Isaiah's prayer for quick deliverance

1) Isaiah 63:10; “grieve His holy Spirit”; LXX word is the same as in Ephesians 4:30. Rudolf Schnackenburg says Isaiah 63 is the backdrop for Paul's understanding of the kingdom as developed in Ephesians

2) note non-theocratic appearance of Israel, Isaiah 63:16-19

3) Isaiah 64:11; prophecy of temple destroyed (prophetic perfect)

(Young: could be figurative of worship condition)

- e. Ch. 65-66; God's answer to Isaiah after Jerusalem is viewed as desolate (Isaiah 64:10)

1) Isaiah 65:8; blessing for obedient remnant

2) Isaiah 65:6-7; destruction for rebellious

3) Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; new heaven and new earth (= millennium and eternal kingdom); cf. 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1; see Peters, Prop. 148 (vol. 2, 499–505)

4) Isaiah 65:20

5) Isaiah 66:22; New Heavens and New Earth

The Book of NAHUM

Prophet against Nineveh, probably from Judah, second half of the seventh century.

He is called the “Elkoshite” (Nahum 1:1), probably an uncertain village.

—Modern Arabic tradition (from the AD 1600s) is that this site is in ancient Assyria (Iraq), a possibility suggested by familiarity with Assyrian geography (Nahum 2:5-6) and language (Nahum 2:7; 3:17).

Jerome, in his Onomasticon, suggested a Christian tradition that Elkosh was the earlier place name for Capernaum, “City of Nahum (viz., “of comfort”).

I. Subject of Nahum

The coming judgment and destruction of Nineveh, a Gentile power depicting “world evil” in the days of the prophet

Until 1845, the early critics thought that Nineveh was a fictitious place; Alexander the Great waged battles nearby without even knowing of its existence

Nahum 1:1, “burden of Nineveh,” נִשָּׂא *massa’* (from נָסָא *nasa’*), load, burden, as on a beast; thus a weighty utterance, oracle, normally of judgment (cf. 2 Kings 9:25; Isaiah 14:28)

II. Date

A. Nahum 3:8-10, after the destruction of Thebes in 663 BC

B. Nahum 1:1, etc., before the destruction of Nineveh in 612 BC

C. Kings of Judah are not mentioned

686-642 BC Manasseh

642-640 BC Amon

640-609 BC Josiah

Would fit with the wicked reigns of Manasseh or Amon, or with Josiah’s earlier years

D. Nahum 2:13; 3:1-4, Assyria still strong

Ashurbanipal, the last strong king, died 631 BC

E. Probably written near the middle or second half of the 7th century; Bullock suggests a time close to Nineveh’s downfall, 612 BC

III. Assyrian Background

Note a brief sketch of Assyrian history from Jonah's time to their destruction:

Assyrian rulers:

Tiglath-Pileser III	745-727 BC
Shalmaneser V	727-722 BC
Sargon II	722-704 BC
Sennacherib	704-681 BC
Esarhaddon	680-669 BC
Ashurbanipal	668-627 BC

Last kings:

Sin-shar-ishkun	627-612 BC
Asshur-uballit II	612-606 BC

ca. 760 BC, Jonah preaches repentance to Nineveh

ca. 740 BC, Assyrians receive tribute from Menahem

732 BC, Assyrians conquer northern Israel

722 BC, Assyrians conquer Samaria

721 BC, Babylon becomes rebellious from this time on

712 BC, Assyrians reconquer the Philistine coast

701 BC, Assyrians conquer most of Judah (cf. Nah 1:11-12)

689 BC, Assyrians conquer rebellious Babylon

671 BC, Assyrians defeat Egyptians, occupy Memphis

667 BC, Assyrians crush another Egyptian rebellion

663 BC, Assyrians destroy Thebes in Egypt (Nah 3:8-10)

ca. 655 BC, Egypt wins independence from Assyria

ca. 650 BC, Assyrians hold Manasseh in temporary captivity in Babylon
(2 Chron 33:10-13)

648 BC, Assyrians retake rebellious Babylon

626 BC, Nabopolassar of Babylon achieves independence; Medes begin attacking Assyria

616 BC, Egyptians switch sides to support Assyria

614 BC, Medes conquer the old capital of Asshur

* 612 BC, Babylonians and Medes (“the king of Akkad” and “the king of the Umman-Manda”)² conquer Nineveh; remnant of Assyrians flee to Haran

610 BC, Babylonians and Medes take Haran (hold on in counterattack in 609)

By this time, Assyria is not a contender; Egypt is the main enemy of the Babylonians; Egypt controls Palestine

605 BC, Babylonians defeat Egyptians in Carchemish (Jeremiah 46:2); take control of Palestine

IV. Poetic Style

Excellent poetry, like Isaiah

“As to poetic form, the book of Nahum is thus one of the finest in all the Old Testament.—No other of all the prophets, except Isaiah, can be said even to equal Nahum in boldness, ardor, or sublimity.—His descriptions are most vivid and impetuous.—‘His language is strong and brilliant, his rhythm rumbles and rolls, leaps and flashes, like the horsemen and chariots he describes’ (G. A. Smith).—By general consent Nahum is counted a master of Hebrew style.—His supreme excellence is not his feeling but his power of description, which for fiery vigor, glowing color, dramatic impressiveness and picturesque phraseology is unsurpassed.”

(George L. Robinson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, p. 113)

² Akkadian: is a term used in the early second and first millennia BC, meaning “barbarian horde” or “the horde from who knows where,” for a poorly known people in the Ancient Near East. Scythians.

V. Outline of Nahum

Nahum comprises two sections, unified by themes and imagery (see Armerding chart in *EBC*, p. 453).

Section I = Judicial Decree of Judgment against Nineveh, Ch. 1

Section II = Execution of the Decree against Nineveh, Ch. 2-3

A. Psalm of triumph over Nineveh by the Divine Warrior, Ch. 1

1. Nahum 1:2-8 is a broken acrostic poem; the acrostic style is often employed to denote thoroughness, in this case, of God the Judge

God's judgment and wrath, vv. 2, 6, 8-14

God's mercy to his people, vv. 3a, 7, 15

God's power, vv. 3b-5

2. Nahum 1:8; flood of the Tigris tributaries opened a gap in a rampart around the city
3. Nahum 1:10; Assyrians had repulsed the Medes earlier, were "celebrating" when attacked
4. Nahum 1:11-12; Sennacherib invasion of Judah (2 Kings 18-19; Isaiah 7:17; 8:8; Ch. 36-37)
5. Nahum 1:14, Nineveh's grave; fulfilled, Ezekiel 32:22-23

B. Siege and destruction of Nineveh foretold, Ch. 2. Possible connection to an eyewitness.

1. Nahum 2:2-8 the graphic depiction of Nineveh's fall
2. Nahum 2:8 canals and aqueducts

C. The case against Nineveh closed, Ch. 3

1. Nahum 3:1-4, Nineveh's sins
great cruelty, especially under Ashurbanipal

Examples in *ANET*, pp. 294-301

2. Nahum 3:5-19, verdict against Nineveh

- a. Nahum 3:8-10, No Amon = Thebes, on the Nile, 400 miles south of the Mediterranean Sea

Defeated and ruined by Ashurbanipal in 663 BC (*ANET*, pp. 295, 297)

- b. Nahum 3:19, joy at Nineveh's destruction for her reputation of cruelty

Only the two prophets that address Nineveh end with a rhetorical question.

VI. **NT Use of Nahum**

A. **Nahum 1:6**, "who can stand the wrath of God?"

cf. Isaiah 63:4; Jeremiah 10:10 (in Aramaic); Malachi 3:2

quoted in Revelation 6:17 of the return of Christ

B. **Nahum 1:15**, "on the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news"

also in Isaiah 52:7; perhaps a proverbial expression

quoted in Acts 10:36; Rom 10:15; Eph. 6:15

VII. **Nahum's Dependence on the Book of Isaiah**

Bible scholars have debated whether Nahum 1:15 was citing Isaiah 52:7 or whether the two works shared a common [proverbial] source. —Carl Armerding in *EBC* builds a tight case showing Nahum's literary dependence on Isaiah. —He thus argues for the literary unity of Isaiah and says the entire book was extant by the time of Nahum.

In a contextual study, he shows that Nahum 1:12-15 "corresponds with remarkable exactitude to that of Isaiah 51:21-52:7. — "Moreover, the correlation between the Book of Nahum and Isaiah 51-52 extends to [Isaiah's] second theme of judgment on the oppressor." —See p. 454 for development of the deliberate parallels.

"The evidence for literary interdependence between Isaiah and Nahum is thus founded on:

- 1) Unique, multiple verbal repetitions linking specific passages
- 2) Extensive continuity of imagery
- 3) A shared thematic pattern of oppression, deliverance, and judgment experience in relation to Assyria" —p. 455

The implications of this investigation have bearing on

- 1) Hermeneutics: how one prophet interprets and applies the prophecies of another prophet
- 2) Canonicity and authorship: Nahum authenticates the earlier Isaiah in its entirety

The Book of ZEPHANIAH

Prophet to Judah, second half of the 7th century

I. Date and Historical Background

Zephaniah 1:1, reign of Josiah (640-609 BC)

Zephaniah 2:13, before Nineveh was destroyed (612 BC)

Zephaniah 1:4-5, 8-9, apparently before Josiah's reformation in 621 BC

numerous references to syncretism; probably just before the reformation in 622 BC (2 Kings 23:4-25), yet too late to avoid judgment altogether (2 Kings 23:26-27)

However, O.P. Robertson (*The Christ of the Prophets*, p. 264) believes that Zephaniah probably wrote AFTER the discovery of the law of God (Deuteronomy) in the temple in 622 BC, since the law of Deuteronomy appears to shape his message.

Conclusion: written during the period 640-620 BC; nearly 100 years after Micah and Isaiah. Just had passed through a "dark period" of wicked Kings Manasseh and Amon

Zephaniah was a contemporary of Nahum, who wrote against Assyria; he personally witnessed the beginning of Jeremiah's long ministry and of Huldah's.

Zephaniah ministered during a time of national idolatry, while Judah remained encircled by the declining rule of Assyria.

II. The Prophet Zephaniah

Zephaniah 1:1, great-great-grandson of Hezekiah (probably King Hezekiah)

Zephaniah 1:4, etc., "from this place ..." = lived in Judah, even Jerusalem

Zephaniah's preaching may have led Josiah to seek the Lord, as it had for the prophetess Huldah (cf. 2 Kings 22:14-23:3).

III. Literary Form

Almost all of Zephaniah is in poetic form (except 2:8-11; 3:16-20). Each line has 3 + 2 beats; this funeral dirge tempo is known as ELEGIAC METER, which flourished in Greek poetry in the 7th century BC.³

—>This style shows Greek-Israelite intercourse of this period, which was cultural as well as commercial

IV. Outline of Zephaniah

Theme: “the day of Yahweh,” (= a day both of judgment and of blessing)

Zephaniah 1:7, 14-16, 18; 2:2-3; 3:8, 11, 16

A. Zephaniah 1, God’s coming great judgment (=Babylonian invasion of Judea in 20 years)

Zephaniah 1:2-3 sound like Genesis 6:7 in preparation for “the day of the LORD”

Zephaniah 1:4; excommunication of idolatry

Zephaniah 1:7; “consecration of guests”

Zephaniah 1:12; God is not apathetic about apathy

Zephaniah 1:18; encouragement to the pious in an age of materialism

B. Zephaniah 2, The remnant and its enemies

Zephaniah 2:2-3, anger and mercy meet in the “Day of the Lord”

Zephaniah 2:3, Zephaniah (צפניה) means “Yah hides”

Zephaniah 2:12, typical of the Divine Warrior found in the prophets, e.g., Isaiah 63:2,3

Zephaniah 3:17; The LORD your God in your midst, *a delivering Warrior*, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.”

³ An elegiac couplet is a two-line poetic verse form from ancient Greece and Rome, widely used for love poetry, personal grief, and epigrams. Elegiac means mournful, sorrowful, or relating to an elegy (a sad song or poem remembering someone who has died or a time in the past).

C. Zephaniah 3, Yahweh's righteousness, and kingdom

1. Zephaniah 3:1-5 = a Lament over Jerusalem
2. Zephaniah 3:8, day of wrath; Armageddon? cf. "decision" of Joel 3:14

⁸ "Therefore, wait for Me," says the LORD, "Until the day I rise up for plunder; My determination is to gather the nations To My assembly of kingdoms, To pour on them My indignation, All my fierce anger; All the earth shall be devoured With the fire of My jealousy.

3. Zephaniah 3:9-20, kingdom promises (likely millennial)

Zephaniah 3:9; "pure lips" ctr. Isaiah's unclean lips (chpt. 6)

Zephaniah 3:9; "For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, That they all may call on the name of the LORD, To serve Him with one accord."

Dumbrell (*Faith of Israel*) believes the judgment on Babel is reversed when the scattered remnant returns to speak with "pure lips" Babel had tried to make a name for itself (Genesis 11:4); now the exalted remnant is given a great name (Zeph. 3:19,20) in fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12:2, a promise given on the heels of Babel in Genesis 11).

Zephaniah 3:19; Behold, at that time I will deal with all who afflict you; I will save the lame, And gather those who were driven out; I will appoint them for praise and a name. In every land where they were put to shame. ²⁰ At that time I will bring you back, Even at the time I gather you; For I will give you a name and praise Among all the peoples of the earth, When I return your captives before your eyes," Says the LORD.

Genesis 12:2 "I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing."

Zephaniah 3:15; theocratic ideal of Shekinah in the midst

The Book of HABAKKUK

“ardent embrace”

Prophet to Judah, late seventh century

I. Date and Historical Background

Date not stated directly (similar to Obadiah and Joel)

Habakkuk 1:5-6 places the Babylonian conquest of Palestine in Habakkuk's time

Fulfilled in 605 BC and afterward

Huldah said it would not happen during Josiah's life (2 Kings 22:19)

Habakkuk 1:5; it was to be an “incredible” event

cf. Jeremiah 36:29

Keil places Habakkuk during the reign of Manasseh (2 Kings 21:10-16; 2 Chronicles 33:10) among the unnamed prophets mentioned.

The text seems to imply a date early in the reign of Jehoiakim, Habakkuk 1:6-10 (cf. 609-605 BC), or perhaps early in the reign of Josiah (ca. 640-630 BC), since Habakkuk 1:6-10 views Babylon as a world threat

For historical background, see under Jeremiah. Apparently, Habakkuk wrote his prophecy during the turbulent years before Nebuchadnezzar's great victories of 605 BC.

II. The Prophet Habakkuk

Not much is known about the prophet personally; his name means “Ardent Embrace.” Besides Jonah, he is the minor prophet who dialogues with God and shares his inner questions.

Habakkuk 3:19 - some suggest he was a temple official or singer

The apocryphal story of “Bel and the Dragon” says that Habakkuk, a Levite, was carried by an angel to feed Daniel in the lions' den (this story would be too late for Habakkuk, 538 BC).

Daniel 14:33-39; ³³ Now, the prophet Habakkuk was in Judaea: he had been making a stew and breaking up bread into a basket. He was on his way to the fields, taking this to the harvesters, ³⁴ when the angel of the Lord spoke to him, 'Take the meal you are carrying to Babylon, and give it to Daniel in the lion pit.' ³⁵ 'Lord,' replied Habakkuk, 'I have not even seen Babylon and know nothing about this pit.' ³⁶ The angel of the Lord took hold of his head and carried him off by the hair to Babylon, where, with a great blast of his breath, he set Habakkuk down on the edge of the pit. ³⁷ 'Daniel, Daniel,' Habakkuk shouted, 'take the meal that God has sent you.' ³⁸ And Daniel said, 'You have kept me in mind, O God; you have not deserted those who love you.' ³⁹ Rising to his feet, he ate the meal, while the angel of God carried Habakkuk back in a moment to his own country.

Habakkuk seems to be a contemplative and philosophical prophet, with a powerful sense of justice. The question of God's justice is developed under the rubric of "THEODICY."

Unlike the other prophets who speak to the people for God, Habakkuk is the only writing prophet to speak at length to God on behalf of the covenant people.

III. **The DSS Habakkuk Commentary**

(see Menahem Mansoor, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, pp. 89-94; Millar Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, pp. 365-70)

This DSS dates to about the time of Christ, making it one of the latest scrolls.

Confirms the MT text type

The Essene commentary shows a fanciful method of interpretation, but "literal" for their own time (see examples in Burrows or Gaster's translation)

The absence of chapter 3 in the DSS commentary is used to argue against the unity of Habakkuk.

BUT

- cf. the psalm in Jonah 2
- Hab. 3:16 alludes to the Babylonian invasion too
- The commentary is sectarian, and Ch. 3 did not supply it with references against the "Kittim," or Romans.
- Also, Ch. 3 was written for temple worship, which the Qumran community opposed. See verse 19.

IV. Outline of Habakkuk

A. Questions about Judah's sin, Habakkuk 1:1-11

1. Habakkuk 1:1-4; sin seems unrestrained
2. Habakkuk 1:5-11; God's answer: punishment will come by means of the Babylonians (Chaldeans)

B. Questions about Judah's punishment, Habakkuk 1:12 - Ch. 2

1. Habakkuk 1:12-17; another problem: Chaldeans are wicked idolaters; they do not give God glory. How can God exalt them to judge his own people?

Habakkuk 1:12; note *qere-kethibh* variant: "my God who will not die"

Habakkuk 1:13; age-old concern about the existence of evil in God's creation

2. Habakkuk 2; God's answer: he will punish the Babylonians afterward, and deliver his righteous remnant

v. 4, "the righteous will live by his faith/faithfulness"

In context, the "righteous" must be defined, not as the "faithful" as opposed to the "faithless," but rather as the "righteous" as opposed to the "proud."

If the emphasis is on "faithfulness," as opposed to "faith" in NT usage, then Habakkuk would be stressing "good works" vs. "bad works" of the proud.

FAITH = Passive trust in God's words and ways

FAITHFULNESS = Active work in response to God

Quoted three times in the NT, each with separate emphasis:

- Rom 1:17 ("the righteous")
- Gal. 3:11 ("shall live")
- Hebrews 10:37-38 ("by his faith")

"Moses gave Israel 613 commandments; David reduced them to 10, Isaiah to two; but Habakkuk to one: the righteous will live by faith" —Talmud, *Makkot* 23b

woes against Babylon, vv. 6, 9, 12, 15, 19

C. Habakkuk's prayer-psalm of expectation, Ch. 3

1. Habakkuk 3:1; *shigionoth*, musical term; could mean "loud cry in adversity," cf. Ps 7 title

cf. ending in v. 19; note the theory of James W. Thirtle, *The Titles of the Psalms* (specifically, Hebrew musical notations occur at the end, and thus belong with the previous psalm in the book of Psalms)

2. Habakkuk 3:3; Numbers 10:12 is a connection to the region (and event?) of Paran
3. Habakkuk's vision: a theophany marching from the south, bringing salvation to beleaguered Israel

Much of the imagery rehearses that of

- the wilderness wanderings, Habakkuk 3:6
 - the crossing of the Red Sea and Jordan, Habakkuk 3:8-10
 - Joshua's long day, Habakkuk 3:11
4. Habakkuk 3:16-19; Habakkuk's reaction to the vision; doubt turns to faith (Habakkuk 2:4)

Doubt, as opposed to faith, is not removed by the introduction of new facts (e.g., God will punish the wicked by the Babylonians), but rather by a refreshed perspective of belief, seeing *the world through God's eyes*.

note progression of the close of the book:

dread

resignation

joy

strength

The Book of JEREMIAH

Prophet to Judah, late seventh and early sixth centuries

I. Date

Jeremiah 1:2-3, from 13th year of Josiah to 11th year of Zedekiah

Josiah	640-609 BC (13th year = <u>627</u> BC)
Jehoahaz	609 BC (= Shallum in 22:11-12)
Jehoiakim	609-597 BC
Jehoiachin	597 BC (13:18-19; 22:24-30; cf. 2 Kings 24:12, 15)
Zedekiah	597-587 BC (11th year = <u>587</u> BC)

—these verses indicate a range of 627-587 BC

Jeremiah 25:1-3, 23 years, from the 13th year of Josiah to the 4th year of Jehoiakim, which was also the first year of Nebuchadnezzar

Josiah's 13th year = **627** BC

* Jehoiakim's 4th year = Nebuchadnezzar's 1st year = 605 BC

605 BC was a big year for Jeremiah; cf. Jeremiah 36:1-2 - wrote prophecy up to that point (burned in 36:23)

Jeremiah 40-44, story of Jews in Jerusalem after 605 BC

includes Jews under Governor Gedaliah and commander Johanan, with refugees going to Egypt

date of this section goes as late as ca. 580 BC (?)

Jeremiah 52:31-34, record of elevation of Jehoiachin in Babylon

37th year of Jehoiachin's exile = **561** BC

accession of Evil-Merodach (= Amel-Marduk) = 562 BC

Conclusion: about a 65-year ministry, 627-561 BC

about age 21-86

II. The Prophet Jeremiah

A. Jeremiah's family

1. Jeremiah 1:1; priestly family

territory of Benjamin

Anathoth, a Levite city, 1-1/4 miles north of Jerusalem (Joshua 21:18); Abiathar lived there after he was deposed for helping Adonijah against Solomon (1 Kings 2:26)

father Hilkiah, probably not the Hilkiah of 2 Kings 22-23, who found the law under Josiah (that one lived in Jerusalem and was of the line of Zadok, not of Ithamar's line like Abiathar)

probably born about the same time as Josiah was born, 648 BC

2. Jeremiah 16:1-2; not married

B. Jeremiah's call

recorded in Jeremiah 1

emphasis on being able to be a prophet, "a child" (cf. 1 Timothy 4:12)

C. Jeremiah's reception

had royal favor until 609 BC, then opposition

2 Chronicles 35:25; "Jeremiah lamented for Josiah"

D. Jeremiah's ministry

1. brave in the face of opposition

—he preached surrender, Jeremiah 2:8-9; 38:2

Jeremiah 7:2; stand in the temple

Jeremiah 17:19; in the gates of the city

Jeremiah 22:1; in the gate of the king's house

2. the "weeping prophet"

Jeremiah 4:19; 8:20-22; 9:1; 10:19, 23-24; Lamentations 1:16

Jeremiah 9:1; Oh, that my head were waters, And my eyes a fountain of tears, That I might weep day and night For the slain of the daughter of my people!

In spite of all, a burning compulsion to preach, Jeremiah 20:7-9

III. **Historical Background**

A. Timeline

(for earlier history, see under Micah)

622 BC: revival in Judah under King Josiah

612 BC: Nabopolassar of Babylon, along with the Scythians, destroys Nineveh;
Ashuru-uballit II leads Assyrians to Haran

609 BC: Josiah dies at Megiddo trying to prevent Egyptian Pharaoh Neco II from helping the Assyrians against the Babylonians

Josiah's son Jehoahaz reigns only 3 months, is taken by Neco to Egypt, where he later dies

Neco installs a second son of Josiah, Eliakim (= Jehoiakim), as a vassal king in Judah

605 BC: battle of Carchemish; Nebuchadnezzar defeats Neco and the Assyrians and begins captivity of Judah; he makes Jehoiakim his vassal, and carries away captives, including Daniel and his three friends

During this year, Jeremiah sends his scroll to King Jehoiakim (Jeremiah 36)

597 BC (March 15-16 per Babylonian Chronicle): Jehoiachin rebels, is taken with his family to Babylon as a captive, along with 10,000 other Jews (the "good figs" of Jeremiah 24, like Ezekiel's family)

*Archives at the Ishtar gate of Babylon mention provision for "Yaukin, king of Yahud"

Nebuchadnezzar installs Jehoiachin's uncle (another son of Josiah's) as vassal-king, Zedekiah

Zedekiah is the one who had Jeremiah thrown into a pit

589 BC: Zedekiah rebels against Babylon

588-586 BC: Nebuchadnezzar comes again, besieges Jerusalem, captures and destroys the city, kills Zedekiah and his children, installs Gedaliah as governor; takes nearly all the survivors in captivity to Babylon; leaves Jeremiah and only a few poor people

ca. 580 BC (?): Ishmael leads a plot to kill Gedaliah

Johanan takes over; the people decide to flee to Egypt; Jeremiah goes with them

562 BC: Evil-Merodach (Amel-Marduk) succeeds his father Nebuchadnezzar as king of Babylon

Evil-Merodach allows captive Jehoiachin more comfortable conditions in Babylon

B. Prophets contemporary with Jeremiah's earlier ministry: Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk

C. Prophets contemporary with Jeremiah's later ministry: Daniel, Ezekiel

IV. **Unity and Authorship of Jeremiah**

A. Arguments against the unity of Jeremiah are based solely on unproved critical theories, assuming that parts of Jeremiah must be later than the prophet:

Jeremiah 10:1-16 quotes "Deutero-Isaiah"

Jeremiah 17:19-27 depends on the P document

Jeremiah 30-31 teaches a later "messianic hope"

B. A major problem with Jeremiah is the original text of the book.

1. The LXX is 1/8 shorter (2700 words) than the MT (Masoretic Text). The DSS manuscripts are divided into two groups: some are MT-type, others are LXX-type.

2. Also, the order of the LXX text is different:

(approximate LXX order) ch. 1-25

ch. 45-51

ch. 25-45

(See Gleason Archer article for LXX relation of Jeremiah to MT: *Trinity Journal* 12:2:135-150, Fall 1991.)

3. Some have suggested the possibility of two original editions produced by Jeremiah himself.

cf. Jeremiah 36:32;

“Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote on it at the instruction of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire. And besides, there were added to them many similar words.”

- a. It is possible that Ch. 52 (an appendix), coming much later than the bulk of the prophecy, was appended by Baruch.
- b. There are chronological flashbacks throughout the book, but many synchronisms. The order appears related to the subject matter, emphasizing, for each new king, the history leading up to him.
- c. The oriental mind is not necessarily chronological, but may deliberately use repetition for the sake of emphasis and teaching. Dorsey (*Literary Structure of the OT*) believes the book comprises seven “well-defined” units, placing the new covenant in the fourth, middle position of the book.

V. Archaeological Notes

A. Babylonian Chronicles of Nebuchadnezzar

esp. for the years near 600 BC

includes Jehoiachin’s captivity in 597 AD:

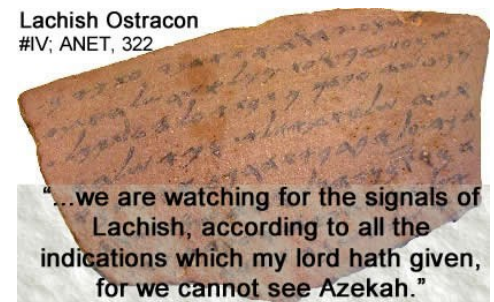
“Year 7, month Kislimu: The King of Akkad moved his army into Hatti land, laid siege to the city of Judah (la-a-bu-du) and the king took the city on the second day of the month Addaru. He appointed in it a (new) king of his liking [Zedekiah], took heavy booty from it and brought it into Babylon.” (ANET, p. 564; see D. J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldaean Kings in the British Museum*, p. 73, plate 5, script on plates 14-16)

B. Lachish Ostraka

18 found at Lachish in 1932-38 by J. L. Starkey

Carbon ink on pottery pieces, Old Hebrew script

Written by military captain Hoshaiiah to his superior Joash in Lachish during Nebuchadnezzar’s siege of Lachish in 588 BC (cf. Jeremiah 34:7)



- * Mention “the prophet”

Pictures in Michael Avi-Yonah, ed., *History of the Holy Land*, p. 104; text in *ANET*, p 322

1. Tablet confirming Nebuchadnezzar’s “chief officer,” Nebo-Sarsekim, with Nebuchadnezzar at the siege of Jerusalem in 587 BC: Jeremiah 39
2. Tablet translated at the British Museum in 2007, confirming the historicity of Nebo-Sarsekim
3. The tablet references this official’s payment of .75 kg of gold to a temple in Babylon

VI. **Summary Outline of Jeremiah**

- A. Jeremiah’s call, Ch. 1
- B. Prophecies against Judah, Ch. 2-29
 - 1. Against the people, Ch. 2-18
 - 2. Against the rulers, Ch. 19-29
- C. Prophecies of the Messiah and the restoration, Ch. 30-33
- D. Disintegration of the kingdom, Ch. 34-39
 - 1. Zedekiah’s false liberty proclamation, Ch. 34
 - 2. The Rechabites’ good example, Ch. 35
 - 3. Jehoiakim burns Jeremiah’s scroll, Ch. 36
 - 4. Jeremiah’s experiences during the siege and capture of Jerusalem, Ch. 37-39
- E. Jeremiah after the captivity, Ch. 40-45
 - 1. Jeremiah in Judah, Ch. 40-41
 - 2. Decision to go to Egypt, Ch. 42-43
 - 3. Prophecies against the stubborn Jews in Egypt, Ch. 44
 - 4. Compensation to Baruch (605 BC), Ch. 45
- F. Prophecies against the nations, Ch. 46-51
- G. Historical appendix, Ch. 52

DORSEY: Literary Structure of OT

23.8 The Book of Jeremiah

- a **oracles against Judah: coming invasion and disaster from the north** (1:1–12:17)
 - Jeremiah appointed over the nations to declare God's judgments against them (1:10);
 - messages to nations (10:11, 25; 12:14–17); including Egypt, Edom, etc. (9:25–26 [9:24–25])
 - eyewitnesslike depictions of Judah's invasion, including battle scenes, horses, trumpet alarms, swords and bows, casualties, destruction of towns, exiles, etc.
 - exhortations to weep and wail over Judah's fall (4:8; 6:26; 9:20 [9:19])
 - theme: disaster coming from the north (1:13–15; 4:6; 6:1, 22; 10:22)
 - nearly verbatim repetitions: 6:22–24 || 50:41–43 and 10:12–16 || 51:15–19
- b **Judah's exile and suffering predicted** (13:1–20:18)
 - Jeremiah's complaints of his persecution
 - Jeremiah beaten and imprisoned at Upper Benjamin Gate by Pashhur (20:1–18)
 - Jeremiah's complaints about his persecution; God will save him from enemies
 - Jeremiah's prayer that he be vindicated and avenged
 - themes: sword, famine, plague (or variations)
- c **dated messages of judgment about specific kings and groups** (21:1–29:32)
 - begins: message to Zedekiah during siege: city will fall to Babylonians and be burned; Zedekiah will be captured (21:1–7)
 - failure of Davidic kings to be just and to rescue oppressed (21:12; 22:3–5)
 - symbolic-action message: cup of wine to nations (25:1–38)
- d **CENTER: messages of future hope** (30:1–33:26)
- c' **dated messages of judgment about specific kings and groups** (34:1–35:19)
 - begins: message to Zedekiah during siege: city will fall to Babylonians and be burned; Zedekiah will be captured (34:1–3)
 - failure of Davidic kings to be just and to rescue oppressed (21:12; 22:3–5)
 - symbolic-action message: cups of wine to Rechabites (35:1–19)
- b' **Judah's fall and exile** (36:1–45:5)
 - stories of Jeremiah's persecution
 - Jeremiah arrested at Benjamin Gate; beaten and imprisoned by Pashhur and others
 - Jeremiah's persecution documented; Jeremiah is saved from enemies repeatedly
 - Jeremiah is vindicated (predictions come true) and avenged (Judah falls)
 - themes: sword, famine, plague (or variations)
- a' **oracles against the nations: coming invasions and disasters from the north** (46:1–51:64)
 - Jeremiah declares God's judgments against the nations, including Egypt, Edom, etc.
 - eyewitnesslike depictions of nations' invasion, including battle scenes, horses, trumpet alarms, swords and bows, casualties, destruction of towns, exiles, etc.
 - exhortations to weep and wail over various nations' fall (48:17, 20; 49:3; 51:8)
 - theme: disaster coming from the north (46:20, 24; 47:2; 50:3, 9, 41; 51:48)
 - nearly verbatim repetitions: 6:22–24 || 50:41–43 and 10:12–16 || 51:15–19
- appendix: fall of Jerusalem** (52:1–34)

VII. Outline and Contents of Jeremiah

A. Jeremiah's call, Ch. 1

1. Jeremiah 1:10; Jeremiah's ministry

cf. God's providence in Jeremiah 18:7-9; 31:27-28

2. Jeremiah 1:11-12; *a pun*

almond tree, שֶׁקֶד *shaqed*

I am watching, שֶׁקֶד *shoqed*

3. Jeremiah 1:13-15; boiling pot, symbol of war

Eastern armies approach from the north

B. Prophecies against Judah, Ch. 2-29

1. Against the People, Ch. 2-18

- a. errant wife, Jeremiah 2:2, 32; 3:1-9, 14

- b. hypocrisy under Josiah, Jeremiah 3:10

- c. individual salvation needed, Jeremiah 4:3-4, 14 (כָּבַשׁ *cabas*, “wash your heart”); Jeremiah 6:16; 9:23-24; 17:14; 18:11

Jeremiah 4:4 Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, And take away the foreskins of your hearts, You men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, ... ¹⁴ O Jerusalem, wash your heart from wickedness, That you may be saved.

- d. desolation to come, Jeremiah 4:23-26, 30; 5:15-19; 6:22-23

- e. apostasy, Jeremiah 2:11-13, 28; 5:1, 4, 30-31; 6:7, 10; 7:31 (human sacrifice)

- f. total depravity, Jeremiah 13:23; 17:9

Jeremiah 17:9 “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; Who can know it?”

- g. No peace, Jeremiah 6:14; 8:11

- h. Mosaic covenant repeated and broken, Jeremiah 7:5-7; especially Jeremiah 11:1-13; 17:24-27; 18:1-12 (potter's vessel)

- i. worthless idols and superstitions, Jeremiah 10:2-5
- j. God's power, Jeremiah 10:6-16
- k. Jeremiah's sympathy, Jeremiah 4:19-26; 8:18-22; 9:1; 13:17; 14:17; cf. Lamentations
- l. Plea for mercy from God, Jeremiah 10:23-25; drought, Ch. 14-15

Jeremiah 10:23; O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. ²⁴ O LORD, correct me, but with justice; Not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing.

- m. future restoration for Israel, largely based on promises to the fathers, Jeremiah 3:15-19; 12:15; 16:14-15
- n. covenant for Israel's neighbors, Jeremiah 12:14-17
- o. Jeremiah's sash and long walks, Jeremiah 13:1-11
- p. Jeremiah not popular in Anathoth, Jeremiah 11:21-23; 18:23

2. **Against the Rulers, Ch. 19-29**

- a. Speech in Hinnom, "Valley of Slaughter," because of child sacrifice; potter's vessel, Jeremiah 19:1-13
- b. Speech in temple court, Jeremiah 19:14-15
- c. Jeremiah in stocks, and speech to chief temple officer, Pashur, Jeremiah 20:1-6
response of Jeremiah (v. 3) is "Maggor Missabib," literally "terror on every side!"
- d. compulsion to preach, Jeremiah 20:7-9

Jeremiah 20:9; But His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I could not.

- e. submission to Babylon, Jeremiah 21:8-10
- f. last-minute covenant, Jeremiah 22:4-5
(probably spoken earlier)
- g. weeping for exiles, Jeremiah 22:10
- h. prophecy for Jehoahaz, Jeremiah 22:11-12

- i. prophecy for Jehoiakim, Jeremiah 22:18-19
- j. * prophecy for Jehoiachin that requires the virgin birth of Christ, Jeremiah 22:24-30

Jeremiah 22:24 “As I live,” says the LORD, “though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet on My right hand, yet I would pluck you off; ... 30 Thus says the LORD: ‘Write this man down as childless, A man *who* shall not prosper in his days; For none of his descendants shall prosper, Sitting on the throne of David, And ruling anymore in Judah.’”

- k. the future king in the kingdom age, “the Lord our righteousness,” Jeremiah 23:3-8

This opening section describes the false shepherd *kings*, in contrast to the coming good Shepherd. The following section indicts the false prophets.

- l. false prophets, Jeremiah 23:9-40

- m. good and bad figs, Ch. 24

(written after 597 BC captivity of Jehoiachin)

- n. beginning of the 70-year captivity, Jeremiah 25:11-12

¹¹ ‘And this whole land shall be a desolation *and* an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

¹² ‘Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,’ says the LORD; ‘and I will make it a perpetual desolation.

- 1) Start in 605 BC (Jeremiah 25:1)
- 2) Finish with the return of Zerubbabel under King Cyrus in 536 BC
- 3) 70 years, see Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10 (noted in Daniel 9:2)

2 Chronicles 36:20-21; cf. Leviticus 26:34-35

Interesting note: also 70 years that the temple was destroyed, from 587 BC destruction to being rebuilt in the sixth year of Darius (Ezra 6:15; start rule in 522 BC)

- o. year of Josiah’s death, 609 BC, Jeremiah 26:1

“last chance,” Jeremiah 26:3-4, 13

* close call: Jeremiah saved by elders (v. 17), who quoted former prophet Micah (Jer 26:8-24; Ch. 1:18-19; cf. Micah 3:12-4:1)

but the good prophet Uriah was killed (Jeremiah 26:20ff.)

probably a textual error in Jeremiah 27:1; cf. vv. 3, 12, 20; esp. Jeremiah 28:1

probably should be the 4th year of Zedekiah (594 BC); see NIV text and footnotes

p. sovereignty of God, Jeremiah 27:5

command for all nations to submit to Nebuchadnezzar

q. bonds and bars, Ch. 27-28

r. Hananiah and iron bars, Ch. 28:16

s. false optimistic prophecy, Jeremiah 28:11ff.

t. Jeremiah's letter to the captives: "settle into captivity ..." (Jeremiah 29:1-23).

Jeremiah 29:10; 70 years

u. Message to Shemiah, another false prophet, Jeremiah 29:24-32

C. Prophecies of the Messiah and the Restoration, Ch. 30-33

1. First tribulation, then the kingdom, Ch. 30

Time of Jacob's trouble: Jeremiah 30:7; Alas! For that day is great, So that none is like it;
And it is the time of Jacob's trouble, But he shall be saved out of it.

Cf. Daniel 12:1:

"At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the
sons of your people;
And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation,
Even to that time.
And at that time your people shall be delivered, Everyone who is found written in
the book.

2. The New Covenant, Jeremiah 30-33

The New Covenant grows out of God's covenant with Abraham in His plan to restore His creation design, and it promises a Davidic King (30:9, q.v.). This covenant is new, not in its promises, but in that both sides will henceforth keep its terms. The covenant-faithful God will put His law within the hearts of the people so that they all keep covenant, not just the original representatives.

Hebrews 8 & 9 further elaborate on Jeremiah's clear statement of the New Covenant. Ezekiel 36:24-27 also describes the new heart that God gives, as well as the promises of the renewed earth.

Jeremiah 31:31-40; cf. Jeremiah 32:38-40; Ezekiel 36:24-27; Hebrews 8:6-13

³¹ “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah -- ³² “not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. ³³ “But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ “No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

note particular physical promises; e.g., Jeremiah 30:18; 31:23-26, 38-40

Israel's conversion promised, Jeremiah 30:9; 31:9, 18-19, 33-34

Jeremiah under “house arrest,” Jeremiah 32:1-2 (588 BC)

Jeremiah buys a field in Anathoth from his uncle Hanamel for 17 shekels of silver; this investment serves as a down payment that God's people will have a future back in the land, Jeremiah 32:9

the power of God, Jeremiah 32:17-19, 27

captivity, then return and the kingdom, Jeremiah 32:36-44

“everlasting covenant,” v. 40

³⁸ ‘They shall be My people, and I will be their God; ³⁹ ‘then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them. ⁴⁰ ‘And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me. ⁴¹ ‘Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will assuredly plant them in this land, with all My heart and with all My soul.’ ⁴² “For thus says the LORD: ‘Just as I have brought all this great calamity (“evil”) on this people, so I will bring on them all the good that I have promised them.

Kingdom covenant confirmed in **Messianic Branch**, Jeremiah 33:14-26

¹⁵ ‘In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David a Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. ¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved, And Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.’ ¹⁷ “For thus says the LORD: ‘David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel;

preceded by salvation, Jeremiah 33:8

covenant is faithful as day and night, creation, and now covenant, witnesses, Jeremiah 33:20, 25

²⁰ “Thus says the LORD: ‘If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season, ²¹ ‘then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers. ²² ‘As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.’”

D. Disintegration of the Kingdom, Ch. 34-39

1. Zedekiah’s false proclamation of liberty, Ch. 34:8ff.

Note covenant form of the proclamation involving sacrifice, Jeremiah 34:15,16, 18-19; cf. Genesis 15

¹⁸ ‘And I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before Me, when they cut the calf in two and passed between the parts of it -- ¹⁹ ‘the princes of Judah, the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf --

2. The Rechabites’ good example, Ch. 35 (cf. 2 Chron 2:55)

(ch. 35 and 36 are in the time of Jehoiakim) This family of Nazirites perhaps descended from Caleb or the Kenites.

Jeremiah 35:16; Surely the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them, but this people has not obeyed Me.”“

3. Jehoiakim burns Jeremiah’s scroll, Ch. 36

The curse given to Jehoiakim (v. 30) is the same as that for Jehoiachin in Jeremiah 22:30

4. Jeremiah's experiences during the siege and capture of Jerusalem, Ch. 37-39

False to put their hope in Egypt, Ch. 37

Quite a statement, v. 10

Jeremiah beaten, imprisoned

(dungeon → court of the guard)

Jeremiah rescued from the pit by Ebed-Melech, Ch. 38

cf. Jeremiah 39:15-18

Capture of Jerusalem, Ch. 39

E. Jeremiah after the captivity, Ch. 40-45

1. Jeremiah in Judah, Ch. 40-41

2. Decision to go to Egypt, Ch. 42-43

Jeremiah 43:10, Nebuchadnezzar's throne to be in Egypt; cf. Jeremiah 44:30

Pharaoh Hophra (589-570 BC)

similar predictions against him in Ezekiel 29:1-16; 30:20-26; Ch. 31-32 (587-585 BC),
and in Ezekiel 29:17- 30:19 (570 BC)

Pharaoh Hophra was killed in a revolt in 570 BC; Nebuchadnezzar then invaded
Egypt in 568-567 BC.

A fragmentary historical text: "In the 37th year, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon,
marched against Egypt to deliver a battle" (ANET, p. 308d)

3. Prophecies against the stubborn Jews living in Egypt, Ch. 44

4. Compensation to Baruch, Ch. 45

(during the time of Jehoiakim, 605 BC)

Jeremiah 45:5 – the basis of Spurgeon's call

F. Prophecies against the nations, Ch. 46-51

(similar to Amos 1-2 and Isaiah 13-23)

1. Egypt, Jeremiah 46

vv. 2-12, battle of Carchemish in 605 BC

vv. 13-26, Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Egypt in 568 BC

2. Philistia, Jeremiah 47

3. Moab, Jeremiah 48

4. Ammon, Jeremiah 49:1-6

5. Edom, Jeremiah 49:7-22

6. Syria, Jeremiah 49:23-27

7. Kedar and Hazor, Jeremiah 49:28-33

Kedar was the second son of Ishmael (Genesis 25:13); it was in the distant east in Jeremiah 2:10, a tribe in northern Arabia (see article in *ZPEB* by A. A. MacRae); it was destroyed by Ashurbanipal and by Nebuchadnezzar.

8. Elam, Jeremiah 49:34-39

son of Shem, Genesis 10:22

capital of the Persian empire; cf. Acts 2:9

9. Babylon, Jeremiah 50-51

appropriate conclusion, end with Babylon

a. Jeremiah 51:11, Medes = the tool against Babylon

b. Jeremiah 51:36, "dry up the waters of Babylon"

c. Jeremiah 51:41; A code word for Babylon, שֶׁשַׁק *sheshak* is an "Athbash" in Hebrew,⁴ comparable to "A-z-B-y" in English (i.e., a cryptogram אֶתְבַּשׁ) for בָּבֶל *Babel*.

⁴ Athbash (or Athbash) is a simple substitution cipher originally created for the Hebrew alphabet, where the first letter is swapped with the last, the second with the next-to-last, and so on.

- d. Jeremiah 51:59-64; this judgment book against Babylon is thrown into the Euphrates in the 4th year of Zedekiah

G. Historical appendix, Ch. 52

From Zedekiah to the elevation of Jehoiachin in 561 BC

Jeremiah 52:28-30; three “captivities” = 4,600 people

see Keil II, pp. 327-31 for discussion of problems

cf. 2 Kings 25:18-21

The Book of EZEKIEL

Prophet to the exiles in Babylon, early sixth century. Name means “God will strengthen.”

I. Date

- A. Ezekiel dates his prophecies very frequently, as much or more than any other OT book.

There are 14 “time-posts” in Ezekiel, all in chronological order except Ezekiel 29:17, which has a logical connection to its context of Oracles against the Nations:

Ezekiel 1:1	30th year (of what?)
Ezekiel 1:2	5th year of Jehoiachin’s captivity
Ezekiel 8:1	6th
Ezekiel 20:1	7th
Ezekiel 24:1	9th
Ezekiel 26:1	11th
Ezekiel 29:1	10th
Ezekiel 29:17	27th
Ezekiel 30:20	11th
Ezekiel 31:1	11th
Ezekiel 32:1	12th
Ezekiel 32:17	12th
Ezekiel 33:21	12th year of our captivity
Ezekiel 40:1	25th

- B. Jehoiachin’s captivity started in 597 BC; the book’s chronological frame of reference:

5th year = 593 BC

27th year = 571 BC

Note that many of these prophecies were given during his 11th and 12th years of captivity. That would be 587-586 BC, just during and after the fall and destruction of Jerusalem (cf. 33:21).

- C. Ezekiel 1:1 poses a question: the “30th year” of what?

1. It could be the 30th year of the Neo-Babylonian empire (about 596 BC, assuming its beginnings under Nabopolassar in 626 BC), the year after Jehoiachin was taken captive, two years before Ezekiel’s call related in chapter 1.
2. Another possibility is that it is Ezekiel’s age at the time of his call (cf. Numbers 4:3, and the lives of John the Baptist and of Jesus, Luke 3:23).

The old critical view of C. C. Torrey, *Pseudo-Ezekiel and the Original Prophecy* (1930), is now generally discarded. Torrey and others denied that Nebuchadnezzar ever did destroy Jerusalem and Judah. That critical view is now discredited by archaeology (cf. the Lachish Ostraka, the Babylonian Chronicle of Nebuchadnezzar, and Babylonian arrowheads and burn levels unearthed around old Jerusalem in 2019). Actually, even many older critics acknowledged Ezekiel's genuineness and unity (e.g., A. B. Davidson, S. R. Driver). There is now a general critical consensus that Ezekiel is genuine.

- D. Ezekiel was contemporary with Jeremiah's later years, and with Daniel's earlier years. He mentions the holiness of Noah, Daniel, and Job (Ezekiel 14:14, 20).

II. **The Prophet Ezekiel**

1. Family background

Ezekiel 1:3; priest, son of Buzi (only place mentioned)

Probably of Zadok's line, since he was taken captive from Jerusalem in 597 BC, and since he favors Zadok (Ezekiel 40:46; 43:19; 44:15; 48:11)

2. Personal life

Taken to Babylon with Jehoiachin and the aristocracy in 597 BC (cf. 2 Kings 24:14-16); he dates his prophecies from that time.

Lived in a Jewish colony called Tel-Aviv ("hill of the spring"), by the River Chebar (נְהַרְנָה, *nahar*, probably a canal; Ezekiel 1:1, 3; 3:15)

Had a house there, where he "held services" with people coming to hear his word from Yahweh (Ezekiel 8:1; 14:1; 20:1; 33:30-33). These were the elders of the commonwealth who represented the people by their waiting on the word of God from Ezekiel.

Was married, but his wife died the day the siege began against Jerusalem in 587 BC (Ezekiel 24:15-18; cf. vv. 1-2)

3. Ezekiel was a "Watchman" to warn of impending judgment and to proclaim hope of restoration.

His prophecies were in two phases:

(1) 5th - 12th years of his captivity

(2) 25th and 27th years of his captivity

(note the 13-year silence after Jerusalem was destroyed)

4. Ezekiel performed many symbolic acts and was in a prophetic trance several times (e.g., Ezekiel 3:15).

Ralph Alexander (*EBC*, 742,745) says this literary revelation fits the VII-VI cent. milieu of the “Mesopotamian Dream-vision, ...a symbolic visionary prophetic literature, composed during oppressive conditions, consisting of visions whose events are recorded exactly as they were seen by the author and explained through a divine interpreter, and whose theological content is primarily eschatological.” –p. 745

Cf. Daniel and Zechariah’s visions

5. Twice he was carried in a vision back from exile to Jerusalem:
 - a. in 592 BC, to see the corruption of the temple (ch. 8-11)
 - b. in 573 BC, to describe a new temple (ch. 40-48)

(Concerning this unusual behavior, see the notes on the prophetic call and state in the introduction)

III. **Summary of Ezekiel**

A. **Summary Outline**

—Ezekiel is logically developed and quite chronological

1. Prophecies against the Jews, Ch. 1-24

(dated 593-587 BC, until the siege)

Out of the expected seven-part outline, Dorsey (*Literary Structure of OT*) finds four sub-sections in this first half of Ezekiel. These four are set off by a date (except section 3) and the gathering of elders to hear the Word of the Lord. (See Dorsey’s Outline of Ezekiel, p. 257)

2. Prophecies against the seven neighboring nations, Ch. 25-32

—for those who sneered at Israel’s demise and resisted God, there was ultimate judgment; cf. Genesis 12:3

(dated 587-586, time of the final siege and captivity)

(except Ezekiel 29:17-21, sixteen years later, 571 BC)

3. Prophecies of restoration, Ch. 33-48

(dated 586 BC and 573 BC)

a) Impending judgment and restoration (Ezekiel 33-39)

b) Vision of New Temple and New Land (Ezekiel 40-48)

B. **Summary of Themes** (see Alexander in *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, pp. 745-746 for a development of these five themes)

1. Nature of God
2. Purpose and nature of judgment
3. Individual responsibility
4. Ethical, moral, religious history of Israel
5. Nature of Israel's promised restoration

Dumbrell (*Faith of Israel*, 127) notes that the three great visions of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1-3, 8-11, 40-48, all of which are united by the phrase, "the hand of the Lord" was upon him) are all dominated by temple concerns that portray the divine kingship of Yahweh over Israel.

See Ezekiel 20:33 for an explicit statement:

Ezekiel 20:33 "As I live," says the Lord GOD, "surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you.

C. **Literary Device summary**

Few OT books use as many literary forms as does Ezekiel: prose, poetry, dream visions, apocalyptic, drama, allegory, parables, proverbs, dirges, etc.

IV. **Outline of Ezekiel**

A. **Prophecies against the Jews, Ch. 1-24**

1. **Ezekiel's call and commission, Ch. 1-3**

- a. Christophany, Ezekiel 1:26 (cf. Revelation 1)
 - God depicted as enthroned above, much as at Isaiah's call in Isaiah 6
 - God is in the midst, yet over all creation, as depicted by the mobility of the wheels
 - God revealed at Jerusalem:
 - Significantly, the revelation of God's glory to the remnant in Babylon anticipates the abandonment of His glory from Jerusalem.
 - The book of Ezekiel ends with a restored temple in restored Jerusalem—restored only because God's glory has returned to it.
 - Lesson: trust and obey God, rather than rest in the outward locations/forms (John 4:24).
- b. vision of God recurs, Ezekiel 3:23; 8:4; 43:2-3 (cf. Revelation 1:15)

Cherubim relate to the sanctuary as temple guardians
- c. to be struck dumb, Ezekiel 3:26 (cf. Ezekiel 24:27; 33:22)

2. **Object lessons of Jerusalem destroyed, Ch. 4-5**

- a. Dating from Ezekiel 1:2 = 593 BC
 - v. 5 593 + 390 years = 983 BC (days of David)
 - v. 6 593 + 40 years = 633 BC (days of Josiah)
- b. ch. 4, lie on side; 9 oz. daily ration of cakes defiled over buffalo chips
- c. ch. 5, cut hair off: 2/3 of Jerusalem to be destroyed by fire and sword

3. **Judgment against Judah prophesied, Ch. 6-7**

4. God forsakes his temple, Ch. 8-11

- a. Ezekiel 8:1; 6th year = 592 BC
- b. Ezekiel 8:3; transported in spirit back to Jerusalem
- c. Ch. 8, abominations in the temple (vs. 10)
- d. progressive departure of shekinah glory of God—Ezekiel 8:4; 9:3; 10:4, 18-19; 11:23
- e. mark on the forehead—Ezekiel 9:4,6 –provides protection from six destroying angels
 - cf. Revelation 7:2-3; 9:4 = 4 destroying angels
- f. Ezekiel 10:20; “cherubim” identified
 - Akkadian cognate (kiribu) means “adore, praise”
- g. Ezekiel 11:17-20; restoration and regeneration for the remnant
 - Ezekiel 11:19-20 = New Covenant

¹⁹ “Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, ²⁰ “that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God.

5. More prophecies against the Jews, Ch. 12-24

- a. Ch. 12, two symbolic acts
 - 1) #1 = vv. 1-16, escaping out through the wall
 - v. 13, note Zedekiah prophecy; cf. Jeremiah 39:7 where the king is blinded

¹³ “I will also spread My net over him, and he shall be caught in My snare. I will bring him to Babylon, to the land of the Chaldeans; yet he shall not see it, though he shall die there.

- 2) #2 = vv. 17-28, eating with trembling

b. Ch. 13, against false prophets/prophetesses

- male (v. 2)
- female (v. 17)

Ezekiel 13:10; “whited sepulcher” illustration of Jesus

¹⁰ “Because, indeed, because they have seduced My people, saying, ‘Peace!’ when there is no peace...

c. Ch. 14, idolatry leads to ruin

vv. 14, 20, heroes past and present

d. Ch. 15-17, allegories

1) ch. 15, vine-tree: not much good except for the fire

2) ch. 16, wayward wife

restoration in vv. 60-63

3) ch. 17, two eagles

explanation in vv. 11-24

○ Nebuchadnezzar

○ Pharaoh Hophrah, the Jews’ ally

e. Ch. 18, appeal to repent, v. 32

God is not pleased with the death of the wicked, vv. 23, 31-32

³¹ “Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel?

³² “For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,” says the Lord GOD.

“Therefore, turn and live!”

f. Ch. 19, lion, and vine allegories

two lion cubs, Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin, captured and carried off

v. 14, lamentation (elegiac 3:2 beat) = “past glory and present distress”

g. Ch. 20, Mosaic covenant to be enforced

v. 12, Sabbath = a covenant sign of separation to God in the midst of a profane world

¹² “Moreover, I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them.”

purging in the wilderness (Babylon), v. 25

restored, vv. 41-44

h. Ch. 21, Babylon to judge Judah and Ammon

v. 21, divination methods (cf. *ANEP* #394)

“song of the sword” (Freeman), vv. 19ff.

i. Ch. 22, the dross to be burned away, v. 18

Len Pine’s key verse: ³⁰ “So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.

j. Ch. 23, allegory of Oholah and Oholibah, v. 4ff.

1) אֹהֶלָה ‘*oholah*, “her tent” = Israel of the North

2) אֹהֶל־בָּהָא ‘*oholibah*, “my tent (is) in her” = Judah. The tent = His tabernacle (temple)

k. Ch. 24, the boiling cauldron object lesson

1) v. 2, siege begins (588 BC, 9th year of captivity)

2) vv. 15–27, Ezekiel’s wife dies; “the desire of his eyes,” v. 16

3) 27, Ezekiel’s temporary dumbness

4) Three years minus five days; ends in Ezekiel 33:21-22

B. **Prophecies against the nations, Ch. 25-32** as fulfillment of God's curse on those who curse Abraham, Genesis 12:3

1. Ch. 25: Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia

Edom's judgments also the subject of Ch. 35

2. Ch. 26 - 28:19, prophecies against Tyre which was supplying Nebuchadnezzar

Ezekiel 26:1, eleventh year = 586 BC, after Jerusalem was destroyed

a. Ch. 26, prophecy against **Tyre**

1) vv. 4-5 Tyre scraped bare, becomes a place to dry fish nets

⁴ 'And they shall destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. ⁵ 'It shall be a place for spreading nets in the midst of the sea,...

2) vv. 7-11 = "he," (Nebuchadnezzar)

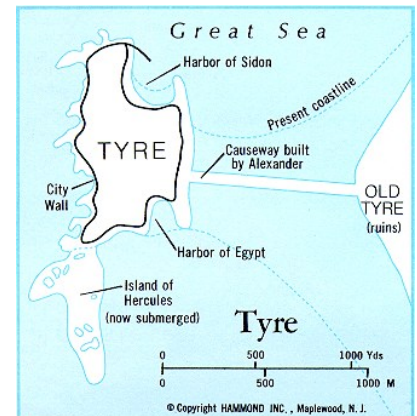
3) vv. 12, 14 = "they" (Greeks of Alexander)

b. Ch. 27, lament over Tyre

c. Ezekiel 28:1-10, prophecy against the king of Tyre

d. Ezekiel 28:11-19, lament over the king of Tyre

Note: The lamentation contrasts the glory of the former state (which is hyperbolic) with the ruin of the latter state (cf. the book of Lamentations, which does the same for the city of Jerusalem).



Ezekiel 28:12-16, NRSV

[Son of man], raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord GOD: You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, carnelian, chrysolite, and moonstone, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald; and worked in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created, they were prepared. ¹⁴ With an anointed cherub as guardian I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked among the stones of fire.

¹⁵ You were blameless in your ways from the day that you were created, until iniquity was found in you.

¹⁶ In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and the guardian cherub drove you out from among the stones of fire. ¹⁷ Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you.

The larger context, along with the general biblical pattern, does not justify our referring this lamentation to Satan.

- The language is inflated, hyperbolic poetry under the image of the imminent fall of an allegedly perfect man (not a perfect, heavenly spirit)
- The setting is an image of the garden of Eden. Two other times in his prophecy (Ezekiel 36:35; 31:8ff.), Ezekiel uses this image both times by way of comparison to contemporary issues (not as descriptive history of the garden)
- The language is deliberately ironic and shows God's condescension to the vanity of the king. Note the "you say" statements (Ezekiel 27:3; 28:2, 9)
- Textual variants in the Hebrew and proper translation solve the apparent puzzle of Ezekiel's flashback to times of prehistory.
 - Ezekiel 28:14: "With the anointed cherub that covers I placed you..." (Take *ta* as a preposition, "with," instead of as a nominative pronoun, "you.") =>The king of Tyre was like Adam in perfection
 - Ezekiel 28:16: preferred reading in context is, "The covering cherub destroyed you" [Adam]. This is supported by the LXX, which translates, "The covering cherub 'led you out'"
 - Should be vocalized as "He [covering cherub] will destroy you." Not "I destroyed you"

3. Ezekiel 28:20-24, Sidon

4. Ezekiel 28:25-26, (kingdom blessings for Israel when other nations judged)

5. Ezekiel 29-32, prophecies against Egypt

- a. Ezekiel 29:1, tenth year = 587 BC, year of Jerusalem's destruction
- b. Ezekiel 29:2, Pharaoh Hophra (Jeremiah 44:30)
- c. Ezekiel 29:10-13, "forty-year captivity" of the Egyptians
- d. Ezekiel 29:17, twenty-seventh year = 571 BC (latest time recorded)

- e. Ezekiel 29:18-20, Egypt will be Nebuchadnezzar's wages for conquering Tyre
Nebuchadnezzar invaded and re-subjugated Egypt in 568 BC
- f. Ezekiel 30:20; 31:1, eleventh year (586 BC, first and third months)
- g. Ezekiel 31:8-18, as Assyria, Egypt shall be destroyed
even though now Egypt should be more exalted "than all the trees of Eden"
- h. Ezekiel 32:1, 17, twelfth year = 585 BC (twelfth month, first day and fifteenth day)
- i. Ezekiel 32, Pharaoh's companions in Sheol

C. Prophecies of Restoration, Ch. 33-39

1. Ezekiel 33:1-8-9; Ezekiel a watchman (cf. Acts 20:26-27)
2. Ezekiel 33:10-20, appeal for individual repentance now that Jerusalem has fallen; in his earlier prophecies he had appealed to the representative leaders and nation as a whole to repent (see Dumbrell, *Faith of Israel*)
3. Ezekiel 33:21, twelfth year = 586 BC (tenth month)
4. Ezekiel 33:21-22, Ezekiel's dumbness removed (Ezekiel 3:22-27; 24:25-27)
5. Ezekiel 33:23-33, false hopes of remaining Jews in Palestine and in Babylonia
6. Ezekiel 34, false shepherds (civic rulers) to be replaced by the true shepherd; vv. 23-28,31
cf. Jeremiah 23
shepherd, symbol of king, national leader
vv. 12-31, long passage of future kingdom; basis of John 10
7. Ezekiel 35, prophecy against Edom
inserted, indicative of supremacy of Israel in the kingdom
cf. Ch. 25

8. Ezekiel 36, kingdom promises

a. vv. 8-15, kingdom blessings on the mountains

b. PURPOSE vv. 16-23, kingdom blessings for the glory of God only

v. 23 “And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD,” says the Lord GOD, “when I am hallowed in you before their eyes.

c. vv. 24-38, kingdom blessings on the people

regeneration; cf. Ezekiel 11:19-20; Jeremiah 31:33; sprinkling is associated with regeneration as may be intended in John 3:5, “... be born of water and of the Spirit ...”

(see C. John Collins in *Presbuterion*, Fall 2012 = 38:2:81-84).

²⁵ “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. ²⁶ “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

The Spirit of God will then be given universally rather than solely for God’s leaders and servants.

d. vv. 29-35, restoration and removal of the curse; return to Eden, v. 35

²⁸ “Then you shall dwell in the *land* that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. ... ³⁵ “So they will say, ‘This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden;...

9. Ezekiel 37, kingdom figures

a. vv. 1-14, valley of dry bones

Is this a reference 1) to the political reconstitution of the nation, or
2) to the physical resurrection of its members.

The latter interpretation is preferred due to the preceding context of spiritual regeneration and the following context of the messianic kingdom.

Note personal resurrection in vv. 12-14 following contextually the promise of personal regeneration in Ch. 36

b. vv. 15-28, lesson of the two sticks

1) David the king, vv. 24-25

²⁴ “David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. ²⁵ “Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children’s children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever.”

2) The temple, vv. 26-28

²⁶ “Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. ²⁷ “My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ²⁸ “The nations also will know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.”

Revelation 21:22; “The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple”

10. Ezekiel 38-39, the war with Gog and Magog

a. Probably at the end of the millennium (Rev 20:8) instead of Armageddon

1) Ezekiel 33-37 are preparation for blessing in the land

2) Ezekiel 38:11,12,14 describe “unwalled cities”

3) Fire from heaven; Ezekiel 38:22; cf. Revelation 20:9

Gog = the ruler

Magog, the land of Gog (today’s Armenia)

normally identified as the land between Cappadocia and Media; Josephus *Antiquities* 1:6:1 identifies it with the Scythians (cf. Col 3:11)

b. Ezekiel 38:8-12, to attack Israel after peaceful settlement

agrees with the time after the initial establishment of the kingdom

c. Ezekiel 39:4, 17, feast for the birds

d. Ezekiel 39:26, 29, Israel saved; the Spirit of God on them

cf. Revelation 19:17-18, 21, for the birds

cf. Revelation 20:7-10, for Gog and Magog

D. The New Theocratic Order, Ch. 40-48

This temple and priestly order is visualized as under the conditional Mosaic economy. In the new heavens and earth there is no physical temple (Rev 21:22).

Ezekiel 40:1, twenty-fifth year = 573 BC (late in Ezekiel's career)

"The opening (Ezekiel 40:1ff), central (Ezekiel 45:1ff), and closing (Ezekiel 47:13ff) parts feature Ezekiel's measuring the restored land; and these parts are in an order from smaller to larger: temple, sacred land around the temple, entire land of Israel." (Dorsey, p. 256)

1. Dimensions and furniture of the theoretical Temple, Ch. 40 - 43:17

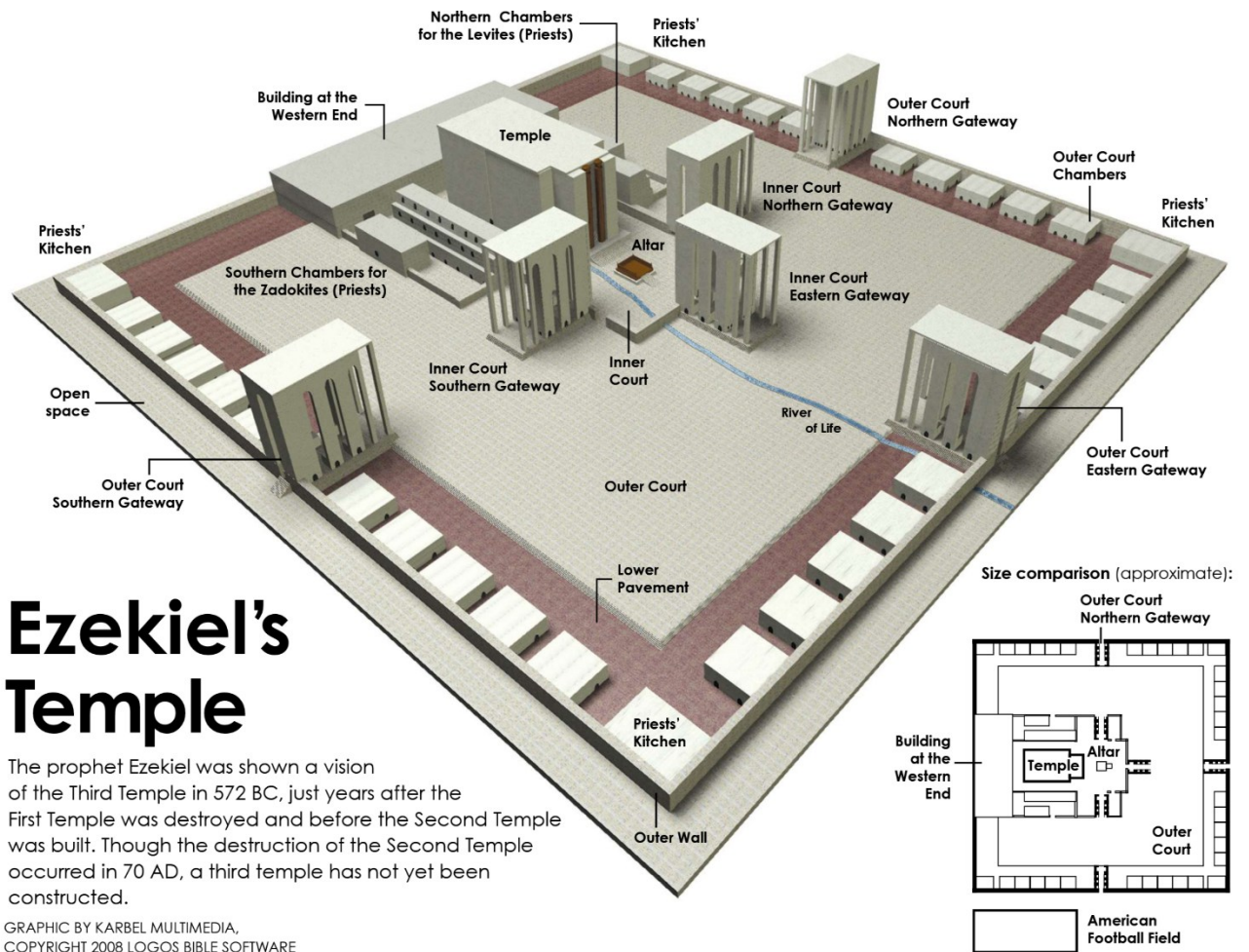
- a. The temple discussion comes at the end of Ezekiel, even as the tabernacle narrative comes at the end of Exodus after the nation's redemption from bondage.

The size, shape, and arrangement of Ezekiel's temple are unlike any Jewish temple built so far and are different from the instructions in the rest of the OT. As a symbol of the presence of God, it goes back past Solomon's temple to a heavenly pattern more like the tabernacle in the wilderness (Dumbrell, 139).

- 1) The pattern for this temple, as well as for the original tabernacle, comes from heaven.
 - 2) The vision of this temple finishes a message of deliverance, even as the picture of the tabernacle finishes the deliverance message of Exodus.
- b. This temple design has guard rooms (Ezekiel 40:5, 7). Contrast the future state of a city without walls (Ezekiel 38:11).
 - c. Ezekiel 43:2-5, the Shekinah of God returns to the temple
 - cf. its departure in Ch. 8-11
 - d. Ezekiel 43:7, 9, 11; conditional nature of the theoretical temple promise: note "IF" clauses

¹¹ "And if they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple

It seems best to understand this temple and the ritual described as given in the Mosaic economy, with the promise of its fulfillment contingent on the nation's obedience in the time of Ezekiel. Since the returning captives did not keep the law of the Lord as required (cf. Malachi), this temple was not given to them.



After the coming of Christ and his complete sacrifice, this promissory temple and its sacrificial system have been rendered obsolete.

Revelation 21:22 notes that in the New Heavens and New Earth there will be no need of a temple.

2. Temple priesthood and ritual, Ezekiel 43:18 - Ch. 46

a. *the entire Mosaic economy seems implied*

1) all the OT sacrifices:

- sin offerings, Ezekiel 43:19
- trespass offerings, Ezekiel 46:20
- burnt offerings, Ezekiel 43:18
- fellowship offerings, Ezekiel 43:27
- grain offerings, Ezekiel 44:29
- drink offerings, Ezekiel 45:17
- daily sacrifices, Ezekiel 46:13-15

These sacrifices are all for reconciliation (Ezekiel 45:17); but contrast Hebrews 10:18.

Hebrews 10:16 “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,”¹⁷ then He adds, “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”

^{*18} Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

2) The OT holy days:

- Sabbaths, Ezekiel 44:24
- New moons, Ezekiel 45:17
- Passover, Ezekiel 45:21
- Feasts, Ezekiel 44:24; 45:17
- Jubilee, Ezekiel 46:17

3) Continuation of circumcision, Ezekiel 44:9

4) OT cleanliness laws for priests:

- hair, Ezekiel 44:20
- wine, Ezekiel 44:21
- marriage, Ezekiel 44:22
- dead bodies, Ezekiel 44:25
- unclean food, Ezekiel 44:31; not true under the New Covenant economy, Acts 10, 15

5) priests to live from the sacrifices, Ezekiel 44:28-30

6) “the prince,” a Jew but not the Messiah, who lives as a redeemed but sinful man:

- needs sin offerings, etc., Ezekiel 45:17, 22-25
- is subject to laws, Ezekiel 46:18
- has sons, Ezekiel 46:16-18

b. Three main theories about Ezekiel’s temple and ritual

1. Literal millennial temple and ritual

See Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the OT Prophets*, 308-324.

This is the standard dispensational understanding. The future millennium is viewed primarily as a Jewish dispensation, with sacrifices serving more as a memorial. This view offers a more literal understanding of these chapters.

The disadvantages are requiring a strong Jewish-Christian distinction, requiring the restoration of a system the Bible itself says is no longer relevant (Hebrews 10:1; they were a “shadow of things to come” that have now come), and ignoring the conditional nature of the promise.

2. Figurative language describing spiritual truth

See Edmund P. Clowney, “The Final Temple,” *Studying the NT Today*, 97-132

Some see partial fulfillment in the temples of Zerubbabel and Herod, but still interpret much of this section in a “spiritualizing” manner. This view has the advantage of recognizing that the sacrificial system ended with the NT dispensation and that returning to the OT ceremonial law is undesirable. It has the disadvantage of relying on a method of interpretation that is subjective and often arbitrary.

3. Literal language describing conditional theocratic promises

see G. N. H. Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom*, prop. 172, vol. 3, pp. 83-91

This has the advantages of recognizing the literal nature of the prophecy, including the nature of the prince described and the total Mosaic system, of recognizing the conditional nature of the prophecy (43:6-11), of recognizing the passing away of the Mosaic economy in both the present and future ages (cf. Revelation 21:22), and of recognizing the unity of the OT and NT believers in the church.

Peters calls this approach “Hypocatastasis.”⁵ Promises of a potentially future time are portrayed in terms that are understandable to present experience. Compare the language of Hebrews 13:15 and 1 Peter 2:5, 9.

Hebrews 13:15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. 16 But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Its primary disadvantage seems to be the limited emphasis on the conditional element in Ezekiel and the lack of conditional statements in other prophetic portions that predict the Mosaic system as operable in the kingdom age (e.g., Isaiah 2:2; Zechariah 14:16-19; Jeremiah 33:16-18).

(4) Perhaps describes the first half of the seven-year tribulation before Antichrist breaks covenant with the Jews?

⁵ Hypocatastasis is a figure of speech that implies a comparison or resemblance by naming only the substitute noun while leaving the actual subject hidden underneath.

3. Arrangement of the Holy Land, Ch. 47-48

Ezekiel 47:1-12, the water flowing from the temple

cf. Revelation 22:1-2, flowing from the throne of God

Ezekiel 47:13 - 48:29, tribal divisions of the land

see *The Macmillan Bible Atlas*, map #166

The outside borders of the land correspond to Numbers 34:1-5

Ezekiel here divides the tribes into twelve, with Ephraim and Manasseh as separate tribes. To keep the number at twelve, Levi is left out of the number, with a special territory allotted, along with that of the Zadokites (48:8-22; 45:1-8).

Ezekiel 48:30-35, twelve tribes on the gates of the wall

Here the tribes are apportioned differently. Ephraim and Manasseh are counted as one tribe, Joseph; and Levi is included to make twelve.

cf. names on gates in Revelation 21:12-13

Note:

The similarities between the descriptions in Ezekiel 47-48 and Revelation 21-22 seem to point to a similar fulfillment. Especially noteworthy are the similarities between the wall and the river in the new Jerusalem.

What is not found in the kingdom picture in Revelation are the animal sacrifices and Mosaic ceremonial elements.

*The future kingdom will contain all the promised OT blessings, but will not include the sacrificial and ceremonial elements which are now fulfilled in Christ and have passed away.

The Book of LAMENTATIONS

- ◆ A dirge of National lamentation over the unrecoverable past, much like Job is the dramatic expression of personal suffering
- ◆ This book is the vindication, the “amen” on the message of the monarchical prophets who had delivered God’s covenant threats.

I. Background

The name of this book is derived from the LXX title of *Threnoi* (Vulgate = *Treni*), although the Talmud calls the book *Qinoth*, which also means lamentations. The dirge-like “qinah” phrasing is taken from this Hebrew term for lament.

The Hebrew name of the book is אֵכָה *‘ekah*, an ejaculatory “How!” which introduces the first, second, and fourth laments.

This book is one of the five *Megillot* (particular canonical “scrolls” read during Jewish holidays/anniversaries) and has been read annually on the 9th of Abib to commemorate the destruction of the two temples.

II. Author and Date of Lamentations

A. By an anonymous prophet in Judah, first half of the sixth century

Jeremiah is the traditional author

1. Attributed to Jeremiah in the LXX and Vulgate in the opening of the book:

“And it came to pass after Israel had been taken into captivity and Jerusalem had been laid waste that Jeremiah sat weeping and lamented this lamentation over Jerusalem and said...”

2. Young and Harrison believe this was a false deduction based on 2 Chronicles 35:25:

²⁵ Jeremiah also lamented for Josiah. And to this day all the singing men and the singing women speak of Josiah in their lamentations. They made it a custom in Israel; and indeed they are written in the Laments.

3. Also in favor of Jeremiah is his weeping for Jerusalem (Jer 9:1, etc.; cf. Lam 1:16)

B. Time of composition:

1. Written after Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 BC (e.g., Lam 1:1, 10, 18; 5:18)
 - If written by Jeremiah, then probably fairly soon after the destruction of Jerusalem
 - Or if written by someone else: the author apparently was an eyewitness to the destruction, Lamentations 4:20: “our...”
2. Written certainly before the restoration under Cyrus in 536 BC

III. Structure of Lamentations

A. Five poems, one chapter each

Not only are the individual poems shaped as 3:2 dirges, but the whole of the book appears to be arranged as a 3 + 2 dirge (Dorsey, pl 247).

Chapter	Lines
1	66
2	66
3	66 X 3
4	44
5	22

The first three chapters follow a pattern of 66 lines, building to a climax in the center of the book; the fourth chapter is immediately shorter, and the final chapter is the shortest, with 22 lines, and has lost the order of the previous acrostic poems.

The form of this macro-structure gives the impression of disintegration, and a “dying away” intended by the 3:2 elegiac dirge.

B. Poems 1-4 = acrostic form based on the order of the Hebrew alphabet, perhaps signifying the dramatic totality of suffering

(שׁ + שׂ *sin* and *shin* are used interchangeably)

C. Poems 2-4 reverse the א + ע ` ayin and pe position

This order of the alphabet has been found in the oldest extant Hebrew writing of substantial length —the Hebrew alphabet, written left to right—the Izbet Sartah shard, dated 1200-1000 BC (*BAR* 4:3 [Sept-Oct, 1978], 23-30, esp. p. 30).

- D. Poem 5, regular rhythm of 3 + 3, non-acrostic, but still 22 verses for 22 letters of the alphabet

IV. **Content of Lamentations**

The “Lament” (title in LXX = “*Threni*”) is a funeral dirge (cf. Zephaniah). It combines and contrasts the former glory with the present wretchedness. The 3:2 meter is typical of the dirge, and in Hebrew literature, this meter has been labeled the “Qinah” meter.

cf. Lamentations 2:15; 4:5

Lamentations 2:15; All who pass by clap their hands at you; They hiss and shake their heads at the daughter of Jerusalem: “Is this the city that is called ‘The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth’?”

Yet, in spite of the great destruction and ruin of the city, God will remain faithful to his covenants and will redeem his people; there are rays of faith and hope for the future. These messages of hope amid severe suffering are rooted in the people’s God of the covenant and help them come to grips with His theodicy.

This passage of hope is found at the center and climax of the book (Lam 3:21-26):

²² Through the LORD’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.

²³ They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

²⁴ “The LORD is my portion,” says my soul, “Therefore I hope in Him!”

²⁵ The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him.

²⁶ It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD.

The Book of OBADIAH

Prophet against Edom, early sixth century

I. Date of Obadiah

Date not stated specifically

A. Parallels with other prophets

Examples of parallels, especially in Jeremiah and Amos:

Obadiah 1-6	Jeremiah 49:7-22
Obadiah 4	Amos 9:2
Obadiah 14	Amos 1:6
Obadiah 19	Amos 9:12

The parallel with Jeremiah 49 is especially noticeable. The difficulty comes in determining which prophet wrote first. It is possible that Jeremiah quoted Obadiah (Keil, Archer, Freeman), that Obadiah quoted Jeremiah (Bewer in *ICC*; Armerding in *EBC*), or that both prophets employed a common source (Allen, Bullock).

The third possibility seems the most likely since Jeremiah and Obadiah are verbatim parallels, yet in a slightly different order. It is assumed that Obadiah followed the third source more closely than the looser Jeremiah text.

B. Historical information

Obadiah describes a terrible invasion and conquest of Jerusalem (esp. vv. 10-14), a great calamity in which the Edomites assisted the enemy.

There were at least five serious invasions of Judah recorded in the OT:

1. Under Rehoboam, by Shishak of Egypt (926 BC, 2 Chron 12)
2. Under Jehoram, by Philistines and Arabians (ca. 845 BC, 2 Chron 21:16-17; cf. v. 8, Edom revolts)

2 Chronicles 21:8; In his days the Edomites revolted against Judah's authority, and made a king over themselves. ⁹ So Jehoram went out with his officers, and all his chariots with him. And he rose by night and attacked the Edomites who had surrounded him and the captains of the chariots. ¹⁰ Thus Edom has been in revolt against Judah's authority to this day.

—note the early canonical placement of Obadiah among the minor prophets

3. Under Amaziah, by Jehoash of Israel (790 BC, 2 Chronicles 25:20-24)
4. Under Hezekiah, by Sennacherib of Assyria (701 BC, 2 Chronicles 32:1-21)
5. Under Zedekiah, by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (587 BC, 2 Chronicles 36:17-19)

Comparing all these invasions with the description in Obadiah 10-14 seems to indicate that the great destruction described by Obadiah best fits with the final destruction of Jerusalem and its people in 586 BC:

- a. Cataclysmic events of 586 portend “the day of the Lord”
- b. Day of the Lord will come on Gentile foes; theodicy
- c. See Psa 137:7; Lamentations 4:20-22; Ezekiel 35.5

Psalm 137:7; Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom the day of Jerusalem, who said, “Raze it, raze it, to its very foundation!”

Ezekiel 35:5 Because you have had an ancient hatred, and have shed the blood of the children of Israel by the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, when their iniquity came to an end...

Note the fugitives of v. 14 (cf. 2 Kings 25:4-5) are not likely from earlier invasions. If that is the case, the book would have been written shortly after the Babylonian destruction.

C. Still, we can only speculate on the date. Early daters note:

1. no mention of temple destruction
2. no mention of Babylon while other bad neighbors are cited (and would Edom attack Jerusalem if Edom’s homeland was threatened by Babylon?), and
3. Obadiah may be cited by Jeremiah, not vice versa.

II. **Brief History of Edom: “Red”**

From Esau, Jacob’s twin brother

- mixed with other Edomites (Gen 36:20)
- promise to Esau (Gen 27:39-40)
- Esau moves to Edom, Seir (Gen 32:3)
- chiefs include Teman (Gen 36:15, 31)
- home of Eliphaz (Job 2:11)
- reputation for wisdom (Jer 49:7)
- three fortified cities: Selah (Petra), Teman, Bozrah
- perhaps included the city of Uz (Lam 4:21; Job 1:1)
- refused passage to Moses and Israelites (Num 20:14-21; cf. Dt 2:1-8; Jud 11:17-18; see *Moody Bible Atlas* #52)
- were fought by Saul (1 Sam 14:47)
- were brought under subjection by David (2 Sam 8:14)
- unrest increased under Solomon (1 Kings 11:14-22)
- successful revolt under Jehoram, 845 BC (2 Kings 8:20-22)
(Some suggest Obadiah was written at this time)
- rejoiced in Jerusalem’s downfall in 587 BC (Psa 137:7; cf. Lam 4:20-22)
(suggested occasion for Obadiah’s prophecy), v. 8
- were pushed out of Petra by Nabataean Arabs by 312 BC
- Greeks called them Idumaeans
- lived south of Judah
- were pushed further south from the Negev by Judas Maccabee, 164 BC
- forced into Judaism by John Hyrcanus, ca. 120 BC
- produced Herod the Great
- destroyed by the Romans in AD 70
- disappeared from history

III. Simple Outline of Obadiah

A. Edom's coming doom, vv. 1-9

“Wisdom irony,” where terms like “pride” and “height” are used in conjunction before the demise of the worldly wise

complete destruction comes after the time of the Idumean Herod: 70 AD,
vv. 10, 18

¹⁸ The house of Jacob shall be a fire, And the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau shall be stubble; They shall kindle them and devour them, And no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau,” For the LORD has spoken.

B. Edom's great sin: treachery, vv. 10-14

cf. Gen 12:3; 22:17; 24:60

C. Judah's eschatological triumph, vv. 15-21

v. 16 “Retribution justice” — “only repentance breaks the vicious cycle of evil” –
Craigie

v. 20 “Sepharad” — perhaps ancient Jewish idea of Spain; modern scholarship suggests Sardis in W. Turkey

NT Usage: Revelation 11:15 cf. Obadiah 21:

²¹ Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion to judge the mountains of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the LORD's.

Revelation 11:15; “... The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”

The Book of DANIEL

Prophet in Babylon, sixth century

I. Introduction to Daniel

A. Date of Daniel

Daniel 1:1 3rd year of Jehoiakim

605 BC, Nebuchadnezzar takes captives from Jerusalem to Babylon

There seems to be a contradiction with Jeremiah 46:2, which specifies the “fourth year.” A good solution is that Jeremiah used the non-accession year system, while Daniel used the accession year system (reckoned from the king’s first full year of rule).

Or possibly Jeremiah was following the Religious calendar, while Daniel was on the civil calendar, leaving a gap in the date of reckoning.

Daniel 1:21 1st year of Cyrus, 539 BC

Daniel 2:1 2nd year of Nebuchadnezzar, 604-03 BC

Daniel 5:1, 30 = last year of Belshazzar, 539

Medes capture Babylon, 539 BC

Daniel 7:1 1st year of Belshazzar, 553 BC

Daniel 8:1 3rd year of Belshazzar, 551 BC

Daniel 9:1 1st year of Darius the Mede, 539-38 BC (see below)

Daniel 10:1* 3rd year of Cyrus, ca. 536 BC

Daniel 11:1 1st year of Darius the Mede, 539-38 BC

Conclusion: Daniel’s prophecies, 605-536 BC

* = the exact duration of Judah’s 70-year captivity

B. The Prophet Daniel

1. taken as a hostage in 605 BC to ensure tribute payment; remained in Babylon for 70 years
2. royal birth, intelligent, along with his three friends (1:3-4, 6)
3. probably a eunuch; no family mentioned (cf. Isa 39:7; Matt 19:12)
4. high morality (Daniel 1:8)
5. could interpret dreams (Daniel 1:17)

cf. Joseph in Egypt

like Joseph, loyal to Yahweh, in spite of danger and opposition (cf. Daniel 3:16-18)

able to survive all court intrigue; but note that there are no dated prophecies between Nebuchadnezzar's second year and Belshazzar (ca. 600 BC - 553 BC)

6. deeply spiritual and full of love for his people (esp. Ch. 9)

widely known among the exiles and elsewhere for his holiness and wisdom (Daniel 1:4; 2:48; 5:11; 6:4-5; Ezekiel 14:14, 20; 28:3)

Ezekiel 14:14; "Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness," says the Lord GOD.

C. Critical Attack against Daniel

Most critical scholars maintain that the book of Daniel was produced in Judea in the second century BC, during the persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes. They say it was assigned to an obscure prophet, Daniel, who had been mentioned in the book of Ezekiel centuries earlier.

Robert Dick Wilson of Princeton and Westminster seminary said that Daniel is the hardest OT book to defend, but if we accept it, it is the greatest proof of the divine inspiration of OT prophecies.

1. EXTERNAL OBJECTIONS

- a. located in the writings, not in the prophets
- b. not mentioned or quoted in post-exilic books prior to the second century
- c. not mentioned in Babylonian monuments

2. INTERNAL OBJECTIONS

a. Philological objections

- 1) Aramaic portion points to a later date: Daniel 2:4b - Ch. 7

—BUT: other OT Aramaic portions: Ezra 4:8 - 6:18; 7:12-26; Jeremiah 10:11; part of Genesis 31:47

—A Maccabean pseudepigrapher could not have easily effected the “Imperial Aramaic” of Daniel that ended with the coming of Alexander.

* —Daniel’s Aramaic is not Maccabean but is the same as the V Century Elephantine papyri

- 2) Greek musical instruments in chpt. 3 (now largely abandoned due to acknowledgment of Greek presence in VII Mesopotamia)

- *Kitharis* = trigon
- *Psalterion* = harp
- *Sumphonia* = bagpipe

b. Historical objections (only a few key objections among others)

- 1) Nebuchadnezzar’s madness, Daniel 4

No other historical confirmation

- 2) Darius the Mede non-historical; a confusion with the Medes and with the Persian kings Darius Hystapes, the Great (521-486 BC), and Xerxes (Ahasuerus, son of Darius, 486-464 BC)

Daniel 5:31; 6:1, 28; 9:1 = a big slip!; 11:1

c. Prophetical objections

Critics maintain that Daniel thoroughly traces the history of the Jews up to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes in 168 BC. He includes detailed information about the Hellenistic empires immediately prior to that time. His knowledge of earlier history is said to be weaker, with many errors. Since detailed predictions of the future are held to be impossible, it is assumed that Daniel was written after the events (*vaticinium ex eventu*) and the prophetic portions are made to conform to that view.

- 1) four kingdoms from Nebuchadnezzar to Antiochus, Daniel 2, 7
- 2) Persia, Greece, little horn, Ch. 8, 10:20
- 3) detailed account of Ptolemy and Seleucid histories, Ch. 11

cf. attacks of Porphyry (d. AD 303), an Alexandrian Neoplatonist

attacked Christianity, first to dispute Daniel

quoted and refuted by Jerome

d. Doctrinal objections = “Anachronisms”

It is claimed that the doctrines assumed or taught in Daniel developed late in Israel's history. Hence, they would not be present in the book if it had been written when it claims to be set.

- 1) apocalyptic form
- 2) physical resurrection (Daniel 12:2-3)
(cf. Isaiah 25,26; Job 19:25; Ezekiel 37)
- 3) Messianic expectation (Daniel 7:13ff., 27)
- 4) angels (Daniel 10:12-13)

e. Critical conclusion

The book of Daniel is not genuine but was written in the time of the Maccabees, between the desecration of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes (168 BC) and the cleansing of the temple by Judas Maccabee (165 BC).

The book's unity is disputed. Some critics say it is a unit (Driver, Pfeiffer); others say that it is a divided work made into a composite (Montgomery, C. C. Torrey).

D. Arguments favoring the genuineness of Daniel

1. Some useful sources:

- Josh McDowell. *Daniel in the Critics' Den*
- Robert Dick Wilson, *Studies in the Book of Daniel* (2 vols.; 1917, 1918; reprinted (Baker, 1972)
- E. J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel* (1949)
- J. Whitcomb, *Darius the Mede* (ETS, 1959)
- D. J. Wiseman, T. C. Mitchell and R. Joyce, W. J. Martin, K. A. Kitchen, *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel* (Tyndale, 1965)
- OT introductions: Young, Archer, Harrison

2. Answers to the Critics

- a. Many of the objections against the genuineness of Daniel themselves have difficulties to overcome:
 - 1) surprising accuracy of Daniel, even better than the historians of the 2nd century BC (e.g., the existence of Belshazzar is unknown in ancient Greek histories)
 - 2) Aramaic and Persian words are similar to those in older texts, not to those in the 2nd century BC
 - 3) Universal acceptance by the Jews as canonical, in spite of the fact that it claims to be by Daniel; hard to happen if they knew it was produced 300 years later
 - 4) supposed "blunders" (e.g., "Darius ben Ahasuerus" of 9:1) are too obvious for an otherwise admittedly "brilliant" scholar
 - 5) theological problem: critics must assume the book to be pseudepigraphal, yet it plainly is meant to be taken as written by Daniel

- b. Daniel is named as the author in the second part of the book

Daniel 7:28; 8:1, 15, 27; 9:2; 10:2; 12:5, cf. v. 4

- c. Daniel, named by contemporary Ezekiel as a holy and wise man (Ezekiel 14:14, 20; 28:3), fits his character in Daniel

d. Daniel is found in the LXX after Ezekiel

Date of LXX translation—see Edersheim *LTJM* 1:26

e. Many portions of Daniel in the DSS, with the same language divisions

f. Daniel named in 1 Maccabees 2:59-60 (written ca. 103-63 BC)

⁵⁹“Ananias and Azarias and Misael by believing, were delivered out of the flame.

⁶⁰Daniel in his innocence was delivered out of the mouth of the lions.”

g. Daniel named by Christ as the author

Matthew 24:15 (not named in the Greek text of Mark 13:14)

Matthew 24:15 “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place”

h. uniform tradition of Jews and Christians (until Porphyry in the 3rd century AD)

E. Historical Background of Daniel

605 BC Daniel taken captive to Babylon, along with his three friends

Lives through reigns of Neo-Babylonian kings:

Nebuchadnezzar	605-562 BC
Evil-Merodach	562-560 BC
Neriglissar	560-556 BC
Labashi-Marduk	556 BC
Nabonidus	556-539 BC
(+Belshazzar)	548-539 BC

539 BC Babylon captured by Cyrus the Persian, General Gobryas (Ugbaru)

538 BC Cyrus’s proclamation allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 1; 2 Chronicles 36:22-23)

536 BC Jews begin rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 3:8-10)

F. Summary Outlines of Daniel

There are two possible schemes:

1. Two-part outline: a bifid welded together by the book's change of language in Daniel 2:4

1) History, Ch. 1-6

2) Prophecy, Ch. 7-12

While the first part contains prophecy and the second history, this outline follows the book's emphasis. These are the natural contrasts favoring this approach:

<u>ch. 1-6</u>	<u>ch. 7-12</u>
historical (except Ch. 2)	predictive, visions
Daniel in 3rd person	Daniel in 1st person (except Daniel 10:1)
Holy Spirit emphasized	angels emphasized

2. Three-part outline (follows the form of the book's languages)

a. Historical introduction (in Hebrew), Ch. 1

b. Message to the nations (in Aramaic), Ch. 2-7

c. Message to Israel (in Hebrew), Ch. 8-12

This outline method seems to fit Daniel's content better, especially when language differences are taken into account. We will follow the three-point outline in this class.

II. Contents of Daniel

A. Historical introduction, Ch. 1

This section establishes Daniel and his three companions as worthy examples of living for God in a heathen environment, and establishes Daniel as a prophet as well (v. 17).

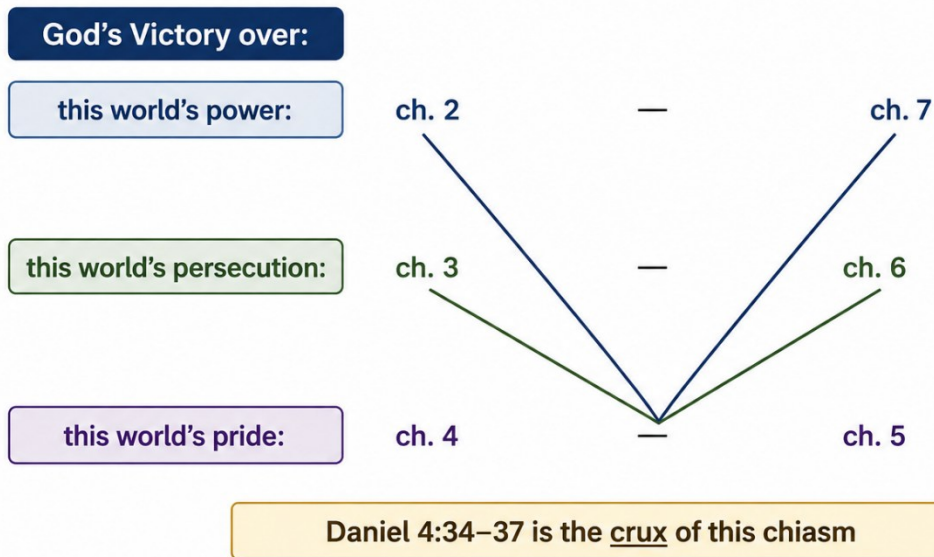
According to v. 21, Daniel remained in Babylon throughout the Neo-Babylonian period. He continued to live there at least two more years after that (Daniel 10:1).

B. Message to the nations, Ch. 2-7

Note on the chiastic structure of the Aramaic portion of Daniel

Theme: God's victory over this world

Keil notes that this section has an extended chiastic structure:



³⁴ And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom *is* from generation to generation. ³⁵ All the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, "What have You done?" ... ³⁷ Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works *are* truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.

Power: ch. 2, Nebuchadnezzar's statue dream

ch. 7, Daniel's vision of four beasts

Persecution: ch. 3, The three men in the furnace

ch. 6, Daniel in the lions' den

Pride: ch. 4, Nebuchadnezzar's madness

ch. 5, Belshazzar's feast

Chapters 2 and 7 are in chronological order (with Ch. 7 occurring between Ch. 4 and Ch. 5); and chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 are in chronological order.

1. **Victory over the power of this world, Ch. 2, 7**

a. Ch. 2, Nebuchadnezzar's statue dream

The fulfillment to be in the future for Nebuchadnezzar, vv. 28, 29, 45

kingdoms predicted:	gold	Babylon
		(replaced in 539 BC)
	silver	Media-Persia
		(replaced at the Battle of Issus, 333 BC)
	brass	Greece and Hellenistic empires
		(replaced in Palestine in 63 BC)
	iron	Rome
		(divided in AD 300)
	iron & clay	
		(situation remains, various countries)

significance of metals:

value: decreasing royal authority of the anti-Christian empires

Note the sudden displacement of metals in the one, unified, anti-Christian world empire;
except the fourth kingdom divides, then disintegrates; agrees with history

Note that Rome is depicted as already divided when the stone attacks the statue, thereby establishing the messianic kingdom. As soon as the messianic kingdom is started, the image is gone. The messianic kingdom does not allow the heathen kingdoms to continue in existence. These observations argue against the messianic kingdom being established at Jesus's first coming or at the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Also, the “toes” of Daniel 2:42-44 are parallel to the ten horns in Daniel 7:7 and in Revelation 13:1; 17:3, 12-13. These latter verses are viewed as future from John's time, thus after the first advent.

b. Ch. 7, Daniel's vision of the four beasts

1) v. 1, “Belshazzar, king of Babylon”

Actually, crown prince; “king” is a general term

Belshazzar is not named, but is referred to several times as the “crown prince” in the Nabonidus Chronicle and in the “Verse Account of Nabonidus” (ANET, pp. 306, 313; standard work is R. P. Dougherty, *Nabonidus and Belshazzar* [1929]; good discussion in Jack Finegan, *Light from the Ancient Past*, pp. 227-28.

also actually named in several small astrological tablets (ANET, p. 310, footnote)

2) v. 3, sea = humanity, Gentile nations

cf. Revelation 17:15

Beasts:

- Lion “humanized”: the lion was Babylon's national symbol
- Bear (ribs = three conquests over Lydia, Babylon, Egypt)
- Leopard (four divisions: Cassander in Macedonia, Lysimachus in Thrace and Asia Minor, Seleucus in Syria, and Ptolemy in Egypt)
- Nondescript beast:
 - Iron teeth; cf. Daniel 2:40
 - 10 horns; cf. Daniel 2:42
 - 3-1/2 year rule of Antichrist, v. 25; cf. Daniel 12:7



²⁵ He shall speak *pompous* words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.

****Compare this period (“time and times and half a time”) to comparable periods in parallel apocalyptic literature:**

- ✓ Daniel 9:27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week, He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering
- ✓ Revelation 11:2 = 42 months
- ✓ Revelation 12:6 = one thousand, two hundred and sixty days
- ✓ Revelation 12:14 = a time and times and half a time
- ✓ Revelation 13:5 = beast given authority to continue for forty-two months.

The messianic kingdom follows judgment on the Antichrist; Daniel 7:11, 26

cf. Daniel 2:44; Revelation 19:20; 20:4, 6

2. Victory over the persecution of this world, Ch. 3, 6

a. Ch. 3, the three young men and the fiery furnace

- 1) v. 2, officers; 8 kinds (see Keil)
- 2) v. 5, etc., musical instruments

See T. C. Mitchell and R. Joyce in *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*

- 3) v. 6, furnace, unlike Antiochus Epiphanes
- 4) v. 17, the principle
- 5) v. 25, “son of God,” or “son of the gods”? cf. v. 28

b. Ch. 6, Daniel in the lions’ den

- 1) v. 1, Darius the Mede (cf. Daniel 5:31)

Data in Daniel:

Daniel 5:31; took the kingdom when 62 years old; “the Mede”

Daniel 6:1; appointed 120 satraps

Daniel 6:6, 9, etc.; called “king”

Daniel 6:28; Darius, and Cyrus the Persian; OR Darius, even Cyrus the Persian

Daniel 9:1; son of Ahasuerus

seed of the Medes

king over all the realm of the Chaldeans

Daniel 11:1, Darius the Mede

2) v. 2, “yet three kings in Persia”; the fourth is Xerxes

Kings of Persia:

- Cyrus the Great 559-530 BC (captures Babylon in 539 BC)
- Cambyses 530-522 BC
- Darius I, Hystaspes 522-486 BC
- Xerxes (Ahasuerus) 486-465 BC
- Artaxerxes I 465-424 BC

Critical conclusion regarding Darius the Mede; see Stanley B. Frost, “Daniel,”
IDB 1:765a

Two main suggestions for his identity:

Gubaru, governor of Babylon under Cyrus (translated as Gobryas in Greek texts, along with the Akkadian Ugbaru; cf. Nabonidus Chronicle in *ANET*, p. 306); supported by John C. Whitcomb, Jr., *Darius the Mede*

Cyrus himself; another name; cf. Daniel 6:28; similar situation in 1 Chronicles 5:26; supported by D. J. Wiseman (“Darius,” *New Bible Dictionary*; see Whitcomb, pp. 46-49)

3) v. 1, organization; 120 satrapies

cf. administration of Darius Hystapes

4) v. 2-3 presidents; Daniel over them

Darius’s character (see Wilson 1:255-57; very possible for him to appoint Daniel; cf. v. 14)

- 5) v. 5, good testimony
- 6) v. 7, lion den
- 7) v. 8, “law of Medes and Persians”
alters not; vv. 12, 15, 17; ctr. Esther 1:19; 8:8
- 8) v. 10, testimony
prayer—cf. Daniel 9:2-3
- 9) v. 16, faith (?); v. 20
- 10) v. 22, angel; cf. 3:25
- 11) v. 23, faith
- 12) v. 24, death to accusers; cf. 3:29
lex talionis
- 13) v. 28, different or same?
cf. 1 Chronicles 5:26; Whitcomb, p. 48

3. **God’s victory over the pride of this world, Ch. 4-5**

a. Ch. 4, Nebuchadnezzar’s madness

Nebuchadnezzar the author? vv. 1, 4, 34, 37; cf. vv. 28, 29-33; “authorized biography”

- 1) vv. 4-18, the dream
- 2) vv. 19-27, the interpretation
- 3) vv. 28-33, the fulfillment
- 4) v. 30, the pride
cf. Agrippa I in Acts 12:23
- 5) v. 33, wet; in LXX = *baptw* (*bapto*)
- 6) the madness: zoanthropy (animal), or lycanthropy (wolf)

7) the duration:

seven “times,” “seasons.” The same word as Daniel 7:12, 25, which is seven years in parallel passages

8) the date:

Nebuchadnezzar ruled 605-562 BC (43 years); last major effort in 568 BC, his 37th year, Egyptian invasion; perhaps after that, 568-62 BC

9) vv. 34-37, the conclusion

strong assertion of the sovereignty of God

b. Ch. 5, Belshazzar’s feast

Identity of Belshazzar; see above under Ch. 7; good summary of evidence in Young, pp. 115–119; for texts, also see A. L. Oppenheim, *IDB* 1:379-80

1) vv. 1-4, the feast

- a) v.1, drank wine; cf. Xerxes in Esther 1:3 and reckless Judah in Isaiah 22:12-14

threat of the army of Cyrus, but confident inside the walls

- b) v. 2, vessels Nebuchadnezzar took; Daniel 1:2

“Nebuchadnezzar his father,” cf. vv. 2, 11, 13, 18, 22

= “ancestor”; Wilson 1:117-22 has eight uses of “father”

It is possible that Belshazzar’s mother, Nitocris, was a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, strengthening Nabonidus’ claim (Harrison, *IOT*, p. 1120).

In any case, Daniel is not in error, knowing Jeremiah’s writings (Daniel 9:2), where Nebuchadnezzar’s son is named as Evil-Merodach (Jer 52:28-31).

- c) vv. 2-4, wicked desecration; cf. v. 23

2) vv. 5-9, handwriting on the wall

v. 7, reward, 3rd place in kingdom, fits situation; vv. 16, 29

3) vv. 10-12, queen (probably queen mother)

- a) 11, spirit of the holy gods; v. 14; Daniel 4:8-9, 18
- b) 12, Daniel now old
- 4) vv. 13-16, Belshazzar's offer
- 5) vv. 17-28, Daniel's response
 - a) vv. 18-21, example of Nebuchadnezzar's humiliation
 - b) vv. 22-24, consequences for Belshazzar
 - c) vv. 25-28, interpretation of the writing

All intensive *Piel* participle forms, except the last, are nouns

מִנֵּעַ *mene'*, repeated to keep balance in the phrase, and to show double meaning for words = "to count, number, reckon"

תֵּקֵל *teqel*, verb *teqal* to weigh, verb root *qll* in *Niphal*, "to be light"

וּ *u-*, and

פָּרְסִין *parsin*, Persians; also verb *peras*, "to divide"

Medes and Persians, here and Daniel 6:8

Persians and Medes in Esther 1:3, 18, 19, etc.

- 6) v. 29, Daniel's reward
- 7) v. 30, Darius the Mede takes Babylon, slays Belshazzar

Capture of Babylon predicted:

Isaiah 14:1-23; 21:1-10; 44:28 - 45:4; 46:1-2; 47:1-5; Jeremiah 50-51

capture described in the Nabonidus Chronicle and on the Cyrus Cylinder (*ANET*, pp. 306b, 315-316)

drawings of Babylon and maps, C. F. Pfeiffer and H. F. Vos, *Historical Geography of Bible Lands*, pp. 26-29; photos of Ishtar Gate remains and model in *NBD*, plates 8-9

C. Message to Israel, Ch. 8-12

Now Daniel returns to the Hebrew language, since these prophecies are directed primarily to his own people. Rather than predicting the progress and downfall of the Gentile powers, this section emphasizes the fate of his own people, both in the immediate and in the more distant future.

1. Vision of the Ram and the Goat, Ch. 8

= prophecy about the intertestamental era

a. v. 1, third year = ca. 545 BC

b. v. 2, Shushan = Susa

palace of Xerxes there; excavated by Dieulafoy in the 19th century

c. vv. 3-4, Persians grow over the Medes

d. vv. 5-7, Alexander defeats the Persians in 333 BC

e. v. 8, death of Alexander, 323 BC

Four divisions of the empire; see under Ch. 7

f. vv. 9-12, little horn = Antiochus Epiphanes

g. vv. 13-14, rebellion that causes desolation

2300 days = ca. 6.4 years

time of Menelaus' appointment as high priest (171 BC), to the cleansing of the temple by Judas Maccabee in 165 BC (1 Macc. 1:21, 57; 4:52; 2 Macc. 4; see Keil)

h. v. 16, Gabriel (9:21; Luke 1:19, 26)

i. vv. 17, 19, "time of end, time of wrath"

Antiochus Epiphanes, a type of the future Antichrist

j. vv. 20-21, Media-Persia and Greece (Alexander the Great)

יָוָן *yawan*, Ionian name for Greece



- k. v. 22, the Diadochi⁶
- l. v. 23, transgressors = apostate Jews (Hellenizers)
- m. vv. 24–25, persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes

Death of Antiochus Epiphanes

- Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 12:9:1-2
- 2 Maccabees 9:1-29 (less reliable)
- Died in the Median campaign, 164 BC

cf. Pfeiffer, *Between the Testaments*, pp. 79-82, 91-92

- n. vv. 26-27, conclusion of vision, Daniel's reaction

2. Daniel's prayer and the prophecy of seventy sevens, Ch. 9

- a. v. 1, information about Darius the Mede; see under Ch. 6
- b. v. 2, Jeremiah 25:9-14 and 29:4-14 both predict 70 years of captivity, leading to Daniel's prayer to God

cf. 2 Chronicles 36—v. 6 605 BC

v. 10 597 BC

v. 17 587 BC

vv. 20-23 = 70 year captivity

covenant foundation for Daniel's prayer

Leviticus 26:14-45 (sabbaths, confession)

Deut 28:15-68, esp. vv. 36, 48-50, 52

Deut 30:1-6 (return)

⁶ The Diadochi were the rival generals, families, and friends of Alexander the Great who fought for control over his empire after his death in 323 BC.

c. vv. 3-19, Daniel's prayer

emphasis on God's sovereign justice, mercy; confession of the people's sin; plea for God to remember his promises

d. vv. 20-23, Gabriel comes

(Gabriel—Daniel 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26)

e. v. 23, "greatly beloved" = "a precious treasure" (*BDB*)

f. vv. 24-27, the prophecy of 70 sevens

The background is that 70 years of exile have just passed, due to 70 X 7 years of disobedience when the sabbath years were not observed. Now a new era of 490-year probation (?) is in view

g. v. 24, situation at the end of the 70 sevens

could refer to the death and resurrection of Christ, but seems more natural to refer to the beginning of the messianic kingdom already referenced in chpt 7

one "seven" probably = seven years; hard to build city in 490 days

(note 10:2, 13 = seven days; the word "days" is supplied here to distinguish from implied years of Daniel 9)

h. v. 25, "the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem"

1) possibilities that set the terminus a quo of the prophecy:

a) decree of God, at the destruction of Jerusalem, 587 BC (Jeremiah 25:9-12; 27:19-22; 29:10)

b) decree of Cyrus in his first year, 538 BC (Ezra 1:1-3; 2 Chronicles 36:22-23)

c) decree of Artaxerxes in his seventh year, 458 BC (Ezra 7:6-7, 13, 23)

d) decree of Artaxerxes in his twentieth year, 445 BC (Nehemiah 2:1-8)

2) If "the Anointed One, the ruler" is Cyrus:

—view of Driver, Montgomery, MacRae

Cyrus called "anointed one" in Isaiah 44:28; 45:1

Allows for a gap between the 7 sevens and the 62 sevens (fits better with Masoretic pointing, and lends symmetrical balance to the time break before the last period)

Recognizes that the Anointed One in v. 26 is the Messiah

Use beginning date #1:

587 BC

+49 years (7 sevens)

538 BC, the year of accession of Cyrus

(then a gap of time until 405 BC; city built by then)

405 BC

434 years (62 sevens)

30 AD, the year of Christ's death

(some have another gap, which is continuing)

? AD (= end of modern history)

+ 7 years (1 seven = time of tribulation)

?, the time of the second coming of Christ

3) If "the Anointed One, the ruler" is Jesus:

—view of Keil, Anderson, Young, Wood

Allows Jesus to be entitled; perhaps more appropriately than Cyrus

Begins with the date of the decree for rebuilding the city, date #4

Eliminates the arbitrary 404 BC date in combining the 7 and 62 sevens

Some (especially Sir Robert Anderson, *The Coming Prince*) use Jewish years of 360 days to alter the number of solar years involved. (cf. 7:25; Revelation 12:6, 14)

Others (such as Young) take the numbers in a non-precise manner.

445 BC

476 solar years (69 sevens) = 483 lunar years

32 AD, Jesus' triumphal entry and death

Month of Nisan (Nehemiah 2:1), same as Passover

(then some place a gap after the 69 weeks before final week)

Variations abound; for example:

Young (pp. 192-95, 206), all 70 sevens finished by 70 AD

Wood (pp. 253-54), 458 BC (#3) + 483 years = AD 26 (Jesus' baptism)

(Lurie) (*JETS* 33:3), see chart

i. v. 26, death of Messiah, destruction of city, wars and desolations

j. v. 27, final seven

"He" either Messiah or Antichrist, depending on whether speaking of past or future fulfillment

Abomination of desolation verses:

Daniel 9:27; 12:11; Matthew 24:15 = Mark 13:14 (not Luke 21:20); 2
Thessalonians 2:3-4; Revelation 13:14-15

3. Daniel's last vision, Ch. 10-12

This final vision recorded in Daniel took place in the third year of Cyrus, 536 BC. That is the same time the Jews in Jerusalem began building their new temple, but they faced opposition. In this section we see how spiritual forces act behind the scenes, bringing about or resisting God's purposes.

a. Ch. 10, visions of angels

1) v. 1, 536 BC (cf. Ezra 3:8 - 6:15), opposition to the temple

2) v. 13, power behind the idols

cf. 1 Corinthians 10:20

Michael (Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7)

21 days; cf. v. 2

- 3) vv. 20-21, princes of Persia and Greece

spiritual powers; evil angels

- 4) v. 21, “the Book of Truth”

God’s plan and record; cf. Ps 139:16; Malachi 3:16; Revelation 5:1ff

b. ch. 11, future wars

- 1) v. 1, angel speaking, not Daniel (continues from Daniel 10:18-21)

- 2) v. 2, four more Persian kings after Cyrus

(some include Cyrus and omit Pseudo-Smerdis)

Cyrus

Cambyses

Pseudo-Smerdis

Darius

Xerxes (480 BC, massive invasion of Greece)

- 3) v. 3, Alexander, the goat’s big horn in Ch. 8

- 4) v. 4, the Diadochi⁷

Cassander	Macedonia
-----------	-----------

Lysimachus	Thrace and Asia Minor
------------	-----------------------

Ptolemy	Egypt
---------	-------

Seleucus	Syria
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- 5) vv. 5-20, wars of the kings of the north and south

North = Syria and the Seleucids

South = Egypt and the Ptolemies

Amazing accuracy and detail

⁷ The Diadochi were the rival generals, families, and friends of Alexander the Great who fought for control over his empire after his death in 323 BC.

- 6) vv. 21-35, career of Antiochus Epiphanes

The little horn in Daniel 8

- 7) vv. 36-45, possibly the career of the Antichrist

cf. Wood's commentary, pp. 304-14

Details seem to fit better than with Antiochus, who already appears to be a type of the future Antichrist (the horn in Daniel 8 is a type of the horn in Dan 7)

c. ch. 12, last events and conclusion

- 1) v. 1, the tribulation —perhaps time of “Jacob’s trouble” (Jeremiah 30:7).

tribulation verses: Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21;
Revelation 12:13

- 2) v. 2 agrees with a two-phase resurrection

“many” . . . “some” . . . “others” . . . “those”

- 3) vv. 5-13, final parting

- a) 11, extra 30 days; perhaps for “mop-up operations”
- b) 12, extra 45 days; perhaps for setting up government
- c) 13, final promise to Daniel

EXCURSUS ON THE RESURRECTION OF DANIEL 12:2-3

1. “Many” are raised to life—not “all”
2. The “many” are identified in vs. 3 as “the righteous”
3. “These” righteous are raised out from among the entire group of those sleeping. This is expressed by the Partitive מִן *min* on the participle, “sleepers.” Literally, it is “from the sleeping ones.”
4. There is a strong contrastive disjunctive between “these, but those” in vs. 2
5. The MT indicates a pause after the resurrection of the many to life; those consigned to perdition are mentioned as an afterthought
6. Other resurrection passages imply a separation of the righteous from the wicked at the end of the age
 - a. Isa 26:14 says that wicked oppressors will not rise from the dead, whereas Isa 26:19 says the righteous will rise from the dust to rejoice.
 - b. Luke 20:35 = “resurrection from out of the dead ones”
 - c. Luke 14:14 = “you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just”
 - d. Revelation 20:4-6, 12-15 = two resurrections, one of the righteous (vv. 4-6), and one of the wicked (vv. 12-13)

The Book of Haggai

“festival”

Prophet to Judah, end of sixth century

I. Date of Haggai

520 BC, second year of Darius I Hystaspes (521-486 BC)

	<u>year</u>	<u>month</u>	<u>day</u>
Haggai 1:1	2	6	1
Haggai 1:15	2	6	24
Haggai 2:1	-	7	21
Haggai 2:10	2	9	24
Haggai 2:18	-	9	24
Haggai 2:20	-	-	24

Thus, all Haggai’s messages were delivered within a three+-month period in 520 BC

II. Historical Background

Persian kings:

Cyrus	550-530 BC
Cambyses	530-521 BC
Pseudo-Smerdis	521 BC
Darius	521-486 BC
Xerxes	486-464 BC
Artaxerxes	464-423 BC

539 BC, Cyrus captures Babylon

ca. 538 BC, Cyrus decrees exiles may return (Ezra 1:1-4)

Joshua is high priest; Zerubbabel (Sheshbazzar? cf. I Chron. 3:18) leads Jews back (Ezra 1:8; 2:2)

Some assume that Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar are identical since they both built the temple (Ezra 5:14) and were each governors (Ezra 5:16,2). Likely they were two different characters, since they each had dissimilar Babylonian names, but they were probably of the same family (1 Chron 3:18): Zerubbabel, son of Pedaiah, likely being Sheshbazzar’s nephew.

42,360 Jews + 7,337 servants return = ca. 50,000 people (Ezra 2:64-65)

ca. 537 BC, Jews arrive in Jerusalem

Build an altar (Ezra 3:2)

but do not yet start building the temple (Ezra 3:6)

536 BC, temple foundation is laid (Ezra 3:8, 10; cf. Haggai 2:18)

Opposition continues until the time of Darius and Haggai (Ezra 4:5), and further, even into the reign of Artaxerxes (Ezra 4:6-23)

Temple building is suspended for 16 years (Ezra 4:24; 5:16)

521 BC, Darius I Hystaspes becomes emperor (Ezra 6:1)

520 BC, prophets Haggai and Zechariah appear in Judah

Ezra 4:24 - 5:2; Haggai 1:1; Zechariah 1:1

Temple building is resumed (Ezra 5:2; Haggai 1:14-15)

516 BC, the temple is completed in the 6th year of Darius (Ezra 6:14-15)

III. **The Prophet Haggai**

A. Perspective: probably an older prophet, near 90 years old (cf. Haggai 2:3)

³ 'Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, is this not in your eyes as nothing?

B. Ministry: encouraged the people throughout the temple rebuilding (Ezra 6:14)

simple prose style

LXX attributes some Psalms to him and to Zechariah (Ps 137, 145-148; cf. Freeman, p. 328)

IV. **Outline of Haggai**

The book of Haggai is a collection of four messages given over three months:

A. Message 1: Exhortation to rebuild the temple, Haggai 1

vv. 4-6, false economy; God demands first fruits (6,9)

vv. 10-11, drought

vv. 12-15, obedience: Zerubbabel, Joshua, the people

B. Message 2: Glory of the new temple, Haggai 2:1-9

v. 3, comparison with Solomon's temple

v. 5, Mosaic covenant blessings to come

vv. 6-9, judgment, and future glory; Hebrews 12:26 casts this prediction into the future

C. Message 3: Infectious nature of their sin, Haggai 2:10-19

vv. 11-13, "bad apple" illustration

Beware of the "infiltration doctrine" of New Evangelicals; cf.
1 Corinthians 15:33

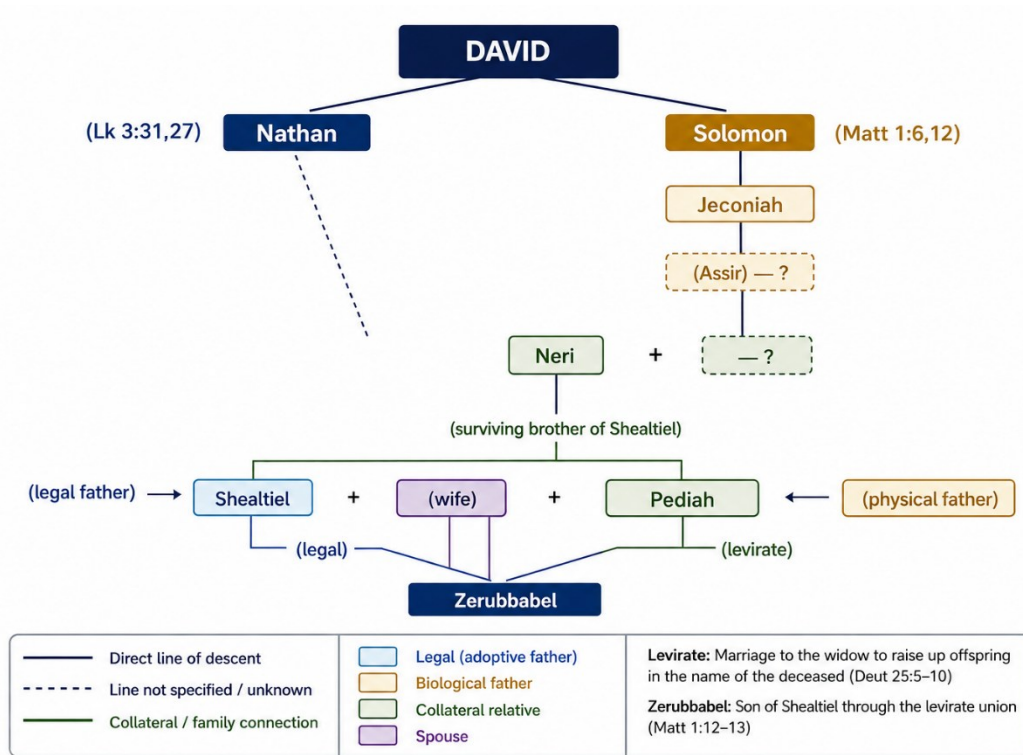
*Biblical doctrine of ecclesiastical separation is based on the ideal of God's holiness

v. 14, unclean hearts

v. 19, blessings upon repentance

D. Message 4: Blessing on Zerubbabel, Haggai 2:20-23

Zerubbabel—both genealogies of Jesus cross in him (Matthew 1:12-13; Luke 3:27); one is the line of David-Solomon, the other of David-Nathan; possible explanation in Keil, pp. 175-76:



Cross-check David's genealogy in 1 Chronicles 3.

Shenazzar, a brother of both Shealtiel and Pediah in 1 Chronicles 3:18, could be the same as the Governor Sheshbazzar in Ezra 5.

v. 21, final shaking (Hebrews 12:26-27)

v. 23, signet in kingdom (forfeited by grandfather Jehoiachin)

small seal, seal ring; cf. Esther 3:10, 12; 8:2

The Book of ZECHARIAH

“Yahweh remembers”

Prophet to Judah, late sixth century

I. Date of Zechariah

520-518 BC (second through fourth years of Darius)

	<u>year</u>	<u>month</u>	<u>day</u>
Zechariah 1:1	2	8	-
Zechariah 1:7	2	11	24
Zechariah	4	9	4
Zechariah 9-14	(undated)		

Zechariah’s prophecies began just about two months after Haggai’s, and Zechariah continued for at least two years.

II. Historical Background

(see under Haggai)

III. The Prophet Zechariah

Son of Iddo (Zechariah 1:1; Ezra 5:1; 6:14)

Priestly family, head of a course (Nehemiah 12:12-16)

Young man, as opposed to Haggai (Zechariah 2:4; cf. Daniel 1:4)

More geared to spiritual needs than Haggai

Apocalyptic emphasis is prominent

IV. Outline of Zechariah

A. Command for repentance, Zechariah 1:1-6

vs. 3 = Key Verse of the Book teaches repentance, literally “turn!” Possible translation: “return!” to the God of the covenant

³ “Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Return to Me,” says the LORD of hosts, “and I will return to you,” says the LORD of hosts.

B. Night of eight visions, Zechariah 1:7 – 6:8

1. Vision of horse and rider in the valley of myrtle trees, Zechariah 1:7-17

a. vv. 16-17, God will return to Jerusalem

b. Kingdom to be established after tribulation; cf. v. 8; Revelation 6:1-8

2. Vision of four horns and four craftsmen, Zechariah 1:18-21

Four nations to be judged who scattered Israel (cf. Daniel’s four empires)

3. Vision of man with measuring line, Ch. 2

cf. Zechariah 1:16

a. v. 4, Jerusalem without walls! cf. Ezekiel 38:11

Jerusalem to be glorified; cf. Ezekiel 40

b. v. 8, בִּבְתָּא babath, “apple of” the eye; cf. Deut 32:10 אֵשׁוֹן ‘ishon

c. vv. 5 + 10 = Shekinah

⁵ ‘For I,’ says the LORD, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’” ... ¹⁰ “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming, and I will dwell in your midst,” says the LORD.

d. v. 12, “holy land,” only place in the Bible

¹² “And the LORD will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem.

4. JUSTIFICATION Vision of Joshua’s garments, Ch. 3 = Double Imputation

a. v. 2, “Accuser” (הַשָּׂטָן “Satan”) = legal prosecutor; cf. Job 1; Ps 109:6

Ps 109:6; Set a wicked man over him, And let an accuser stand at his right hand.

- b. v. 3, filthy garments, Israel's sin (Isaiah 64:6)
- c. v. 4, righteousness of God is imputed (Rom 3:21; 10:3)
- d. v. 8, the Branch (6:12-13) **נִמְצָא** *tsemach*—Psalm 132:17; Isaiah 4:2; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12c
- e. v. 9, one-day conversion; cf. Zechariah 12:10

5. WITNESS Vision of lampstand and two olive trees, Ch. 4

- a. v. 6, God present with people
 - b. vv. 8–10, Zerubbabel to build temple
 - c. v. 14, two anointed ones
- cf. Revelation 11:4

Perhaps Zerubbabel and Joshua, or Haggai and Zechariah: the merging of the two spheres.

6. Vision of the flying scroll, Zechariah 5:1-4

- a. v. 2, 15 ft. by 30 ft., the size of the sacred sanctuary (“holy place”)
 - b. v. 3, represents the sentence of the law: both tables
- cf. Revelation 17 for vv. 1–4 (ecclesiastical harlot) and Revelation 18 for vv. 5–11 (commercial harlot)

7. Vision of two women and the basket, Zechariah 5:5-11

- a. v. 6, “measuring basket,” Hebrew “ephah” = 3/5 bushel
- b. v. 7, cover of lead, woman inside (wickedness)
- c. v. 11, evil carried back to Babylon (Shinar; Genesis 10:10; Daniel 1:2)

8. Vision of four chariots, Zechariah 6:1-8

- cf. Revelation 6:1-8
- vv. 2-6, chariots to patrol in all directions

God's judgments to come on the nations, v. 8

C. Symbolic crowning of Joshua, Zechariah 6:9-15

Note that a *double tiara* is used to represent both offices of the king-priest

- a. vv. 12-13, the Branch (Joshua) to be priest-king (type of Messiah)

Branch, **נֶחֱמָשׁ** *tsemach*—Psalm 132:17; Isaiah 4:2; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12c

cf. synonyms in Isaiah 11:1 (**נִצָּר**); Isaiah 53:2

- b. v. 15, conditional promise

D. Historical section, Ch. 7-8

1. Zechariah 7:1, fourth year of Darius, 518 BC
2. Zechariah 7:3, question of obligation to continue exilic fasting
3. Zechariah 7:5, the real question
4. Zechariah 8:16-17, what God desires (cf. Micah 6:8)
5. Zechariah 8:19, conclusion for the fast
6. Zechariah 8:20-23, millennial predominance and sincerity

E. Apocalyptic section, Ch. 9-14

1. First burden, judgments on the nations, Ch. 9-11

This section includes two important prophecies of the first coming of Christ:

- Zechariah 9:9, Palm Sunday
- Zechariah 11:12, thirty pieces of silver

The familiar quotation in the next section (13:6, wounds in your body, or between your hands) does not refer to Christ, but is a statement of a former false prophet.

“And *one* will say to him, ‘What are these wounds between your arms?’ Then he will answer, ‘*Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.*’”

a. Zechariah 9:1-8, judgment on enemies

Initial fulfillment in the time of Alexander; v. 8, Jerusalem spared

b. Zechariah 9:9-10, the coming Messiah

⁹ “ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

¹⁰ I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be ‘from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.’

Cf. Ps 72:8

on a colt, Matthew 21:5; John 12:15

c. Zechariah 9:11 - Ch. 10, Israel’s victory over her enemies

eschatological, Lord visible (Zechariah 9:14)

Zechariah 10:8ff., = a future re-gathering from a future (70 AD) dispersion

d. ch. 11, rejection of the true Shepherd, rule of the false shepherd

vv. 1–6, Roman destruction of AD 70

v. 7, two staffs; explained in vss. 10, 14

vv. 12–13, rejection of Messiah, the Good Shepherd

30 pieces of silver

price of a slave or ox, Exodus 21:32

Matthew 26:15; 27:9-10, literally fulfilled

Problem of reference in NT quotation. Matthew 27:9-10 attributes this quote to Jeremiah.

⁹ Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, “And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, ¹⁰ and gave them for the potter’s field, as the LORD directed me.”

Proposed solutions (see Freeman, pp. 340-42; David. Baron, pp. 409-12):

- 1) Matthew's error (Luther, Beza, Keil)
- 2) Major prophet Jeremiah stands for prophets as a whole
- 3) Textual error in the Greek text of Matthew
 - a) Zechariah abbreviation is ZRIOUS *zriou*; Jeremiah's is IRIUS *iriou*; copyists substitute a more familiar name by mistake over the first letter
 - b) The original text of Matthew had no name; scribes later inserted Jeremiah
- 4) While words taken from Zechariah, Matthew thinking of ideas from Jeremiah

Cf. Jeremiah 18:2 references a potter, and Jeremiah 32:6-8 references the buying of a field.

"Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words" (Jeremiah 18:2).

"And go out to the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, which is by the entry of the Potsherd Gate; and proclaim there the words that I will tell you" (Jeremiah 19:2).

vv. 15-17, Antichrist instead of Christ

cf. John 5:43

2. **Second burden: Apocalyptic Chastisement of Israel, Ch. 12-14**

This section is clearly apocalyptic. Note the emphasis on the phrase "in that day," Zechariah 12:4, 6, 8, 9, 11; 13:1, 2, 4; 14:(1), 6, 8, 9, 13, 20, 21. Below is a topical arrangement of the verses in this section:

- a. coming siege over Jerusalem (Zechariah 12:1-3; 13:7-9; 14:1-2)

Zechariah 13:7, Suffering Servant = God's Associate

- b. deliverance from the siege (Zechariah 12:4-9; 14:3, 12-15); only a remnant (one third) will be saved (Zechariah 13:7-9). *This presupposes that unbelieving Jews will be in the land before the Lord's return.

- c. Spirit poured out on Israel (Zechariah 12:10)

Zechariah relates this promise to the new covenant in Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 36

Zechariah 12:10 “ And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only *son*, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

d. coming appearance of the Messiah (Zechariah 12:10; 14:4)

Zechariah 14:3; Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. ⁴ And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives,

John 19:37; Revelation 1:7; seen by the whole surviving nation (but = only a remnant survives; see 13:8)

Revelation 1:7; Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him.

e. repentance and cleansing of Israel (Zechariah 12:10-14; 13:1-6)

Cf. flowing water of Numbers 19:17 & Ezekiel 36:25

f. the Lord’s rule over all the earth:

physical change (Zechariah 14:4-8)

- possible greenhouse effect indicated by overcast sky and diffused light, v. 6-7
- river springing out of Jerusalem, v. 8; cf. Joel 3:8

social change (Zechariah 14:9-11)

9b, universal monotheism

⁹ And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be—“The LORD is one,” and His name one.

Religious change (Zechariah 14:16-21) to universal holiness

The Book of JOEL

“Jah is God”

Prophet to Judah, end of the fifth century (?), or possibly mid-ninth century

I. Author and Date of Joel

A. Author

The **author** of the book is named as Joel, son of Pethuel (Joel 1:1); otherwise, he is unknown. Most scholars do not contest the authorship and unity of the book, although Duhm denied Joel's authorship of all the apocalyptic passages.

B. Date

The **book's date is unspecified**, and the range of possibilities is wide.

1. Earliest date: after Jehoshaphat, 873-848 BC (Joel 3:2), perhaps in the days of the boy king, Joash, since no king is mentioned, and the priests (Jehoiada?) are prominently mentioned.

A caveat regarding the early date is the reference to captivity in Joel 3:1 and to the Greeks' activity in Joel 3:6.

2. Latest suggested date: before the destruction of Sidon by the Persians, 345 BC (Joel 3:4)
3. Evidence for the **date of Joel**:
 - a. no king mentioned: could mean exilic/post-exilic period, period of a weak king (young Joash or Zedekiah), or could mean nothing at all. Patterson in *EBC* argues extensively for the era of King Uzziah, about 750 BC, after contracting leprosy.

Other possible times:

- Athaliah
- Zedekiah, the Babylonian puppet
- No king (i.e., after exile begins)

- b. Judah and Israel are used interchangeably (Joel 2:27; 3:1-2, 16, 19)

could be a generic use of Israel (occurs in eschatological contexts or passages that promise restoration of the two wings of Israel; cf. Ezekiel 37:15-23)

- c. enemies listed

Tyre, Sidon (Joel 3:4)

Philistia (Joel 3:4)

Greeks (Javan; Joel 3:6)

Sheba (Sabaeans; Joel 3:8)

Egypt (Joel 3:19)

Edom (Joel 3:19)

Compare enemies not mentioned:

Assyria

Babylon

Persia

Syria

Rome

- d. idolatry not mentioned as a sin of Judah = likely post-exilic

- e. previous captivity referred to (Joel 3:2)

could be Babylonian captivity

or could be eschatological (cf. v. 1)

could be past or future

Preliminary Conclusion: A date after the exile seems likely, as best fitting all the evidence. Yet an earlier date is possible.

f. Note Joel's placement in the canon for support of an early date

R. K. Harrison, who first suggested a date of shortly before 400 BC (*Introduction to the OT*, p. 879; 1969), changed his opinion to ca. 830 BC ("Joel, Book of," *ZPEB* 3:621; 1975).

II. Historical Background of Joel

A. Locust plagues

See pictures in *ZPEB* 3:619, 949.

Normally, locusts come from the south, sometimes from the north (Joel 2:20)

B. Also, "fire" is mentioned (Joel 1:19-20); perhaps drought

III. Outline of Joel

A. The locust plague, Ch. 1 - 2:27

1. Ch. 1, locusts

uncontested as to meaning

v. 4, types of locusts (*ZPEB* 3:948; #1, 6, 7, 8)

perhaps phases of migrating locusts (*ZPEB* 3:948, par. 2)

v. 8, בְּתוּלָה *bethulah* = young widow, not virgin

but Keil and NASB: "bridegroom," implies not yet married

בַּעַל נְעוּרֶיהָ *ba`al ne`ureh*; cf. Isaiah 54:6

but see Isaiah 54:4

BDB, p. 127a, "husband" in Joel 1:8; ASV, NIV

v. 15, day of Yahweh at hand

cf. Joel 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14

Amos 5:18; Obadiah 15

2. Ch. 2:1-27, disputed interpretation as to locusts or northern army

a. army arguments: from the north (v. 20)

nations rule (v. 17)

but cf. ASV marg., NASB, NIV, on לְמִשָּׁל בָּם *limshal bam*

b. *locust arguments: “like, as” (vv. 4-9); not vice versa

“army” (Joel 2:11, 25; nation in Joel 1:6)

“darkness” (Joel 2:2, 10)

vv. 4-11, description of locusts; cf. Revelation 9:1-11

vv. 15-27, call for repentance and relief

B. The last great battle, Joel 2:28 - Ch. 3

[in Hebrew Bible = chpt. 3-4]

1. Joel 2:28-32, signs preceding the second coming: “After Isaiah ...”

a. v. 30, cf. Luke 21:11, 25-26

b. v. 31, cf. Matthew 24:29

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.”

c. vv. 28-32, cf. Acts 2:16-21

To what extent related to Pentecost? Peter says, “This is that which was spoken through the prophet Joel...” *touto estin to eiremenon* (Acts 2:16)

1) fulfillment in Peter’s time

2) beginning of fulfillment in Peter’s time, concluding at the last day

3) same kind of signs that shall be in the last day

4) sign of imminent kingdom; coming of Messiah to follow
immediately after the signs; cf. Acts 2:33-36; 3:18-21; 4:2

2. Ch. 3, the challenge to war

- a. v. 1, return from captivity
- b. v. 2, Valley of Jehoshaphat: “Yahweh shall judge”; cf. vv. 12,14

Payne takes it as the Kidron Valley outside Jerusalem

- c. vv. 3,4,7,8 could be Alexander the Great, or else earlier Greek slave traders
- d. vv. 9-10, call to war
- e. v. 13, sickle

cf. Revelation 14:14-20

after 5th trumpet (Joel 9:1-12, locusts)

after 6th trumpet (Joel 9:13 = 200 million horsemen)

after the 7th trumpet (Joel 11:15, leading “quickly” to bowls of Ch. 16)

- f. v. 14, “Valley of Verdict”
- g. vv. 17–21, theocratic kingdom
- v. 18, ctr. to the locusts

¹⁷ “So you shall know that I am the LORD your God, Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. Then Jerusalem shall be holy, And no aliens shall ever pass through her again.”

¹⁸ And it will come to pass in that day That the mountains shall drip with new wine, The hills shall flow with milk, And all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water; A fountain shall flow from the house of the LORD And water the Valley of Acacias.

–spring from the house of the Lord

The Book of MALACHI

“my servant”

Prophet to Judah, second half of fifth century

I. The Prophet Malachi

Malachi 1:1; the only time his name appears

Hebrew = “my messenger”

LXX, *en cheiri angelou autou*, “by the hand of his messenger”

Targum: “by the hand of my messenger, whose name is called Ezra the scribe” (cf. Malachi 3:1 ?)

but probably a proper name; cf. all the other books

Still, a critic like Richard Hanson suggests that Malachi was written by Il Zechariah (*Bible Review*, Dec. 1991, pp. 25-27). He speculates this on the basis of Malachi’s book being a *massa*, “a burden” (Malachi 1:1); this burden follows immediately on the heels of Il Zechariah’s two burdens in Zechariah 9-14. Zechariah ends in the anticipation of the future glorious celebration of the pilgrim feast of Tabernacles, and then Malachi blasts the pilgrims for their negligent temple worship.

Of significance, and to the contrary, is Malachi’s allusion (Malachi 3:7) to Zechariah’s theme (Zechariah 1:3), “Return unto me, and I will return unto you.”

Perhaps a priest, since very concerned with priests, sacrifices, and tithes

Legal interaction with his audience: *question-and-answer style*;

e.g., “but you ask” in 1:2, 6, 7; 2:14, 17; 3:7, 8, 13

= Legal interrogation: affirmation —> interrogation —> refutation

II. Historical Background

Later kings of Persia:

Darius I	521-486 BC	
Xerxes I	486-464 BC	(Persian name = Khshaysarsha, OT = Ahasuerus)
Artaxerxes I	464-423 BC	
Xerxes II	423 BC	(murdered, end of legitimate line)
Darius II	423-404 BC	(named in Nehemiah 12:22)
Artaxerxes II	404-358 BC	
Artaxerxes III	358-338 BC	
Arses	338-336 BC	
Darius III	336-331 BC	(on Nehemiah 12:22, see Whitcomb on Darius III, <i>ZPEB</i> 2:28)

516 BC, temple completed in the 6th year of Darius I, under Zerubbabel the governor, Joshua the high priest, and prophets Haggai and Zechariah (Ezra 5:15)

486 BC, Xerxes becomes king

attack on Greece, 480 BC

Esther story, ca. 475 BC

464 BC, Artaxerxes I becomes king

son of Xerxes, who was assassinated

quelled a stubborn rebellion in Greece in 460 BC, and following

allowed Greek cities in Asia Minor independence, 449 BC

458 BC, Ezra returns to Jerusalem

allowed by Artaxerxes in 7th year (Ezra 7:1-10)

Ezra takes ca. 1500 Jews

Ezra initiates reforms, especially against mixed marriages (Ezra 9-10)

445 BC, Nehemiah hears that the walls are destroyed

allowed to return by Artaxerxes in 20th year (Nehemiah 1:3; cf. Ezra 4:12, 23)

takes the group to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls and city

governor for 12 years (Nehemiah 5:14)

433 BC, Nehemiah returns to Artaxerxes

in the 32nd year of Artaxerxes (Nehemiah 13:6)

spends an unknown amount of time in Persia (cf. Nehemiah 2:6; Whitcomb's chart says 13 years; Leon Wood, *A Survey of Israel's History*, p. 405, says only 1 or 2 years)

423 BC, Darius II becomes king (cf. Nehemiah 12:22)

ca. 420 BC (?), Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem

Finds many moral problems, carries out reforms (Nehemiah 13:6-7)

407 BC, Elephantine Aramaic Papyrus 30 written, names the governor of Judea as Bigvai (Bagoas); thus, Nehemiah is either no longer present or dead by that time

III. **Date of Malachi**

A. Evidence for date:

1. Under a governor (Malachi 1:8)
2. Edomites expelled by the Nabataean Arabs (Malachi 1:4; this occurred during the whole Persian period, completed by ca. 400 BC)
3. Temple and worship were already reestablished
4. Many of the abuses mentioned in Malachi were common at Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem after his temporary absence: intermarriage, no tithing, lax priests

B. Suggested date, ca. 430 BC

1. EITHER between Nehemiah's two terms in Jerusalem (if he stayed in Persia a longer time) since Nehemiah calls himself the Emperor's Tirshatha while Malachi uses another term for "governor"
2. OR after Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem (if he stayed in Persia only a short time)

IV. Contents of Malachi

A. Encouragement to the faint, Malachi 1:1-5; 3:13-18

B. Sins of priests and people, Malachi 1:6 - Ch. 2; 3:7-12

*This message shows that Israel had not lived up to the conditions required in Ezekiel.

1. Miserable offerings and worship of God (Malachi 1:6-14)

a. v. 6, possible neglect of using God's name Yahweh?

Malachi 1:6 'Where is My reverence?' Says the LORD of hosts to you priests who despise My name. Yet you say, 'In what way have we despised Your name?'

b. v. 13, cheap religion is worse than none at all ...

2. Consequences of priestly disobedience (Malachi 2:1-9)

3. Divorces vs. godly design of covenant marriage (Malachi 2:10-16)

Malachi 2:14; ... the LORD has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, With whom you have dealt treacherously; Yet she is your companion And your wife by covenant.¹⁵ But did He not make *them* one, Having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore, take heed to your spirit, And let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth. ¹⁶ "For the LORD God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence," Says the LORD of hosts. "Therefore, take heed to your spirit, That you do not deal treacherously."

4. Lack of faith (Malachi 2:17; cf. the encouragements for the faint)

5. Withholding tithes (Malachi 3:7-12)

C. The coming judgment, Malachi 3:1-6—Ch. 4

"the day" (Malachi 3:2, 17; 4:1, 3, 5; cf. Malachi 1:11)

John the Baptist predicted as a covenant messenger (Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6)

Cf. Matthew 11:14 with John 1:21

Matthew 17:11, to restore all things

Acts 3:21; ... that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,

²¹ "whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.