

Purpose and scope of the course:

1. To examine the phenomena of prophetism in ancient Israel [cf. Young]. This includes:

- call of prophets.
- inspiration of prophets.
- true and false prophets and how to distinguish between them.
- relation of prophets to the cult (outward ritual forms of worship): priests, feasts, rituals.
- comparison of prophecy inside vs. outside Israel.
- apologetic value of prophecy: Can fulfillments be used as evidence for the existence of Xian God?

2. To become familiar with the prophetic writings of OT.

- content, purpose, historical settings

3. To learn some principles of hermeneutics for prophetic writings (both theory and application).

- eg. Isaiah 2:4. Is it a-mil or premil?

4. To become acquainted with critical (liberal) theories as applied to prophetic books.

- particularly those dealing with Daniel, Is. 40-66.

I. Prophetism in Ancient Israel - General Remarks.

A. A Unique Phenomenon.

The prophets in ancient Israel do constitute a unique phenomenon (to both Israel and the world) at one time in history.

- Nothing comparable wrt prophetism anywhere else (have been attempts to find parallels in other cultures; see III A).

Is sometimes said: Each nation has its own genius: The Greeks in philosophy, Rome in military and government, Germany in philosophy and music, America in pragmatism, and Israel in its unique prophetic genius. The main difference between Israel and other peoples is then lost sight of:

-Israel's uniqueness is not in degree or category but is different by NATURE from other peoples.

-Israel's prophets were endowed by God with the prophetic function in order to deliver God's word to Israel and then to all men.

B. The Prophets were Servants of God, Invested with the Prophetic Function.

Prophets were frequently referred to as servants of God: "My servants the Prophets."

cf. 2 Kings 9:7, 17:13; Jer. 7:25, 25:4, 29:19; Jer. 35:15, 44:4; Ezk. 38:17; Zech. 1:6.

Prophets were servants of God invested with this prophetic function.

1. Some of the Prophets Received a Special Call to the Prophetic Task.

Is. 6:1-13 (The call of Isaiah):

-A vision of the glory of God

-Isaiah realizes his sinfulness

-His lips are anointed

-The task proclaimed:

His message is not attractive (judgment).

It brings little response (listen but not hear).

Announces exile, but presents hope: The return.

But this will "be eaten" also, only a root will survive.

-Isaiah is not to be discouraged:

Go, speak my message to deaf ears.

Be obedient and proclaim my message, there will ultimately be a blessing.

(9/14/81)

Jer. 1:5 (The call of Jeremiah):

- Ordained to be a prophet from before his birth.
- He tried to avoid the responsibility of the call
- He thought that he was too young and weak.
- The LORD: "I have put my words in thy mouth."

Ezk. 1-3 (The call of Ezekiel):

- He was in a foreign land (Babylon), just before the major exile (586 BC).
- Sees vision of God (1:1)
- Also hears voice of God (1:28) prophetic call
- Vision is to impress the power of God on Ezekiel even though God allowed the captivity.
- Stubborn, rebellious character of Israel emphasized (2:4). He is not to be concerned if they listen or not (2:5). The people are responsible despite their rebellion.
- He should not fear to speak God's message (2:6-7).
- The message was not a pleasant one: Destruction of temple; continued, more extensive exile.

The eating of the scroll (2:1-3):

- Meaning: He was to make the message his own.
- Content: "All My words" (3:10).

Amos 7:15 (The call of Amos):

- "God took me from the fields and told me to prophesy." He had been a farmer and herdsman.
- Mission: To prophesy against the northern kingdom at Bethel (He came from Judah, S. Kingdom).
- King Amaziah told Amos to go back home but Amos responded that this call was not his choice.

2. For Some a Special Calling is not Related, But They all Give Evidence that they know they are Endowed with the Prophetic Function.

- There is not enough Biblical data to know that all received a specific prophetic call.

- Some apparently did not receive a call:

Balaam (Num. 22-25) was not called but gave true prophesy. Had been hired by Balak to curse Israel, but blessed them instead (he couldn't curse them => He functioned as a prophet).

-Others who were set aside for other tasks also performed the function of a prophet:

David was called as a king, but also functioned as a prophet (Acts 2:29-30, ref. to Ps. 16:10).

Gideon was called to be a deliverer (Judges 6:14) but functioned as a prophet in Judg. 7 when he selected the men.

-When certain people speak God's word they give evidence that they know God is speaking through them apart from having a special call.

3. The Endowment with the Prophetic Function was a Power Which no Prophet Could Resist.

Amos 3:4-6 Idea of cause and effect in these examples.
=>3:8 Main point: The LORD God has spoken; Who can but prophesy?

Some did try to resist, yet eventually gave in:

-Jonah tried to flee, but gave in.

-Jeremiah (20:9): "If I say that I will not speak in His name anymore, then in my heart it becomes a burning fire"

C. The Function of the Prophet is the Proclamation of the Word of God.

-The true prophet does not bring his own words and thoughts but God's words and thoughts.

-This is the main difference between true and false prophets: True prophets proclaim God's words, false prophets proclaim their own words (cf. Deut. 18:18 for true prophets). Also:

-Jer. 1:9 "I have put My words in your mouth."

-Jer. 23:16 (false prophets) "They speak a vision of their own hearts."

1. Expressions with which the prophets introduce their sermons are indicative that the message is God's, not their own.

-Young, "My Servants the Prophets," p. 171-175 (list of Biblical phrases which makes clear that the prophet knows that his message is God's word).

2. The Prophet must declare God's word, regardless of whether or not this is pleasant to him.

-Saul anointed by Samuel even though he did not want to (1 Sam. 10:1).

-Samuel mourns over Saul (1 Sam. 15:35).

-God tells Sam. not to grieve over Saul (1 Sam. 16:1).

3. There is a distinction between the prophet's own words and what he speaks as the Word of God.

-Scripture makes it clear that the prophets knew the difference between their own word and God's.

-Is incorrect to say that prophets brought their own ideas and words and that these then served as God's word.

-This is not to say that the prophet's own background was not used, but there is a distinction:

eg. 2 Samuel 7: David wants to build the temple.

(3) Nathan agrees with the idea because God is with David (generally).

(4) But God's word comes to Nathan that night.

(10-11) Play on the word "house" - dynasty (v. 16) vs. temple (to be built by Solomon).

Nathan had to correct his words with the word of God - although we are not sure how he knew the difference.

J. Schelhaus' article "2 Samuel 7:1-5" in "The Law and the Prophets," ed. by J. Skilton, p. 283f.

"David's intention was not wrong: In 1 Kings 8:18 the Lord commended David's desire, but the prophet should have waited for God's word. Nathan's mistake was that his opinion as a prophet was asked for, but he initially spoke his own words."

eg. Jeremiah 28: Controversy between Jeremiah (true) and Hananiah (false prophet).

-Jeremiah knows that he spoke the word of God so he does not believe Hananiah the false prophet.

- (2) Hananiah predicts that captivity will end in two years ("Thus says the LORD" format).
- (6) Jeremiah hopes so, but previous predictions of judgment make him nervous of Hananiah.
- (8-9) The prophecy of peace should only be believed AFTER it comes to pass.
- (11) Hananiah breaks Jeremiah's yoke, Jeremiah goes home.
- (12) NOW the word of the Lord comes to Jeremiah; now he can respond with God's authority to Hananiah.
- (15) Jeremiah confronts Hananiah.
- (16-17) God did not send Hananiah - he lied. Prediction and fulfillment of his death.

Hananiah had gone against previous revelation from Jeremiah and others who predicted judgment, but Jeremiah did not answer him until he had heard from God.

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1 Kings 13 (Man of God from Judah sent to prophesy against Jereboam and his altar).

- (9) Man is not to eat or drink or return the same way.
- (18) Old man who had functioned as a prophet previously was probably lonely and said that an angel had spoken to him telling the man to come back (lied).
- (20-22) Old man then gave a true prophecy.

D. The Phenomenon of Israel's Prophets is as old as the History of Israel Itself.

Prophetism in Israel is co-extensive with Israel's history -Is not an isolated point which occurs only at a certain time.

Noah, Moses, Abraham, Joshua, and of course from Samuel on. See Freeman, "An Intro. to the OT Prophets," p. 26f.

Jer. 7:25 - The Lord can say, "Since the day I brought you out of Egypt, I have sent you my servants the prophets."

E. Besides male Prophets, Israel also had her Prophetesses. -not common or frequent, but does occur.

Three examples:

- 1) Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron (Ex. 15:20).
- 2) Deborah (Judges 4:4).
- 3) Hulda, in the time of Josiah when the book of the Law was found (2 Kings 22:14).
- 4) Wife of Isaiah (Is. 8:3) is termed a prophetess. This just means the wife of a prophet but is strange. Yet we have no prophecy from her.

F. Besides Individual Prophets, There were also bands or Companies of Prophets Referred to in the O.T.

1. References to Prophetic Bands or Companies.
(Not frequent or numerous)

1 Sam. 10:5-6 Samuel tells Saul he will encounter in Gibeah a group of prophets making music. Saul will prophesy with them and "be turned into another man."

-Berkeley translates v.5 "They shall be in ecstasy."
אֲזַנְנִים "to prophesy" in some situations this word can mean "to be in ecstasy or to act abnormally" as opposed to proclaiming God's word.

-Young, "My Servants the Prophets," p. 70: "The word אֲזַנְנִים might have a wider connotation than that of declaring a message for God. At least ... it may indicate those who are engaged in abnormal behavior."

=> It could be that the prophets were singing praises to God and Saul joins them.

1 Sam. 19:20 At Naioth in Ramah. Strange events with a group of prophets; see Young, p. 88-91.

(18-24) a "company of the prophets" with Samuel when Saul's messengers came to take David. The messengers prophesied. Two more times messengers were sent and they prophesied. Finally Saul comes himself and prophesies.

1 Kings 18:13 Two groups of 50 prophets hid by Obadiah during the time of Elijah.

1 Kings 20:35,41 "A certain man of the sons of the prophets." v.41, "the king of Israel recognized him that he was of the prophets."

2 Kings 2:3 sons of the prophets at Bethel;
" " v.5 sons of the prophets at Jericho;
" " v.7 more than 50 men were sons of the prophets;
" " 4:38 sons of the prophets at Gilgal with Elisha.

2. Members of these Companies came to be called אֲזַנְנֵי לַיהוָה - אֲזַנְנֵי

-This phrase occurs 7 times in the O.T. with the exception of Amos 7:14.

-All occur between 1 Kings 20 and 2 Kings 9.

-This is between Ahab (874 BC) and Jehu (841 BC).

What is meant by the term "sons of the prophets"?

-definition of בְּנֵי

- a) male child - most familiar
- b) descendent
- c) a member of a group

This last meaning is most appropriate: They were people who belonged to a certain class, called prophets.

Illustrations of use:

-Neh. 12:28 "sons of the singers" => people who belonged to the choir, not only children of singers.

-Ps. 18:44 (45 in Hebrew) בְּנֵי אֲרָמִים - בְּנֵי אֲרָמִים "sons of the foreigners" (not children of foreigners). An idiom for a group of foreigners.

So the "sons of the prophets" are those who belong to the category of people who are prophets.

Another possibility: "sons of the prophets" are followers or disciples (cf. E. J. Young). But the Hebrew usage of בְּנֵי is never that of disciple.

3. The Term "School of the Prophets."

The idea has arisen from the understanding that these groups of prophets were instructed by the great prophets.

- This idea is found in the Targums.
- But it is not found in Scripture anywhere.

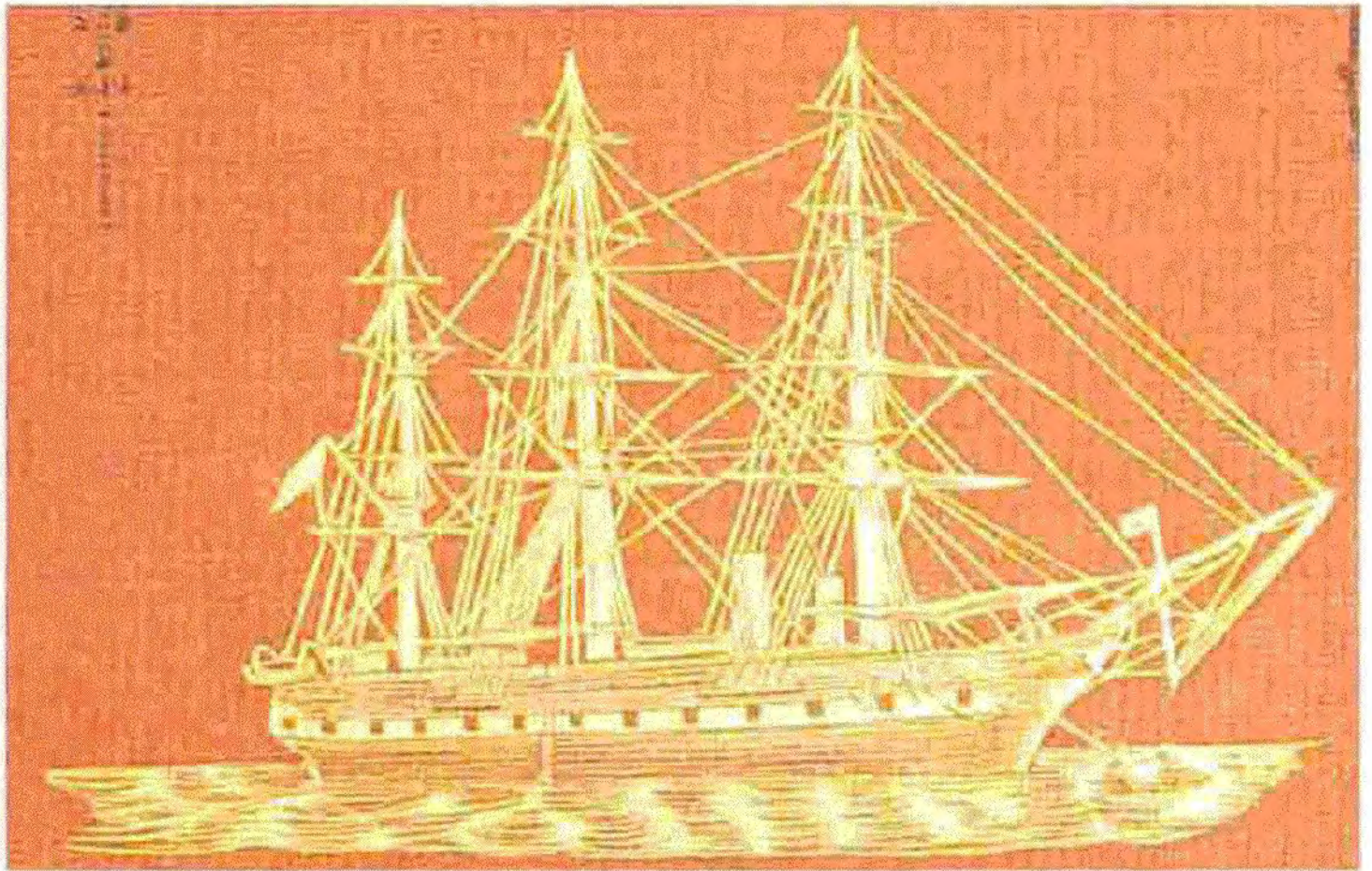
The closest thing to this term is 2 Kings 22:14, where old KJV says "dwelt in the college" where new KJV says "dwelt in the Second Quarter."

- term in Hebrew is obscure and refers to "second"
- so means here "the second quarter of the city."

We do not read in OT that any special training was needed to be a prophet (eg. Amos).

- not like seminary
- prophets were given direct revelation, and were called from normal work to declare God's message.

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4. The Companies of the Prophets Apparently Lived in their own Communities.

Prophets lived at Bethel, Jericho (2 Kings 2:3-5), Gilgal (2 Kings 4:38), Gibeah (1 Samuel 10:5), Ramah (1 Samuel 19:20)

-Samuel was the lead of the group at Ramah ("Samuel stood as appointed over them").

Some think the prophets lived in cloisters or abbeys:

1 Samuel 19:19 - perhaps Naioth means "abbey".

2 Kings 4:38 - sons of the prophets ate communally in Gilgal.

2 Kings 6:1-2 - "Let us take a beam and make a place for ourselves." Place is singular, but might mean a place where various houses could be built, ie, a neighborhood.

The evidence is not clear; are not forced to conclude that they lived together. 2 Kings 4:38 was an unusual situation (a famine) and they were fed in a miraculous way. Note also:

2 Kings 4:1 - "A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets." Borrowed jars and filled them with oil. But she had her own house and she had neighbors to borrow from (see narrative).

1 Samuel 19:18-19 "Naioth" at Ramah.

נִיּוֹת is related to נֵיִן = habitation, dwelling. Also Naioth (unusual feminine form) is plural; may indicate a complex of houses where prophets dwelt (a neighborhood in town of Ramah).
-Samuel hid David in this section of town.

5. The Degeneration of the Prophetic Function with the Companies. (Information not clear on this idea.)

Slowly a degeneration set in with these groups of prophets, possibly people began to associate with the groups for material advantage (an easy livelihood).

2 Kings 4:42 - A man brought food to the prophets.
-Is possible that prophets lived from these gifts.

-Kings had prophets in their service:

1 Kings 22:6 (Ahab and Jehoshaphat) Ahab had over 400 prophets plus Micaiah.

Micah 3:5,11 "If one feeds the prophets, they declare peace; if they are not fed, they prophesy war." v.11 "Her prophets tell fortunes for money."

May have developed this way because prophets were supported by the people (they were not dependent on God) so (lazy fakes) could begin to prophesy for a livelihood.

6. The Canonical Prophets are Distinguished from These Companies.

No evidence that any of the great writing canonical prophets (a) were supported by the people, (b) belonged to these companies.

It appears that Amos expressly rejects the idea that he is to be regarded as a member of these groups:

Amos 7:14 I AM no prophet, nor AM I the son of a prophet; for I AM a herdsman and a grower of sycamore figs. {NASB and New Scofield}

7:14 I AM neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but I WAS a herdsman . . . {Berkeley}

7:14 I WAS no prophet, neither WAS I a prophet's son, but I WAS a herdsman . . . {KJV and NIV}

[Hebrew has no verb]

Note: If past tense (was), then Amos is saying that he did not make himself a prophet but God called him to be a prophet. He is not denying that he is now a prophet but that he was originally a prophet.

If present tense (am), then Amos is saying, "I am not a prophet in the sense that you understand (v.12 - doing it to earn bread)." As far as Amaziah is concerned, Amos is someone who is prophesying for a living. Amos says in response, "I don't need to do this for my livelihood, I'm a herdsman, and God told me to prophesy."

Amaziah's remark (v.12) betrays his presupposition that all prophets are in it for the money.

Implications:

1. "Prophets" had become freeloaders, not men sent by God.
2. Amos isn't that type of prophet.
3. Amos is a prophet in the true sense of the word.

-Vannoy thinks the NASB and New Scofield are best in this interpretation: Amos is distinguishing himself from the common (wrong) view.

G. The Canonical Prophets, or Writing Prophets.

-Means the 4 major and 12 minor prophets who authored the books named after them. Were apparently not supported by people or court.
-Amos was one of the earliest.

-Term can be confusing since we know that there were others who wrote:

2 Chron. 9:29 "...Book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer...."

-Canonical prophets = Jewish "latter prophets"
-Does not include the books called the "former prophets" by the Jews (Joshua, Judges, Samuels, Kings).

II. The Prophetic Nomenclature.

From the terminology we can gain some understanding of the function of a prophet:

-Today: "Prophecy" commonly means predicting the future.

-Then: Prophets gave the word of God to their own contemporaries and preached to their own times in a relevant way. The message sometimes included prediction but this was not the essence of the prophet's function.

Note: Relevant to their day; we have to decode.

A. The Most General Name is "The Man of God."

- This occurs 76 times in the O.T.
- Half of these apply to Elisha.
- 15 refer to the unnamed prophet of 1 Kings 13 (Jeroboam's altar incident).
- Rest are scattered: Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Shemaiah.

Man of God => someone who stands in a special relationship to God, though not a precisely defined relationship.

B. "The Servant of the Lord."

- Relationship between God and man is more clearly indicated by the term 'servant'.
- Implication that he speaks God's words, not his own.
- Applied to Moses, Elijah, Ahijah, Jonah, Isaiah.
- Term is general: Men other than prophets were called this, even a pagan king:

Jeremiah 27:6 and 43:10. Nebuchadnezzar is termed a servant because God used him.

C. "The Messenger of the Lord."

- Title is closer to the essence of the task.
- The prophet is one who brings the message of God to man.
- Singular form: Used only in Haggai 1:13 (Unless you take 'Malachi' as a designation rather than name; literally means 'my messenger.' (Mal. 1:1))
- Plural form: Used several times of the prophets in general.

D. "Nabhi" - נָבִי

- Means prophet. Is the most frequently used term.
- English is derived from the Greek (Septuagint) translation of the term προφητης - "to speak on behalf of", from προ = for, φημι = speak.

But what does the Hebrew term mean?

- Does not mean soothsayer, fortune teller, prognosticator.
- These were forbidden to the Israelites in Deut. 18.
- In Greek, fortune-teller is another word; rather προφητης is someone who interpreted the revelations from the gods to men: A proclaimer of divine revelation.

-Greek: Put unintelligible revelations into words which men could understand; eg. Priestess of Delphi: Babblings by the Pythia (Priestess) in the fumes were interpreted by the "prophet". Also the rustling of oak leaves at some special place.

-In Greek, the prophet was an interpreter rather than a mouthpiece cf. Vos, "Biblical Theology," p.195

"The $\pi\rho\omicron\phi\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$ (in general Greek) is one who spoke for an oracle. But a Greek p. does not stand in the same direct relationship to deity as Hebrew 'nabhi' does. $\pi\rho\omicron\phi\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$ is an interpreter rather than a mouth piece of what the god speaks through the one whom the god directly inspires. $\pi\rho\omicron\phi\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$ adds his own meaning and form to what the god says."

"Difference between Jehovah and pagan god: Biblical God gives light to all who seek it although He uses the 'nabhi' as His transmitter. Pagan gods utter dark, incomprehensible sounds through Pythia who needs the $\pi\rho\omicron\phi\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$ to interpret understandably."

-Hence, we cannot take the secular meaning of the Greek term 'prophet' and apply it to the Bible.

1. Etymology of $\chi\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$

-Very obscure; linguists do not agree.

-Various derivations:

a) Stem $\chi\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$ related to $\psi\alpha\lambda\lambda\omega$ = "to bubble forth" so prophet was called by this name because of the impression his speaking made (Gesenius).

b) From 'nabu' an Akkadian verb (active form).

-The deity Nebo (or Nabu) was the god of wisdom, science and writing; occurs in names such as Nebuchadnezzar and Nabopolassar.

-Nabu means "to speak" (as a verb).

-Noun would mean "a speaker" or "spokesman" [for God, when it occurs in the Bible].

(Meek, "Hebrew Origins," p.147)

c) Comes from 'nabu' but in a passive sense.

-Means someone who is called by God (Albright).

d) From naba'a an Arabic root.

-Means to speak at the command of someone else, to announce something for someone else.

- The debate on this area is highly technical linguistically and it seems like we cannot say for sure what is nabhi's origin.
- However, etymology is not that important anyway because meanings change with usage so usage is most important.

2. Usage of the word $\chi^{\prime} \dot{\chi} \dot{\chi}$

- (Young p.57-61) "The essential task of a prophet and therefore the meaning of the word $\chi^{\prime} \dot{\chi} \dot{\chi}$ is found in Deut. 18:18 - "I will put My words in his mouth."
- A prophet is a spokesman for God; he conveys the words which God has put in him. Examples:
 - Exodus 7:1 "I have made you a god to Pharaoh and Aaron will be your prophet."
 - The relation between Aaron and Moses is like that between Moses and God.
 - Moses does not himself speak to Pharaoh; Aaron conveys the message of Moses to Pharaoh like a prophet proclaims to the people all that God commands.
 - Exodus 4:16 "He shall speak for you to the people and he shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be as God to him."
 - Aaron is the mouthpiece of Moses like a prophet is the mouthpiece of God.
 - Jeremiah 15:19 "You will be as My mouth."
- Thus the essence of the prophetic task is to be a mouthpiece for God.

E. $\pi \chi^{\prime} \dot{\chi}$ the participial form of $\pi \chi^{\prime} \dot{\chi}$ "to see".

- Normally translated as "seer".
- Apparently were 2 terms used: prophet and seer.
- Originally they were 2 types of people but they later merged in function (cf. liberals).
- Kuenen: $\pi \chi^{\prime} \dot{\chi}$ cannot be distinguished from soothsayer while $\chi^{\prime} \dot{\chi} \dot{\chi}$ developed from wild ecstatic rites of the Canaanites (like the Mohammedan dervishes today who carry on wild ecstatic carryings on).
- Alfred Haldar draws an analogy between 2 Mesopotamian (Babylonian) terms and the Hebrew:
 - 'mahhu' priest <---> 'nabi' (prophet),
 - 'baru' priest <---> 'roeh' (seer).

In Mesopotamia both had the task of making the will of the gods known to men. "Baru" got his message by external means: Casting lots, liver looking, pouring oil on water, astrological, meteorological techniques. "Mahhu" received the message from the gods directly while in an ecstatic condition, and he would pass it on while in that condition.

-Haldar thought that the same difference applied in Israel: Seers used means and worked individually while prophets worked in groups using trances.

This is a nice theory but it does not fit the O.T. data very well: 1 Samuel 9:11 shows that Samuel was called a seer, but he did not work with external means to determine the will of God - He had direct revelation. eg, Samuel took the initiative to anoint Saul as King (he was not asked by Saul).

There were people in Canaan and Israel at this time who said that they could determine the will of God by external means, but they are not called seers: cf. Deut. 18:10 - they are listed and all called abominations. The Israelite was to go to the prophet if he wanted to know the will of God.

Note: Consultation by external means was not totally excluded in Israel:

- 1) Urim and Thummin on the Ephod would give God's message.
-The Urim and Thummin were some kind of means by which the will of God was known, but the men using these were never called seers (=> doesn't fit Haldar theory).
- 2) 2 Samuel 5:24 "When you hear the sound of marching on the tops of the balsam trees, then you shall act promptly." -These external means were given to David.

Thus when we look at the OT usage, there is no difference between 'seer' and 'prophet'; they are synonymous terms.

1 Samuel 9:9 "Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he used to say, 'Come and let us go to the seer;' for he who is called a prophet now was formerly called a seer."

-Problem: What date does this statement come from and what implications does that have for the dating of Samuel?

-Distinction is a chronological one.

-Context makes it appear that this is an inserted explanatory remark to explain to later people what they wouldn't know.

-Vannoy thinks this verse was not originally in the text; was a gloss written in margin then later added to text but no texts show this in their margins.

-Support for this idea:

-Is found in the wrong place - it would fit better contextually after v.11 (where the term is actually used) than after v.8.

-If there is no essential difference in meaning but "seer" is simply the older terminology, then when is this remark dated?

Problem: A long time after Samuel, prophets were still called seers (cf. Isaiah 30:10).

-Some think that this remark is from the time of the Babylonian captivity, but the term 'prophet' is used before the time of Samuel.

-How then can it be said that what we now call a prophet was formerly called a seer?

Critics argue for late dating of all 'prophet' usage.

Possible solution: Textual gloss.

Septuagint has different reading than Hebrew text.

MT: $\text{וְיִקְרָא אֶת־הַנָּבִיִּים אֲשֶׁר־לָקְחוּ אֶת־הַבְּרִיטָה הַזֹּאת וְיִקְרָא אֶת־הַנָּבִיִּים אֲשֶׁר־לָקְחוּ אֶת־הַבְּרִיטָה הַזֹּאת וְיִקְרָא אֶת־הַנָּבִיִּים אֲשֶׁר־לָקְחוּ אֶת־הַבְּרִיטָה הַזֹּאת$

(Note only one verb in Hebrew)

KJV: for he that is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer. (2 verbs)

NASB: for he who is called a prophet now was formerly called a seer.

Berkeley: for the prophet of today used to be called a & NIV a seer. (1 verb)

LXX: $\text{ὅτι τον προφητην ἔκαλει ὁ λαος ἐμπροσθεν ὁ βλέπων.}$

(for the people before time called the prophet the seer)

The Septuagint translation reads as if נָבִיִּים stood in the place of נָבִיִּים (nearly equivalent in unpointed text).

-If Septuagint accepted, then ro'eh is the popular term and nabhi is the technical term. So ro'eh could continue in use in later times. Greatly reduces difficulty!!

Conclusion: The text shows that prophets were seers, which is an alternate form of designation for the function of a prophet. Examples:

Isaiah 6:1 ~ "I saw the Lord" - imperfect of $\pi\chi\text{'}$
 Ezekiel 1:1 ~ "I saw visions of God" - verbal form $\pi\chi\text{'}$

-Even though 'prophet' and 'seer' are synonymous we have two different emphases:

$\chi\text{'}$ = a person turned to the people to speak
 => proclamation.

$\pi\chi\text{'}$ = a person turned to God to receive a message
 => receptor.

F. $\pi\text{'}$

-Comes from verbal form $\pi\text{'}$ = "to gaze at".

-Is normally translated "seer".

-Points primarily to visionary seeing of messages.

USAGE:

Isaiah 1:1 "The vision which Isaiah saw"

Isaiah 2:1 "The word which Isaiah saw"

Isaiah 30:10 "...unto the prophets, prophesy not."

Amos 1:1 "The words of Amos . . . which he saw"

-There is little difference between $\pi\text{'}$ and $\pi\chi\text{'}$

-Both are used as 'seer'.

III. The Origin of Prophetism in Israel.

A. Alleged Analogies to Israel's Prophetism in Other Nations.

-Is often asserted that analogies to prophetism can be found in other nations; ie., perhaps Israel elevated prophetism but the same thing existed elsewhere.

-Then the attempt is made to explain that Israel derived prophetism from other peoples.

Cannot deny 'a priori' that there are not similarities.

-There are formal similarities in prophetism as well as in other practices: kingship, sacrifices, circumcision (yet in Israel each was also different in some ways).

-Other nations had people who functioned in some formal ways as prophets.

But we must ask if there is any necessary connection between Israel's prophetism and that of surrounding nations.

- When we consider that prophets are men chosen by God to bring His special revelation, there is very limited overlap.
- ie, derivation of Israel's prophetism is not possible since it is a gift of God.

1. Mesopotamian Analogies (Haldar).

For more details on this section, see Young's Appendix in "My Servants the Prophets".

- Primary evidence comes from Mari (on middle Euphrates) which was excavated in 1935-39. Was a prosperous city before the time of Hammurabi (~1700 BC). Found a great archive there of 5,000 clay tablets in cuneiform.
- Among the texts some think that they find a trace of Babylonian prophetism (cf. "Ancient Near Eastern Texts," ed. by Pritchard, also "Ancient Near Eastern Pictures.")

a. Letter of Itur-asdu to Zimrilim. ANET p.623(a)

- Zimrilim was king at Mari.
- Itur-asdu had a visit from a man who had had a dream.
- Had been fighting between Zimrilim and Benjamites. Dagan asks if there was peace between them (=> Dagan not omniscient). There isn't. Dagan asks why king did not lay a full report before Dagan. If the king had, then Dagan would have delivered them and there would be peace.
- Similarity to Bible: "Now go, thus I shall send you" sounds like God commissioning His prophets.

Some see in the man who received the vision an analogy to the prophets of Israel. He gives a message of salvation conditioned on obedience, which Zimrilim was to obey (Wow is this far fetched!).

b. Letter of Kibri-Dagan to Zimrilim. ANET p.624(e)

- Just a few lines of text.
- An ecstatic of Dagan (mahhu) came and said to K-D that Zimrilim should offer a mortuary sacrifice for the peace of the dead spirit of Yadulim (Zimrilim's father).
- K-D was governor of Terqa.
- Zimrilim had apparently neglected to bring sacrifices and is now reminded by this mahhu.

c. Letter of Kibri-Dagan to Zimrilim. ANET p.624(g)

-Ecstatic of Dagan says that a sacrifice for the dead is to be performed on a particular date.

d. Letter of Kibri-Dagan. ANET p.624(f)

-K-D has not been remiss in building a city gate. An ecstatic (3rd reference to him) warns against ceasing to build that gate.

e. Conclusions Regarding Mesopotamina Analogies.

-Some draw a parallel between 'mahhu' in Babylonia and prophets in Israel.

-Claim there are:

1) Formal similarites,

- a) Prophet receives message from God and ecstatic from his god.
- b) Prophet brings message unasked - whether the king wants to hear it or not.
- c) Actions of the king are criticized - neglect of sacrifice and neglect to inform his god.

2) Material similarites,

- If the king does something, God will deliver him.

Examples:

Dagan: "Now go I send you" in first letter promises deliverance.

Jeremiah 1:7-8 "Everywhere I send you, you shall go ... for I am with you to deliver you."

-We can admit there are formal similarities, but there great differences are very significant when they are compared.

-The net similiarites are so weak that derivation is unreasonable. For example:

-Zimrilim is not asked about 'internal' matters: his relationship with his god or his ethical conduct.

-He is only asked about 'externals': sacrifices and reports.

-Young: "The Babylonian material only deals with local situations. It does not deal with the end of time or spiritual deliverance from sin, but merely with a promise of amelioration for a local situation" (p.195).

-At best, the Babylonian prophets remind us of the false prophets of Israel.

-N. Ridderbos (Amsterdam): When Isaiah and prophets bring an announcement, we must notice the background. They relate it to the larger picture of God's purposeful action in history and his great plan of redemption. Prophets outside of Israel give no indication of any larger purpose.

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2. Egyptian Analogies (cf. Young, p.200-202).

a. Admonitions of Ipu-wer ANET p.441+

-Have a mutilated copy from 19th or 20th dynasty of Egypt (1350-1100 BC).

-Original text is probably from about 2000 BC.

-Has gaps in the middle; beginning and end missing.

-Story:

Man called Ipu-wer comes before Pharaoh and sums up the disaster in Egypt: Nile flooding, people wearing dirty clothes, no conception, roles in society are reversed, land desolate, robbery, revolution.

-Some compare this description with Isaiah 1:7, "Your land is desolate, your cities are burned with fire, strangers devour your fields in your presence . . ."

-Both describe chaotic situations in their land.

-BUT Isaiah identified the cause: spiritual apostasy, which Egyptian text doesn't say anything about.

-Then in the text, find what some think is a Messianic prophecy: Ipu-wer speaks of an ideal king.

"He will bring coolness, he will shepherd all men."

-But we cannot be sure of the tense because of gaps in the text; is he speaking of a past king when things were better, or of a future king?

-Are two translations of the text:

(1) ANET by J. A. Wilson,

(2) German translation by H. Ranke.

-Wilson chooses the future: "Egypt is looking forward to a god-king who will deliver Egypt from her woes. This is truly a Messianic passage."

-Ranke chooses the past idea: "Translation by a perfect is not certain but it is not future." => past ideal.

-Summary: Is not clear, but probably past.

-Shepherd analogy? Not uncommon, kings were often thought of as shepherds of their people.

-Differences between the 'Messiahs':

Egyptian - protects the people and acts righteously.
Israel - Does above and brings people into harmony
and restores fellowship with God.

-See no similarity in spiritual basis, God's purposeful
direction or plan is not seen.

b. Prophecy of Nefer-rohu (ANET p.444)

[This name should be 'Neferti' - a linguistic problem].

-A prophecy of the fall of the Old Kingdom in Egypt and
subsequent restoration under Amen-em-het I.

-He established the Middle Kingdom around 1990 BC (12th
dynasty).

-Prophecy given by Nefer-rohu.

-Story:

Snefru (of 4th Egyptian dynasty ~2650 BC) asks
city council if there is someone who could entertain
him with fine words and speeches. Nefer-rohu was
priest of the cat goddess (Bastet) and was recommended.
Snefru asks Nef. to tell him of things to come. Nef.
says that he can't tell the future so describes present.
At end he says, "Then it will happen that a king from
the South will come and Ameni is his name, and justice
will come into its place while wrongdoing is driven
out." (=) this is a prophecy 700 years in advance.)

-Young (p.203) "Notice that there is an utter lack of
seriousness in the text. The king is merely seeking to
be entertained ... Nefer-rohu says he is not a prophet."

-The message is not a revealed one nor does it claim to
be. Like many 'predictions' of the ancient world, it is
far removed in style from OT prophecies.

-Authenticity of this document is seriously questioned.

-Oldest copies are from 1450 BC but the event claims to
occur in 2650 BC and be fulfilled in 1990 BC.

-Albright, "Stone Age to Xianity." This is 'the oldest
example of prophesy after an event: vaticinum ex eventu.'

-N. Ridderbos, "Prophecy." 'The most that can be said
is that a king will arise who will bring restoration,
but otherwise is not extraordinary.'

3. Canaanite Analogies.

-Though many have looked for Canaanite analogies, none
have been found.

-Yet when one reads the literature, there are many people
who think that Israelite prophets must have had their
foundation in Canaanite religion.

A. Kuenen, "Prophets and Prophetism in Ancient Israel," (1875, rep. 1969), p.555; It would be "desirable to speak with certainty on this, but from want of historical accounts we must rest content on probable conjectures, which do have the advantage of giving us a satisfactory explanation of prophetism.'

G. Von Rad, "Theology of the OT," V.2, p.8; Since prophetism existed outside Israel, the "Canaanite religion must have been the medium by which it came to Israel."

There is NO extra-Biblical texts of Canaanite prophecy or divination (even in Ras Shamra). We have no evidence that prophecy was a part of the Canaanite religions.

Reasoning which liberals use to justify Canaanite idea:

1. Prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18),
 2. Journey of Wen-Amon (Egyptian papyrus).
1. The Phoenicians were closely related to the Canaanites, and there were 450 prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18 (Elijah on Mt. Carmel) plus 400 prophets of Asherah!

v.26 The Baal prophets 'danced around the altar.'

v.29 They 'prophesied until the time of the offering' => had ecstatic utterances.

-Some then say that this text shows religious ecstasy in Phoenician religion, which would carry over to Canaanite religion.

2. The journey of Wen-Amon tells of a priest who went up to Phoenicia. During it, an ecstatic came and gave a message to the king.

(9/28/81)

-Story: (cf. "The Ancient Near East," Anthology)

The priest Wen-Amon went to Phoenicia (Byblos) in the 5th year of Nemesus III (~1100 BC) to purchase lumber to build a great ship (throne) for the deity Amon-Ra. He was not well received, they would not accept his price and he was told to leave. While Wen-Amon was waiting for the next boat to Egypt...
-> One night the gods seized and possessed one of the king's men and he told the king that Amon had sent Wen-Amon. The king then changes his mind and sells the lumber to the priest.

-The youth who spoke ecstatically shows that this phenomena was common in Canaan at this time (supposedly).

-This implies that prophetism was a Canaanite practice adapted by Israel.

-Samuel was the one who adapted it as he was the leader of the bands of prophets during the early monarchy (deduced from him telling Saul that he would meet them).

Biblical view:

-Is not very likely that Samuel would have adapted a Canaanite practice as Samuel was opposed to heathen practices.

All of these attempts to explain prophetism from the outside are not convincing: The Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Canaanite analogies are not even remotely like Israel's.

B. Internal Israelite Explanations for the Origin of Prophetism.

1. Religious genius of Israel itself.

-This people above all other peoples had a spiritual inclination and developed prophetism as its highest form.

-But this ignores Israel's history! Israel was not inclined to listen to their prophets; they were inclined toward heathen gods and practices around them.

-The prophets were always telling them to return to God.

2. The Religious Consciousness of the Prophets.

-If Israel as a whole did not exhibit a religious consciousness, then perhaps some of the Israelites did have this genius, and they became the prophets.

-But the testimony of the prophets indicates that when they speak it is not their own words or desires, but they are compelled by God to speak.

-This opposes the view that it is the prophets own religious consciousness.

C. Prophetism in Israel According to the Witness of the OT Finds its Origins in God and Must be Viewed as a Gift of God to His People (Deut. 18:9-22).

-This is the only explanation that does justice to and fits with Israel's prophetism as shown in the Bible.

Deuteronomy 18:

-Context: Moses is speaking to the Israelites prior to Moses' death.

-He reminds them of the covenantal obligations.

-The people are probably wondering where they will get divine guidance from after Moses dies.

v.9-14 Are told not to practice the heathen methods of divination. Don't get advise this way.

v.15-19 Are told how Israel is to receive her guidance. By a method similar to that given to Moses. God will raise up a prophet (the essence and origin of prophetism).

-People have the responsibility to listen and to do what the prophet tells them.

v.20-22 Told the dangers of listening to false prophets.

Interpretation of Deut. 18: "Prophet"

1. Collective noun.

=> All the prophets of all time in Israel.

2. Individualistic noun.

=> An explicit and exclusive reference to Christ.

Does not refer to the prophets in Israel's history.

3. Collective noun, BUT it was only completely fulfilled in the person of Christ, in whom the idea of prophetic order is perfectly realized.

Also must consider Acts 3:20-23:

-The context applies Deut 18 to Christ, but the context in Deut. indicates that this applies to a prophetic movement after Moses' death.

How do we do justice to these two passages?

Freeman p.26 "A prophet like unto me" - refers to the prophetic institution which in turn is a type of Christ.

-This interpretation avoids the double-fulfillment problem.

Prophecy ----> {Prophetic Institution} ----> Christ
|----- NOT -----|

Young p.29f (Summarized on p.34):

"Deut. 18 seems to contain a double reference:

1. There is a body of prophets, an institution, which would speak God's commanded words.
2. There is to one great prophet, who alone would be like Moses, namely, the Messiah.

It is best to regard the prophet as an ideal person in whom are comprehended all true prophets. The prophetic order is thus an ideal unity, which is to find its focus point in the historic Christ. For the Spirit of Christ was in all the true prophets. When finally Christ appeared upon earth, the promise was fulfilled in its highest and fullest sense. It is, therefore, a Messianic promise."

Prophecy ----> {Prophetic Institution and Christ}

The origin of Israel's prophetism lies in God. God has chosen to put His words in these men (2 Peter 1:21).

IV. The Ways and Means of God's Revelation to the Prophets.

- As we noted, the prophets made it clear that they speak divine revelation, not their own words.
- This exegesis cannot be denied.
- Therefore denials are not based on the facts in Scripture but upon the presupposition that external revelation does not exist.
- So attempt is made to explain revelation along psychological lines (which destroys the fact that prophets were receivers and transmitters of the word of God).

What are the means by which God's revelation was given to the prophets?

A. Prophetic Seeing and Hearing the Word of God.

The prophets wrote that God spoke to them:

Jeremiah 1:7 "The Lord said unto me ..."
Isaiah 7:3 "Then said the Lord unto Isaiah ..."
Isaiah 8:1 "The Lord said unto me ..."

This speaking is heard by the prophet with his ears:

Isaiah 22:14 "It was revealed in my ears by the Lord"
1 Samuel 9:15 "The Lord told Samuel in his ear ..."

What are we to understand by these expressions?

- Did the prophet hear something audible with his ears?
- Scripture could mean this but is not necessary meaning.
- In some cases God spoke directly without an audible voice.

-Brought thoughts into the consciousness of the prophet in a more direct manner. Example:

1 Samuel 3 God calling Samuel.

- v.7 "Samuel did not know the LORD" in the sense of receiving revelation.
- v.8 Eli figured out but apparently did not hear.
- v.11 "The LORD said to Samuel ..."
- v.15 "Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli."
(note 'vision')

'Vision' suggests that it was internal, not external.

Are many references to 'seeing' and 'hearing'.

- Amos 1:1 "The words which he saw ..."
- Micah 1:1 "The word of the LORD ... which he saw"
- Ezekiel 40 Description of Ezekiel's vision:
 - v.2 "in the visions of God, He brought me into the land of Israel."
 - v.4 "see with your eyes, hear with your ears ... Declare ... all that you see"

-The vision is the primary means of revelation to the prophets. Visions apparently occur when the person is awake; dreams occur when a person is asleep.

B. The Function of the Holy Spirit in the Revelation of God to the Prophets.

-This subject is rather obscure, yet in a number of instances we have references to the Holy Spirit and prophecy.

1. Some Biblical Passages which have a bearing on the Function of the Holy Spirit in the Revelation of God to the Prophets.

-Numbers 11:25 Moses and the 70 Elders.
"When the Spirit rested on them they prophesied."

- v.26 Two men were within the camp when they prophesied.
- v.29 Moses says, 'Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them.'

-1 Samuel 10:6 Saul meeting the company of prophets.

"The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you mightily,
and you will prophesy ..."

-1 Samuel 19:20 Saul sends messengers to take David.

"The Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul,
and they also prophesied."

v.23 "The Spirit of God came upon him [Saul] ... he
prophesied continually."

-2 Samuel 23:1 The last words of David.

v.2 "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me and His word
was on my tongue."
=> a coupling of the Spirit and His Word.

-Micah 3:8 "I am full of power by the Spirit of the
Lord ... to declare to Jacob his transgressions."

The term is not used here but this links empower-
ment of the Holy Spirit with the function of a prophet.

-2 Chronicles 15:1 "Now the Spirit of God came upon
Azariah" and he goes and prophesies.

-2 Chronicles 20:14 "Upon Jahaziel came the Spirit of
the Lord" and he prophesies.

-2 Chronicles 24:20 "The Spirit of the Lord came upon
Zechariah" and the message was a prophecy.

From texts like these, it appears that there is a direct
connection between the Spirit of God and the prophetic
function.

2. The Holy Spirit, Ecstasy, and the Prophets.

a. Mowinckel - Spirit and Ecstasy belong together.

Sigmund Mowinckel (Norway, OT scholar) is of the
opinion that:

-The activity of the Holy Spirit always has the result
of an experience of ecstasy.

-*"This ecstatic activity of the HS is found in early
Israel, and in exilic and post-exilic Israel, but not
in connection with the great writing prophets."*

-The great writing prophets all consider the possession
of the Spirit to be undesirable.

-Their emphasis is on the Word, not the Spirit.

The above thesis is found in "Journal of Biblical
Literature," v.53, p.199ff, (1934).

b. Sometimes the Holy Spirit Produces Abnormal Behavior Described as Prophecy.

- When we look the use of the term $\chi^{\tau} \lambda^{\tau} \eta^{\tau}$ we cannot deny that the Spirit produces ecstasy.
- But this is not related to the writers of historical books (Scripture).
- Is the exception rather than the rule.

In Numbers 11 (Moses and the 70 elders):

- Prophecy is probably some sort of enthusiastic praise of God.
- The Spirit takes control of men to praise God.
- This is an influence not only of words but also of actions.

1 Samuel 10:5 Saul meets the company of prophets.

- This also appears to be enthusiastic praise.

1 Samuel 19: Saul's messengers sent for David.

- The context does not suggest divine revelation.
- Rather, the Spirit took control of them to frustrate Saul's plans to kill David.

There are only a few instances where the passage indicates abnormal behavior. This implies that it is rare, yet we cannot exclude this meaning. Generally however, people spoke the Word of the Lord when the Spirit came upon them.

- We cannot always link Spirit and ecstasy, so we cannot generalize as Mowinckel does.

c. We Must not Exaggerate this into more than the Bible says.

- Mowinckel makes the band of prophets into a group of ecstatic wild-men who roamed the country of Palestine.
- Sees Canaanite influences (Wen-Amon letter).
- Reduces Israel's prophetic movement to the common phenomena of ecstatic wild-men.
- The Biblical data implies that these ecstatic cases were actually very isolated phenomena.

d. To Admit Abnormal Behavior does not Mean Derivation from Heathen Practices.

- Even granting the occurrence of abnormal behavior certainly does not force the conclusion that Israel took over heathen practices.

e. The Bible does not indicate that the coming of the Spirit on a man always brings about Abnormal Behavior.

-Biblical passages indicate that the Spirit plays an important role in prophecy, but does not always produce ecstasy.

f. Mowinckel's Contention is not True.

"The Spirit always produces ecstasy" and the Spirit "Was not present in the great writing prophets" are not true.

-There is little reference to the Spirit among the writing prophets, but the absence of comments is not proof in itself.

-It is not that the great writing prophets knew nothing about the Spirit or that they only wanted to emphasize the Word which God gave them. There is no real contrast here.

-All prophets had the Holy Spirit.

-The Spirit gives the Word and the prophets proclaim the word by the Spirit.

-Amos does not emphasize the manner in which the Word came to him, yet others do:

Micah 3:8 "I'm full of power by the Spirit of the Lord."

-Mowinckel says 'the Spirit of the Lord' phrase was added later.

Isaiah 61:1 "The Spirit of God is upon me ..." to do many things.

-Mowinckel says that this is 3rd Isaiah, rather than a statement from the early Kingdom period.

-One cannot really say that because the great writing prophets do not mention the Spirit that they have cast it aside (especially when you fudge the data).

C. In what sense may we speak of ecstasy among Israel's prophets?

1. There has always been a difference of opinion here.

Philo of Alexandria (d. 42 AD).

- "As the divine spirit came on men, the mind was driven from its home."

-Philo says this regularly happened to the prophets.

Various opinions in this century:

- "Ecstasy belongs to the essence of prophetism."
(G. Holscher)

- "Older prophets were ecstasies" but later prophecy developed beyond this form to one that cast it aside.

- "Scriptural data does not lead to the conclusion that there is any relationship between ecstasies and prophets."

2. Ecstasy is a broad concept and very different things can be understood by it.

- J. Lindblom made a distinction between 'absorption' and 'concentration' ecstasy.

a. Absorption ecstasy: "The prophet is dissolved into the divine all; his personality is fused with that of God's."

b. Concentration ecstasy: "Is produced by a radical concentration on an idea or feeling that causes normal consciousness to be lost and external senses are made more or less inoperative."

- Find this sort of thing in Eastern religions, especially the absorption ecstasy.

- Also in Greece in the cult of Dionysus.

- The Greek ἔκστασις has the idea of a change or movement outward, setting the soul free from the body.

- O.E.D. defines 'ecstasy' as "withdrawal of the soul from the body."

- The idea is not just to set loose, but to set loose to unite with the deity. The purpose of ἔκστασις is 'enthusiasmos' which comes from the Greek ἐνθεος meaning "in the deity; to come in the power of or to be possessed by the deity."

- O.E.D. defines 'enthusiasm' as "possession by a god; frenzy."

The idea of being absorbed into God is familiar to Plato, Neo-Platonists, and mystics.

- BUT it is foreign to Israel and the OT.
- In the OT, the distance between man and God is so great that there is no possibility of man being absorbed into God.
- Fellowship is possible but not fusion.

- Holscher's idea is therefore not consistent with the OT as fusion is not a Biblical concept.

Does concentration ecstasy function within the data of the OT?

- There may be similarities in formal characteristics (like the intensity of the message).
- But any form of explanation must be lifted beyond merely a psychological concentration to a level of revelation (this causes the intensity).

(10/2/81)

3. Certainly Not Everything Labeled as Ecstatic Behavior on the part of the Canonical Prophets can be so Considered.

a. Symbolic Acts.

-Example:

Ezekiel 4:9-17	Lived on loaves of bread.
4:4-6	Laid on one side to show iniquity.
5:1	Shaved off head and beard.

- These were means used by the prophet to draw attention to his message. His own consciousness was active.
- These were not done in a trance or ecstasy.

b. Strong Emotional Expression.

-Isaiah 21:3-4 Isaiah's response to the message of judgment from Babylon which he is to bring to the people.

-This affects his body emotionally and physically because he is aware of the sufferings to come, not because he is ecstatic.

-Jeremiah 23:9 "Bones tremble, heart broken."

-Jeremiah is strongly aware of the seriousness of his message.

=> Prophets were not ecstatic most of the time.

c. First Person Style of Prophetic Speech.

- The prophets speak not only in the name of God or for God, but as if God were speaking directly.
- Amos 3:1 "... I will punish you for your iniquities."
- Holscher: "Here is proof that prophets when they speak identify themselves with God" (=> fusion).
- This is just a style used by the prophets. Is another means of showing that they are speaking God's word.
- Example: 2 Kings 18:29 Jerusalem attacked by Assy. forces and Sennacherib sends a messenger. This messenger speaks possessively for the king.
 - Problem: Hebrew says 'his hand', but Septuagint, Syriac and Targums say 'my hand'. However, the context shows other uses of the possessive idea.

d. The Labeling of the Prophets as Mad Men.

- 2 Kings 9:11 (Prophet comes and anoints Jehu king).
 - Someone says, "Why did this mad fellow come to you?"
 - Jehu's answer, "You know very well the man and his talk."
 - This remark is made by someone who is making fun of the prophet.
- John 10:20 (speaking about Jesus):
 - Many said "He is demon-possessed, why do you listen to Him?"
 - Not that Jesus was raving but because of what he said.
 - Jesus and the prophets had a message which people did not want to hear, thus they slandered them.
 - May have been some rare exceptional behavior but this was not usual.

4. The Form of Ecstatic Behavior most Frequently Displayed Among Israel's Prophets is that of the Visionary Experience - Not Wild Abnormal Behavior.

-If you must attribute ecstatic behavior to the prophets, that form is the vision.

-Vision is the principal means of divine revelation of God to the prophets.

-There are varying degrees of use: Ezekiel had many visions, Jeremiah had relatively few, but records many sermons.

-Most prophets have references to visionary experiences, but their frequency is apparently dependent on the content of the message.

-Some critics explain visions as:

1. A literary device without actual reality.
2. Hallucination that arose out of the psyche of the prophet himself.

-These both deny divine revelation, since the Scripture says that visions are a primary means of getting divine revelation to the prophet.

-What is a 'vision'?

Young: A vision is like a dream, but in an awakened condition. The consciousness of the prophet is shut off from the surrounding world and he perceives a spiritual world which is not seen by normal sense perception.

-Some say that prophets lost their own consciousness during the vision.

-Augustine: A vision is "not removal of consciousness but the loosing of consciousness from the normal body senses so that God could make known what He wanted to make known."

-The normal ear and eye do not perceive.

-In a sense we can term this ecstasy, but we must be careful.

-Acts 10:10 (Peter and the sheet):

"He fell into a trance" (Greek - ἐκστασις)

Peter here has an experience similar to the prophets.

-Acts 22:17-18 (Paul in the temple)

"I fell into a trance (Greek - ἔκστασις)
and I saw the Lord speaking ..."

Paul has a similar experience.

V. The Preaching of the Prophets.

A. General Remarks.

1. The Prophets were First and Foremost Proclaimers of God's Word.

-The prophets received their divine revelation not to keep it to themselves but to tell others.

-This was done mainly through preaching.

-The prophetic books are a written record of their preaching.

-The prophets delivered their messages in a clear understandable way; that is, in clearly developed and understandable words, not in a frenzy or raving manner.

-Gave sober, carefully reasoned statements.

2. The Message of the Prophets was a Faithful Proclamation of God's Revelation, but not to the Exclusion of a Personal Element in the form of its Presentation.

-What is the relationship between the revelation of God and the proclamation of the prophets?

-The problem here is the human instrument.

-We must not make a tension or division between revelation and proclamation.

-The Proclamation was a faithful representation of what God revealed to the prophets.

-But we do not want to exclude the personal element in the proclamation.

-The personal element is used in the proclamation (this is seen in the Scripture):

-See differences in language style, choice of wording; apparently these are effected by the personality of the prophet.

- Jeremiah - Is very sensitive.
- Amos - Is an agrarian.
- Isaiah - See very little of his inner personality or feelings.

- God incorporates and utilizes the prophet's personality.
- Here is an element of mystery which cannot be fully explained.
- We find this problem whenever deity and humanity get close together: Other Scripture writers, Christ, etc.
- The point is: Where do you put this mystery?
 - Henry Krabbendam at International Council on Biblical Inerrancy (1979, Chicago) gave an analysis of Berkouwer (published in "Inerrancy").
 - In Berkouwer's earlier years he held a view of inspiration almost identical to Warfield.
 - Later, he turns and opposes Warfield.
 - Berkouwer has shifted where he puts the mystery:
 - Early mystery: Scripture is identical with the infallible Word of God inspite of its human mediation.
 - The mystery is that God made the Book infallible despite *men*.
 - Later mystery: Scripture is used by God as His word inspite of its fallible humanity (which it shares with other writings). ie, the message of redemption stands despite errors.
 - Now the mystery is that the Book is fallible yet true.
 - Scripture is now less than inerrant yet it is still God's Word.
 - Berkouwer apparently conceded points to liberals which forced him to shift his position. Now he clings to the message of redemption despite Biblical fallability.

B. Some Formal Characteristics of the Prophetic Proclamation.

1. The Messages are direct and living - Not Abstract and Dry.

This is obvious when you read them:

- They are not formal academic lectures.
- They speak in a vivid forceful way to the conscience of the people of their day. Examples:

-Jeremiah 7:1 (The message of Jeremiah at the gate of the temple): Israel was so taken by their being chosen as God's people that they thought they were invulnerable. The Babylonian captivity is imminent. God is calling them to repent so that they will not be taken away.

-Joel 2:1 A striking description of a locust plague. A picture of God's judgment at the end times.

-Nahum 2 (The fall of Ninevah).

2. The Prophets often Utilize a Play on Words to get a Point Across.

-These 'puns' are generally lost in translation.

-Isaiah 5:7 "... He looked for judgment but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry."

וַיִּקְוֶה לְדָשׁוּט וַיִּקְרָא וַיִּבְרַח
וַיִּקְרָא וַיִּבְרַח וַיִּקְרָא וַיִּבְרַח

-Isaiah 7:9 "If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established."

אֲמַן לֹא תִבְרָא כִּי לֹא תִבְרָא כִּי לֹא תִבְרָא

-These are puns because they share the same verbal root but use different stems.

-Jeremiah 23:33 (Following Septuagint and Vulgate)
"When one of this people or a prophet or a priest asks you, 'What is the Lord's burden?' Then you shall say to them, 'You are the burden! And I will cast you off,' says the Lord."

-The Hebrew in back of the Septuagint and the Vulgate is apparently:

אָפֶשׁוּׁם ׀ אָפֶשׁוּׁם ׀ אָפֶשׁוּׁם ׀ אָפֶשׁוּׁם ׀ אָפֶשׁוּׁם - אָפֶשׁוּׁם

"What is the Lord's burden?" "You are his burden!"

"Burden" can mean 'what is carried' or 'a pronouncement' (oracle), as in Malachi 1:1.

M.T. used in KJV and NIV:

אָפֶשׁוּׁם - אָפֶשׁוּׁם - אָפֶשׁוּׁם : אָפֶשׁוּׁם ? אָפֶשׁוּׁם : אָפֶשׁוּׁם אָפֶשׁוּׁם
"what burden?" : Then you shall say to : "What is the burden
: them : of the LORD?"

Where you divide the letters makes the difference!

-In English the word 'burden' does not have this same double meaning, so the point does not come across very strongly.

3. The Prophets often Utilize Poetic Expression.

-Is striking how much of the prophets is poetic. Great sections are written in poetic form. NIV and other modern translations use prose type set to indicate poetry - do not notice this in KJV.

-In Hebrew poetry:

-Rhyme is not important.

-Parallelism is the most important characteristic.

-Each verse consists of 2 parts:

-The second part either repeats the first in different words or reverses or builds upon the previous part.

-3 types of parallelism in Hebrew poetry:

(1) Simultaneous - repeats.

(2) Synthetic - builds.

(3) Antithetical - contrasts.

-Examples from Isaiah 2:2-4

"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
To the house of the God of Jacob." (1)

"For the law will go forth from Zion,
And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." (1)

"And He will judge between the nations,
And will render decisions for many peoples." (1)

"And they will hammer their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning hooks." (2)

"Nation will not lift up sword against nation,
And never again will they learn war." (2)

4. The Prophet's often use Imagery or Figurative Language.

-Images and figures are used to present the message in a forceful way.

-Isaiah 28 (Pronouncement of woe on the N. Kingdom).

-The capital city is a crown on the head of a drunken man

-Destruction will come as a hailstorm.

-How do we interpret these figures? Will discuss later.

-Isaiah 5:1-7 Extended imagery.

v.7 Israel is a vineyard. God did everything for Israel.

v.7 Also has a play on words.

-Ezekiel also uses many allegories (ie, Ezk. 27 pictures Tyre as a merchant ship).

C. Some Characteristics of the Content of the Prophetic Proclamation.

1. The Prophets do not Bring a New Religion or Morality.

-They do not preach newly discovered 'truth'.

-They emphasize what God has previously revealed to Israel.

-Give a deepening and further development of what had already been revealed (progressive redemptive history).

-The prophets were not innovators but reformers.

-Their basic emphasis was to turn the people back to the Law. Their messages bring no central changes.

-Wellhausen and critical scholars think:

a. The prophets were innovators.

b. 'D' document in 621 BC reflects prophetic teaching.

c. The prophets wrote first, then the Law was written.

-Whereas the Biblical view is that the Law preceded the prophets (who are calling the people back to the foundation of the Law).

[Comment from Joe Mullen:

Today there is mainly an emphasis in the eschatology of the prophets and many Xians miss the main emphasis of the prophets.]

2. The Message of the Prophets Centers in Four Areas.

-These areas are not easily separated; we find these elements but all are interrelated.

a. Religious or Theological:

-Teaching about God, His relationship to man and His people, and warnings against idolatry and religious formalism.

-General comments:

1) General teaching about God in the prophetic works emphasizes:

- God's oneness.
- His power and sovereignty (The Creator and maintainer of all things who governs by providence).
- God's Holiness and justice (He judges sin).
- God's love and mercy (He seeks out His people, draws them, and sends prophets to them).

2) General teachings about God's relationship to His people.

a) The emphasis is directed towards the unique covenant relationship.

-The idea of the covenant is pervasive as a background to the prophetic message.

-However, the term ברית occurs only 65 times, 11 times in Isaiah, 23 times in Jeremiah, 18 times in Daniel, 5 in Hosea, 2 in Zechariah, 6 in Malachi; and not at all in Obadiah, Joel, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Haggai.

-Yet even in these books it is still the underlying principle.

-Critics claim that we can ascribe this idea to a prophet only if the term is used in their writing.

- Walther Eichrodt "The Theology of the O.T.," v.1, preface; "The crucial point is not the occurrence or absence of the term כְּרִיב but that all the acts of the O.T. rest on the assumption of the covenant."
- The actual occurrence is a superficial basis; the covenant relationship is a foundational concept underneath their writings.

-In this covenant relationship is the basis for:

1. God's right to the worship and obedience of his people.
2. God's right to punish and curse their disobedience.

- The prophets point people back to the Law and condemn false worship, idolatry, and religious formalism that is not from the heart.
- The goal was love and devotion which expressed itself in loving obedience.

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b. Morality and Social Relationships.

- The prophets give these matters more attention than one might expect.
- Expressed a great concern for injustice.
- Social relationships were closely related with one's relationship to God:
 - If you loved God, you would love you neighbor.
 - True religion involved concern for social justice.
- The origin of social evil is caused by Israel's apostasy.

1) The Prophets Speak Out Against Materialism as seen in Exploitation of the Poor and Weak for Personal Gain.

- Jeremiah 22:13 To defend the poor and needy - "Is not that what it means to know Me?"
The term "to know Me" has covenantal connotations (will develop this later).
- Amos 8:4-7 "You who trample the needy" and "cheat with dishonest scales."

2) The Prophets Speak Out Against Corruption in the Courts.

- Isaiah 1:23 All love bribes and chase after gifts.
- Isaiah 5:21-23 Judges "who justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the rights of the ones who are in the right."
- Micah 3:9-12 "Her leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe."
- The Law explicitly denounces bribes: Exodus 23:8, Deut. 16:19. Corruption of judges is warned against.

3) Prophets Speak Out Against the Misplaced Values of the People as Exhibited in Their Manners and Life.

-Isaiah 3:16-26 Description of fine clothing which is the main concern of the people.

This is not just moralism or social reform. All these emphases are closely related to calling the people back to the covenant.

Nothing in other cultures parallels the concern of the Hebrew prophets for moral and social relationships.

c. Political Issues.

-Prophets speak frequently on political issues, both internally and externally concerning foreign nations.

1) Internal.

-The relationship between the prophet and the king stands out in Israel.

-The monarchy (kingship) came into existence under the prophet Samuel.

-This laid the foundation of prophetic authority over the king.

-The king remained subject to the prophet because the prophet proclaimed the Word of the Lord.

-Example: Elijah appears before Ahab unsummoned.
Predicts a 3.5 year drought as judgment.

(One of the Deut. covenant curses was drought.)

-Vos: "The prophets were the guardians of the unfolding theocracy. They are to keep it as a true representation of the kingdom of God. Often the prophet addresses himself to the king rather than to the people. On many occasions the prophets seek the king and tell him to turn to God. At other times the king asks the prophet about the will of God."

2) External Foreign Relations.

a) Opposition to alliances with heathen nations.

1) The prophets view this as evidence of a lack of trust and confidence in the Lord.

-Were trying to find security in human alliances.

2) Often such alliances involved compromise religiously.

- Treaties involved relationships with foreign gods.
- Marriage was an influence toward apostasy. Examples:

Ahab and Jezebel (Syrian) Jezebel introduced her prophets and gods into Israel.
Solomon and Egyptian wife. He built a temple for her gods.

-Isaiah 30:1-5,7 and 31:1 "Woe to those who trust in alliance with Egypt but do not look to God or seek the Lord."

-2 Chron. 16:7-9 "Because you relied on the king of Syria and have not relied on the Lord your God" the Syrians escaped. God "strongly supports those whose heart is completely His."

-When Israel sought security in foreign alliances, they found the opposite of what they expected.

-Isaiah 7:4-9 "Kings of Syria and Israel were attacking Ahaz (Judah) at Jerusalem. God tells Isaiah to tell Ahaz not to fear 'these two stubs of smoldering firebrands' because God will not let them take Judah.

b) The Prophets Prophesied Concerning the Fall of Foreign Nations.

- Enemy powers of Syria, Assyria, Egypt, Babylon.
 - All seen as instruments in the hands of God to carry out His judgments on His people.
 - Fulfillment of the covenant curse.
 - This is why prophets like Isaiah had no sympathy with the people who tried to throw off the yoke of slavery instead of accepting God's judgment.
 - But then he also predicted the rise of Cyrus who would judge the Babylonians when they got too haughty.
- God controls the nations for His own purposes.
(2 Kings 18:19-37 is psychological warfare on the part of Rabshakeh. Not that he actually had a message from God).

d. Eschatology and Messianic Expectation.

-This is the prophetic emphasis most often thought of, but it is not the only emphasis.

-Freeman p.126 points out that there are two streams of Messianic prophecy, all of which developed out of the message to Abraham:

"I will make of thee a great nation" (Gen. 12:2) and "in thee will all the nations be blessed" (Gen 12:3)

1) "I will make of thee a great nation." Freeman says this "emphasizes the glorious future of the nation or kingdom of Israel, ruled over by a Davidic monarch, the Messianic king."

2) "In thee will all the nations be blessed." This 'emphasizes the work of the Messiah as the suffering servant, to be humiliated and slain on behalf of the people.'

-Thus the first advent of Christ is as a suffering servant, and the second advent will be as the reigning king. (Not entirely independent as Christ is reigning already in a preliminary sense).

-How do you relate some of the prophecies of the kingdom to Israel and the church? Where is the fulfillment?

-The framework in which you set these prophecies makes a difference in how you interpret them. Will discuss later.

[Incidentally, these same four emphases are evident in the NT also. The political emphasis is different because of the times, but the other three are clear.

cf. Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is contrasting the distortion of the OT by the traditions of the Pharisees with the real OT law principles. "Eye for an eye" was given in a judicial setting. The principle of equal punishment for a crime. People had taken it out of this courtroom context and were using it for personal revenge (perhaps as the 'minimum' revenge limit).]

VI. True and False Prophets.

A. Statement of the Problem.

- The prophets themselves possessed an immediate and certain knowledge that their message was from God.
- But the people who heard him could not tell this.
- They had no immediate certainty that a given message was the Word of God.

-Issue: How could the people tell if what the prophet said was really of divine origin?

But wouldn't "self-witness" be sufficient? Prophecies were usually introduced with "Thus says the LORD."

Dilemma: False prophets also used the same formula and claimed to speak for God. Example:

Ezekiel 13:6 False prophets 'who are saying, "The LORD declares" when the LORD has not sent them, yet they hope for the fulfillment of their word.'

- False prophets would proclaim something from their own hearts. These liars would get people to trust them.

Thus this is not a theoretical distinction, but was related to everyday life. Why?

- Deut. 18:19 "Whoever will not listen to My words which he (the prophet) will speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him."
- True prophets came with a message from God and the people were responsible to respond to it.
- The prophets often called the people to action and to deeds. Example:

- Jeremiah said that the people should submit to Babylon, which was not a popular view.
- Hananiah says just the opposite: In 2 years God will end the exile.
- Both use the words: "Thus says the LORD!"

- This question appears in Deut. 18:21. After it is said that the people are responsible (v.19), then we find:

"And you may say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the Lord has spoken?'"

v.22 Describes one of the tests [if the prediction comes true]. Will discuss this more later.

B. Validation Criteria for True Prophecy.

1. Signs and Wonders.

-Often pointed to as an important distinguishing feature of true prophecy. Messages of a prophet could be accompanied by a validating sign. This was important,

BUT in itself it is not a sufficient test!

-Because false prophets can sometimes also do signs.

-Deut. 13:3 Israel was warned not to be blinded by signs or wonders when that sign accompanied a message to go after other gods.

-Thus signs and wonders are not a final proof in and of themselves. They do play a role, but it is secondary.

2. Moral Character of the Prophet Himself.

-Is Pointed to as a factor to determine if the person is a true prophet. cf. Freeman, p. 104, "Introduction to the OT Prophets":

"False prophets were characterized by their low morality; hence, true and false prophets could be distinguished by a personal or intrinsic test. The false prophet was a mercenary who prophesied for hire; he was a drunkard; ... and he was generally immoral in life and conduct. Thus, in a real sense, the moral character of the prophet himself would attest to his authority. He who professed a divine commission from the Holy God of Israel must reflect conduct and character consistent with that claim."

-Vannoy thinks that Freeman has overstated the case.

-Just because many false prophets were characterized by outward immorality, one cannot assume that this was true of all the false prophets. For example, we read nothing about immorality in Hananiah's life.

-His false prophecy may have come linked with a strong and good life so that he could lead many astray.

-Also, we cannot say that the true prophets were sinless men. Isaiah and Jeremiah led good lives and gave true prophecy, but:

-Balaam was a true prophet and also a heathen soothsayer.

-The old man who deceived the prophet from Judah (1 Kings 13) lied but then gave true prophecy.

-Hence character is not a sufficient test in and of itself. It can be helpful, but is not decisive.

[Question about the prophetic 'office'. Vannoy: Many people can perform the prophetic 'function' at specific times, like David and Deborah. But it is not a position where one is appointed and anointed for life, like kings and priests were. There can be full-time prophets like Jeremiah and Isaiah, who have a full-time 'function', but Vannoy finds the term 'office' misleading and unscriptural.]

3. Fulfillment of Prophecy.

-Deut. 18:21-22 alludes to this: If a prophet speaks in God's name and "if the thing does not come about or come true, that is a thing which the Lord has not spoken."

-This functions only in a negative sense: When a prediction does not come to pass then we know it is not from God.

-Deut. 13:2-3 adds to this: Even if a prediction does come true, it is not sufficient proof in and of itself.

-Also, this criteria is of use only with respect to predictive prophecies and could be utilized only at some future time when the prophesy was not fulfilled.

-Thus, it is not useful at the present time when the prophesy is given.

-Criteria: The non-fulfillment of prophecy is proof that it was not from God, but that does not give one a right to conclude that fulfillment is absolute proof.

-Hence fulfillment may be a sign of true prophecy.

-Is important, but is not final (but cannot be minimized) as God alone possesses knowledge of the future so He alone can truly predict the future.

[1 Samuel 3:19 "The LORD let none of Samuel's words fall to the ground, and all Israel KNEW that Samuel was a prophet from the Lord." Track record - accumulation gives weight to validity? Vannoy: Yes, but Nathan in 2 Samuel trips in recommending to build the temple.]

4. Conformity of the Message to Previous Revelation.

-A true prophet always spoke in agreement with the revelation which Israel had already received in both the Law and former prophets.

-Any deviation from previous revelation means that it is a false prophecy.

-This is and was something ALWAYS available for testing by the people, hence it was a good standard since:

- a. No waiting is necessary,
- b. It can be applied immediately.
- c. Do not have to judge character, motives, etc.
- d. Every Israelite could know the Law and former prophets sufficiently enough to be able to check the conformity of a new revelation.

-Deut. 13:2-3 supports this: "If he then says, let us go after other gods, do not listen to him."

-Signs and wonders must be judged by teaching and doctrine, not doctrine by signs and wonders.

-Example: Jeremiah 28:2-3 Hananiah's false prophecy of the exile's return in 2 years. In v.7-8 Jeremiah notes that it is contrary to all that the former prophets had said. Jeremiah's prophecy of judgment agrees with the former prophets and Hananiah's does not.

-Thesis: Hananiah is predicting peace without repentance. No former prophet was done this. They have all predicted exile against a sinful nation, as has Jeremiah.

-Jeremiah also gives a validating prophecy to show that he is a true prophet (v.16).

-Isaiah 8:19-20 When the people say "consult mediums ... should not a people consult their God? ... To the Law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no light in them."

-Prophecy is the proclamation of God's word, so the best check for a prophecy with previous revelation in God's word.

Objection 1:

- Someone may object saying this test will not help because a revelation is the unveiling of new things and a new thing cannot be checked against the former things because it is different from the old things. We might label something new as 'false' when it really is not.
- This is not as serious as it sounds...
 - God's revelation is never totally separate from what precedes it.
 - We find a constant development and growth on an already laid foundation. We see progression with continuity.
 - We can expect this continuity to continue.

Objection 2:

- Previous revelation is not sufficient for testing certain special prophecies, such as when Isaiah predicts to King Hezekiah that Sennacherib would not capture Jerusalem; or when Jeremiah predicts that Babylon's power would only last 70 years.
- Such details of a prophecy by themselves cannot be compared with previous revelation.
- However, such details usually are not isolated, but come in a broader context. We can find validation within that context.
- Example: Jeremiah 28 How could the people know that Hananiah was false and Jeremiah was true?
 - Because Hananiah predicted peace without repentance while Jeremiah predicted judgment. Jeremiah's thesis agreed with previous revelation, Hananiah's did not.
- [Thought: Jeremiah says, "If H's prediction comes true, then we will know he is a true prophet" => Deut. 18 has some positive force?]
- Conclusion: The prophets needed certainty about every detail which they gave in prophecy.
- But listeners needed only to be convinced that the basic features were in agreement with previous revelation.
- In this way certain details that were unverifiable were supported by their context.
- [Thought: What about charismatics who 'prophecy' stuff which is in general agreement with Scripture, or is always untestable (witness to this guy, etc.)?]

Jeremiah 26 God tells Jeremiah to go to the temple and give a message predicting judgment.

- v.6 Says Jerusalem will be destroyed like Shiloh was.
- v.8-9 Under the leading of the priests and false prophets the people turn against Jeremiah, saying that his message cannot be true. They plan to kill him. How could anyone dare to proclaim such blasphemy?
- v.12-15 Jeremiah is confident, replies that the Lord has spoken to him. Warns the people that they are responsible to listen and to obey.
- v.16-19 Some rise to Jeremiah's defense by appealing to previous prophecy of Micah who predicted a similar message about 100 years before. Why should they kill Jeremiah when Micah was not killed?

-Thus the prophesy of Jeremiah is compared with that of a former prophet and then accepted.

-Could have also looked back to the covenantal blessings and curses in Deut. for general confirmation.

-This criteria is the most important. The other three (signs and wonders, moral character of the prophet, and fulfillment of prophesy) all have a large role to play, but they are not sufficient in themselves. A conformity to previous revelation is most important.

[-G.C. Aalders - "Criteria are based on the character of false and true prophecy. A false prophet sought to conform as much as possible to the true prophet in formal correspondence, but the content of the message is where they deviate. This is the result of the enmity of the human heart against God."]

5. Enlightenment by God's Spirit.

-Conformity with previous revelation of a message is the most objective test, but even this does not give an automatic or mechanical stamp of absolute confirmation with certainty.

-In addition to objective confirmation, there needs to be a subjective enlightenment by the Holy Spirit.

-Need an "eye to see previous truth", understand it and to see how present revelation corresponds to this.

-Only as the Holy Spirit works can true and false be clearly seen.

-However, man is not excused:

-In objective, divine revelation there is sufficient light to remove all excuses.

-However, the Holy Spirit is required in order for a person to accept the revelation and to bow to it.

VII. Prophet and Cult in Ancient Israel.

- The term 'cult' = The visible and audible expressions of worship. Outward religious rites.
- What is the relation of the prophet to the cult (ie, to these outward forms of worship {the sacrifices and the temple})?
- This has been a major question in recent times.

A. The View that the Prophets were Anti-cultic.

1. Explication of the View.

- There was a time (>25 years ago) when the general critical view was that there was a strong antithesis between the prophets and the cult.
- The prophets were straight anti-cultic:
 - Were against 'cult' itself, not just a particular form.
 - The prophets promoted a system that called for justice, loving one's neighbors, and high moral standards.
- They replaced the cult with morality alone, not just a morality which was above or behind the cult.
- The prophet proclaimed an ethical, moral religion which was cultless.
- cf. Paul Volz "Moses and His Work" (1932). Thesis:
 - The prophets sought a return to the original Mosaic religion which was cultless.
 - The rise of cultic activities in Israel came out of Canaanite influence.
 - This was a decline from the Mosaic heights, as the Mosaic religion was originally cultless.
- Volz was a follower of Wellhausen.
- Thought that all material in the Pentateuch was from after the exile. Ceremonial, cultic aspects were very late, from the P (Priestly) document, and thus was derived from the Canaanites.
- Ludwig Kohler "Theology of the OT" p.72,181-182.
 - Adopts this view.
 - Israel took their cult over from the Canaanites and for this reason the prophets opposed them.
 - The prophets promoted social justice.

2. Scripture Adduced for Support of This View.

-Advocates focus on passages in the prophets:

- a. Amos 5:21-27 "I hate, I reject your festivals ... even though you offer the burnt offerings ... I will not accept them. But let justice roll down like water."
- b. Hosea 6:6 "I desired mercy, not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."
- c. Isaiah 1:11-17 "What are your multiplied sacrifices to me? Bring your worthless offerings no longer ..."
- d. Micah 6:6-8 "With what shall I come to the Lord? Does the Lord delight in 1000's of rams? ... What does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God?"
- e. Jeremiah 7:21-23 God says, "For I did not speak to your fathers ... in the day I brought them out of ... Egypt, concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices, but ... (instead) obey My voice and walk in the way I commanded you"

3. Assessment of the View.

-We cannot deny that these above passages are strong statements with respect to the cult, but should we understand them as the critics say - that the prophets were anti-cultic and promoting a cultless religion?

-Even though these statements appear to be anti-cultic there are other pronouncements which were not.

-Isaiah spoke out in chapter 1, but in Isaiah 2:2-3 he speaks of God dwelling in His temple in Zion.

-Isaiah 6:1 Isaiah's vision and call occurred in the temple. A coal from the altar cleanses his lips, etc.

-This and many other positive references show that Isaiah had a high regard for the temple symbols.

-Jeremiah 32:34 "The house which is called by My name."

-This phrase is often used by Jeremiah. Positive sense.

-Hosea 9:4 One of the disasters on Israel in captivity is that they will not be able to offer sacrifices.

-Thus this model is too simple:

- a. One cannot say that the prophets were anti-cultic when they make positive references like these.

b. Volt's assertion contradicts the Pentateuch; only by ascribing all of the rites to later writing can one conceive of such an idea. Israel's religion was never cultless.

-Philosophically, the whole idea of a cultless religion is strange.

c. Is religion possible without a cult?

-If so, this makes ethics absolutized to the highest good, which then becomes moralism, a destroyer of true religion.

-How can true religion be possible without a cult?

-True religion is fellowship with God, expressing itself in human acts directed toward God.

-Both private and communal, public acts (prayer, etc).

-This goes beyond simple social moral actions.

-The Pentateuch says that the cult was a gift of God to the people. Key passage:

-Leviticus 17:11 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls."

-The essence of the problem was in Israel's practice:

-What the prophets were condemning was the heathenism which had entered into Israel's cult, combined with the formalistic concept of a ritualistic system, ie. "opus operatum".

-If you go through the act, it automatically and mechanically produces the result.

-God's blessing is guaranteed if these things are done.

-Syncretism and opus operatum were the two problems.

-This is the background in which we need to understand the prophets' statements.

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-Examples of heathenism entering Israel's cult:

Hosea indicates that Baal worship was prevalent in the Northern Kingdom.

2:5-8 Fruit of the land ascribed to Baals, not to Lord.

2:16 The worship of the Lord had fallen to such a low degree that He was thought of as one of the Baals.

4:11-14 Baal worship combined many practices: Temple prostitution, idolatry, fertility rites.

-This is the reason for the prophet being against the cult: It was syncretized and corrupt.

- 8:4-5 "Throw out your calf-idol, O Samaria!"
The people are doing these outward things to get results, but they are worthless. Because of corruption, it makes no difference if the people sacrifice.
- 6:6 "I desire mercy, not sacrifice ..."

Isaiah 1:11 "I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls ..."

- Why do you sacrifice when I am sick of rituals?
- 1:15 "Your hands are full of blood"
In doing these things you are only condemning yourself (by sinning more).
- 1:16 "Wash and make yourselves clean"
-Needs to be a life of obedience to the covenant obligations.
-Rituals do not work if you have bloody hands.

- The people had turned from the Lord in their hearts, and were merely going through these ritual forms.
-This was an abomination to the Lord.

Amos 5:21-27 and Jeremiah 7:21-27 are the strongest ones used to support the anti-cult idea.

Amos 5:23 "I hate, I despise your religious feasts ... your burnt offerings ... I will not accept."
v.24 "But let justice roll on like a river ..."

-Note the contrast between ritual and the practice of justice.

v.25 "Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings forty years in the desert, O house of Israel?"

- Opinions are divided as to the resultant meaning of v.26. How does the answer expected by the question (v.25) connect to the arguments?
- Is Amos expecting a positive or a negative answer to this rhetorical question from God?
- Does a negative answer mean that the critics are right about Hosea being anti-cult?

Vannoy agrees with J. Ridderbos (OT professor), father of N.H.R. (OT - Vannoy studied with him) and H.N.R. (NT).

- Ridderbos: The response intended is "No".
-V.25 builds on v.22 and continues.

-The not-bringing of sacrifices is given as proof that the bringing of sacrifices is not the primary and only thing that the Lord asks of Israel.

-But if we use this 'no' answer, does this contradict the Pentateuch - that sacrifices were instituted at Sinai with at least the partial intent that they be carried out in the wilderness? After all, doesn't:

-Numbers 16:46 "fire from the altar" => sacrifices?

-Rid: During the wilderness journey it was not possible to engage in the sacrificial system in its entirety.

-It was very tied with the settlement in Canaan (offering the first fruits of the land, etc.).

-Apart from Numbers 16:46 there is no explicit mention of sacrifice being offered in the 38 years of the wilderness wandering (although there is not much on this period anyway).

-Conclusion: The regular and complete observance of the ritual laws was not possible and was not done.

Riderbos: Possibly some sacrifices but not all.

-Example from Vannoy:

Circumcision was not practiced in the wilderness.

-Possibly because the people were under God's wrath and so it was not appropriate.

-Numbers 14:34 For 40 years "you shall bear your iniquities and you will know what it means to have me against you."

-If this approach is correct, the purpose of Amos 5:25 in asking this question is less absolute than it used to be.

-Amos is not implying that much was lacking in the ritual observance.

-Rather, is implying that the rituals do not have the significance which the people have attached to them.

-People thought that they were essential and automatic.

-But the essence of true religion is not simply ritual observance; Amos is reminding them that the wilderness period was an example of that.

-ie, "No, it was not just the rituals that established our special relationship with God."

-Others would say the intended answer to v.25 is "Yes" but they give the passage the same thrust.

-J.A. Motyer "The Day of the Lion", p.134-136.

-After v.25 question, everyone shouted 'yes'. Moses had received the laws and the people were observing it.

-But Amos is attacking a false departmentalism:

"Have you ONLY offered sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness?"

-Implies that they did more (ie, were more obedient).

-Need not just the form, but also the life style.

-Not much difference between Ridderbos and Motyer.

-This verse does not give the critical view much support.

[v.25 is not grammatically clear if it is a statement or a question (cf. NASB note). Doesn't make much difference. Verb tense problem: Vannoy says v.25 is past, v.26 is present (} consecutive) and v.27 is future (also a } consecutive). When v.26 is present or future, this makes it the cause for v.27 (nice).]

Jeremiah 7:21-23 Another difficult passage.

v.21 God says "Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat flesh."

v.22 "For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of ... Egypt, concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices."

Vos, "Biblical Theology," p.272 "Critics contrast v.23 with v.21-22: These are the things God does require, "Obey My voice, and I will be your God and you will be My people and you will walk in all the way which I commanded you, that it may be well with you."

-The critics think that Jeremiah felt that the Mosaic legislation imposed no ritual demands on Israel.

-They assume that Jeremiah had a hand in the Deuteronomic reform-movement, which laid the Deuteronomic code upon the people. (ie, if the Deut. code was formulated in 621 BC, this was the same time as Jeremiah. Wellhausen figures that Jer. was initially in this reform, then cut himself from it, as shown in Jer. 8:8 'The lying pen of the scribes has made the law of the Lord into a lie.'

-But then Jer. is accusing himself of this...

-Further, Jer. has positive comments on sacrifice in 17:26 and 33:11.

-Vos solution: Jeremiah's view of sacrifice is to be understood from Exodus 19:5. "At the very first approach of the Lord to Israel with the offer of the covenant ... God refrained from saying anything about sacrifices, but simply staked the entire agreement ... on loyalty and obedience to Him. The covenant does not ultimately rest on the sacrifices but the sacrifices rest on the covenant."

-Hence Jer. 7:22 is correct: God did not first speak to them about sacrifices; He spoke to them first about loyalty and obedience (v.23).

(10/16/81)

B. The View that the Prophets were Cultic Functionaries.

1. Explication of the View.

Today, even among critical scholars, the feeling is that the prophets were not fundamentally opposed to the cult (in the way that the early scholars thought).

-Now the tendency is to relate the prophet and the cult so closely that the prophet was an official cult functionary, like the priest.

-The prophet's place was at the temple or local sanctuary or altar and he performed his prophetic function in connection with the official cult observances.

-Thus the prophet and cult were not in antithesis because he was a functional part of it.

Background and Development.

-Promoted initially by Scandinavian scholars.

-Sigmund Mowinckel (Swedish) Series of studies on the Psalms: III. "Cult Prophecies and Prophetic Psalms," (1923).

-In Psalms often find God speaking directly in 1st person.

Psalm 75:2 "When I shall receive the congregation, I will judge uprightly."

Psalm 81:6 "I removed his shoulder from the burden ... You called in trouble, I delivered you, I answered you."

-Mowinckel infers that form and style of these Psalms is the same as in prophetic writing.

-Concludes: Psalms with few exceptions originated in the cult, in the context of public worship. 1st person words were spoken by prophets who had a part in the public liturgy (Mow. called them cult prophets).

-1st p. sing. in these Psalms is a prophet who brings an oral response, a contemporary word of God to the people as they are gathered in worship.

-This necessitates the presence of the prophet at the temple during the festivals. In addition to priests who performed sacrifices, there was an oracle bearer who spoke the word of God.

-Priest and prophet represent two different offices in the temple service.

"The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel" Aubrey Johnson,
p.60 "אֲדָוָה prophet was a representative of the people
and of Yahweh."

- Functioned both to offer prayer and give divine oracle.
- The prophets were a part of the temple personnel.

p.74 Summary: considerable Biblical evidence shows
that during the monarchy אֲדָוָה was an important
figure in the personnel of the cultus, esp. in Jerusalem.
-Function was to promote welfare of the people.
-Gave oracles and addressed God in prayer.
=> Prophet had an official place as a cult functionary.

2. Scripture Adduced for Support of this View.

cf. Young, "My Servants the Prophets"

-Texts are hardly convincing for the far-reaching
implications of the theory.

- 1 Samuel 3 Prophet Samuel linked with Shiloh.
- 1 Samuel 9 Prophet Samuel linked with Ramah.

-They reason Samuel is a cult prophet because he is
linked with these sites and sacrifices.

- Prophets and priests are frequently mentioned together.
Isaiah 28:7 "The prophet and priest have erred through
strong drink."
Jeremiah 4:9 "The priest shall be astounded, the
prophet shall wonder."

- The appearance of the prophet in the temple.

Jeremiah 7 Jer. told to go to the temple and proclaim
message.

3. Assessment of the View.

The basis for the view is largely inferential.

-No explicit passages which present the prophets as cultic
functionaries.

-cf. J.A. Motyer in "New Bible Dictionary" under 'Prophecy
and Prophets.'

-"Theory rests on a slight foundation." Example:

-Jeremiah 35:4 "... into the house of the Lord, into the
chamber of the sons of Hanan the son of Igdaliah, the man
of God."

- Johnson says, "Igdaliah (man of God) is a prophet. As he had a chamber assigned to him in the temple, => he is a cult prophet."
- Motyer: Officials also had chambers in the house of the Lord (see context) and they were not functionaries. Perhaps significant people got places in the temple.
- Besides, the fact that prophets are at cultic centers only shows that they were religious people.

-cf. Young, *"My Servants the Prophets,"* p.103:
 "Must leave the precise relation between the prophets and the temple unanswered. Sufficient evidence is not given in Scripture to enable one to pronounce with certainty upon the matter. However, Johnson's theory serves as a very wholesome antidote and corrective to the attitudes which became prevalent under the school of Wellhausen (W. held cult-prophet antithesis)."

- Some Psalms may have originated in the cultic setting where a prophet spoke the word of God; but maybe a priest did. Cannot say for sure (office and function of a prophet distinction again).

C. The View that the Prophets were Neither Anti-Cultic as Such, Nor Cultic Functionaries, But Simply the Proclaimers of Divine Revelation.

- This is all we can say. There is no evidence that the prophets were anti-cultic as such or functionaries.
- Scripture presents them as proclaimers of divine revelation.
- The prophetic function rested on divine calling.
- God could call a priest, Levite, or farmer to that function.
- Whoever it is they are to proclaim his word and call the people to come (return) to faithfulness.
- Sometimes they cried out against the cult when it deviated from its purpose (in this sense it could be anti-cultic). But were not anti-cultic per se.
- They promoted the unity of the inward disposition of the heart to love the Lord and the outward expression of that love in both moral uprightness and in the performance of ritual worship according to prescribed standards.
- The essence of the prophetic message is to promote covenantal unity of heart and actions in these two ways. This is the emphasis of the prophets and the Scripture in general concerning true religion: Love of God and neighbor.

VIII. The Composition of the Prophetic Books.
Were the Prophets Writers?

Did the prophets write the material in the books that bear their names? How was this material transmitted - was it oral or written? Were the prophets actually writers?

A. The Traditional View.

"The writing prophets" are called this because they wrote their messages. Term includes those in the Bible as well as some whose works did not get into the Bible.

- The purpose of their writing was to preserve the prophecy in a permanent form.
- Scripture itself does not give much information about how this was done.

Jeremiah 36:4 "Jeremiah called Baruch ... and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord, which He had spoken to him, on a scroll.

- King Jehoiakim burns the scroll.
- Baruch writes it again.

- Whether a prophet wrote his message himself or used a scribe is difficult to determine and makes no difference.

- Not much internal evidence otherwise to establish the method. There are indications in the prophetic books that either the prophets were writers or had it written, and it was not transmitted in oral form:

Isaiah 30:8 "Now go, write it on a tablet before them and inscribe it on a scroll, that it may serve in the time to come as a witness forever."

Habbakuk 2:2 "Then the Lord said, "Write the vision and inscribe it on tablets that the one who reads it may run."

- These texts support the idea that the prophets were writers and the material was preserved in written form.

B. The Literary Critical School.

-Agree that the prophets were writers but they try to distinguish what is original material from that was added later. They use the literary critical methods to separate and determine what was authentic and what was not.

-In the process, rationalistic ideas which exclude genuine prediction play a large role. Examples:

Isaiah speaks of return from exile by hand of Cyrus before Israel has even gone into captivity.

=> critics say it was written by Deutero-Isaiah.

Daniel same thing. Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman empires are shifted to Bab, Per, Mede, and Greek.

-But at least these critics still view the prophets as the writers (of at least part of it).

C. The History of Traditions School.

1. H.S. Nyberg "Studies in Hosea," (1935).

Thesis:

a) "The normal manner of transmission of various information in the Ancient East was not written but oral. Stories, songs, legends, and myths were passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth; they were not written literature. This was true of the OT as well. In pre-exilic Palestine writing was used only for such practical affairs as contracts, monuments, official lists, letters, etc.; history like epic tales, cult legends and such were transmitted orally.

b) The written OT is the creation of the Jewish community between the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BC and the time of the Maccabees (2nd century). What was written prior to this was slight. The transmission of all the OT material was mainly oral until post-exilic times.

c) Prophetic preaching was also transmitted orally and was written down only after the captivity. The prophets were not writers. Their preaching was passed on through their circles of disciples.

H.H. Rowley "Old Testament in Modern Studies"

(A collection of essays summarizing the last 50 years of studies in various fields).

-In an article on the prophets (p.128) is a translated quotation from Nyberg's book.

"This view would involve some changes. We do not talk about textual corruptions but of active transformation. OT scholarship should consider if you can get back to the actual words of the prophets. You cannot. We have nothing but the traditions of their sayings. It is in the degree unlikely that any but oral transmissions ever existed for them."

2. Harris Birkeland.

- Student of Nyberg.
- Tried to work out Nyberg's thesis as it applied to individual books.
- In 1938 he published his results (available only in German, not English).

- Thesis: Individual prophets were surrounded by a circle of disciples which continued after his death.

- The tradition of his sayings was oral and was transmitted through this 'tradition circle' of disciples.
- As this process continued, the pronouncements of the prophets were kept alive and combined into ever growing, larger complexes, called 'tradition complexes.'

- During transmission there is a continual remolding of the older material as new material is fused with it.
- Birkeland compares this constant change to 'the survival of the fittest' as what was retained was what was most relevant to the people.

- Result: Because of this means of transmission, there is no way to distinguish the prophet's original sayings from what is tradition and remolding.

- Thus B. wanted to shift the approach from a literary critical approach (studying written and literary patterns) to an approach which analyzes oral process with traditions.

3. Edward Nielsen.

a. A Synopsis of His Thesis.

- "The Oral Tradition," (1954).
- H.H. Rowley wrote the forward, says this book is the best summary of this approach.

- Chap 1: Oral tradition in the Ancient Near East.

- Memorization of old texts was common in the A.N.E.
- Babylonian and Assyrian texts speak of memorization as a benefit.
- In Arabia the Koran was orally transmitted. "To be admitted to a special Mosque in Cairo, a person had to be able to recite the entire Koran without hesitation."
- The Koran was also written, but this does show how much was memorized.

- In Judeaism, when Rabbi Johanna Ben Zaki was a prisoner he was able to tell time from how long it took him to recite the Mishnah.
- Plato (discussing Ibis and Thuth and the invention of numbers and letters): Written texts will produce forgetfulness rather than aid memory (pocket calculators).
- In India, many people learn the Rig-Veda by heart (153,000 words).
- In Greece, it was common to memorize the poems of Homer.
- Thus Nielsen proposes that in Israel the Biblical texts were also transmitted orally through the centuries.

Nielsen attempts to establish this in two ways:

- 1) Shows the subordinate role of writing in pre-exilic Israel (negative proof).

- Writing had a practical, not a literary purpose in pre-exilic Israel.
- In the Pentateuch, in Genesis and Leviticus we have no examples of writing.
- In Exodus, is used 11 times with 9 references to the Book of the Covenant or the tablets of the Ten Commandments.

-The other 2 references:

- Exodus 17:14 "Write this for a memorial" (for Joshua).
- This is the only place in the Pentateuch that mentions a literary activity of Moses.
- Does not fit his thesis.

Exodus 39:30 "They made the plate of the Holy Crown ... and wrote on it a writing like ... a signet."

- He also analyzes Numbers and Deuteronomy and concludes that all the Pentateuch was only in oral form.

- Numbers 21:14 "The book of the wars of the Lord"?
- He says that this only existed in oral form.

- 2) Significance of oral transmission in Israel (positive).

- His treatment centers around the idea that there were regular festivals held yearly in Israel where much of this material was recited orally and refreshed.
- He is not speaking of the 3 Biblical annual feasts but of "royal covenantal festivals held in Jerusalem".
- However, there are no records of other feasts.

-Nielsen also notes that oral recitation of the law (Bible) was in the context of the father's oral teaching in the household.

b. Assessment of His Thesis.

-We must recognize that there is an element of truth in the idea that oral tradition existed in Ancient Israel and played an important role.

-W.H. Gispen (Dutch) has a good treatment.

-Points out many passages in the OT which point to oral tradition.

Exodus 10:1-2 "... that you may tell in the hearing of of your son, and of your grandson ..."

Deut. 6:20-25 "Then you shall say to your son ... [a summary of Israel's history follows]".

-This is to be told to children when they ask about God's commandments.

Judges 6:13 "... where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about?"

Psalms 44:1-3 "O God, we have heard with our ears, our fathers have told us the work that You did ..."

Psalms 78:1-7 "... He commanded our fathers that they should make [the laws] known to their children ... that they may arise and tell them to their children that they should put their confidence in God, and not forget the works of God ..."

-Notice that oral tradition finds its 'Sitz im Leben' in the family circle of fathers teaching their children.

-Is no evidence of professional bards or troubadours in the OT who traveled and told stories.

-Fathers were to pass these facts on to their children for a purpose as shown in Psalm 78:7-8 "to set their hope in God."

-The tradition which they passed on consisted of a summary of the basic facts of redemptive history.

-These were not isolated or carried on apart from a written fixation of the text.

-This was true outside of Israel also.

-The Koran was memorized but was also written. It may have been taught orally but the written standard was there.

=> Oral tradition followed the written original.

-Cannot deny that Israel had written laws at an early time, as other nations had written material long before Israel existed.

-There are also explicit references to written history in the OT.

Exodus 17:14 "Write this in a book as a memorial, and recite it to Joshua"

-Note both the written and oral elements here!

Numbers 21:14 "Therefore it is said in the Book of the Wars of the Lord."

- 'Book' implies a written source.

1 Kings 11:41 "Acts of Solomon ... are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon?"

-court record were written so that people could have access to them.

1 Kings 14:19 "The book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel."

-In Chronicles, we find references to the writings of the prophets.

2 Chron. 13:22 "They are written in the story of the prophet Iddo."

2 Chron. 12:15 "They are written in the records of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer."

2 Chron. 20:34 "They are written in the book of Jehu."

2 Chron. 32:32 "Written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet."

-Nielsen never makes a reference to Chronicles.

-He would probably say that they were written in exile.

Nielsen's thesis is untenable:

1) Even though oral tradition did exist in Israel, it did not play the role which he ascribes to it.

2) There is no convincing evidence that writing was not used for literary purposes prior to the exile.

-Since Nielsen, the Ebla finds show literary texts long before the time of Abraham.

3) The sources referred to by the Chroniclers show that the prophets did write (book of Isaiah, Iddo, Shemaiah).

-Thus the case for oral transmission until the exilic period is not based on compelling evidence.

-Even though we do not have much material in the Bible to show how it was produced, sketchy direct evidence (Is. 8:16, Jer. 30:6) better than unsupportable theory.

(10/21/81)

IX. Some Hermeneutical Principles for Interpretation of the Prophetic Writings.

Sources:

Milton S. Terry, "Biblical Hermeneutics," p.405ff, Chapter on 'Prophecy and Its Interpretation.'

Louis Berkhof, "Principles of Biblical Interpretation," p.148ff, 'Interpretation of Prophecy.'

Bernard Ramm, "Protestant Biblical Interpretation," p.220, 'Interpretation of Prophecy.'

A. Berkeley Mickelsen, "Interpreting The Bible," Chap 13.

J. Barton Payne, "Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy," Introduction contains some material.

Paul Tan, "Interpreting Prophecy."

A. Some General Characteristics of Predictive Prophecy.

1. The Purpose of Predictive Prophecy.

-Two aspects of prophetic preaching:

Forth-telling = Meant to exhort, reprove, instruct, correct.

Fore-telling = The prediction of events to come, either distant or near.

-Today foretelling receives the emphasis and forth-telling is neglected.

-Thus the fundamental purpose of the message of predictive prophecy is often lost sight of.

-This 'Parenetic' (exhorting) function is the main purpose of predictive prophecy.

-Even the future aspects of a message were meant to exhort, reprove, and instruct.

-Removing this element distorts the message.

-Prophecy is not a religious horoscope, nor should it be used as a gimmick to raise large crowds.
 -God did not give it to satisfy our curiosity.

-There has been a long history of date setting and the relating of current events to prophetic history which has proven to be unfounded.

cf. "Armageddon Now," by Dwight Wilson (survey of the premill position on Russia-Israel interpretations), p.216

- These speculations undermine Christian credibility, increasing skepticism towards millennialism. The pre-mill's path is strewn with false predictions.
- Interpretations should be qualified, and are qualified in the Bible.
- Our interest should be on holy living in the light of God's lordship over history, rather than on expertise in analyzing the details of prophecy.
- History is moving towards a consummation according to the Bible. This should direct our living, rather than our curiosity about prophetic details."

cf. "Dreams, Visions, and Oracles," by Carl Armerding and Gasque, eds; article by James R. Ross, "Living Between Two Ages," p.238.

-If we should know the exact future, but our lives are not transformed by these prophecies, then our study of prophecy is simply a parlor game."

-The Scriptural purpose of prophecy is seen in:

1 John 3:3 (after mentioning the 2nd advent of Christ):
 "And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, even as He is pure."

2 Peter 3:11 "Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness."

2 Peter 3:14 "Therefore ... be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless."

- These verses emphasize the purpose of prophecy.
- The prophetic element is given to show that God's purpose moves in history with certainty. All people are subject to Him. God is leading to a definite goal.
- This fact is to affect our manner of life.
- Thus the purpose of prophecy is the same today as it was for Biblical times.

Remember:

- The prophetic message was given to a particular historical people.
- The prophets spoke to their contemporaries.
- Prophecy may have a future aspect but the message in its totality was given to influence people in his own time.
- Hence the purpose of prophecy was to induce the prophet's contemporaries to holy living.
- If we focus on bare prophecy itself, we lose sight of the original purpose of prophecy.

Conclusion:

- God intended, in giving predictive prophecy, to reveal some of the details of the future.
- But we must be careful in our interpretations and remember that the goal or focus should be holy living.
- The detailed relation of current events to Biblical prophecy can cause interpretive problems.

2. Predictive Prophecy and History Writing.

cf. Mickelsen, "Interpreting the Bible," ~p.290.

- Two common but erroneous views of the nature of the relationship of prophecy and history writing:
 - 1) "Predictive prophecy is a captivating way of writing history after the event has occurred."
- This is the method used by higher critics to explain away prophecy (such as Isaiah, Daniel).
- This style livens up otherwise 'dull' history.

Mickelsen: Prophecy is not history written after the fact.

- Ordinary history writing in the Bible lacks the enigmatic (mysterious) character of prophecy.
- History writing is characterized by the treatment of details in a chronological pattern.
- Prophecy deals with future realities but subordinate details are not in chronological order.
- "Anyone who wrote Hebrew history would have to forget half of what he knew to get the style of Hebrew prophecy."

2) "Predictive Prophecy is History Written Beforehand."

- Mickelsen is not denying that predictions are not genuine, but is commenting on their style.
- Prophecy does not normally give as complete a picture as does a historian's account.
- A prophecy only gives certain elements where history gives details such as: preceding events, aftermath, chronology, dates, and other details.
- If prophecy were true history written in advance, you would have all these details given and thus there would not be the enigmatic (mystifying) ['guess-work' in looking for it's fulfillment] character in prophecy.
- This enigmatic character does not negate our ability to recognize the fulfillment of a prophecy.
- But a fulfillment may come in a somewhat 'unexpected' manner (because of the lack of details given).
- Example:

Isaiah 9:1-2 is recorded in Matthew 4:12-16 as being fulfilled in Christ, when Jesus made Capernaum the headquarters for His ministry.

Isaiah 7-12 "The Book of Immanuel" is the particular historical situation of the above verse:

- Ahaz was King of Judah, is being threatened by the Kings of Israel and Damascus (Pekah and Rezin).
- Ahaz sought aid from the Assyrians which God did not like. This act led to the Assyrian invasion of Israel (predicted by Isaiah).
- The Isaiah 9 prophecy describes a dark, dim picture for the Northern region of the Sea of Galilee.
- The people in the area will be devastated by Tiglath-Pileser.
- But this darkness will be dispelled at a future time.
- Isaiah 9:1-2 is a prediction of Christ but we do not have many details.
- The context of Isaiah 9:6 hints at what the light might be: a child is identified with deity (Messiah).

Conclusion:

- Enigmatic character is a general feature of prophecy.
- This makes it difficult to say in advance of a fulfillment that "this is it."

3. The Progressive Character of Predictive Prophecy.

- As with revelation in general, in predictive prophecy there is a gradual unfolding and development.
- As revelation progresses, so do the prophecies concerning an event to come.

- Even when we recognize that this is the case, the sum total of what God gives is still enigmatic.
- Yet as prophecy progresses, certain features become clearer and clearer.

- Michelsen gives the example of the anti-christ.
 - The picture develops slowly:
 - Daniel
 - Gospels: Matthew 24, Mark 13.
 - Epistles: 2 Thess. 2:4
 - Rev. 13, Rev. 19.
- But all have elements of mystery and the enigma is never removed.

Progressive prophecy does pose one problem:

-That of integration.

-How do you relate these various references?

-They can be enormous in quantity,

-But are not easy to correlate.

-Beware of making inferences between points and building on them.

-Warning: Do not work out an explanation too quickly (you may just be superficially accepting someone else's view).

4. Predictive Prophecy has its own Peculiar Time Perspective.

- Time is not stressed in precise terms in predictive prophecy for the most part.
- Notice that this prevents fatalism!
- We often find many events compressed into a brief span of time.
- But their actual fulfillment covers a large span of time.

Delitzsch calls this prophetic time perspective the
"fore-shortening of the prophet's horizon."

-Delitzsch: The prophets beheld the future as if it were the present. This explains:

- 1) the use of the 'prophetic' present tense.
- 2) why the time perspective is compressed.

-cf. Berkhof p.150.

5. The Message of Predictive Prophecy May Be Couched In Culturally Dated Terminology.

-cf. Mechelsen, "Interpreting the Bible," p.295f.

-The prophets spoke to the people of their own day in the language, thought patterns, and cultural setting of those people.

-They used terminology which was then known and appropriate. For example:

-If prediction involved transportation, the prophet used terms like, 'horses, chariots, and ships.'

-If it involved warfare, 'spears, shields, and swords.'

-For the means and manner of worship, 'temple, types of sacrifice.'

-For the world around Israel, he used existing nations, 'Philistines, Moab, Edom, Babylon, Egypt, etc.'

-Descriptions used the means and characteristic terms known at that time.

How do we approach this?

1) The interpreter may insist on a literal fulfillment down to the very details.

-If the prophet refers to horses, swords, etc., then we expect a literal fulfillment using these instruments.

-If Edom, Moab, and the Philistines are to be conquered, then these countries literally will be.

-However, to insist on a literal fulfillment is to lose sight of the cultural setting of the prophet and people to whom he ministered.

-Does not give attention to the fact that if the prophet used 15th, 20th, or 25th century terminology, then his message would have been meaningless to his audience.

-Thus he spoke in a language which was understandable to his audience.

2) The interpreter may insist on the symbolic meaning of the entire prophecy.

-The words of the entire prophecy are not meant to be taken concretely, but spiritually. They are symbolic of spiritual reality; there is no historical reality.

3) The interpreter can approach such terminology by looking for equivalence, analogs, or correspondence.

-Are not spiritualizing the passage, but saying that the terminology represents concrete historical realities.

-After we account for differences in the cultures of the two times, we can look for analogous objects or people at the time of fulfillment.

-Hence we are accepting figurative language but are not spiritualizing it. Example: chariots -> jeeps or tanks. Swords -> guns. Enemies of God's people then (Moab, Edom) -> Modern enemies (in same territory?)

How far can we carry this principle?

Isaiah 11:1-6 -> Which model should we use?

1) Should we expect a literal fulfillment?

-Then this passage predicts a regathering of the Jews fighting with bows and arrows.

2) Should we spiritualize it?

-Then this is not talking of Israel at all, but of the redemption of many people; ie, the spread of the Gospel throughout the world.

3) Should we culturally update it?

-Then we would expect a regathering of Israel, fighting people who now live in the Philistine areas.

See the spiritualizing approach (2) in E.J. Young,
"Commentary on the Book of Isaiah."

- v.12 The Messiah is the ensign, the drawing point of the heathen, so Christian missionaries should go out.
- v.13 All regional distinctions will be abolished through Christ => Unity in the body of Christ.
- v.14 This true unity takes the offensive. In the strength of the Messiah, Xians will conquer the Philistines (the unbelieving enemies of the church).

- The starting point for this approach is in certain assumptions (conclusions) regarding the relationship of Israel and the church. They assume the church and Israel are equivalent now.
 - Hence the passage cannot be taken literally.
 - Thus it does not picture the reversal of events with the Philistines but a revival and drawing to the Messiah.
 - Thus it 'predicts' the unity and conquering nature of Christianity.
-
- In reality, we must let the nature of each text supply its own criteria for decision.
 - There may of necessity be some uncertainty regarding its interpretation.

6. Predictive Prophecy May Be Conditional.

- The fulfillment of some prophecies may be contingent on the actions and response of men.
- That condition may be expressed directly and explicitly or it may be hinted at, or it may not be stated at all.
- Yet even though not stated, it may still be a vital part of the passage.

Jeremiah 18:5 (Clay in the potter's hand).

- v.8 If the nation repents, God will repent of the wrath He promised.
- v.10 If nation turns to evil, God will not give the good He promised.

-Predictions of judgment are conditional on the response of the people.

-Individual examples of conditional repentance:

1 Kings 11:28f Ahijah promised Jeroboam that he would be king over Israel. God would build him an enduring house, IF (v.38) Jeroboam will keep God's statutes like David did.

1 Kings 15:29-30 God destroys the house of Jeroboam because he did not obey.

-Sometimes one feature of a prediction is conditional, although the prediction as a whole is unconditional.

1 Kings 21:19 Elijah meets with Ahab and says, "In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, the dogs shall lick up your blood."

-No conditional statement given here.

v.27 Ahab repents, so God postpones the judgment.

v.29 "I will bring this evil upon Ahab's house in his son's days.

-The predictive judgment is altered with respect to the time element because of Ahab's repentance.

Jonah 3:4 Jonah goes to Ninevah - "In 40 days, Ninevah will be destroyed!"

-No expressed condition.

-But Ninevah repents and was spared (which upset Jonah).

-Ninevah is destroyed later (cf. Nahum).

-Note that repentance functioned not to eliminate the judgment but to postpone it.

Problem:

-Uncertainties can arise if a conditional element is to be assumed as being present whenever a fulfillment is not seen (false prophets can just claim a hidden conditional).

J. Barton Payne, "Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy," p.62f, discusses conditional prophecies.

"Application of the conditional principle is necessarily restricted."

-Cites Berkhof's "Principles of Biblical Interpretation"

-Berkhof believes that 2 requirements are essential in a conditional prophecy:

- 1) The prophecy must be of near application.
- 2) It must possess elements that are capable of satisfaction by the prophet's contemporaries.

-Example: Jonah and Ninevah meets these.

- 1) 40 days.
- 2) The people addressed would be destroyed.

-These rules safeguard conditional prophecy from in anyway affecting the certainty of the outcome of God's redemptive purposes.

-But these rules may be too restricted.

-May be better to say that when a conditional is not expressed, the prophecy can only be delayed in the time of its fulfillment and not retracted.

7. Kinds of Predictive Prophecy.

-Distinction between direct and typological predictions.
(cf. Mickelsen, p.300f).

a. Direct Prediction.

-A prophetic statement which has its fulfillment solely in the future.

Example: Micah 5:2 (birth of Christ in Bethlehem) is literally fulfilled in Matthew 2:5-6.

-This is normally what we think of as 'prophecy'.

b. Typological Prediction.

-An institution, person, or event which finds its highest application of meaning in an institution, person, or event in a later period of redemptive history.

Example: Passover lamb -> Christ.
Serpent in the wilderness -> Christ.

Calvin Theological Journal v.5, (1970), p.135-162,
"Biblical Typology: Yesterday and Today" by John Stehk,

-(p.139) "A 'type' is a historical reality which served a significant function in its own context. Its reality also served another purpose of pointing forward in which the same truth or principle would have a clearer manifestation in later time."

-"It images or pre-figures whereas a verbal prophecy is a direct assertion.

-"Hence both type and assertion serve the function of prophecy."

-In the history of interpretation it has been hard to analyze types.

-Is hard to keep a proper perspective on typology.
The NT is explicit with some, but should we limit ourselves to only the ones so labeled?

-Mickelsen: "Often typology becomes an excuse for sensationalism ... but if careful we can find some ... key idea is that we must have a unity of meaning between the stages ... the chief danger is the tendency to go to allegory." (p.263)

-Vos: Make certain there is a oneness of meaning between the type and anti-type.

-Stehk: The same truth should be exhibited in the type and anti-type.

-Allegory loses sight of the oneness of meaning in the progression of redemptive history.

Example: John Chrysostom: Murder of the infants by Herod. As > 3 in age were spared, but < 2 were killed => that trinitarians will be saved, but unitarians and bitarians will be lost.

-Vos: The same truth must be present in the type as is typified in the anti-type; a type must first be a symbol.

Examples of bad typology (from John Bright, "The Authority of the OT," p.81): Rahab represents the church made up of harlots and sinners; the scarlet thread is redemption in Christ; Moses seated holding up hands while Joshua fights the Amalekites is the sign of the cross; Abraham going to Egypt during famine is backsliding

-Hence we need to get the meaning in the original context and preserve this.

-Because a type has its own significance and meaning independent of what it prefigures, it follows that the people of the time may not have understood the prospective significance of the type.

-But this does not nullify its predictive meaning.

-Mickelsen (p.263f): We should carefully study NT types first to see how it is done. Far-fetched analogies will eventually only hinder the Gospel.

B. Some Guidelines for Interpretation of Prophecy.

1. Make a Careful Grammatical-Historical-Contextual Analysis of the Passage.
 - a. Need to understand the meaning of words and their relationship to each other (grammatical).
 - b. Need to understand the background of the prophet and the historical setting of his audience (historical).
 - c. Need to understand the context which preceeds and follows the passage (contextual).

- Sometimes the flow of thought from proceeding passages may not be a great deal of help as it is unrelated.
- Parallel passages should be consulted, first dealing with them in grammatical-historical-contextual analysis and then relating them to the main passage.

2. State explicitly to Whom or to What the Passage Refers.

- Is the message about the hearers or readers to whom it is addressed (didactic), or is it proclaimed to them but about someone else (predictive)?
- If it is predictive, are there any conditions attached to it?
- If it is predictive, is it fulfilled or unfulfilled? First look for fulfillment in recorded Biblical history (for OT, either in the OT or NT), some may not yet be fulfilled (people differ on estimates).

3. Pay Attention to Fulfillment Citations.

-New Testament.

There are phrases which are very helpful in determining if a prophecy has been fulfilled.

a. ἵνα πληρωθῆ "in order that it might be fulfilled."

- 1) Normally has quite a specific fulfillment in view.
- 2) In a few cases it may be taken as denoting a relationship of illustration or similarity in words or ideas to an OT statement which in itself was not predictive. Cannot then conclude definitely that it is a fulfillment.

Examples of type (1):

- Matt. 1:22 refers to Isaiah 7:14.
- Matt. 2:23 an element of obscurity here, is probably referring to Isaiah 11:1.
- Matt. 8:17 refers to Isaiah 53.
- Matt. 12:17 refers to Isaiah 42:1-4.
- Matt. 21:4 refers to Zechariah 9:9.

Examples of type (2):

James 2:21-23 -> Genesis 15:6
 "Abraham believed in God and it was reckoned unto him as righteousness" is just a statement, but when Abraham offered up Isaac he demonstrated the reality of his faith (an example of illustration).

- b) *οὕτως γεγραπται* (1) Often shows fulfillment, but
(2) May simply be a reference to something in the O.T.

Examples of type (1):

Matt. 2:5-6 prediction of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem.
Matt. 26:24 "the son of man goeth as it was written of him."

Examples of type (2):

Acts 15:15 Problem of interpretation, is a quotation of Amos 9:12. The flow of the narrative (Jerusalem Council) is not a fulfillment of Amos 9:12 but it agrees with the prophecy.

- c) Various forms of *λεγω* . "It was said ..."

-When it stands by itself, most often it is indicative of some historical reference or application, but is not a fulfillment.

Examples: Matt. 22:31 Quotation of an OT passage.
Acts 7:48

-These are not an automatic proof of prophecy, but are good indicators and delineators.

4. Avoid the Idea of Double Fulfillment or a Double Sense.

-When we look for fulfillment of prophecy, we should not adopt as a principle of interpretation the idea of double fulfillment of sense, ie, that a given prophecy may refer to two or more events (one near and one in the future) at the same time and thus assume that the same words have multiple meanings.

-There is a long history of this type of interpretation.

cf. Westminster Confession of Faith, Chap. 1, sect. 9:
"When there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly."

=> there is not more than one meaning to Scripture.

Luther and Calvin: "The duty of the interpreter is to arrive at the plain sense of the text intended by the author."

Luther: "Only the single proper sense, the sense in which it was written, makes good sense."

Bernard Ramm: "One of the most persistent hermeneutical sins is to put two interpretations on one passage, thereby breaking the force of the literal meaning and obscuring the word of God." (cf. Payne p.121)

Eric Sauer: (p.145 in "Dawn of World Redemption")
"Everything is historically conditioned and yet at the same time interpenetrated with eternity ... prophecy speaks of return from the Babylonian exile and simultaneously promises the gathering of Israel at the still future kingdom." (cf. Payne p.121)

(10/28/81)

J. Barton Payne "Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy," p.123. "The basic reason for maintaining the concept of one meaning as opposed to that of the so-called dual fulfillment is, as John Owen said, 'If Scripture has more than one meaning, it has no meaning at all.'" (=) the meaning is then indeterminate).

Berkhof "Principles of Biblical Interpretation," p.58.
"It is absolutely foreign to the character of language that a word should have 2, 3, or even more significations in the same connection." Communication would break down. (cf. Payne p.123)

Ramm "What a passage really means is one thing. If it meant many things, hermeneutics would be indeterminate." (cf. Payne p.124)

-Thus, if you can read more than one meaning into a passage, then interpretation breaks down since the real meaning is indeterminate.

John Bright "The Authority of the Old Testament," p.80.
The general early church view: Origen had a 3-fold sense, a trichotomy of body, soul, and spirit.

-Literal or corporeal = body = plain meaning.
-Moral = soul = figurative meaning.
-Spiritual, mystical = spirit = spiritual meaning.

Later a 4th sense was added, the eschatological.
Thus the word 'Jerusalem' had 4 meanings in one passage:

Literal	->	The city itself.
Moral	->	A faithful Christian soul.
Spiritual	->	The church of Christ.
Eschatological	->	Heavenly city of God.

It was possible to understand the word in all 4 senses at the same time.

-But the tendency was to care less for the literal and more for the spiritual, especially in 'dull' passages which dealt with things thought to be immoral, or temple dimensions, or sacrificial laws.

-This multiple sense idea was followed rather uniformly until the Reformation. Then Luther and Calvin said, "The duty of the interpreter is to arrive at the plain sense of the text intended by the author."

Luther has some vivid descriptions of allegory: Calls Origen's allegories "so much dirt ... a scum on the Scripture, a nose of wax which can be bent in any direction ... how can you teach faith with certainty when Scripture is made uncertain?"

However:

-Sometimes specific texts are really tough to handle:

Deuteronomy 18. Is there a dual sense here, or a unity with progression (cf. Young), or is this just quibbling with words?

Malachi 4:5-6 "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord ... and return the hearts of the fathers to their children."

-When was this fulfilled?

-Is the last passage in OT, so was it fulfilled in NT?

-Or is a future fulfillment in mind?

Matt. 17:3 (Elijah at the Transfiguration)

-This is probably not the fulfillment.

Seems like a greater possibility of fulfillment is in John the Baptist:

Luke 1:17 "He shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah."

Matt. 11:10 Jesus said, "This is he of whom it is written [quotes Malachi 3:1]."

Matt. 11:14 "If you will receive it, he himself is Elijah who was to come."

Matt. 17:10 "Elijah is coming and will restore all things ..."

v.12 "Elijah has already come ..."

v.13 The disciples understood that Jesus was referring to John the Baptist.

John 1:21 They asked John, "Are you Elijah?" and he said, "I am not."

-Can take 2 approaches:

- 1) The prophecy of Malachi 4:5-6 is to be taken literally as Elijah really returning to earth [this is how the Rabbis understood it at the time of Christ, cf. John 1:21 - why John answered 'no'].

-But then we must say that the prophecy has an initial and partial fulfillment in John the Baptist and a later fulfillment just before Christ returns.

cf. Alford's "Commentary" on Matt. 11:14 (V.1, p.118)
"Neither this nor Matt 17:12 is inconsistent with John's own denial that he was Elijah [they were assuming a reappearance of the actual Elijah on earth]. Jesus cannot be understood as meaning that the prophecy received its full completion in John the complete fulfillment is yet future at the great day of the Lord."

- 2) The prophecy of Malachi 4:5-6 is fulfilled in John B.

-Based on the references above which apply it to John.
-The N.T. does not explicitly state otherwise.
-Was a misconception of the Rabbis, they should not have expected a literal return of Elijah.
-Hence this prophecy should be taken in a similar sense as the prophecies about David:

Jeremiah 30:9 "They shall serve the Lord their God
and David their king."

Ezekiel 34:23 "Then I will set over them one shepherd,
My servant David, and he will feed
them"

Hosea 3:5 "...Israel will return and seek the Lord
their God and David their king"

-Most interpreters take these as references to Christ, although some hold out for a literal David.

-Thus Malachi 4:5-6 is fulfilled but in an unexpected way. "Great and terrible day" could be eschatological but telescoped in prophecy, or it could be the destruction of Jerusalem.

Daniel 8:9ff (The little horn).

v.23 "a king will arise, insolent and skilled
in intrigue ..."

v.25 "He will magnify himself ..."

-Who is this? Antiochus Epiphanes, who persecuted the Jews, or the antichrist?

Old Scofield notes: (v.23) "The little horn is Antiochus. (v.24-25) "Goes beyond Antiochus and is talking of both Antiochus and the beast at the same time. The actions of both Antiochus and the antichrist blend ..."

-Since there are some problem passages, your hermeneutics must allow for that.

-You cannot lay down an arbitrary rule that there is only one way of fulfillment.

-Yet we should avoid the idea of double fulfillment, ie,

-We should not look for them and expect them as this opens the door for reading anything into the text.

-May be forced to acknowledge a double fulfillment, but this depends on the merits of the verse, the context, and the apparent fulfillments.

Example: In the Psalms when David speaks of himself as king but they also are Messianic references.

5. Interpretative Analysis Must Precede a Decision on the Exact Relationship Between the Literal and Figurative in any Passage.

-How much figure is there in a prophetic passage?

Mickelsen (p.305) "Literal meaning must become the base for figurative meanings. We need to have reasons for assigning figurative meanings which arise from objective study of all factors to decide why we prefer a figurative meaning."

Isaiah 4:2 "In that day the Branch of the Lord will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth will be pride and adornment of the survivors of Israel."

"Branch of the Lord" => messianic prophecy.

-Is used in Isaiah 11:1

But the later phrase is a parallelism of the first.

-What is the 'fruit of the earth'?

-Is it also Messianic?

Some find the two natures of Christ expressed here in a figurative manner.

Divine - "Branch of the Lord"

Human - "Fruit of the earth" (from his mother)

But you could say that this is literal and is speaking of prosperity.

cf. "Meaning of the Millennium: 4 Views," ed. by Klaus, Boettner p.134: "We find no labels telling us to take this literally or to take this figuratively."

(p.137) "concerning literal or figurative meaning with respect to prophecy, we cannot discover this until its fulfillment. Since the Bible is complex, we must consider the nature of the material, the style and purpose of the writer, in determining whether it is literal or figurative."

-Sometimes interpreters insist that some elements are figurative because their system of eschatology requires it (although sometimes you are forced to do this).

-As much as possible, let the passages speak for themselves (is hard to do as there are many inter-related factors).

(11/2/81)

-If we are going to find figure then the reasons for it should arise from the context itself, and not from the influence of a preconceived system of doctrine (at least consciously).

Mickelsen p.304-5 "A careful interpreter will interpret both literally and figuratively because the passage he is interpreting demands these procedures. Labels suggesting that a man is either a completely literal interpreter or a completely figurative interpreter are foolish [ie, a 'literalist' does not exclude figures of speech, etc.]. The well-balanced interpreter has objective reasons for both literal and figurative meanings."

-Guidelines (Based on Mickelsen):

1. Language should be understood literally unless the context, inherent contradiction, further revelation, or other considerations clearly indicate otherwise.

-Assume literal fulfillment unless factors point in a different direction.

-This approach is not arbitrary. Based on observation of the fulfillment of other OT prophecies within OT time (this demonstrates the literal fulfillment principle).

2. Recognize that literal language often includes figures of speech as vehicles of richer expression. But at the same time keep in mind that the presence of figures does not mean that the passage should be taken as totally symbolical.

3. Become familiar with various types of figures of speech so that you can easily identify them.

-Mickelsen (p.179-235) discusses metaphor, simile, personification, etc.

-Figures do not detract from but rather enhance Biblical expressions.

X. The Apologetic Value of Biblical Prophecy.

A. Does Biblical Prophecy Have Apologetic Value? (A Preliminary Consideration).

-This question can be answered with good reason in the affirmative. However, some evangelicals do not think so and they find a limited value and usefulness in prophecy.

-Example: G. Ch. Aalders (OT Prof at Free Un. of Amsterdam before Ridderbos). Has a high view of Scripture. Works in English: "A Short Introduction to the Pentateuch"; "Commentary on Genesis" (Zondervan) [one of the best available, done in the 50's].

"From the beginning spokesmen for the church have been concerned about the grounds for truth on which Christianity rests. A number of criteria for evidencing the divine character of Scripture have been proposed: One of these is fulfilled prophecy."

"Prophecy has many positive factors: The Christian church is in a better position [in time] to utilize this argument than the ancient Israelites as the church exists long after the prophecies were given and many have been fulfilled, especially with respect to Christ. Thus the great objection to an Israelite - that fulfillment would come later - is done away with."

"It is recognized that it is impossible to men to predict the future. This may be possible in some instances via divination, but the multiplicity of Scriptural predictions is strong evidence in favor of a supernatural power."

"God Himself uses this line of evidence against the dumb idols: cf. Isaiah 41:22-29, 42:9, 44:7, 46:10, 48:3-8. Thus the few true prophecies of false prophets are beaten by the many true prophecies of the true prophets."

"The conditional nature of prophecy cannot form a modern objection to this reasoning since most have been fulfilled by now. Thus it is not surprising that apologetics normally places great emphasis on fulfillment of prophecy."

"Men who have used this approach include:

"Calvin's Institutes," V. 1, bk. 8, para. 7-8.

Alexander Keith, "Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion Derived from the Literal Fulfillment of Prophecy," (1839).

John Davison, "Discourses on Prophecy," (Oxford), 1865.

John Urquhart, "The Wonders of Prophecy," 3rd ed. 1904.

"But there are serious objections in appealing to the fulfillment of prophecy for demonstrating the truth of Scripture which show that the apologetic value is not so great."

Aalder's Serious Objections:

1. "The question of whether or not prophecies have indeed been fulfilled often depends on what sense or meaning is ascribed to the prophecy (how do we interpret it?).

-Opinions often differ over the sense or meaning of a given prophecy.

-Kuenen gives lists of unfulfilled prophecies, turning the argument around. On the basis of nonfulfillment of prophecy he has argued against the supernatural nature of prophecy [cf. his book mentioned above which was reprinted in 1969]. For example, liberals say that Tyre (Ezk. 27) was not fulfilled as stated.

1a. "Books like Keith's witness against the apologetic value of prophecy because if the fulfillment was evident books which demonstrate it would not be so thick."

2. "The question of whether or not prophecies have been fulfilled depends on one's judgment of other factors like:

(a) The date of the prophecy,

(b) The way in which one views the nature of the connection between prophecy and its fulfillment.

"This objection is discussed in Davison, p.276:

'In discussing the value of prophetic evidence, it must adhere to these criteria:

(1) The |known promulgation| of the prophecy prior to the event.

(2) The |clear| and |palpable fulfillment| of it.

(3) The |nature of the event| itself. If when the prediction concerning it was given, it lay |remote| from human view, and was such as could not be foreseen by any supposable |effort of reason|, or be |deduced| upon principles of |calculation| derived from |probability| or |experience|.'

Aalders: "It is clear with respect to these |bracketed| terms that subjective value judgments will differ. Thus the force of the argument is weakened, implying that fulfillment cannot prove the truth of Scripture. But the reverse is also true: Non-fulfilment of prophecy cannot prove a fallible nature either."

"Believers perceive prophecy in one way, and unbelievers in another. Thus the prophecy fulfillment argument is ultimately derived from the perception of fulfillment."

3. "In prophetic literature image and symbol play an important role. It is clear with many items in prophetic literature we should not expect a literal fulfillment. That there is much symbolic language in prophecy is admitted by all, but then you should realize that it is then difficult to appeal to fulfillment. Much is said which cannot find fulfillment as given (passages about the Jews, Zion, Jerusalem, and the temple indicate fulfillment as spiritual realities; Egypt, Babylon, and Asher indicate sinful powers or directions). Thus lands, cities, mountains, and peoples should be understood as symbols and not in a literal sense."

"How can one who admits to a literal fulfillment method keep himself free from the chiliast (pre-mill) error? If you go in this literal direction, you become entangled in great difficulties; but if you abandon this for spiritual meanings then you lose your apologetic weapon because it is difficult to try to explain spiritual fulfillment to those who oppose the Christian faith." [Wow!]

[Aalders is an amillennialist so he spiritualizes OT prophecies; but he sees keenly that this robs him of the apologetic value of literal fulfillment when talking with unbelievers.]

"It is not fulfillment of prophecy that brings conviction of the divine truth of Scripture, but it is the opposite. Conviction of the truth of Scripture leads to belief in prophecy. The certainty of the revealed truth of God does not rest in outward evidences in itself."

"God does not force men to believe, thus fulfillment of prophecy should not be 'too' solid or clear beyond doubt. It only renders support for those who already believe. Someone who recognizes the Scripture as the word of God can recognize prophecy (fulfillments) as clear as day, but for someone who does not believe, it does not speak so clearly that he is forced to believe."

"Thus it comes down to the internal principle: Belief is the fruit of the work of the Holy Spirit. The testimony of the Holy Spirit brings acceptance of the truth of Scripture on a subjective basis. Apologetics should not involve itself in finding evidence for the truth of Scripture but should retreat to the subjective standpoint and demonstrate that the non-Christian world view cannot justify itself with external evidence any more than the Christian world view (as it is just as subjective)."

(11/4/81)

Only value: Confirmation of an already existing faith.

Machen: "Christianity and Culture," in 'Banner of Truth,' v.69, (1969), p.15-24. "A man can believe only what he holds to be true. We are Christians because we hold Christianity to be true. But other men hold Christianity to be false. Who is right? This question can be settled only by an examination and comparison of the reasons adduced on both sides. It is true that one of the grounds for our belief is an inward experience that we cannot share and upon which we cannot directly base an argument. But if our position is correct, we ought at least to be able to show the other man that his reasons may be inconclusive. It would be a great mistake to suppose that all men are equally well prepared to receive the Gospel. It is true that the decisive thing is the regenerative power of God which can overcome all lack of preparation, and its absence makes even the best preparation useless. But God usually exerts that power in connection with certain prior conditions of the human mind. It is our duty to create so far as we can with the help of God, those favorable conditions for the reception of the Gospel. I do not mean that the removal of intellectual objections will make a man a Christian. A change of heart can be wrought only the power of God."

"Because intellectual labor is insufficient, it does not follow that it is unnecessary. God may overcome all intellectual obstacles by an immediate exercise of his regenerative power. Sometimes He does, but He does so very seldom. Usually He exerts His power in connection with certain conditions of the human mind. These conditions are usually not those with conceptions which make the acceptance of the Gospel logically impossible."

Prophecy's apologetic value is to remove the intellectual absurdity of the Gospel.

Israel knew that God was God because He manifested Himself in theophanies, signs and wonders, and in prophecy and fulfillment.

We have appropriated this same methodology and continue using it as a line of evidence => is Biblical methodology.

B. The Revelatory Claim of the Bible.

- Bible presents itself as the word of God, not fantasy.
- To a large extent it concerns itself with human history.
- In its prophetic sections it claims to sketch the broad lines of human history which are determined by the sovereign will of the God of the Bible.

- This is a unique claim for any book. It calls for and is open to verification and testing.
- Its historical claims and statements can be submitted to verification independent of one's belief or unbelief.
- Much of this revealed history has already been manifested.

- Thus in the connection between prophecy and fulfillment, particularly between the OT and Christ, there is to be found an objective prophecy fulfillment structure that is clearly visible and recognizable.
- This points to the existence and veracity of the God who has spoken in Biblical revelation.

- The prophecy fulfillment structure in the Scripture is not characterized by a 'religious quality'; it breaks through religious subjectivism by its very nature because it demonstrates in a recognizable way the reality and veracity of the God of the Bible apart from the necessity of any religious commitment to Him. Examples:

Isaiah 41:22-23 "Show the things that are going to come afterward, that we may know that you are gods."

-Fulfilled prophecy shows divine power at work.

42:8-9 "Now I declare new things; before they spring forth I proclaim them to you."

48:3-6 "I declared the former things long ago ... and they came to pass. Before they took place I proclaimed them to you, lest you should say, 'My idol has done them.'"

=> God demonstrates to His people that He is God by the fact that He tells things in advance.

Calvin's "Institutes" V 1, bk 8, para 7-8. Discussing Moses: "It is impossible to deny that Moses was guided by a prophetic spirit in assigning the first place to the tribe of Judah. Suppose that Moses invented the prophecy. Then 400 years pass with no mention of a scepter in the tribe of Judah. After Saul is anointed, the kingly office appears fixed in Benjamin... How could the subsequent replacement with David be done by human art or skill and not be fulfillment of prophecy?"

"In like manner, do not the predictions, though obscure, of the admission of the Gentiles into the divine covenant seeing they were not fulfilled until almost 2000 years after, make it palpable (clear) that Moses spoke under divine inspiration?"

Cites the case of other prophets where the evidence is even clearer. "There are other reasons, neither few nor feeble, by which the dignity and majesty of the Scriptures may be not only proved to the pious, but also be completely vindicated against slander. These however cannot of themselves produce a firm faith in Scripture until their heavenly Father manifests his presence in it and thereby secure implicit reverence for it." (need Holy Spirit)

"Then only does Scripture suffice to give a saving knowledge of God when its certainty is founded on the inward persuasion of the Holy Spirit. Still, the human testimonies which go to confirm it will not be without effect if they are used in subordination to that chief and highest proof as secondary helps to our weakness."

-Thus Calvin gives a legitimate place to the use of evidence.

-Often those who minimize the objective value of prophecy to break through religious subjectivism say that this structure can only be seen through the eyes of an already received faith. The understanding must be enlightened by God in order for it to be discernable.

-If this were true, then the Bible and its fulfillment structure are meaningless as they are a closed book to everyone who does not believe.

-Overlooked: For those in a pre-believing condition, the Bible is primarily experienced as a writing which initially simply asks for an intellectual inspection and examination.

-Evangelicals neglect the emphasis upon clear, objectively observable elements in the unfolding of redemptive history. Instead, the emphasis is almost exclusively on the insight of faith. So belief is the all-important thing. But belief in what? Must emphasize the clear, objective, observable elements in redemptive history. Intellectual recognition of these elements leads to an openness to faith.

- We should not place the total stress and emphasis on belief because the content of that belief is important.
- Cannot neglect either emphasis: belief or evidence. Both are seen in Scripture itself.
- While intellectual recognition of the existence of God and even of prophecy fulfillment is not belief in the existential sense, it is a corollary, if not a precondition for true belief.

- There is an objective revelation, and it is recognizable.
- It exists apart from the response of faith which is worked in a given individual by the Holy Spirit.

-Can distinguish between internal and external revelation:

External: Apologetic value of the prophecy fulfillment structure and the objective works of God in History.

Internal: Is necessary for true belief, but without it the external is still recognizable.

[Problem: Man then judges the Bible instead of being judged by the Bible. Vannoy: This methodology is valuable when people say, 'Why should I listen to the Bible?' Used in a preliminary basis, shows why it is reasonable and unique. Then move from this to what claims and demands the Bible makes on us. Evidences remove objections so men become willing to listen.]

(11/6/81)

C. Prophecy and Fulfillment.

- The OT contains a unique and surprising form of revelation.
- That revelation has a certain structure which is adequate to demonstrate in an objective and recognizable way the reality of the God of Israel.

-Important to this structure are 3 elements:

- 1) The Lord makes His own presence and power recognizable through signs, wonders, and theophanies. These are sense-perceptible realities.
- 2) God makes a plan known through certain men (the prophets) concerning historical events.
- 3) That plan is brought into realization in human history.

-These combine to give the Scripture's unique character:

(1) is a revelation which comes to men through their senses, (2) and (3) show the connection between plan and execution.

-The O.T. distinguishes itself from all other religious revelation by not promoting belief simply on the basis of what some men claim to receive by revelation from God.
-Rather, belief is founded in revelation connected with external, sense-perceptible signs and the progression of history along a preannounced plan.

-The signs which God gave to authenticate His revelation served an immediate and direct purpose in connection with the historical progress of revelation. Their primary purpose was to directly authenticate God's working in a manner which was relevant to the prophet's contemporaries.

-But with the completion of revelation we should not look for signs and wonders (were only done by prophets).
-Instead, prophecy and its fulfillment is of such a character that its value continues to function in a direct way even among future generations. Indeed, they have an increasing value with time as their fulfillment becomes clearer.

-God's signs and the preannounced progression of redemptive history are open for all to see as recognizable objective historical realities.

-The God of the OT speaks and acts to legitimize himself.

-The OT does not just relate what some primitive people believed about their deity.

-Nor does it present a mythological, metaphysical (philosophical) God concept.

-The OT records historical, visible, and perceptible signs and predictions.

-Israel had experiential knowledge of the living God by means of these visible signs.

Example: Exodus 3:5 (The call of Moses).

-Moses encounters a sense-perceptible theophany.

3:12 A prediction is given.

3:20 Another: Pharaoh will finally let Israel go.

4:1 Moses' response: The people will not believe me.

4:5 God gives a sign to authenticate Moses.

4:8-9 Gives two more signs.

4:23 Predicts the death of the first-born.

-In Exodus there are many such cases of prophecy and signs being given to authenticate God's word.

6:6-8 Outline of events: Deliverance, covenant, conquest.

7:3-5 In this the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord.

7:17 "In this you will know"

9:29 Thunder and hail "so that you will know"

14:13 Crisis at the Red Sea. "Stand and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you."

14:30 Result: Israel sees and believes.

- Signs, wonders, and predictions demonstrate God's existence and truth.
- Israel's God claims belief on the basis of what they have seen of Him.
- Rationally speaking, Israel could do little else but believe since they knew by objective fact that God exists and His words come true.
- However, Israel did often turn her back on God in willful rebellion, but not because she did not have objective revelation.
- God gave His people many infallible and convincing proofs of His veracity, existence, and power (cf. Acts 1:3).
- In our own witnessing we should do no less. We should use God's method to demonstrate His existence, power, and action in history.
- Many predictions deal with the first advent of Christ.
- Thus we should pay attention to the connection of prophecy and fulfillment in history.
- We should check if the prophecy has a human basis.
- If not then we have something of real apologetic value.

D. Conclusion.

- J.B. Payne has a chart in his "Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy" which lists every Biblical prophecy.
- He finds 737 prophecies and discusses their fulfillment.
- Shows that prophecy is thoroughly integrated with redemptive history.
- In broad lines the Bible contains a structure of prophecy and fulfillment which extends from the beginning to the end of human history. We find that the Bible is concerned (of the most part) with prophecies concerning significant advances in the progress of redemption.
- Some deal with judgment concerning foreign nations, so not all are directly related to redemption.
- This prophecy fulfillment network evidences such a congruence of prophecy and fulfillment contributed by many prophets and realized in events separated by centuries of time, implying that it is not of human construction but it is evidence of divine revelation and guidance of history.
- Patrick Fairbairn in "Prophecy" emphasizes the immense number and connected order of Biblical prophecies.
- Argues that this gives added weight to the evidence as it has this cumulative nature.

-(p.198) "The serial and connected character of prophecy gives it a cumulated force compared with the isolated, random character of other prophetic literature."

-"But prophecy is but one branch of evidence: The miracles of Christ, His character, the teachings of the apostles and their results all must be taken together as a combined force."

-In selecting prophecies to be used in apologetic arguments, we should use those which are clear, ie, "ones with a large enough interval between their prediction and fulfillment so that there is no doubt of the existence of the prophecy before its fulfillment."

-This requires us to use long time span prophecies.

SECTION TWO: A Survey of the Prophetical Books.

I. Introductory Remarks.

-Classification of the Prophetical books.

The Hebrew Bible term: "Former Prophets" corresponds to our 4 historical books; Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings.

The Hebrew Bible term: "Latter Prophets" corresponds to our prophetic books. Are 2 groups; the 4 Major prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel; and the 12 Minor prophets Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi [know].

-The Former prophets have anonymous authors.

-The Latter prophets are named for the prophet who wrote the book.

- "12 Minor" seems to refer only to their length, not their importance (all were apparently put on one scroll).

-Why is the order of the minor prophets as it is?

-This arrangement has varied in the past.

-The Septuagint has: Hosea, Amos, Micah, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah,

-Our English order is taken from the Hebrew Bible.

-The order seems to be arbitrary as no single principle explains the arrangement.

-Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi are the last 3 and these are all post-exilic => some chronological influence.

-But this principle does not apply to the first 9 books. ie, Amos is earlier than Hosea, yet Hosea is found first.

-We will study them in chronological order:

Assyrian Period (845-605)

Obadiah	845	problematic
Joel	835	problematic
Jonah	782	firm
Amos	760	firm
Hosea	750	firm
Isaiah	739	firm
Micah	735	firm
Nahum	650	generally firm
Zephaniah	640	generally firm

Neo-Babylonian Period (605-538) [605 is arbitrary].

Jeremiah	627
Habakkak	609
Daniel	605
Ezekiel	593

Medo-Persian (538-400)

Haggai	520
Zechariah	520
Malachi	433

- These are Freeman's dates (from "Introduction to the OT Prophets") for the approximate beginning of the prophet's ministry.
- There are several arrangement schemes and dating is a complex question.
- Are dated with respect to the major foreign power that is prominent in Israel's history at the time.
- The 605 date corresponds to the Battle of Carchemish as this is the turning point when Babylon began to assume ascendancy over Assyria and Egypt in Palestine.

II. Obadiah.

A. Author and Date.

- This is the shortest book in the OT, only 21 verses.
- Is also the most difficult to date.
- The dating problem here is not a conservative-liberal split; some of each are in both camps.
- The "possible" dates range from 840 BC - 450 BC. ie., from the early Kingdom period to after the destruction of Jerusalem.
- The crux of the dating question lies in the identification of the plundering of Jerusalem in verses 10-14.
- Note especially vs. 10-11:
"Because of violence to your brother Jacob, you will be covered with shame, and you will be cut off forever. On the day that you stood aloof, on the day that strangers carried off his wealth, and foreigners entered his gate and cast lots for Jerusalem; you too were as one of them."

-Various suggestions for identification of the plundering:

1. Freeman, "Introduction to the OT Prophets".
 - The plundering was during the reign of Jehoram (848-841 BC) of Judah.
 - In 2 Chronicles 21:16-17 a coalition of Philistines and Arabians attacked and plundered Jerusalem.
 - Is related to 2 Kings 8:20-22 "In the days of Jehoram Edom revolted".
 - Thus many feel that these 2 events took place during the same series or revolts as one general uprising.

2. J.B. Payne "Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy".
 - Cites 2 Chronicles 28:17-18 where the "Edomites ... carried away captives".
 - This does not specifically mention Jerusalem.
 - Is during the reign of Ahaz (~735 BC).
 - In Isaiah 7, the N. Kingdom and Samaria were allied against Ahaz.

3. Plundering of Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC.
 - Apparently Edom participated.
 - Ezk. 35:5 "Because you have had everlasting enmity and have delivered the sons of Israel to the powers of the sword at the time of their calamity"
 - In some way Edom cooperated with Nebuchadnezzar in the final judgment of Jerusalem.

 - Ps. 137:7 (exilic Psalm) "Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem, who said, 'Raze it, raze it, to its very foundations.'"
 - The Edomites either helped or cheered the Babylonians in the destruction.
 - So read Obadiah v.10-11 in light of this.
 - So Edom was involved in some way in the judgment which the Lord brought against Israel by the Babylonians in 586 BC.

 - Arguments against 586 BC: Obadiah makes no reference to the destruction of the city or temple.
 - The destruction does not seem that final.
 - Are no references to Nebuchadnezzar and/or to the wholesale deportation of people (although he does refer to captives).

- Another consideration: Jeremiah shows an acquaintance with Obadiah 1-6 as seen in Jer. 49:7-9 (Obadiah 5 is a close parallel to Jeremiah 49:7).
- Find other allusions, so some date Jeremiah earlier than Obadiah.
- But opinions are divided: Which is original? Could there be another writing which these both refer to?
- Cannot argue strongly on this.

Author: 'Obadiah' - the name means 'Servant of the Lord.'

- We know nothing about him except for this prophecy.
- The Obadiah who hid the 100 prophets during Elijah's time probably is not the same; no other OT person has this name.

B. The Theme of the Book.

- Is a pronouncement of judgment on the Edomites.
- Edomites were the descendants of Esau, cf. Genesis 36:
 - v.1 "These are the generations of Esau which is Edom."
 - v.8 "Mount Seir is their territory."
- Mount Seir is the chief mountain range in Edom, which is located South of the Dead Sea in mountainous country East of the Arabah (depression of Dead Sea and Jordan).
- Are 3 main cities in Edom:
 - Bozrah
 - Teman
 - Sela (Petra)
- Petra is the most well-known city of Edom.
- The territory is of significance since:
 - The major trade routes from Egypt and Ezion-Geber to the North went through Edom.
 - Specifically the King's Highway, which Moses wanted to use but the Edomites refused to let him (Numbers 20:14f).
- In this judgment we see the ultimate outworking of the Jacob-Esau controversy; cf. Delitzsch, p.360:

"Wrong, or violence, is all the more reprehensible when it is committed against a brother. The fraternal relation in which Edom stood towards Judah is still more sharply defined by the name Jacob, since Esau and Jacob were twin brothers. The consciousness that the Israelites were their brethren ought to have impelled the Edomites to render helpful support to the oppressed Judeans. Instead of this they not only revelled with scornful and malignant pleasure in the misfortunes of the brother nation, but endeavoured to increase it still further by rendering active support to the enemy yet Israel was commanded to be friendly and brotherly to Edom."

C. Comments on the Context.

v.2 use of the prophetic perfect:

KJV "Behold I have made thee small" -Qal Perfect
NASB+NIV "See, I will make you small" -Makes more sense.

- "I am going to bring judgment on you" says God.
- Could argue that this is a statement of what God had done to Edom in the past.
- This is not a clear cut illustration of the Prophetic Perfect, but it does fit well with the context.

v.3 "You who live in the clefts of the rock" (KJV, NASB) ('rock' actually is 'Sela', the proper name of the city).

- Sela was the major city of the Edomites, but we cannot tell if that is what is meant here.
- Is an ancient site located in a unique geographical setting:
 - The city can only be entered through a narrow winding canyon several miles long which opens out into a valley with high walls.
 - The canyon gets as narrow as 12 feet with walls from 100 to 200 feet high.
 - A creek bed flows through the canyon, is normally dry but could flood.
 - The city could be easily guarded in the canyon.
 - Many of the buildings are made out of red sandstone, and many of them are dug out of the cliffs.
- The site was forgotten about for many years until the late 1800's.
- Is now a tourist attraction, although it is in an isolated area.

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General Outline of Obadiah:

vv. 1-9	Judgment on Edom.
10-11	Reason for judgment (they were involved in the destruction of Jerusalem).
12-14	Warning for the future.
15-16	Future judgment on all Ungodly.
17-21	Restoration and Blessing for Israel.

Details:

- v.3-4 Even though Edom felt confident in their physical location, God will humble them.
- v.9 Focal point of v.1-9 -- judgment is coming on Edom to the extent that "Everyone in Esau's mountains will be cut off in the slaughter."
- v.10-11 Because the Edomites were involved in the destruction of Jerusalem, judgment will come on them.
 -The last phrase of v.10 parallels the last phrase of v.9.
 -Can make no conclusion on dating; 845 - 586 BC is possible because of v.12-14.
- v.12-14 Difficult interpretive problem in the verbal forms. Are 8 Jussives forms with the negative: each line begins with a negative and Jussive.
 -Do these refer to a past, present, or future event?
- KJV: (Past) "You should not have...."
 This assumes that Obadiah is referring to the same incident as in v.10-11.
- K&D: The Jussive cannot be taken as a future of the past (ie., "you should not have....").
 -The normal translation of the Jussive is "Do not" normally implying a present or future.
 -"Here the reference must not be to the past or future but to an ideal event which includes both."
- Laetsch: (Missouri Synod Lutheran) This cannot be past.
 -"Is an eyewitness description of the present."
 -v.10-11 is connected with it; v.10-11 is a description of the same event from the time of Jehoram.
 -Is both an eye-witness and warning in the present time.
- Hengstenberg: "Christology of the OT" (4 vol.)
 -Takes as a future.
 -v.12-14 look to the future, "Do not in the future do these things again...."
 -v.10-11 is a pronouncement of judgment for past involvement in a different event than v.12-14.
- Frank Gaebelein: "The Minor Prophets"
 -Date choice for Obadiah between ~845 (Jehoram) to after 586 BC is almost evenly balanced.
 -The earlier date has more weight.
 -May be a multiple fulfillment: First referring to fulfillment in Jehoram's time, then fully fulfilled (and finally) in the Chaldean capture of 586 BC.

Vannoy: Future reference is intended in v.12-14 (The Jussive forces you to this although Laetsch's view is possible).
 -v.10-11 and 12-14 both refer to similar actions by the Edomites; but 10-11 is past, and 12-14 is future.

Thus: v.10-11 refers to Jehoram's or perhaps Ahaz's time.
 v.12-14 refers to Nebuchadnezzar's destruction in 586 BC.
 v.12-14 is then a warning.

Problem: Why pronounce judgment on Edom for something they have already done and then warn them not to do the same thing in the future?

-This involves the conditional nature of prophecy.
 cf. Jeremiah 18:7-8, "If the nation will repent of its evil, then I will repent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned."

-Thus Edom could repent.
 -The warning is then appropriate although this condition is not mentioned in the text.
 -However, the Edomites did repeat their action.

Aalders notes the rhetorical form in which the facts of the past are described:
 -The force of the interpretive line of thought makes you view it as past even though grammatically it cannot be.
 -This implies that it is rhetorical.
 -Best to translate it as "Do not."
 -Thus the pleadings are an irony, as the evil choice has already been made.

v.1-9 have strong statements at the end. In v.9-10:

v.9 "Everyone in Esau's mountains will be cut down in the slaughter."
 v.10 "You will be destroyed forever."

Consider v.3-4 to be Edom's confidence; God is saying that they will not stand.

Historically, Edom did lose control of their territory.
 -The Nabatean Arabs came out of Northern Arabia and moved into their territory, driving out the Edomites.
 -Is not much historical information on how this happened.
 -Biblical reference: Malachi 1:3-5 (somewhat obscure).
 -It appears that by Malachi's time Edom had already been pushed out of their territory (by ~430 BC) and were now saying that they would return and rebuild. God says no.
 -Thus between 586 and ~430 BC the Nabateans had moved in.

-Edomites then settled in Southern area of Judea, which came to be known as "Idumea" (this is the Greek form of the Hebrew "Edom").

-Eventually in Maccabean times they were conquered by John Hyrcanus (135-105 BC) and forcibly Judaized.

-Herod the Great was a descendant of the Edomites and he and his dynasty ruled Israel for some time.

-A final irony of Edom coming back to plague Israel at the time of Christ.

-After Roman times, the Edomites were lost as a people (nation). They assimilate into the Arab people.

-See a long process of fulfillment. Complete by today.

v.15-16 "Future Judgment on all Ungodly." See a transition from Edom to all the nations. Note:

v.15 "For the day of the Lord draws near on all the nations" but "As you have done, it will be done to you " seems to refer to Edom again.

v.16 "Because just as you drank on My holy mountain, all the nations will drink continually."

If Obadiah were written ~840 BC, then we find here the first occurrence of the term "day of the LORD."

What does "Day of the LORD" mean?

General term: "One in which God will bring blessing on God's people and judgment on His enemies."

-Used frequently in the prophetic books but with some variety; "That great day," etc.

-The term appears to be known and understood by the people since no explanation is given of it.

If Obadiah is dated later, then Amos is probably the first to use the term:

Amos 5:18-20 "Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD!"

- "You are asking for the day of the Lord to come but considering how you are living, you will be judged, not blessed!"

-This usage implies that it was a generally known expression.

-The people looked forward to it and expected good for themselves.

-But in Amos and elsewhere its use shows that it was inseparably tied to God's judgment. Note:

Joel 1:15 "For the day of the Lord is near, and it will come as destruction from the Almighty."

-The popular conception incorrectly concluded that it would be a judgment on their enemies only (Amos 5:18 counters this).

Is this day to be considered only one specific day, and if so, when is it to be?

-Usage makes it difficult to be only one day.

-It is used to indicate the destruction of Babylon (Isaiah 13:6,9,17-19).

-Thus "the day of the Lord" is used to refer to the historical judgment of Babylon which is completed by now.

-It is also used to refer to judgment against Egypt (Jeremiah 46:10).

-Refers to the Battle of Carchemish in 605 BC, when Egypt and Assyria were defeated by Babylon.

-In some places it is difficult to determine when it is, but it is clear that it is not one "day" (time).

-But it does refer to specific times of God's punishing activity.

-Some contexts have an eschatological meaning, referring to God's judgment at the end of the age.

-But the "day" is not always identical with the judgment at the end of the world (see above examples).

In Obadiah 1:15 it appears that the end time judgment is in view, when all the nations will be judged.

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v.16 "Because just as you drank on My holy mountain, all the nations will drink continually. They will drink and stagger, and become as if they had never existed."

What is the meaning and connotation where, and who is doing the drinking? Interpretations vary:

1) Refers to the Edomites.

-Obadiah is then continuing to address them in the narrative.

-Implies that they are drinking in triumph and revelry, celebrating their victory.

-Then we assume there is a change in significance in the second half of the verse: Becomes a play on words, referring to when the nations drink => taste God's wrath.

2) Refers to the Jews.

-As the Jews have been judged and have tasted God's wrath (Jerusalem has been overrun), so God's judgment also will come on all nations to destroy them.

Use of "Drink" as "tasting God's judgment" is substantiated elsewhere in Scripture:

Isaiah 51:17 -- "Arise O Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the Lord's hand the cup of His anger...."

-Is used in connection with the judgment of Jerusalem.

-This passage might favor view (2) above.

Jeremiah 25:15 -- God says, "Take this cup of the wine of wrath from My hand, and cause all the nations ... to drink it."

-In the context of Nebuchadnezzar's conquering the nations.

Note that Jerusalem itself is focused on in v.27-29.

Jeremiah 49:7-22 is similar to Obadiah; v.12-13 uses the same imagery [Bosrah is a city in Edom]. May infer from this that Obadiah is referring to Edom.

Conclusion on v.16: The second use of "drink" refers to judgment, but the first usage is not clear.

v.17-21 "Contrast: Restoration and Blessing for Israel."

v.17 begins as a contrast with v.16 => deliverance for Israel and Judgment on Edom.

v.18 parallels v.9.

Interpretations:

1) T. Laetsch "The Minor Prophets" (amillennialist)

The thrust of v.17-21 is on the spread of the gospel and extension of the kingdom in the church.

17-18a Mount Zion is the NT church. Jerusalem is a symbol of the church, where there is deliverance (escape) from Satan as promised in Gen. 3:15 which results in holiness (17b) that is not man's doing.

-Another result is that Jacob will possess Edom's inheritance.

18b-19 Esau and Philistines are the enemies of the church.

The book of Acts records the fulfillment of Obadiah 17-20:

Philistia (v.19) in Acts 8:40, 9:42-43.

Samaria (v.19) in Acts 8:5-17 [Philip preached at Samaria].

Zarephath [Phoenicia] (v.20) in Acts 11:19 [Antioch, etc.].

Sepharad [Asia Minor?] (v.20) in Rev. 3:1 [Paul's activity in Sardis and region].

Benjamin possessing Gilead (v.19) is Paul's work in the world at large (Gilead was a mix of Jews and Gentiles at Paul's time).

v.21 (p.212) Preaching of the Gospel of salvation unto all people. Takes "judging" as proclaiming the Gospel to the Edomites.

- Deliverers will be sent to Edom to proclaim the Gospel.
- Since Edom is a type of enemy and the Gospel is preached to them => "the kingdom will be the Lord's".

This approach understands geographical terms to represent those people who are outside the church, and the possession of their land refers to the preaching of the Gospel to these (ie., all) people.

- Is a thoroughly spiritualized interpretation.

Deut. 30: Speaks of restoration after the curses of ch. 29.

- The covenant curse is dispersion, being driven from the land.
- Why did this happen? Because they rejected God (Deut. 29:24-27).
- "The Lord your God will bring you into the land... and you shall possess it" (Deut. 30:5).

Does Obadiah 17-21 refer to the land or to a spiritual reality which is the spread of the Gospel?

Not all amillennialists follow this interpretation (are not many commentaries on this). Example:

- Aalders interprets this as geographical, not spiritual, and thinks it was fulfilled in the intertestamental period.
- Aalders does say that its significance with respect to the spread of the church is a type for the relation of the church to the world (ie., Jacob -> Esau parallels Church -> world).
- As there was animosity between Jacob and Esau, so there is animosity between the church and the world.
- As Israel triumphed over Edom, so will the church triumph over its enemies.
- Those born into the family of the church later become her most bitter enemies (like Edom and Israel).

Is there real typology here or is this just an analogy?

Vannoy: This is a more legitimate approach than Laetsch's.

- Is prophecy in the sense of type and antitype.

2) v.17-21 predicts the return of Israel from exile to possess her land and the judgment of Edom as a nation.

-If understood literally, when was or will it be fulfilled?

Aalders: In the return from exile.

J.B. Payne "Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy," p.419-421 (Payne sees 10 prophecies in the 21 verses of Obadiah).

v.17 "possess their possession" = return from Babylonian exile. "And it shall be a holy place" = rededication of the temple in 515 BC (Ezra 6:15-16).

- $\psi \tau \rho \pi \tau \rho$ in certain contexts, $\psi \tau \rho$ is interpreted as "sanctuary."

v.18a "House of Jacob, house of Joseph" = representative of both Judah and Israel consuming the stubble of Esau.

Vannoy: Could just be a synonymous parallelism here.

v.18b-21 Gives the details of conquest.

(p.421) "These conquests were accomplished in the 2nd century BC when Northern Judah and Benjamin were the nucleus from which the Jews under the Maccabees pressed out into the areas indicated by the verses. Specifically, Judas conquered in Gilead, defending Jewish settlers there [1 Macc. 5:6,24-54; 164 BC]; and John Hyrcanus [d. 105 BC] then gained control of most of Transjordan, except for a small section immediately surrounding Ammon-Philadelphia."

v.21b "The kingdom will be the LORD's" will be fulfilled in the future Messianic kingdom. "This climax to the progressive prophecies of Obadiah appears, almost abruptly. Lancaster says: 'The prophet seems for a moment to be transported beyond the sphere of [the present] to realize that all that has been happening ... will in due time lead on to the establishment of the kingdom of the Lord.'"

Payne: The saviors (a plural participle form) are human.
 -Are Judas and his nephew John Hyrcanus (the Maccabees).
 -Refers to judgment, not the Gospel.
 -Yet the last half of the verse is messianic.

Note that Payne takes a great jump in time from Maccabean to Messianic kingdom fulfillment at v.21b -- "Abruptly."

- 3) Regard Obadiah v.17-21 as for the most part yet to be fulfilled, interwoven with Maccabean references.

cf. Frank Gaebelin "Four Minor Prophets"

- v.17 Restoration of Israel to the land not yet fulfilled.
v.18 Fulfilled by Maccabees in the intertestamentary period, when they forcably Judiazed the Idumeans.
v.19-20 "The final reapportionment of the land"
-Future fulfillment in the millennium.
-Discusses geographical details, then says that few conclusions can be made.
-Hard to know what is meant, but God knows. Will wait for God to unravel what these 2 verses mean.
v.21 In restricted historical sense, Obadiah is looking forward to Zerubbabel and Judas Maccabee, but it really applies to the second coming of Christ.
-These only foreshadow "the Savior," has a typical significance with respect to Christ.
-Obadiah saw the Savior of the world.
-"Scientific exegesis sees nothing of the sort in these words, but we may venture to say it is there."
-Primary reference is to the Maccabees.

New Scofield note on v.18: "Esau (Edom) will be revived in the latter days."

-They see this verse as unfulfilled, think that Edom must become a nation again.

Vannoy: Agrees with Payne, we do not have to look for a future fulfillment because there is an adequate fulfillment in the intertestamentary period.

Summary of Obadiah:

1. Prediction of judgment on Edom.
2. Intimation of scattering of Judah (v.21).
3. Warning of destruction by Nebuchadnezzar (dating?).
4. Prediction of the return of Israel from exile.
5. Prediction of extension of dominion over Edom in Maccabean times.
6. Prediction of the future Messianic kingdom (v.21?).

III. JOEL.

A. Author and Date.

1. Named for author, Joel the son of Pethuel (1:1).
 - No contextual or other Biblical references to Joel.
 - Know nothing more about him.
2. Date:
 - Must use indirect indications from context.
 - Is extremely difficult to come to a universally acceptable position.
 - Again not a conservative/liberal division, although liberals do tend to date it later.
- a. Two basic positions (and a third minor one).
 - 1) Post-exilic date after the rebuilding of the walls under Nehemiah (~430 BC or later).
 - 2) Pre-exilic date placed (usually) at the time of Joash (~836 BC). Freeman adopts this view.
 - (3) Pre-exilic date placed at the time of the death of Josiah (~600 BC).

Reasoning with respect to these views of dating:

- 1) Post-exilic date after the rebuilding of the walls under Nehemiah (~430 BC or later).
 - a) Argue on the basis of Joel 3:2,3,5,6 which could only be made after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC.
 - 3:2 "My people who have been scattered among the nations."
 - 3:5 "You have taken My silver and My gold, and brought My precious treasures to your temples."
 - 3:17 "Aliens will never again pass through her [Jerusalem]."

And ... because chapters 1 and 2 presuppose the existence of the temple and its service, they must be after the time of Haggai and Zephaniah (after the temple was rebuilt).
cf. 2:15, 1:14 "Proclaim a solemn assembly; gather ... all the inhabitants ... to the house of the Lord you God."

Vannoy: It is not certain that chapter 3 necessarily presupposes that the events of 586 BC have taken place.
-Nothing is said about the destruction of the temple.
-Mention of taking slaves, removing treasures from the temple, selling a girl for wine, etc., all could have taken place any one of several times in the OT. Examples:

- 1 Kings 14:25-26 Shishak took away the temple treasures.
- 2 Chron 21:16-17 in Jehoram's time the Philistines took captives.

Other incursions are recorded.

-Freeman says it is possible to take ch. 3 as referring to the present day Diaspora of Israel (3:2). Then would have no OT fulfillment of Joel, making dating really hard!

Thus references for this view are not clear and compelling.

b) Other arguments for this view are from silence:

(1) Northern Kingdom is not mentioned.

-Implies it was no longer in existence => after 722 BC.

-But there is no reason to mention the N. Kingdom.

(2) No mention of a king but do mention elders.

-Therefore must be the post-exilic time when there was no king and the elders were ruling (cf. 1:2, 2:16).

-But other pre-exilic prophets (Nahum and Habakkuk) do not mention a king, and references to elders are common at all times since they always played an important role.

-Is not clear if this reference is to leaders or to old men in the community. 2:16 also says to gather the children, so there is probably no technical significance in the term here.

(3) Presence of apocalyptic section in Joel is evidence of a late date.

Problem: What is apocalyptic literature?

-Term "apocalypse" = "revelation" (Rev. 1:1)

-The term has been borrowed from Rev. 1:1 and applied to a genre of Jewish literature which flourished from 200 BC to 100 AD; called "apocalyptic literature."

-Some liberal critics say that Joel fits this genre and therefore must be of late date (ignoring the idea that Joel may be an early precursor of this genre).

-Daniel is put here by liberals also.

(11/26/81)

Distinctions between Biblical and non-Biblical apocalyptic literature:

-Vannoy questions if we should even use the term "apocalyptic" with non-Biblical literature.

-R.K. Harrison "Introduction to the OT", p.1132:

"The visionary material of Daniel has frequently been described in terms of 'apocalypticism,' which is popularly understood to have originated in Zoroastrianism, the religion of ancient Persia, and to comprise a dualistic,

cosmic, and eschatological belief in opposing cosmic powers, God and the evil one, and in two distinct ages, the present one which is held to be under the power of evil, and the future eternal age in which God will overthrow the power of evil and reign supreme with His elect under conditions of eternal righteousness.

While this approach has elements in common with the thought of certain OT writers, it is important for a distinction to be drawn between Biblical and non-Biblical apocalyptic, and to avoid reading into the canonical Scriptures thought that either occurred in Jewish apocryphal and pseudoepigraphal literature of a subsequent period, or that was foreign to the thought of Judaism altogether. . . . The prophets of Israel placed the final redemption of the elect in this world. The new order would be continuous with the present world ... but would not have suffering or evil. This new era would be instituted by a divine revelation, and not by forces working immanently in history."

Distinctive characteristics of non-Biblical apocalyptic writings:

1. Dualism.
2. Determinism.
3. Pessimism about the conditions of the present age.
4. Ethical passivity.
5. No pronouncements of judgment on God's people like the prophets in the Bible gave.

"Caution should be urged in any approach to Biblical apocalyptic literature lest it be assumed that the visionary material is characteristic of oriental apocalypticism."

-> Non-Biblical apocalyptic author's problem: In their minds, the people had received and kept God's law. So why then were they suffering?

Conclusion: Must not be God's doing. He will rectify this injustice in the glorious age to come.

Meaning of terms for non-Biblical apocalyptic writers:

Dualism: Eschatological type shows a sharp contrast between the present and future age; they are unrelated.

Pessimism: About history in general in this world. They viewed their world as abandoned by God to sin and evil.

Determinism: God is not sovereign now, has left things in the power of the evil one. Has abandoned the Jews.

Ethical passivity: Saw no need for national repentance since they thought they were doing fine. Had lost their awareness of sin.

The true prophets continually appeal to the people to repent. "Your suffering is a result of your sin."
cf. "International Standard Bible Encyclopedia," article by George Ladd on "Apocalyptic Literature."

There is no basis from this perspective to date Joel late or as apocalyptic literature.

- Joel is prophetic literature.
- Eschatological element is present but its context is different.
- Context is a call to repentance, using present disasterous situation to turn people to God.
- Thus is different than nonrepent. apocalyptic literature.

Therefore, is no reason to date Joel late because of eschatological emphasis. Also holds true for parallels like Isaiah 24-27 ("The little apocalypse") in prophetic literature. Isaiah is very apocalyptical like Joel is. No need to date them late, especially in view of their emphasis on repentance.

2) Early pre-exilic date usually placed during the rule of Joash (~835 BC). This would be shortly after Obadiah.

Arguments:

- (a) In Joel 3 have certain nations mentioned as enemies.
 - The list fits pre-exilic enemies best, mentioning Philistia, Edom, Egypt, and Phoenicians.
 - Does not fit post-exilic conditions, since their later enemies (Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians) are not mentioned.
- (b) The absence of any mention of a king (also used by late date people) may point to the time when Joash ruled under the regency of the priest.
- (c) Position of book in order of the minor prophets is more in keeping with an early date. The three post-exilic books are grouped at the end even though the order otherwise is not chronological.

-None of these reasons is conclusive.

3) Pre-exilic date about 600 BC, the time of Josiah's death.

- Minor view, does not focus on a precise date, but involves a variety of suggested dates.

-Idea: the book of Joel should be read and understood as a "Prophetic liturgy."
cf. A.S. Kapelrud "Joel Studies" (1948). Thesis:

- Ch. 1-2:17 should be taken as an example of temple liturgy in a period of calamity.
- Find description of a locust plague attacking the land interspersed with lamentations and calls for repentance.
- Concludes with an oracle (2:18-3) which represents the work of a cult prophet who is replying with words of assurance from the Lord.
- This view requires the existence of temple services so it must date to before 600 BC.

Others date it differently but follow the same approach.

Vannoy: To understand this as prophetic liturgy seems rather imposed; it does not arise naturally from the text. The theory rests heavily on the cult prophet idea and is probably reading it into the text.

B. The Content of Joel.

1. The problem of approach to the first two chapters.

Freeman (p.150) discusses various approaches that center around the first two chapters.

a. Freeman adopts an "apocalyptic interpretation."

- Chapter 1 as a description of an actual locust plague that had recently decimated the land.
- Chapter 2 then uses the locust imagery to describe a future invasion by Judah's human enemies in the last days (ch. 2 is symbolic and eschatological).

This is contrasted with two other views:

b. Allegorical: Takes both chapters as figurative and sees all of it as symbolic of a future enemy attack on Judah. Were no real locusts. cf. E.B. Pusey:

Joel 1:4 locust sequence represents the nations:
 gnawing locusts = Assyria.
 swarming locusts = Babylon.
 creeping locusts = Greece.
 stripping locusts = Rome.

Chapter 2 represents the end of the age and the millennial kingdom.

c. Completely literal: Both chapters describe locust plagues; ch. 2 is more severe than ch. 1.

There are some combinations of the above views:

J. Ridderbos has a variation on the completely literal.

Both are literal:

Ch. 1 is a devastation of the countryside.

Ch. 2 is going into the city, but he sees a fusion of the locust plague with a great future judgment on the day of the Lord.

Thus is a mid-way view.

2. Problem of Chronological Sequence in the book as a whole.

-What can be said about the chronological sequence?

-Obscurity on this point complicates our understanding of the book.

-In 2:1, 2:10,31, 3:15 we see similar cosmic signs given for the day of the Lord:

2:1 - Says the day of the Lord is coming.

2:10 - Cosmic signs: sun, moon, and stars.

2:31 - Cosmic signs: sun, moon, and stars.

3:15 - Cosmic signs: sun, moon, and stars.

-Vannoy: Suggests that these 3 references are to the SAME day historically, which means that we are given 3 parallel accounts in the 3 different sections of the book.

-These accounts are supplementary and emphasize different aspects of the event, adding details.

3. Outline of the book of Joel:

I. 1:1-20 Description of the Locust Plague.

II. Ch. 2-3 Three parallel descriptions of the coming day of the Lord.

A. 2:1-27 The day of the Lord described in the imagery of the present locust plague and drought [2:10 and 3:15 are at the same time].

B. 2:28-32 The promise of the Holy Spirit to precede the day of the Lord (Ch. 3 in the Hebrew Bible).

C. 3:(all) Judgment of the nations and the salvation of God's people (Ch. 4 in the Hebrew Bible).

4. Content.

CHAPTER 1: Describes a locust plague (v.4,7), drought (v.12,20), and fire (v.19) as a result of the drought.

- Shows a severe devastation of the land.
- Joel interprets this as a judgment from God and calls the people to repentance (v.14-15).
- From this perspective Joel moves to his eschatological message (ch. 2).
- Some take v.4 in an allegorical way, as symbolic of 4 foreign empires (Assyrian, Babylonian, Greek, Roman) who invaded the land.
- Vannoy sees this as forcing an interpretation on the text, there is no contextual reason to take it figuratively.
- The Hebrew language is particularly rich in terms for locusts: It has nine (9!) words.
- In verse 4, the four types are all different words, is a rich use of vocabulary.
- Some suggest that these terms refer to different stages of the locust's life cycle (larva, pupa, etc.).
- But 2:25 uses three of the same terms in a different order, so it is probably not a developmental cycle.
- The Hebrews were simply familiar with many varieties of locusts.

The plague was so destructive that there was not enough grain and vegetation left for the temple offerings:

- v.9 "The grain offering and the libation are cut off."
- v.13 "The grain offering and the libation are withheld from the house of your God."

December 1915 "National Geographic" was a good article on a big locust plague in Palestine: "Every green leaf was devoured, the bark was peeled from trees, babies left out in the open had their faces devoured before their cries were heard."

Laetsch's commentary, "The Minor Prophets" p.114, describes the 1915 locust plague: "so thick the sun was obscured, females laid their eggs: 65,000 per square meter, which hatched out in three weeks and"

v.13-14 calls the people to return to God, to gather for prayer in repentance.

Although Joel does not mention it explicitly, the locust plague is one of the covenant curses (Deut. 28:38,42).

- Deut. 28:38 "For the locust shall consume it."
- Deut. 28:42 "The cricket shall possess all your trees and the produce of your ground."

v.2-3 --This occurrence was to be remembered and recited to generations to come.

-Normally were to remind themselves of miracles (positive) but this is to be a reminder of judgment for disobedience (negative).

CHAPTERS 2 and 3:

-Shift to the future day of the Lord, a future judgment.
-Is described in the imagery of a locust plague.

v.2-3 "Day of darkness and gloom", "a great and mighty people" --> seems that this is referring to an army, but the imagery is that of a locust plague.

v.4 "Their appearance is like ... horses."

v.5 "Like a mighty people arranged for battle."
"... fire, ... run like warriors."

-Locusts are symbols representing human invaders.

v.20 Locusts seem to have become eschatological "invaders from the north."

-Freeman notes that the expression in v.20 "I will remove the northern army far from you" also has eschatological overtones.

-(p.153) The North is symbolic of the misfortunes and enemies of Israel. Assyria, Babylon, and others came to Israel from the North, also the eschatological "Northener."

"New International Commentary Series," by Leslie C. Allen, on Joel, p.88:

-Locusts are referred to collectively as the northerner.

-Locust plagues usually come from the south, but not always (cf. plague in 1915).

-2:1-11 sees the plague through psychic spectacles.

-Parallels locusts with apocalyptic hordes from the north (cf. Ezekiel 38-39).

-Allen dates Joel late.

In chapter 1, it seems clear that the locust plague is something that has already occurred (have perfect verbs).

In chapter 2, have a description of a process or something in the future:

-More verbs are in the imperfect tense, particularly v.3-9.

-The imperfect tense describes something future or in process.

2:10-11 is normally taken as a climax: "The Lord utters His voice before his army."

-Later in the chapter, see a clear transition from the onslaught of the invaders to the response of the Lord in repelling the invasion.

-But is this in view already in verse 11?

-Is the Lord leading the army of the locusts, or is this His response to drive them out?

Look at parallel texts:

Matthew 24:29-30 Cosmic signs, perhaps the same as Joel 2:10; the Lord appears.

Rev. 19:11-16 The "armies of Christ who will smite the nations" are lead by Christ on a great white horse.

In Joel 2:11 and 3:16 is literally "He gives his voice." Context of 3:16 implies the Lord himself coming in judgment. "The Lord roars from Zion" [roars = $\lambda \chi \psi$].

Jeremiah 25:30 "The Lord will roar from on high, and utter His voice from His holy habitation; He will roar mightily ... against all the inhabitants of the earth."

So, up to v. 10, we see a progression of forces against Israel and cosmic signs. Does v. 11 continue this progress or is it the Lord's response (cf. Rev. 19)?

Immediately after v. 11, there is a call to repentance in v.12-17:

v.12 "Return to Me with all your heart ..."

v.17 "Let them say, 'Spare Thy people, O Lord, and do not make Your inheritance a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should those among the people say 'Where is their God?'"

v.18-27: The response of the Lord. There is a problem with tense in verse 18.

Berkeley: "Then the Lord became zealous for His land and had pity on His people." (past)

KJV: "... was zealous" (past)

NASB: "... will be zealous" (future)

Many feel that v. 18 is not a prophecy but an account of what happened, so they translate it as completed action. This implies a pause between v. 17 and 18 in which repentance took place.

-Then v. 18 is a result of the repentance: The Lord changed His attitude and became zealous for His people (thus is past tense).

- However, is strange that no explicit mention of repentance is made.
- Also, many items after v. 18 are difficult to interpret as if they had already occurred.
- Even if the locust plague is not eschatological there is much difficulty:

- v.19 "I will no longer (or: never again) make you a reproach among the nations."
- v.20 "I will remove the northern army ... I will drive it out ... [and 2 other futures]."
- v.25 "I will make up to you for the years"
- v.26 "You will have plenty to eat and be satisfied."
- v.26-27 "Then My people will never be put to shame ..." (occurs twice!).

-These all seem to be future events (even to today).

The verbs in v.18 are waw consecutives with the imperfect and both are 3ms Piel Imperfects: $\chi\eta\eta$, $\text{ל}^{\text{א}}\pi$.

Problem: Context and flow of the passage imply a future but the normal translation of the waw consecutive is past.

J. Ribberbos suggests:

- (a) The waw consecutive does not exclude a possible translation as future (cf. Gensenuis, para. 111w).
- (b) Can take the perfect tense but understand it in an ideal sense as having reference to the future since the prophet sees the fulfillment with certainty.
- (c) Can point it differently as a Jussive with the waw copulative, where the Jussive is the apodasis of a conditional clause (the first half is not there). Assume that the repentance called for earlier is the condition implied here. Can then translate it as a future; not with the normal desire idea of the Jussive.

From v. 18 down, it becomes clear that Joel is talking of what God will do. Vannoy thinks that a future translation fits better here with the flow of the text.

- v.21 See a change in the flow of thought: "The Lord has done" is an infinitive form so cannot tell tense.
- v.23 "He gave you ..." (is a perfect tense here)

v.19 (background) --"No longer a reproach"
 v.21 (victory over disaster of the land) --"Do not fear, O land, rejoice and be glad, for the Lord has done great things."

Joel 2:23 translation problem:

כִּי־נָתַן לָךְ אֶת־מוֹרֵה לְצִדְקָה
 for righteousness the teacher to you He has given For
 וַיְהִי־לְךָ גֶשֶׁם מוֹרֵה וּמִלְקוֹשׁ בְּרֵאשִׁיט׃
 at the first latter and teacher rain to you caused He
 rain to come down

NIV "For He has given you a teacher for righteousness..."
 KJV "For he hath given you the former rain moderately..."
 Berk "For he gave you warning, teaching unto righteousness"
 [changing the pointing of מוֹרֵה to מוֹרֵחַ => sign?]
 Keil "For he giveth you the teacher for righteousness"
 LXX "For he gives you food fully [for exactness]"
 [מוֹרֵה to מוֹדוֹן , a rare word for food]
 NASB "For he has given you the early rain for your
 vindication"

Vocabulary:

מוֹרֵה - teacher (masculine noun) from מוֹרֵה .
 מוֹרֵה - early rain (Oct-Dec), important for the
 germination of recently sown crops (masc. noun).
 גֶּשֶׁם - rain shower (masc. noun)
 מִלְקוֹשׁ - latter rain; the spring showers. Unquestionably
 used in v.23b in this sense.

The problem is the term מוֹרֵה "teacher" in v.23b when we expect מוֹרֵה "early rains".

- In every other use of "early rain" (with the possible exception of Psalm 84:6, where there is another textual problem) מוֹרֵה is used as "early rain."
- The people who translate v.23a as "teacher" feel that 23b is probably a problem of dittography with the ם in the last phrase. The first phrase should be "teacher of righteousness", and the copiest made an error in the second phrase, writing a ם instead of a ך .
- Keil & Delitzsch (p.206) "Neither מוֹרֵה or מִלְקוֹשׁ ever has the article in any other place in the OT" so the first phrase should be "teacher" and the second "early rain".
 " לְצִדְקָה cannot mean 'in just measure' or 'moderately' because it is only used in an ethical sense, never in a physical sense."
- NASB tries to indicate this by saying "vindication" i.e., that the rains are a sign of blessing.

Moreover, the idea of the "teacher of righteousness" is an old idea, found in the Targums (2nd cent. BC), Rashi, Vulgate, etc.

If the teacher of righteousness is the best translation, then this is a messianic prophecy. However, there are some other interpretations of who the teacher is:

- A reference to Joel himself.
- All God-given teachers from Moses to the Messiah (cf. Delitzsch).
- Christ.
- The leader of the Qumran community is called this.

The only other place in the OT where this idea occurs is in Hosea 10:12, "till he comes and rains [or teaches] righteousness on you."

-The wording is not as clear, and it is a verbal form.

=> Qumran got this idea from Joel instead.

Freeman's "apocalyptic interpretation" is the best model for chapter 2, thus the "teacher of righteousness" refers to the future Messianic rule.

J.B. Payne's view of Joel chapter 2:

- v. 1-11 is an impending contemporary locust plague.
- v.12-18 call to repentance because of the coming plague.
- v.19-26a fulfilled in the deliverance from a contemporary locust plague.
- v.26b-27 "Never again put to shame" refers to the future messianic kingdom.

Note that there is also a problem with 19b: "I will never again make you a reproach among the nations."

Payne: v.23 "teacher of righteousness" must then be Joel referring to himself, not to Christ or Qumran.

-But why would Joel call himself a teacher of righteousness and why would this be a reason for rejoicing?

Outline II. B. Joel 2:28-32 (M.T. chapter 3):

-The Promise of the Coming of the Holy Spirit to precede the Day of the Lord.

Freeman (p.154-155) lists five views of its fulfillment:

1. Termination at Pentecost.
 - Fulfilled progressively terminating at Pentecost, but some events were in Joel's time (Grotius).
2. Fulfillment at Pentecost.
 - Messianic age, when the Holy Spirit is given at Pentecost (E.J. Young).

3. Eschatological or Nonfulfillment (yet).
-Not fulfilled at Pentecost or during the present age.
4. Typical.
-Pentecost is a partial fulfillment, but is not fully realized until the millennium.
5. Continuing.
-Beginning to be fulfilled at Pentecost and continuing to be fulfilled until the Day of the Lord (R.A. Torrey).

Vannoy thinks #5 is best.

2:28 "And it will come about after this" is: $\gamma\omega\ \iota\ \gamma\ \pi\ \chi$
[literally: "Afterwards"]

Acts 2:14f Peter at Pentecost.

v.16 "this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel"
v.17 "And it shall come to pass in the last days...."

-Peter is not quoting the LXX here, which says "after these things..."

Vannoy puts a lot of weight on Peter's rendering of 2:28. Implies that v.28 is not looking back to v.27 or earlier, but is starting a new descriptive (the second) cycle.

-Peter sharpens v.28 further by applying it to "the last days".

-NT usage of "last days" covers the time from the first advent to the second advent of Christ (cf. 2 Timothy 3:1 and Hebrews 1:1, "In these last days....").

-If this is correct, then Joel means, "In this new period of God's dealing with his people these things will happen" when he says, "And it will come to pass after this."

Then v.28: "I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind" emphasizes the pouring of the Spirit on ALL flesh.

-Certainly the Holy Spirit is not absent in the OT, but is mainly mentioned in the context of enablement for a particular task or function in the theocracy.
-Saul and David were anointed as kings and given the Spirit.
-Judges and prophets also.

-But in the new period, the last days, the Spirit will come on all flesh.
-Not limited to certain leaders of the people.
-Will even extend beyond the Israelites.

In the Gospel accounts, Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would come when He left: cf. John 14:6f, and Acts 1:

v.1:3 Jesus appeared and commanded the disciples to wait for the coming of the Spirit.

v.1:6 Why did the disciples connect the kingdom of God and the coming of the Holy Spirit?
 -Perhaps they were thinking of this prophecy in Joel where the two are connected [Spirit coming is the day of the Lord (sun and moon darkened)].

v.1:7 But... it is not for men to know when the kingdom of God will come.
 -The time element remains a mystery.

(11/25/81)

Peter in Acts 2: Why, if only the first part (v.28-29) was fulfilled at Pentecost, did Peter continue on to quote through v.32?

v.30-32 Announces the signs that will precede the great and terrible day of the Lord, which is still future.

-This is an example of the prophetic time perspective: Two events belong to the last days but they are separated by an unannounced period of time.

-Because these both belong to the period of time beginning at Pentecost, Peter quotes it all.

-Scripture does not indicate how long this separation will be.

-This gives the idea of immanency.

-Peter stresses the need for repentance in light of the coming day of the Lord.

Thus the Day of the Lord here is the same as in 2:10 or 3:14-15, but here we also have other events predicted as forerunners to the Day itself (signs in the heavens), which is the coming of the Holy Spirit.

This passage is important because it points to 2 steps in redemptive history:

- (1) The sending of the Holy Spirit.
- (2) The Day of the Lord (signs, etc.).

From this we can infer:

- 1) In this period in which God's Spirit is poured out, the fullness of God's kingdom is not yet revealed because it precedes the Day of the Lord.
- 2) The period of "the last days" may be characterized as the period of the Spirit.

Calvin's view: Visions, dreams, etc. were OT conceptions of the function of the Holy Spirit in terms Joel's listeners would understand. This would be expressed differently now.

-Thus we would not expect a literal fulfillment, but a more general fulfillment in a new and more full way than found in the OT.

In the OT, most references to the function of the Holy Spirit are with respect to His equipping men for office.

-But this does not mean that He was not active in sanctification, regeneration, etc. in OT times.

Leon J. Woods "The Holy Spirit in the OT", chap. 7, "Spiritual Renewal" p.64, discusses OT references to the Holy Spirit:

-He notes that the Spirit empowered men for their tasks: judges, kings, craftsmen, prophets, etc.

-If in the OT the Spirit is not said to effect spiritual renewal, did the OT saints experience it?

-Yes, are many examples of men of God: David, Abraham.

-Were not saved by their own efforts or resources.

-Evidence in their lives suggests that the Spirit was functioning.

-By logical deduction from NT statements about the work of the Spirit, we can see the Spirit working in the OT.

-Believing Israelites were saved => they had saving grace
=> they had received faith from the Holy Spirit.

But why doesn't the OT talk about regeneration as the work of the Holy Spirit?

Kuyper: "God saw fit to wait until NT times."

-A part of the process in progressive revelation.

Wood: Argues that all the NT terms regarding the function of the Holy Spirit are found in the OT, except baptism; ie., the NT terms regeneration, indwelling, sealing, filling, empowering, are all used with regard to OT saints.

-Only baptism is new to the NT.

-It is the aspect which starts at Pentecost because "baptism has to do with the church and the church did not start until Pentecost. It is the baptism of believers by the Holy Spirit which inaugurates the church (Acts 2:1-12)."

Vannoy: When did the church begin? Wood argues at Pentecost (above). The church-Israel distinction has caused much discussion.

- Some promote too much discontinuity between the church and Israel:
 - Call for two separate, distinct people.
 - two separate programs of God.
 - two separate ways of salvation (law and grace).
- Others make too little of a distinction, and they are equated without sufficient recognition of the differences in their economies (organizational principles).

Biblical perspective: God's people are one over all time and all places, yet the one people have two different structures: The Old and New covenant.

- There is continuity in the way of salvation.
- But a discontinuity in organization:
 - Israel has a political, social, ethnic unity.
 - The church has a spiritual organization.

Thus Wood is right in a "sense" in saying that the church started at Pentecost, but we must also recognize the continuity.

Wood: "The truth of baptism by the Holy Spirit is set forth in 1 Cor. 12:13 ["One body, one faith, ... one Spirit"]. The baptism of the Spirit is that work which joins Christians together in a common purpose and fellowship. Regeneration, sealing, indwelling, filling and baptism all happen at the same time."

"The reason for baptism beginning has to do with the need to spread the Gospel. Before Christ, believers were segregated into a nation and ethnic group, but afterwards the Gospel was to go to all nations.

- No longer need a special nation, but a new organism of special people (the church) began which needed unity to function as a group. This was provided in the first baptism of the Holy Spirit and in subsequent individual baptisms."
- "Baptism of the Holy Spirit gives unity across national barriers.
- Function is to bring the individual into corporate oneness.
- Also empowers the believer in the spread of the Gospel to cross-cultural people. Before Pentecost, there was no need for the baptism of the HS because of cross-cultural and international restrictions."

Outline II. C. Joel 3:1-21 (chapter 4 in Hebrew):

-The Judgment of the Nations and the Salvation of God's People.

v. 1-15 Judgment of the nations.
v.16-21 Blessings on God's people.

v.1 Time designation "in those days and at that time."

- Vannoy: Does not point back to what precedes (2:32) but points forward to the time when God "restores the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem."
- This is the 3rd separate description (cycle) of the day of the Lord.
- 2:28 and 3:1 also refer to the future, not the past.

v.2 "the Valley of Jehoshaphat."

- Geographical place name occurs nowhere else in the Bible. Where is it?
- Some suggest 2 Chron. 20:26, the "valley of Beracah" where Jehoshaphat had a victory over the Ammonites and the Moabites.
- Problem: The valley is named Beracah in the story as a result of Jehoshaphat's victory and this name is used in the text.
- "Jehoshaphat" means "the LORD judges", and its occurrence in this context is probably just symbolic of the judgment of God; hence it is not a specific place name.
- This idea is strengthened by the repetition of v.12: "Let the nations be aroused and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat" and v.14 "valley of decision" -- looks like the same valley with a different name.
- The actual valley is left open as to the geographical place.
- Jewish and Muslim tradition says the Kidron valley is referred to here, but this is based on the mistaken identification of the "Tomb of King Jehoshaphat" in the Kidron valley. Is no firm evidence for this.
- Thus v.2 should read "the valley of God's judgment."

v.2 "All the nations" who will be judged ... who are they?

- This is a reference to the victory which will be won by the Lord at His appearance in power and glory when God's enemies are drawn together for battle in the time immediately preceding the millennial kingdom.

- This parallels:
 - Zechariah 14:2-3 "For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle.... Then the Lord will go forth...."
 - Revelation 19:11-14,15,19 Christ on the white horse. (However, there are no explicit Biblical connections of these parallels).
- The judgment is the Lord's victory in the battle.
- Is the Matthew 25 judgment the same as Joel 3?
 - In Matthew 25:31-46 all the nations will come before the Son of Man like sheep and goats; the unrighteous are sent to punishment immediately and the righteous get the millennial kingdom.
- Problem: Wicked people will be in the millennial kingdom.
- If amillennial, this is no problem since the judgment of the nations occurs at the last judgment.
- If premillennial, then are two judgments; one before the millennium and one after (one throne in Rev. 20): Which one is Matthew 25?
- Buswell "Systematic Theology" v.2, p.417 (premill):
 - "Should be taken in cosmic perspective ... as covering the entire sweep of the eschatological complex" (from pre-rapture signs to the final judgment).
 - This involves "prophetic fore-shortening" where its all squeezed together in one prophecy.
 - The events are not placed at any one specific judgment: it covers them all.
 - This view could be a cop-out.
- 3:4-8 is an illustration with respect to Tyre and Sidon of the abuses which they did to Israel.
- 3:9-12 is a call to war. Note that it is a call to the godless nations to come attack Zion.
- 3:10 "Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears" is a reversal of the imagery of of Isaiah 2:4.
- 3:12 The Lord is stirring up these nations so that He can destroy them.
 - Note the imagery of the winepress and sickle.
 - The end of the summons to battle is linked with the trial in v.2.
 - As God defeats these nations in battle, this is the judgment, the day of the Lord.

- 3:16b-21 Then blessings come on Judah and Jerusalem, including prosperity.
-There is a great contrast here to the first chapter of Joel where there was desolation.
- 3:19 The restoration of Egypt in Isaiah 19:23 is different from the desolation pictured here -- how does it fit in? [good question]

(12/2/81)

IV. JONAH.

A. The name and the writer.

Name: "Jonah son of Amittai" (1:1).

- Is also mentioned in 2 Kings 14:25.
- This helps us place Jonah historically.
- Is from Gath-hepher in the N. Kingdom, N. of Nazareth.

- Must have lived during or shortly before the reign of Jeroboam II (782-753 BC).
- Jonah predicted Jeroboam's extension of Israel's border.
=> He was a contemporary of, or just before Jeroboam.
=> He was a contemporary of Amos and Hosea.

- Are no other Biblical references to him, so we only know what the book of Jonah says about him.
- Is a reasonable amount.

Writer:

- The author is not explicitly indicated.
- Narrative is given in the third person, but that is:
- No compelling reason not to assume that Jonah is the author.
- Even if the book were written by someone other than Jonah, this does not effect its authenticity as the writer is not specified.

Date:

- Freeman gives these arguments in detail.
- Says that late dating is unreasonable.

B. The Character of the Book.

- Important in Jonah's case: Is unique.
- Jonah distinguishes itself in that it is not a record of his prophecies, but it is a narrative in which he is the primary figure.
- The book of Jonah is closer in form to the narratives in 1 and 2 Kings concerning Elijha and Elisha than to the strict prophetic discourse of the prophetic writings of the other minor prophets.

- With respect to the character (or nature) of the narrative we find a variety of viewpoints:
 - The religious value of the book is recognized by almost everyone.
 - Its historical value is often considered to be little or nothing.

Is the book of Jonah history or fiction?

- This is an important issue since this book is one of the first books that critics of general Biblical historicity like to attack.
- Is often said that the writer had a didactic purpose in mind (ie., he told the story to teach certain things).
- Thus is argued that this is reason enough to say that the purpose of the book is not historical, but that the author has just used this story form to teach a lesson.
- Among those who hold this position, there are differences concerning the origin and nature of the story form.

Non-historical views:

- 1) The story was completely made up by the author.
- 2) The author adapted a prophetic legend already in use among the people; the legend may have had a historical core to it (=> not totally fiction).
 - Perhaps a "Jonah" did go to Ninevah for a purpose (envoy for the king, etc.), but time added the accretions of the fish, gourd, and conversion of the Ninevites.
 - Those who hold to this legendary view find points of agreement with non-Israelite legends telling of deliverances from sea monsters.
 - They would say that the book does teach certain truths.

3) Allegorical.

- Jonah = The people of Israel.
- Ninevah = Heathen world to whom Israel has the task of proclaiming repentance.
- J.'s unfaithfulness = Israel's unfaithfulness to her task of proclaiming the message.
- Swallowed by fish = Israel going into captivity.
- Cast up on land = Israel's return from captivity.

Returned Israel is to make the message known to the heathen and when they accept it, Israel is to be rejected because she is dissatisfied with God's grace to the Gentiles.

4) Parabolic.

-Author's purpose was to teach a lesson by means of a parable.

-Do not push the details as far as an allegory does.

-Compare this story with Jesus' parables.

-Do not deny the inspiration of the story, only its historicity.

-This view is spreading among evangelicals.

cf. Leslie C. Allen, "New International Commentary on the OT," "The 4 Minor Prophets," p.178-9:

-The church fathers used it allegorically and some doubted its historicity (Luther, Gregory of Naz.).

-Can take as non-historical and still say it is inspired: Someone was inspired to teach this parable.

-Run into problems with the veracity of the historical books in general (their miracles accounts, etc.).

Vannoy: with respect to the non-historical model, on what basis can one say that the book is not historical and what are the implications?

-Is no real basis for this non-historical approach and strong reasons for rejecting it:

1) The connection with 2 Kings. The book itself gives no good reason for not taking it historically, especially as there is a real historical link between the leading figure in the narrative to a prophet in the time of Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:25).

=> There was a real prophet named Jonah who prophesied a real event.

2) Citation of Christ. His comments about the incidents in the book indicate that He thought that it was historical (cf. Matthew 12:39-41).

-Allen does not feel that these references are conclusive: (p.180) "It was not proved with necessity that if Jesus' resurrection was a fact, so was Jonah's 3 days in the fish Jesus is not using strict exegesis here, but the popular Jewish understanding. He is only reflecting the contemporary view. We must allow for a figurative element in Jesus' teaching. We refer to MacBeth and Oliver Twist in our sermons, couldn't Jesus adapt himself similarly?"

-Problem: The extended context hurts this argument. Jesus parallels the men of Ninevah with the Queen of Sheba (Matt. 12:41-42) who will rise up and condemn that generation. Since she is historical, Jonah must be historical.

- 3) Inclusion of the book in the canon of Scripture and most ancient references to it in the Jewish literature imply that it was always understood as historical.

H.L. Ellison, "The Prophets of Israel, p.56: "Those who deny its historicity must explain how a book so different in style was included in the canon of the minor prophets and how its figurative nature was forgotten. References in Tobit and other intertestamentary period literature show that they understood it as historical. Its literal truth was never questioned in Jewish literature. Even Philo of Alexandria, a great master of allegory, who would doubtless have seized on an allegorical explanation, took great pains to explain the fish in a historical sense."

Problems with the allegorical view:

If we press the story to details, we find serious problems:

- Jonah's urging the crew to throw him into the sea (1:12) does not apply to Israel going to captivity since Israel was not begging or willing to be taken captive.
- The fish was a divinely appointed means to rescue Jonah from death; how does this parallel the captivity?
- In an allegory we expect all of the details to be designed to "fit".
- These weaknesses imply that Jonah was not written with the intent of being an allegory.

Vannoy: This is not do deny that in many respects Jonah may be typical of Israel, but this is different from saying that the story is an allegory where one expects an exact correspondence in details.

Comparisons with other OT allegories:

Ezekiel 17:3-10 "Parable of two eagles and the vine"

Note: v.2 introduces this as "a parable" (KJV).

- The Hebrew term here is *הוֹד* , which has a broad area of meaning.
- Is used for all expressions that contain a comparison (metaphor, parable, allegory, etc.).

- In a parable there is one stressed point of comparison.
- In allegory there are a number of integrated metaphors worked together.

Here: Great eagle = Nebuchadnezzar.
 Lebanon = Hill country of Judah.
 High branch = Jehoiachin.
 Land of trade = Babylon.
 Placed vine = Zedekiah.
 2nd eagle = Pharaoh of Egypt.

In v.11-21 we find an explanation of the allegory!

Another example in Ezekiel 19:2-9 "Lion and her whelps"

Note: v.1 introduces as "a lamentation for the princes of Israel."

First young lion = Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23:31).
 Second young lion = Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:8-16).

In comparison with Jonah, these are much shorter and they contain unmistakable indications that they are allegories.

Such indication of allegorical character are not found at all in the book of Jonah => we should not take Jonah as allegorical.

We find the same principle with respect to Biblical parables (3 main ones):

Jotham's bramble	Judges 9:8-15
Nathan's lamb (David)	2 Samuel 12:1-4
Woman of Tekoa's son	2 Samuel 14:6f

These OT examples are:

- 1) all short, simple and pointed;
- 2) find direct indication of their intent and application in their context.

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Although this does not prove that Jonah is not a parable or allegory, it is fairly strong evidence against it.

The book is not characterized by:

- 1) Making a single point, or
- 2) an indication of its application,

plus we have no indication why a real person (2 Kings 14:25) would be used as the main character if it is a parable or allegory.

This implies that the character of the book is historical.

Critical scholars say that the book is legendary or mythical.

Artur Weiser, "The OT: Its Formation and Development" (p.251). The subject matter reaches back into time. "Perhaps [it is] a prophetic legend embellished by themes from folk tales and mythology, for example the fish myth is found among other nations (Greeks - Hercules). In details, one cannot sort out additions from history."

Reasons for adopting this view:

1) Improbability or impossibility of the events having occurred. Deny historicity on the basis of supernatural elements.

2) Parallels with myths and legends of other peoples.

Rebutal of:

1) Improbability or impossibility of the events.

-Our main question should be, "Is the writer intending to describe reality or not? Does it present itself as historical?"

Leslie C. Allen (p.176) "The element of surprise is a key factor in the book. Jonah is 'crammed' with surprises." i.e., being sent to Ninevah, refusing to go, fish, gourd, mass repentance of Ninevah. "While one or two exciting events are not a problem, recurrent exciting events imply that the author did not intend to describe historical events. But these things are not impossible, just improbable."

Vannoy: To be consistent, one must also deny the historicity of the Elisha stories in 2 Kings 4-13. It is even more 'crammed' with surprises:

- 4:1-7 The widow and her oil.
- 4:8-37 Shunamite woman's son who is born, and raised.
- 4:38-44 purifying and multiplying food.
- 5 Naaman the Syrian's leprosy.
- 6:1-7 Axehead floats.
- 6:8-23 Syrian raids predicted and foiled.
- 6:24-7:20 Deliverance of Samaria from siege and famine.

Good article by John Stek, "The Message of the Book of Jonah," in "Calvin Theological Journal" 4(1969), 23-50.

Footnote (p.23) "Modern readers feel compelled by the 'analogy of history' to reject the historicity of miracles. This is an insidious method as it should also be applied to all other marvelous events. The 'analogy of history'

implies that every event must have a similar event in history elsewhere, implying that there can be no valid unique events. Yet it is a reasonable principle when kept within the proper bounds, i.e., within the history of redemption. Jonah's miraculous events agree with other miraculous events in the history of revelation and redemption."

Footnote (p.42) "[H.H. Rowley says] 'the repentance of the Ninevites implies that the story is legend. It is too swift and ephemeral a conversion to be effective proof, especially to God.' But even an ephemeral repentance was sufficient for Jonah's purpose, because even this was more than Israel's continued, long term rejection of the message and evidence from many prophets. Ninevah responded to one. God does respond graciously to even ephemeral repentance as is shown in God's response to Ahab."

Thus inclusion of the miraculous is not to be regarded as proof of impossibility.

Ellison: Denials of historicity are based on the dominant rationalistic world-view influence.

2) Parallels in myths and legends of other people.

- This sounds more substantial than it really is.
- There is not much correspondence between Jonah and extra-biblical stories.
- The main parallels cited are found in Greek literature, cf. Frank Gaebelin (p.134) "Minor Prophets":
 - Usually linked with Hercules and Heseron, or the myth of Andromeda and Perseus (used by Ovid, etc.).
 - In each case, some beautiful maid was exposed as food for a great sea monster. The hero releases the maid and kills the monster.
- Other appeals (far out): Myths of the sun or moon.
 - The sun being swallowed and cast out is a myth representative of the setting and rising of the sun and the alteration of summer and winter.
 - The moon myth deals with a legendary 3-day disappearance of the moon in Babylon.
- Modern examples of whalers being swallowed?
Be careful; the documentation is poor.

Conclusions on the character of the Book of Jonah.

- The author intended to give a record of real historical events.
- The ancient Jews understood it this way.
- Jesus spoke of Jonah and the repentance of the Ninevites as historical.

C. The Content of the Book of Jonah.

1. Historical Background. (Very important)

885-874	Omri	Ashurnasirpal II	883-859
874-853	Ahab		
853-852	Ahaziah	Shalmaneser III	859-824
852-841	Joram		
841-814	Jehu	Shamsi-Adad V	824-810
814-748	Jehoahaz		
748-743	Jehoash	Adad-Nirari III	810-783
793-753	Jereboam II		

- Around 880 BC when Omri began to rule the N. Kingdom, Assyria began to awake from two centuries of weakness.
- Ashurnasirpal II developed Assyria into a great fighting machine and extended Assyrian power.
- Developed ruthless and cruel tactics (skinned enemies, etc., cf. Finegan p.202).
- By Ahab's time, Assyria (Shal III) was such a threat to the west that Ahab joined in an alliance to fight him at Qarqar (853 BC).
- This is not mentioned in the Bible, but is in Assyrian inscriptions.
- Assyria lost the battle.
- By 841 BC Assyria (still Shal III) returned to the west.
- Conquered Syria and Damscus, took tribute from Jehu (recorded on the black obelisk).
- In 803 BC Jehoahaz pays tribute to Adad-Nirari III.
- The Bible comments that Syria lost its power against Israel (presumably because Assyria had destroyed its power).
- 2 Kings 13:25 tells of Jehoash's victories in taking back cities from weakened Syria.
- 2 Kings 14:25 (Jeroboam II) restores the border of Israel to Hamath (way north).
- These move were probably done with the permission of Assyria (Israel was a vassal paying tribute).

-2 Kings 13:5 may be a somewhat obscure reference to the Assyrians ("In the time of Jehoahaz, the Lord gave Israel a deliverer").

External situation in the time of Jeroboam II (~790 BC):

-Assyria became involved with a people to the north of them in Urartu.

-These people had pushed south to about 100 miles of Ninevah.

-After 783, in this period of decline after Adad-Nirari III, is when many think we should place Jonah's visit to Ninevah.

-The people of Ninevah would be inclined to take seriously Jonah's words because of the menace of the Urartu.

-The "40 days" thus was a real, visible threat.

How do you explain the mass repentance of Ninevah?

-Critics cite this as impossible.

-Good article: D.J. Wiseman "Jonah's Ninevah" in the "Tyndale Bulletin" 30(1979), 29-51.

-(p.43f) "Note that the message affects the city and king. In Assyrian omens, the only situations which lead to such a denunciation (especially of the king) are:

- 1) Invasion by an enemy.
- 2) Total solar eclipse.
- 3) Plague."

-He discusses (1) but discounts it as not being a real threat.

-Argues for (2), the eclipse. "There are 70 Assyrian texts on this and its significance. It always pointed to a major public disaster, such as: the king being deposed and killed, a fire consuming the land, the city walls being destroyed.

-Caused a time of solemn fasting when the king hands over the throne to a substitute king (who gets the curse) until the danger is past.

-The eponym list (yearly list of kings and officials) shows that June 15, 763 had a solar eclipse.

-This was during the reign of Jeroboam II and in the time of Jonah.

-Jonah 3:6 "the king laid aside his robe from him" may be a reference to the king temporarily stepping down.

- Thus Wiseman feels that the solar eclipse presents a good background for Jonah's message of repentance.
- Jonah coming soon afterwards would be taken seriously.
- There must have been a real threat involved in this somewhere or else we have God playing on their superstitions.

-Jonah's visit is not recorded in any Assyrian text, but an understanding of the historical background shows:

- 1) Jonah's reluctance to go to a city which was the capital of an empire which had a history of taking tribute from his people (like a Frenchman who has been attacked 3 times by the Germans).
- 2) Why the Ninevites might have repented (two possible reasons: Urartu invasion or eclipse).

Internal situation in Israel during Jeroboam II's reign:

-John Stek's article [CTJ 4(1969)]:

- Both Israel and Judah were in a period of economic and political resurgence and prosperity.
- This is a sharp contrast with the time from Jehu to Jehoash when things were not good.
- Yet at this time the prophets Amos and Hosea are speaking of judgment to come because of the social injustice, immorality and idolatry.

-Thus this prosperity in Israel is not God's blessing for obedience and repentance, but is God's grace and relief from their earlier hard times.

-2 Kings 14:25-26 comments that Jeorboam's expansion of the borders was because "the Lord saw the affliction of Israel, which was very bitter."

-Thus this prosperity is linked with great immorality.

-Also: Elijah and Elisha ministered in the previous period from Ahab to Jehoash. They did not cause a revival.

-They have words of rebuke for Israel, and also:

-Indications of God's blessings on neighboring gentiles.

Examples:

- Widow of Zarephath (on Phoenician coast near Sidon) sustains Elijah through the famine. God did not send him to an Israelite widow (Luke 4:25-26).
- Naaman the Syrian was healed from leprosy but none in Israel (Luke 4:27).
- Elisha anointed Hazael king over Syria but no Israelite king (1 Kings 19:15). Also predicts that he would do much evil to Israel (2 Kings 8:8f).

The Principal at work here is The Principle of Replacement.

Deut. 32:21 "I will move them to jealousy with those who are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation."

- When God's own people turn their back on Him, God will give His blessings to others.
- Meredith Kline: God would incite jealousy in Israelites by blessing other nations and letting His people suffer.

Historical Context:

- Syria had been shown God's token of blessing but now is in decline following defeat by the Assyrians.
- Jonah's prophecy in 2 Kings 14:25 is fulfilled with respect to the expansion of Israel.

- But at the same time, all is not well in Israel.
- Amos is denouncing the sin of Israel, is speaking of:

2:6-16 impending judgment,
5:27 exile beyond Damascus,
6:14 affliction within the same boundaries as those
Jeroboam just conquered.

- Amos does not specify Assyria as the afflictor, but clearly Israel is to be brought low.

-Hosea is preaching the same message:

4:1 "The Lord has a case against [Israel]"
10:6 "carried to Assyria ..."
11:5 "Assyria will be their king."

- Israel is characterized by a spirit of pride and complacency.
- Because of her moral corruption and religious apostasy, she forfeited her privileged position.

-In this context, God sends a prophet to a heathen nation, presenting them with the covenant privileges which Israel rejected.

- This is the principle of replacement working here.
- See this noted in Jesus' references in Luke 4 (above).

- We are in a similar situation.
- We do not "own" God's word or have a corner on His grace.
- "Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall".
- If we are not faithful, God may abandon us.
- cf. the opening of the gospel to the gentiles, Rom. 9-11.

- Thus Jonah's mission was not restricted only to Ninevah.
- It also has a relevance to Israel and their relationship to the Lord.
- Jonah was probably pressing home to his people their unfaithfulness (as Elijah and Elisha did) by contrasting them with the Ninevites.

2. The Purpose of the Book of Jonah.

- a. The ministry of Jonah serves to point out the stubborn and rebellious character of the Israelites.

- Many prophets had spoken to Israel and the nation had not repented.
- Yet Ninevah hears the words of one prophet and they repent in sackcloth and ashes.

- Stek (p.42) notes other rebukes in Israel via Jonah:
- Even the heathen seamen are surprised that Jonah would flee from such a God as the LORD.
 - Their concern for Jonah's welfare is contrasted with Jonah's callous view towards Ninevah.

- b. The ministry of Jonah serves to point out to Israel that she did not have exclusive rights to the Lord's salvation (and grace).

- The idea of religious exclusivism based on national pride and a false view of election had become prominent.
- Israel's election is the result of God's grace and He can extend it wherever He wills to.
- Israel should not wish judgment on others and be offended when mercy is extended to them.

- c. Perhaps the history of this episode typifies Israel's future history.

- Jonah was cast into the sea and then delivered in order that he might fulfill his mission.
- The nation of Israel, because of its disobedience, passed through affliction until a remnant returned to fulfill its mission to the world.
- This parallel might be considered to be a weak type.

-This does not effect the historicity of the story.

- It implies that no matter how much Israel rebels, God will accomplish His purposes.
- God will do His saving work inspite of her, not because of her.

-Stek (p.41): "The sin of Jonah cannot thwart God's gracious purpose for Ninevah. Jonah goes as a God-wrought sign to Ninevah [saved via the fish]. Parallels Israel, where Israelite sin will not thwart God either."

-Many feel that Jonah does play a representative role. Find various views that Jonah represents:

- 1) Men generally. Shows something of the relation between God and man.
- 2) Those whom God has called to a specific ministry.
-Is an object lesson that we should not turn away from it.
- 3) The nation of Israel. Stek feels that all Israel would identify with Jonah.

d. Points forward to Christ Himself (one greater than Jonah).

E.J. Young "Introduction to the OT" holds this.

-Overstates: "The fundamental purpose of the book is to show Christ's death and resurrection."

J.B. Payne "Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy" (p.423):
"Jesus used Jonah's period in the fish to illustrate His own 3 days in the grave (Matt. 12:40); but He thereby neither constitutes the prophet as a type of Himself nor suggests that this had been God's original intent in decreeing Jonah's miraculous experience."

Stek (p.37) footnote:

"If type refers only to purpose, then this type would be a complete mystery to the people until Christ came."

-Thus while it points forward to Christ, we must be careful how much we see in it.

(12/9/81)

V. AMOS.

A. The Author and His Background.

1. His Name.

-Found in 1:1, "The Words of Amos".

-In Hebrew is אָמֹס , this is the only OT spelling with the א and ס .

-In Isaiah 1:1 we have the name "Amoz" spelled: אָמוֹז .

-Amos' name occurs several times in the book (7:8,10-12; 8:2).

2. His Place of Residence.

- Tekoa is 10 miles South of Jerusalem in the wilderness of Judea.
- Was a herdsman **בֹּקֵר**. In Hebrew, this is someone who owned sheep himself, not just someone who watched someone else's sheep.
- The term is used of the king of Moab (2 Kings 3:4).
- BDB gives the meaning as a cattle dealer or owner.
- This does not imply that he is rich.
- Amos 7:14 "I am a herdsman and a grower of sycamore figs". Fig growing implies a small operation.
- Thus Amos was a herdsman with his own flock of sheep.
- Most likely was a plain and simple man whom God called to be a prophet.

3. His Place of Prophetic Activity.

- Amos is from the Southern Kingdom, but he is a prophet to the Northern Kingdom.
- His message is directed mainly to the Northern Kingdom.
- In 1:1, "Israel" is used, most likely referring to N.K.
- In 7:10-17, see that Amos went to Bethel and is preaching against the altar there.
- Also has some rebukes for Judah:
 - 2:4 "For three transgressions of Judah and for four..."
 - 6:1 "Woe to those who are at ease in Zion ..."
- Amos is reminiscent of the man of God from Judah in 1 Kings 13, who comes up from the S. Kingdom and preaches against Bethel.
- Is not clear if Amos confined his location to Bethel.
- Could also have gone to Samaria.
 - 4:1 "You cows of Bashan who are on the mountain of Samaria" sounds like he is in Samaria.
- He also warns people who are preparing to go to Bethel and to Gilgal => he is not in Bethel at the time.

4. The Time of His Prophetic Activity.

- Amos 1:1 "In the days of Uzziah king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake."

Northern Kingdom	Southern Kingdom	Assyria
Jeroboam II 793-753 (782 [^])	Uzziah 790-739 (767 [^])	Ashur-dan III 773-755
Zechariah 753-752	Jotham 750-731 (739 [^])	Ashur-Nirari 755-745
		Tiglath-Pileser III 745-729

[^] = became sole ruler

-Thus Amos would be a contemporary of Hosea, although Hosea prophesied a bit longer (Hosea is during the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah).

-Hosea was a younger contemporary and possibly even a successor of Amos, although their ministry did overlap.

"Two years before the earthquake"

-Is mentioned in Zechariah 14:5 "before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah".

-During Uzziah's reign there was a memorable earthquake which was used as a point for dating events.

-Today we do not know when this earthquake occurred.

-Freeman suggests the dates of 760 to 753 BC for the ministry of Amos, largely on the basis of silence regarding the death of Jeroboam II.

-If Jeroboam had died, it seems likely that Amos would have mentioned it since he does refer heavily to the political situation.

-This is an argument from silence.

5. The Political and Social Conditions of the Time.

-Under Jeroboam II, Israel experienced a great increase in prosperity, prestige and power (see Jonah comments).

-From 800 to 745 BC (the time of Tig-Pil III) Assyria had to deal with the Urartu invasion.

-Assyria had gotten as far as Syria in the West.

-This gave room from Israel to expand into her old lands.

Amos 6:13 "You rejoice in a thing of nothing and say, 'Have we not by our own strength taken a pair of horns for ourselves?'"

-Horns are a symbol of strength and power.

-Are probably referring to their expansion into Syria "by our own power".

-The only reason they could do so was because Assyria had essentially destroyed Syria.
 -And because Assyria was not an immediate threat to them.

-Amos does not specifically mention Assyria anywhere in his book.
 -Probably because Assyria was not an immediate threat to Israel.
 -Amos does speak of coming judgment.
 -Comes close to identifying Assyria as the instrument of this judgment:
 5:27 "you will go into exile beyond Damascus".

-Other references to exile are found in 6:7 and 6:14.
 -Note that 6:14 "afflict you from the entrance of Hamath to the brook of the Arabah" is the same boundaries which Jeroboam reclaimed in 2 Kings 14:25.

Israel's internal situation reflects prosperity:
 3:15 - summer and winter houses.
 6:4 - feasting and luxury (beds of ivory).

-This luxury is archaeologically supported, but is only one side of the coin of society.

-Ellison: "How can we judge prosperity? Should we look at the luxury of the rich or the level of living of the poor, who were in great poverty?"

-There were many poor and great injustice:

 2:6 - "Sell the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes."
 4:1 - "Who oppress the poor, who crush the needy."
 5:10-11 - "Who impose heavy rent and trample on the poor."
 8:4-5 - "Who swallow the needy and cheat with dishonest scales."

-There is a great contrast between the rich and their luxury and the poor.
 -This probably reflects a big land-owner and share-cropper and slave society (cf. Jeremiah 34:8-11).
 -In time of Menahem, only 60,000 men in Israel were rich enough to afford a 2-shekel tax.

B. The Book of Amos and Its Contents.

1. Outline.

- I. Judgment pronounced on the surrounding nations as well as on Judah and Israel. Chapters 1 and 2.
(This climaxes on Israel)
- II. More specific pronouncements of Judgment on Israel and the reasons for it. Chapter 3 to 6.
- III. Five visions concerning the coming judgment.
Amos 7:1 to 9:10
- IV. A promise of future blessing. Amos 9:11-15

2. Major Theme.

- Amos preaches judgment on Israel because of social injustice coupled with religious formalism and apostasy.
- The people are going through rituals in a mechanical manner.
- Amos emphasizes the justice of God in bringing judgment (carries the idea of covenant breaking and resultant curses).
- Yet there is still hope for the future.

3. Comments on the Content.

Outline I (Chapters 1 and 2): Judgment on other nations.

- Condemnation of 6 surrounding nations plus Judah and Israel.
- Amos follows a regular pattern in introducing each section with the phrase, "For three transgressions of _____ and for four"
- Also a pattern in that 3 foreign nations are called by their capital cities:
 - 1:3 Damascus for Syria.
 - 1:6 Gaza for Philistina.
 - 1:9 Tyre for Phoenicia.
- Then 3 cousin (related to Israel) nations are cited:
 - 1:11 Edom is Esau.
 - 1:13 Ammon is descendent of Lot (cf. Gen. 19:36-8).
 - 2:1 Moab is also a descendent of Lot.

- Then the brother nation of Judah in 2:4.
- Then finally Israel in 2:6 (the goal).
- This is an effective way of getting a hearing.
- First condemn all the foreign nations and enemies, working closer to home, then climaxing in Israel.
- The expression "For 3 transgressions and for 4" is probably an indication of the fulness of their iniquity.
- The sins condemned are often, but not exclusively, related to things which that nation did to Israel.
- But they are judged for other crimes and general evil, cf. Moab in 2:1, "burning the bones of the king of Edom".
- Motyer on Amos: "These nations did not have special revelation but they still have responsibility arising from the law written on their conscience."
- The means of affliction of judgment is never specified.
- In most instances, history shows that Assyria and Babylon were the instruments.
- These predictions and judgment show that God rules over not only Israel, but He is in sovereign control over all nations.
- Note Amos 9:7 "Have I not brought up Israel from the land of Egypt and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir?"
- God controls the movement of nations other than Israel.

(12/11/81)

The second section of the book is a more specific pronouncement of judgment that will elaborate on the first section.

2:6-16 Structure:

- 1) v.6-8 Accusation or indictment.
 - 2) v.9-11 Recital of the gracious acts of the Lord.
-Contrasted with Israel's sins in v.6-8.
 - 3) v.13-16 Sentence of judgment to come.
- This arrangement is very close to the "Covenant lawsuit structure."
 - Parallels that found in Deuteronomy as elsewhere.
 - When prophets come and indict the people they contrast Israel's sins with God's blessings, then pronounce judgment.

Greater detail:

1) v.6-8 Categories of evil which violate the covenant.

-This is God's accusation:

2:6-7a Oppression of the poor (social evil).

"They sell the righteous for money and the needy for a pair of sandals."

-The terms used imply corruption in judicial decisions against the poor.

- "Sandal" is probably some reference to concluding legal transactions.

2:7b-8 Religious and moral apostasy. "Sacred" prostitution implies that the LORD is being worshipped like the Baals (fertility cults).

-This is the epitome of religious and moral corruption.

Deut.23:17 forbids this in Israel.

-Note that these acts are done using materials gained via oppression.

2) 2:9-11 Recital of the gracious acts of the LORD.

-Contrasts with the previous verses describing Israel's sin.

-God says that He has been faithful and done gracious acts: "Brought you up from Egypt", "destroyed the Amorite before you", "gave you prophets and Nazarites".

v.12 is an added indictment: They commanded the prophets not to prophesy.

3) 2:13-16 Sentence of judgment to come.

-The sentence is given in general terms.

-Is made more specific in chapters 3-6.

-Note: Judgment is coming and is inescapable.

v.13 "I am weighed down" comes from an obscure verb only used here. Makes translation tricky. Could be "You will be weighed down."

Outline II: More specific judgment pronouncements on Israel and the reasons for it.

-Have 3 discourses in this section.

-All begin with "Hear this word" (3:1, 4:1, 5:1).

a. Chapter 3: States the essence of the whole book.

v.2 "Only you have I known among all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."

- The privilege of being God's people brought enormous responsibility.
- This is the essence of Amos' message and the covenant idea is central to this message.
- Israel cannot be complacent.

Digression: The Covenant and the Prophets.

D.R. Hillers, "Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea"

-Not an evangelical, is in the conservative but liberal school of Albright and John Bright.

-cf. Chapter 6 (title: "Therefore I will punish you")

"The traditional line of approach to the prophetic covenant relation was to find all the places where the word 'covenant' [berith] was used and analyze these places. Since there are very few prophetic passages where it is used, this implied that the covenant idea occupied a minor place in prophetic thought. If the covenant idea preceded the 8th century prophets, then it had been abandoned by them. Wellhausen and others therefore thought that the covenant idea was a late idea and this silence showed that it was not around yet in the 8th century."

"Now we use a more indirect approach and reach a different conclusion. Instead of looking for usage of 'berith' we give attention to such things as:

- 1) Covenant terminology other than 'berith'.
- 2) Literary pattern of the 'covenant lawsuit'.
- 3) Use of covenant curses.

These criteria reveal that the covenant idea is central to the message of the prophets."

Greater detail:

1) Covenant terminology.

-Analyze usage of words used in expressing the covenant idea. For example: [words like "love", "obey", etc.]

"to know" (appears here in Amos 3:2) has a wide range of meaning, from "to understand" to "sexual intercourse."

- What are the implications in this passage?
- What does it mean when God is said 'to know' Israel?
- In what sense is only Israel 'known'?
- Why is there a logical connection with punishment?

Hillers says that God is using a term which is borrowed from international relations.

H.B. Huffman "Treaty background of the Hebrew יָדָע ", BASOR 181(1966), 31-37.

-Ancient Near Eastern kings used יָדָע both in Hittite and Akkadian treaties in two technical senses:

- 1) "To recognize as legitimate suzerain or vassal relationship."
- 2) "To recognize treaty stipulations as binding."

Examples from Hittite documents:

"And you, Hukanis, know only the sun [Hittite king], do not know any other lord. Know the sun alone."
-Here the term means "recognize, be loyal to".

"As he [the rebel] is an enemy to you, so he is to the sun, and I the sun will know only you."
-Here the king assures a vassal of the king's continuing relationship.

"How is it that you do not know the sun, your lord?"

-The term is found frequently in the Amarna (Ugarit) and Mari letters.

- These throw light on Amos 3:2.
- The vocabulary was familiar to the Israelites from the international scene.
- God had recognized only Israel as His legitimate servants.
- Therefore, since they had not fulfilled the covenant obligations, they would be punished.

-We see the same usage in Hosea 13:4-5 "You know no God but me, for there is no savior besides Me."

-Also Jeremiah 24:7 "I will give them a heart to know Me" (implying future repentance).

-The kind of knowledge involved here is closely related to the people's conduct. Jeremiah 22:15-16 "You are concerned with cedar and you practice injustice; but your father did justice -- is not this what it means to know me, says the LORD?"

-Hosea 4:1 "No knowledge of God in the land" is contrasted with the people's conduct in v.2-3: "swearing, deception, murder, stealing, and adultery."

Hillers after this discussion of the word $\text{y}77$, says:
"Samuel Johnson said that 'making dictionaries is dull work', and perhaps this discussion proves this point."
Vannoy finds it rather exciting.

Yet Hillers has thrown light on an obscure term. Says
"This knowledge [$\text{y}77$] is unmythical and unintellectual"
but is shown in one's life by the performance of God's
will.

-Even if the term 'berith' is not used, the complex of
ideas associated with the covenant is present and forms
the foundation for one of their principle concerns: the
knowledge of God.

2) The Covenant lawsuit.

[Outline of Amos - review:

- I. Judgment pronounced on the surrounding nations as well as on Judah and Israel. Amos chap. 1 and 2.
- II. More specific pronouncements of judgment on Israel and the reasons for it. Amos 3 to 6.
- III. Five visions concerning the coming judgment. Amos 7:1-9:10.
- IV. A Promise of Future Blessing. Amos 9:11-15.]

V.B.3. Comments on the content of Amos (continued).

2) The literary pattern of the covenant lawsuit.

- The Lord is pictured in some passages as taking His people to court and entering into judgment with them.
- In these passages we find elements of the covenant lawsuit form.
- J.A. Thompson, "The Ancient Near East and Treaties in the Old Testament", p.30 says:

- Many references in the prophets point to the covenant lawsuit idea.
- Find fusion of actual court procedures and the treaty pattern. Thompson refers to:

H.B. Huffmon, "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets." JBL 78 (1959): 285-295.

- Huffmon says lawsuits follow standard form:

1. Introduction - the scene of judgment described.
 2. Address by plaintiff (who is also the judge) in the form of questions which are really accusations to which the accused (Israel) has no reply.
 3. Resume of past benevolent acts of the plaintiff and the ingratitude of the accused.
 4. Indictment of the accused: sometimes in the form of a warning or a precise judgment.
 5. Witnesses are sometimes called to attest that the covenant has been broken.
- In the Bible, heaven and earth are often called upon.

- Thompson: Picture of lawsuit is common in OT times.
- The lawsuit was a means of declaring war or stopping rebellion.

Thus the prophets function on behalf of God as bearers of the lawsuit to call people back to covenant responsibility; yet this was only one element of their function.

3) Use of Covenant Curses.

-The pronouncement of judgment (curses) by the prophets is a prominent feature.

Hillers: "The prophets were not arbitrary in choosing their lurid figures and the phrasing of wrath. They did not have morbid imaginations, but were fundamentally like lawyers quoting the law. This is just what the covenant curses had said would happen, giving a sense of inevitability to the judgments. (cf. curses from Sinai, Deut.).

(Hillers: Albright school - conservative higher critic)

D.R. Hillers, "Treaty Curses and the OT Prophets" (1964)

-Compares curse formulas in Biblical and extra-Biblical materials on p.84-85: "If prophets knew the covenant, they also knew the curses which were commonly attached to it. cf. Deut.28, Lev.26 - shows is an old practice (although he late dates them). Joshua 8:34 - when reading the covenant, also read curses and blessings.
-2 Kings 22:11 - Josiah's reaction was caused by hearing the covenant curses.
=> Prophets did use treaty curses as the basis for their doom oracles."

-"all of this is important for our study of the prophets: The usual approach of most past study has been given to analyzing the "abnormal" psychological mental states of the prophets.

-The critical orthodox view saw prophets as great creative figures in developing monotheism, some others see the prophets as cultic figures.

-BUT prophets are really sober figures drawing from conventional ideas and phrases that have roots deep in Israel's history.

-so we must reassess the once common view of the prophets as creators and innovators.

-they were reformers, not innovators.

This is a major reversal of the Wellhausen view of the prophets.

(End of digression on covenant lawsuit ideas).

Amos 3:2 - gives essence of the whole book.

3:3-8 gives a series of illustrations of cause and effect to impress 2 things on the people:

1. The coming calamity is from the Lord (not an accident).
2. Amos' message is from the Lord.
 - as God's spokesman, he can do nothing else but speak.
 - the Lord is the cause of Amos' prophecies.

Two walking together, lion roaring, bird and snare, etc.
All these casual questions are answered by "No".

v.9-11 Amos calls upon the heathen nations to come and see the social evils practiced in Samaria, implying that Israel was worse than the godless nations.
=> Heathen nations can sit in judgment over "godly" Israel.

v.10 refers to the Israelites - "do right" = obey covenant.

v.12-15 Judgment is pronounced in an ironic way:
-"as the shepherd delivers from the lion's mouth a couple of legs or a piece of an ear" so Israel will be delivered.

J.A. Motyer, "The Day of the Lion" (IVP), p.83.

v.9-11: "The Israelites were religious (Amos 4:4-5) but they had no regard for the welfare and dignity of their fellow men, hence the heathen can be their teachers."

-Motyer notes that Cyprian comments on this passage and calls for other nations to look on the church's sin.

(2/5/82)

v.12-15: "It is wholly ironic. The law in Ex.22:12f required that the undershepherd provide proof (a scrap of the lost animal) that the animal had been devoured by some other animal. Otherwise it is assumed that the man stole it for himself and he has to pay compensation. Such a rescue was no rescue at all. It was only the evidence of loss."

"Sit on a couch" - in contrast to the typical luxury.

Amos 4:1-3: Pictures social evil and personal indulgence condemned by Amos.

v.1: Bashan was famous for its prize cattle. Amos called the rich women of Samaria "fat cows" - they were intent solely on their own enjoyment, crushed the poor, and bossed their husbands.

v.3: "fortress" - obscure Hebrew word, probably a place name. The people oppressing the poor will be lead out as captives thru the breach in the wall by an enemy.

Motyer: "Women are the trend setters in society." They have always been the moral guardians of society. Amos can isolate the heartbeat of society by looking at the women.

Amos notes:

1. Their way of life excludes all personal dimension (describing them as cattle).
2. Their attitude of fleecing the poor.

v.4-5: Amos' emphasis turns from social evils to religious apostasy and religious formalism. His mocking tone continues.

-Samaritans were "religious" people: "Come to Bethel and transgress."

-"Bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three days" - NASB. (KJV & NIV have "3 years")

-This was sarcastic because in the law:

first tithe was to be paid annually

second tithe was paid triannually

-Deut.14:28 - intended to relieve conditions of the Levites, poor people, and immigrants

-"make them known": Amos says: You're so particular about being religious, but you are doing it for show.

Motyer footnote: Leaven was prohibited in an offering made by fire (Lev.2:11, 6:17). But it was commanded in a peace or meal offering (Lev.7:12-13) or wave offering (Lev.22:20, 23:15-20). These point to the need for absolute purity. Amos makes his case by combining the word "offer or burn" with the word "leaven".
=> The people are violating the burnt offering requirement (Lev.2:11, 6:7, 7:12).

-While this religious apostasy was going on, the Lord had been speaking to His people, warning them so that they would reflect on the events and repent. Note:

v.6 "cleanness of teeth" = lack of food. But despite the difficulties, the people did not repent. "Yet you have not returned to Me" is covenant terminology.

v.7-8: lack of rain - "Yet you have not returned to Me"

v.9: scorching wind & locust - " " " " " " "

v.10: plague and war - " " " " " " "

v.11: God overthrew them - " " " " " " "

v.6-11: almost all these disasters are covenant curses brought on them which should have prompted them to repent:

v.7-8: drought - Deut.28:23-24

v.9a: blight and mildew - Deut.28:22

v.9b: locust eating crops - Deut.28:42

v.10a: pestilence - Deut.28:21-22

v.10b: war - Deut.28:25-26, 32-33

-> The force of Amos' argument is that Israel is without excuse because she should have read the signs.

v.12: Climax - something even more severe but unspecified will happen after these disasters.

-Deut.28:47ff concludes with a promise of exile:

v.62: "You'll be left few in number."

v.63: "You'll be plucked from off the land ... and scattered."

-Amos' vague reference here ("Thus I will do to you, O Israel") should be understood on the basis of Deut.28.
 -Amos 5:27 makes the exile idea clear.

-"Because I shall do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel."
 => exile will be worse than previous judgments so that Israel should prepare. This hints that they may yet repent and escape the exile.

Amos 5:4: Another call for repentance: "Seek the Lord and live."

-again this may have its background in Deut.30:15f.
 -God's blessing would return to the land if the people are obedient and repent.

-Is there a conflict between this implied blessing and Amos' message of coming judgment?

1. If judgment is now determined on the nation and isn't to be averted in any way, then there is still reason for the individual person to turn to the Lord - and to have God's mercy in the middle of the land.
2. It is always the prerogative of a sovereign God to postpone or withdraw a judgment in case of repentance. cf. Jer.18:8 - God as potter.

-It is difficult to say which possibility Amos meant, but Amos did make a definite call for repentance.

v.15 supports idea #1 - Judgment is unavoidable but perhaps God's grace will be extended to a remnant.
 -More likely that judgment will not be averted as Israel has not and will not respond, but there is the most hope for the preservation of a remnant.
 -Remnant idea is further developed in Amos 9.

Rest of chap. 5 continues on with the anticipation of judgment.

v.18f: Amos warns the people who are looking forward to the Day of the Lord that it will be much different than they expected.
 -God is not always on Israel's side.
 -The prophets were not against the cult per se, but were against religious ritualism combined with heathenism.

v.27: "I will make you go into exile beyond Damascus."
 -Have a more precise indication of judgment.
 -Assyria is beyond Damascus.

Amos 6:14: "I am going to raise up a nation against you.
...and they will afflict you from the entrance of Hamath
to the brook of the Arabah."

-These are Israel's boundaries under Jeroboam (2 Kings
14:25).

-Continuing the pronouncement of judgment, similar to
chapter 5.

Outline section III. Five visions concerning the coming
judgment. Amos 7:1-9:10.

-will not discuss in class.

Outline section IV. A Promise of Future Blessing, 9:11-15.

Two important issues in this section:

1. Literary critical.
2. Interpretive issue.

1. The Literary critical issue.

-This section is the one most frequently challenged with
respect to its authenticity.

-Generally the higher critical school has left the date
and authorship of Amos intact--except here.

-Problem: This section presupposes the fall of Israel and
Judah. Is it reasonable to have the prophets looking
forward to restoration while the house of David is still
standing (v.11: "I will rebuild it as in days of old.")?

-Liberals argue that this could not have been written
before 586 BC, when Judah finally fell => later addition.

-But there is no reason why a prophet could not presuppose
what he had already prophesied. Amos himself predicted
judgment on Judea and Jerusalem in 2:4-5.

-Is no logical reason for him not to assume a destruction.

-This is a strong argument only if one is against the idea
of prophecy.

2. Interpretive issues. (2/8/82)

a. Use of Amos 9:11-12 by James at the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15:16-18.

New Bible Commentary (Revised) on Amos, by J. A. Motyer.
 -"The world-wide rule of the Messiah is commonly seen in the warlike metaphors: the kingship of Jesus Christ and the missionary expansion of the church." This allegorical interpretation is seen as being established or authorized from James treatment of this passage in Acts 15. [Motyer is amill].

Oswald T. Allis, "Prophecy and the Church," p.145.

-"Opponents of Dispensationalism will be inclined to agree with Scofield when he says, 'Dispensationally this is the most important passage in the N.T.' That is to say, they will agree that it is perhaps the best passage in the New Testament for testing the correctness of the Dispensational method of interpreting Scripture."
 -Allis agrees with Scofield that it's a key passage, but for a different reason.

Amillennialists frequently cite the Acts 15 usage as evidence for their figurative interpretation of prophecy as a valid hermeneutic.

-They use the following reasoning:

1) v.11 "I will raise up the fallen tabernacle of David and wall up its breaches."

-taken as a reference to the power of Christ as the son of David in the present time of the preaching of the gospel.

-Theodore Laetsch, "Commentary on the Minor Prophets," p.191: "This was fulfilled in the days of the Messiah. Jesus and his disciples called the lost sheep of Israel to repentance. The 'breach in the wall' between Judah and the 10 tribes was healed when the people joined the church via the gospel."

-O.T. Allis, "Prophecy and the Church," p.148-149.

Allis takes the raising up of the fallen tabernacle:

- not as referring to a future Davidic kingdom,
- but to the first advent of Christ and the spreading of the gospel since:
 - Jesus was heralded as David's son.
 - He had greater power than David ever had.
 - Apostles claimed their miracles were done by His power.

2) v.12 "That they may possess the remnant of Edom."

-Taken as referring to the conversion of the Gentiles.

-An appeal is made to Acts 15:17, "the rest of mankind may seek the LORD and all the Gentiles who are called by My name."

-Argument: When James quotes Amos, he doesn't literally quote but interprets it. He lifts the OT meaning up to a higher level and interprets it as the Gentiles coming to Christ (this method is what amill's do in general).

-Rebuttal: The wording in Acts follows the LXX which is different from the Hebrew.

-Allis discusses this on p.146: "This represents the LXX rendering of the Amos passage. But James, who certainly knew Hebrew, was doubtless aware of the fact that these were not the exact words of Amos, but that they involved a slight change in the original which made the LXX rendering a kind of paraphrase of Amos in the Spirit of Isaiah 11:10..."

-The words 'The prophets' "imply that Peter's testimony as to what has happened is in accord with what the prophets foretold would happen."

- 3) v.13-15 are taken as descriptive of the Christian church, using the terminology of the OT economy. It speaks of the prosperity of the land of Israel and of her return from captivity.

-Laetsch, p.192, comments on each verse:

v.13 "The plowman will overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows seed..."

=> In the church there will be incessant preparation in preaching, missionary activity, and making converts.

v.14 "Also I will restore the captivity of My people Israel, and they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them, they will also plant vineyards and drink their wine..."

=> Restoration of the church after the first advent to a position of glory via the preaching of the gospel.

"drink wine" = eat the fruit of the gospel.

v.15 "I will also plant them on their land, and they will not again be rooted out from their land..."

=> Similar to NT wording: cf. John 10:27, Eph.1:3, Rev.21:1 (references to the eternal security of believers).

Vannoy believes that how you interpret v.12 [see 2)] is the key to how you should interpret v.11,13-15 [1) and 3)].

Further discussion on point 2) above:

a. The textual problem of Acts 15:12.

-LXX and Acts differs from the Masoretic Text (MT).

A. MacRae, 'The Scientific Approach to the OT,'

"Bib.Sac." 110 (1953), p.309-320 discusses this passage.

-The wording in Acts is a quote from the LXX.

-If there is any lifting of the OT to a higher level as some interpreters claim, then the LXX did it, not James. And the unknown translators are not considered inspired.

-The most logical solution is that the Hebrew and LXX were identical at the time of James and the Council and that the Hebrew later changed.

-If James had used a quotation that was different from what the men knew, why didn't someone say, 'Wait, an incorrect quotation of the Bible won't solve this important problem'?

=> There was no difference between the LXX and Hebrew at that time.

Hebrew text:

לֹא
OR
אֲנִי אֶשְׁכַּח
OR
אֲנִי אֶשְׁכַּח

אֲנִי אֶשְׁכַּח אֶתְּכֶם וְאֶתְּכֶם וְאֶתְּכֶם
אֲנִי אֶשְׁכַּח אֶתְּכֶם וְאֶתְּכֶם וְאֶתְּכֶם
אֲנִי אֶשְׁכַּח אֶתְּכֶם וְאֶתְּכֶם וְאֶתְּכֶם

... אֲנִי אֶשְׁכַּח אֶתְּכֶם וְאֶתְּכֶם וְאֶתְּכֶם

Hebrew text: "That they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by My name."

Acts and LXX: "That they might seek me, the residue of men and all the nations who are called by My name."

With an extremely slight change you get different words: the \aleph and τ were very similar in the earlier script and the τ , \aleph , η vowel letters were added later.

So MacRae's suggestion is very reasonable.

b. The issue under discussion at the Jerusalem Council and the bearing which the Amos quotation has on that issue.

-In the Acts 15 passage and context:

-Issue was not: could Gentiles be allowed to be converted and enter the church. This was settled in Acts 11:1-8, 15-18 (Peter's vision of the sheet, Cornelius, and the gift of the Holy Spirit) where they recognized that the Gentiles shared the gift of the Holy Spirit.

-Issue was: would the Gentiles coming into the church have to become Jewish proselytes and be circumcised? cf. Acts 15:5.

-So in this context James quotes Amos to solve the problem of whether Gentiles had to be circumcised to become part of the children of God.

Reasoning of James:

1. He summarizes Peter's reference to the conversion of Cornelius (saving Gentiles) in v.14.
2. The words of Amos agree with this, v.15.
 Note: he doesn't say Amos "predicted" the specific matter that Peter referred to (the conversion of the Gentiles), only that they "agree".
 -we have to remember the issue at the Council: MacRae says that if Amos was simply predicting the conversion, this only begs the question of circumcision which is the main issue.
 -so the Amos quote must have some definite bearing on circumcision since it apparently settled the issue.
3. If you assume that Amos is referring to the eschatological kingdom, not the church, then James' use of the passage takes on a different perspective.

v.14 "Simeon has related how God first..."

-Why does he say 'first'?

-It seems evident that James used this wording because it had an expression similar to the Amos passage in Amos 9:12 "all the nations upon whom my name is called".

-How does James relate this to the Amos quote?

-v.16 "After this I will return..." First God visits the Gentiles, then "after this I will return".

-At this point, we also find a different wording of James than the Hebrew text which says "in that day".

- "After this" is not found in MT or LXX, so James is interpreting it with a more precise time designation. James made a deliberate substitution to place his comments in a specific time sequence.

- => v.14 First the Gentiles are converted (Peter).
 v.15 The prophets agree with this although they didn't predict it.
 v.16 Then "after this I will return and I will rebuild the tabernacle of David..." => 2nd advent.

Relationship of the Amos passage to circumcision:
 Amos is predicting that at His 2nd coming, those to whom He comes will include "Gentiles upon whom my name is called." If that is the case, then there is no reason to require that the Gentiles become Jewish proselytes. The quote is taken as a description of what conditions will exist when Jesus returns. The key here is that the term "Gentiles" is used; Gentile proselytes are always called "Jews" in the OT (cf. Esther) => the prophecy is saying that saved Gentiles will not be culturally assimilated into Judaism (at the 2nd coming) => it is not necessary to have them circumcised now.

"After this" context: does it refer back to something in Amos 9 or only to Acts 15?
 -The evidence points to Acts usage only.

(2/10/82)

Note also: JETS 20 (1977) p.113-121, M.A. Braun, "James' use of Amos at the Jerusalem Council."

-Discusses the use of 'remnant' in this passage, using LXX.
 -Argues that verse 17a and 17b are not referring to the same group of people:

Remnant of men = Jewish converts to Christianity.
 All the nations = Gentile converts to Christianity.

-Thus Amos is referring to 2 distinct groups of believers "who are seeking the Lord" (p.120).
 -Braun takes the parallel in verse 17 as non-exegetical, i.e., not a parallel reference to one group.

-If both terms in 17a and 17b are equated, Braun notes that Gentiles are then being called a 'remnant', a terminology which is never applied to them elsewhere in the OT or NT.

=> Verse 17 is speaking of Jews as Jews and Gentiles as Gentiles both seeking the Lord. This gives the passage its decisiveness in solving the J. Council's problem.

What is the meaning of "seeking the Lord?"

-Vannoy: Not necessarily turning to Christ for salvation.

-TDNT on 'ἐκζητῶν' = "attitude of the righteous as they ask after God and are concerned about His grace."

cf. Isaiah 11:10 "To Him shall the nations seek."
 -Context: Millennial period when Christ is ruling.

cf. Hebrews 11:6 "A rewarder of those who seek Him."

-Thus seeking appears to occur after conversion.

Therefore, after Christ's return, there will be both Jews as Jews and Gentiles as Gentiles seeking the Lord. That these Gentiles were saved before Christ's return is seen in v.14.

Walter Kaiser (same JETS issue) "The Davidic Promise and the Inclusion of the Gentiles." Argues the opposite of Braun. -"The 'remnant of men' and 'all the nations' both refer to the same thing: the inclusion of the Gentiles in the church."

Vannoy's position: This view of point 2) causes 1) to refer to the second advent of Christ, and 3) [v.13-15] to describe the millennial kingdom.

J.B. Payne takes a mediating position:

v.11 is a revival of the line of David in the first coming of Christ. He argues from Acts 15:16, which he also understands as a first advent reference.

v.12 is now fulfilled with the engrafting of the Gentiles into the true Israel, which is the church.

In Acts 15:16 James use of "After this" means, "after the [Babylonian] exile and after what is described in Amos 9:8-10 takes place [the judgment and sifting of Israel]."

Vannoy: But is James intending "after this" to refer to after the exile or after the events of v.14? Grammatically it could be either way, but we should pick the meaning which most contributes to the understanding of the Acts passage and the issue of circumcision. "After this" is not in the Hebrew or the LXX, so it seems most probable that James is interpreting Amos in the light of v.14.

b. Relationship of the interpretation of v.11-12 to the interpretation of v.13-15.

-Payne sees v.13-14 as describing millennial prosperity. This idea forces a gap between v.12 and 13 in that we are then going immediately from the first advent to the kingdom. Is better to see v.11-12 as second advent.

-Many people tend to take the fallen tabernacle as the first advent, the remnant as the Gentiles, and v.13-15 as the church (as there will be no mill. kingdom).

-Kiel's Commentary (p.336): "We are not to seek fulfillment of v.13-15 in the return from exile or in a future return, these are only types which found fulfillment in

the church. The land is not Palestine, but the domain of the Christian church. The reaper, etc., are the church. These fulfillments are as yet not seen as the church is not yet so spiritual that this has happened." [Kiel is post-mill and feels that the church will create the kingdom].

Laetsch (see earlier) and J. Ridderbos also have a figurative interpretation.

BUT does this do justice to the language of v.13-15?

-G.Ch. Aalders (amill) in "Restoration of Israel According to the OT" selects OT passages and shows how we don't have to expect the restoration of Israel from them.

-Instead of the usual figurative approach, he sees them as two separate passages:

v.11-12 are the first advent of the Messiah, and the conversion of heathen by the Gospel.

v.13-15 are the promise of return from exile fulfilled in the decree of Cyrus.

-Aalders opposes the mill. view of a literal future return,

-and also those who spiritualize it against its clear sense to "see" its fulfillment in the church.

-Aalders sees neither view as correct; we can only do justice to the words if we keep it as two separate prophecies.

-Are problems with fulfillment after the Babylonian exile: can we say that the conditions then do justice to Amos' descriptions of the people in a fruitful land, who will never be plucked up again?

Summary:

Those who interpret Amos as descriptive of the establishment of the Christian church go against the context of Amos by:

1. Attributing to James a raising of the OT to a higher level, when in fact he followed the OT text preserved in the LXX.
2. Taking the quotation in a way that does not answer the question before the Jerusalem Council.
3. Disregarding the way in which James introduces the Amos quote in omitting "in that day" and substituting "after this" to indicate a particular time which the Amos context proves to be in view.

VI. ISAIAH

(2/12/82)

A. Isaiah the prophet.

Name = compound form of יְשׁוּעַ and יְיָ
 = salvation is of the Lord.

-Occurs several places in the OT, but not the same man:
 1 Chron. 3:21 and 25:3 - same spelling in Hebrew, but in
 English here are spelled 'Jeshaiah'.

-In Isaiah 1:1 he is identified more fully: "the son of
 Amoz" (Amoz in Hebrew = אֲמוֹז).

-Different than prophet Amos (Amos 1:1 = אֲמוֹס).

-Jewish tradition says Amoz was the brother of King
 Amaziah, but there is no evidence for this.

Home - it seems that Isaiah lived in the area of Jerusalem
 since in the early part of the book he is active in and
 around Jerusalem. Examples:

- Is.7:1-3 - Isaiah met Ahaz (from Jerusalem) at a place
 where water was provided for the city by an aqueduct.
- Is.37:2 - Much later, Isaiah had close contact with King
 Hezekiah.

Married and had at least 2 sons with symbolic names:

- Is.7:3 Shear-jashub = a remnant shall return.
- Is.8:3 Maher-shalal-hash-baz = hasten booty, speed spoil.

Prophesied under at least 4 kings: Isaiah 1:1

-Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.

His death:

- According to Rabbinic tradition,
- He was killed during the persecutions of Manasseh.
- He hid in a tree and was sawn in two when they cut the
 tree down to get him.
- Possibly cited in Hebrews 11:37.

It is likely that Isaiah did live into the reign of
 Manasseh and died then.

If so, why isn't Manasseh included in the list of kings?

- Perhaps he had retired from public ministry.
- Reference in Is.37:38 to Sennacherib and S's death in
 681 BC, which was during the reign of Manasseh.

S. Kingdom	Assyria	N.Kingdom	Syria
Uzziah 767-740 [750-740]	Tiglath-Pileser III 745-727	Menahem [752-742]	Rezin 750-732
Jotham [750-740] 740-735		Pekahiah [742-740]	
Ahaz [735-731] 731-715	Shalmaneser V 727-722	Pekah [752-740] 740-732	
Hezekiah 715-695 [695-686]	Sargon II 722-705	Hoshea 732-722	
Manasseh [695-686] 686-642	Sennacherib 705-681		
	Esarhaddon 681-669		[coregency]

B. The Historical Setting of the Book.

739 BC - Uzziah's death was the end of the period of political and economic strength for Israel and Judah.
 -Assyria had threatened Jerusalem ~840 BC.
 -Jehu had paid tribute to Assyria.
 -Then Assyria and Syria had declined in power.
 -So 800-749 was a period of prosperity and power in I & J.

-2 Chron.26: Uzziah had victories over the Philistines, Arabs, Ammonites, Edomites; he strengthened cities and developed trade.

-Now Assyria was rising again under Tiglath-Pileser III who established the beginning of the Neo-Assyrian Empire.
 -Tig-P was followed by 4 able rulers.

From the Assyrian annals (especially those of Tig-P)
 [Pritchard - "Ancient Near Eastern Texts," p.282-283]:

-Annal dated in 743 BC, towards the end of Uzziah's reign.
 -He fought against a group of kings,
 one was called "Aziahu of Judah".

-Most think this is a reference to Uzziah (who also went by the name of Azariah).
 -The kings were forced to pay Tig-P tribute.

-Another annal of Tig-P speaks of tribute from Menahem of the Northern Kingdom (752-742).

-cf. 2 Kings 15:19 "Pul king of Assyria came against the land, and Menahem gave Pul a 1000 talents of silver..."

-Pul = Babylonian name for Tiglath-Pileser III.

-Thiele dates this event at 743 BC.

734 BC - Syro-Ephraimite War.

-Syria allied with the Northern Kingdom (Ephraim) and attacked Judah.

-Isaiah 7 and 2 Kings 16 record this.

-Their purpose was to push Ahaz off the throne and put their own king on Judah's throne.

-Why?

-Answer not given in the Bible.

-Speculate that they wanted someone on Judah's throne who would join Ephraim and Syria against Assyria.

-The Lord responds to the threat by sending Isaiah to give a message to Ahaz to trust in the Lord.

-But Ahaz attempts to play people off against each other.

2 Kings 16:5-10: He sent to Assyria for help.

-Assyria fought Damascus and won.

-Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tig-P.

-Isaiah said this alliance would mean trouble and sorrow for Judah. This occurred under Sennacherib.

732 BC - Capture of Damascus by Assyria.

- Placing of Hoshea on the throne of the N. Kingdom as a puppet of Tig-P.

-2 Kings 15:30 - Hoshea was a revolutionary who conspired against Pekah, but Bible doesn't say why.

-But in annal of Tig-P (ANET p.234) "They overthrew their king Pekah and I placed Hoshea as king over them" and he received tribute from Hoshea.

-Later Hoshea revolted so Shalmaneser V and Sargon II besieged Samaria for 3 years.

-2 Kings 17 describes the downfall of Samaria.

721-722 - Fall of Samaria.

701 - Hezekiah, king of Judah, revolted against Sennacherib who then besieged Jerusalem.

-2 Kings 19:25 and Is.37:35-37 - the Angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrians.

-God miraculously delivered Jerusalem as Isaiah had prophesied in Isaiah 31.

-Annals of Sennacherib don't say his army defeated Jerusalem or that he was defeated.

-He "shut Hezekiah up in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage."

Is.39:1f - About the same time (in Isaiah) Hezekiah made friendly gestures to the king of Babylon.
 -But Isaiah predicts Judah will fall to Babylon.
 => Babylonian Captivity which comes a century later.
 -Babylon was currently under Assyrian domination.
 -Perhaps Hezekiah tried to make a union with Babylon against Assyria.

Hezekiah was a godly man who instituted reform.
 Manasseh succeeded him, was so wicked and idolatrous that judgment was sure to come.
 -Josiah's revival was too little, too late.
 -In this dark time, Isaiah turns his message from warning to consolation and comfort for the godly:
 -the exile won't last forever.
 -a remnant will return.
 -there will be a future time of blessing.

This is the theme of Is. 40-66, a more private and directed ministry of Isaiah to the godly.
 -Immediately preceding Is.40 have prophecies of going into exile, so it would be reasonable for this section to be under Manasseh.

C. The Structure of the Book of Isaiah.

Organization by Chapters:

1 _____ 66
 1 _____ 35 36_39 40 _____ 66
 1 ___ 6 7 ___ 12 13 ___ 23 24 ___ 27 28_35

1-35 = Prophetic discourses which can be broken down.
 36-39 = Historical narrative which parallels Kings.
 40-66 = Prophetic discourse (one unit).

1-35: Most are discourses in the reign of Ahaz or before.

-Within these chapters, 13-23 are a distinct group which are prophecies of judgment on foreign nations.
 -v.1 of most of these chapters starts with "the burden ..."

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Ch. 1-35: Dividing it into sections, going from the most clear subdivisions to the least clear ones.

13-23 = Prophecies of judgment on foreign nations.

24-27 = "The Isaiah Apocalypse" = description of God's judgment on the nations of the earth that oppose him and the establishment of God's kingdom.

1-12 can best be divided in half, starting with ch. 7.

7-12 = "The Book of Immanuel"

- Has unity in a specific historical background: Ephraim and Syria join against Ahaz, who then seeks help from Assyria, not the Lord. Isaiah tells Ahaz to ask for a sign. When Ahaz refuses, Isaiah gives the Immanuel prophecy.

1-6 = Sequence of prophecies of judgment in a general sense followed by short pronouncements of blessing.

- Hard to pin down its historic background.

28-35 -Find this section similar in nature to ch.7-12.

- It deals with the same period of time and historical background as ch.7-12.
- But it speaks to the leaders of Israel, not just to Ahaz, so it is broader.
- This subdivision was formed by elimination.

40-66 -Although it is similar in some ways to the earlier part of the book, in other ways it is very different:

- Are few historical statements giving its background.
- The prophet has turned his attention away from Israel's sad conditions (probably under Manasseh) and
- Is looking forward to God's future redemption.

=> 40-66 has a different emphasis:

- 1-39 = Contain warning, judgment, & call to repentance.
- 40-66 = Deliverance and consolation.

-Isaiah is speaking to believers, giving them something which is to be passed on which will give hope as well as comfort to future generations in exile.

-Isaiah is looking beyond the exile to deliverance.

-He also is looking at deliverance from sin.

-The climax of 40-66 is in ch. 53:

-It describes the suffering servant and his atoning work.

-It is the middle point of the section.

-40-52 look forward to this chapter.

-54-66 look back and are results based on this chapter.

D. Survey of the content of the book with special attention to important passages.

1. Isaiah 1-6.

It has 3 sub-sections, each characterized by pronouncements of God's judgment on the wicked followed by future blessings for the godly.

Judgment Blessings

a. Sec. I	1:1-2:5	(2:1-4)
b. Sec. II	2:6-4:6	(4:2-6)
c. Sec. III	5:1-6:13	(6:1-13)

a. Section I: Is. 1:1-2:5

Is.1:2 begins by calling the heavens and the earth as witnesses when he pronounces condemnation.

-cf. Deut.4:26, 30:19, 31:19,21 32:1 are examples of the covenant calling heaven and earth to witness the blessings and curses.

-E. J. Young 'Commentary on Isaiah,' 3 vol., discusses v.2b: "they have rebelled against Me."

- "Rebelled" yws belongs to the political sphere and signifies rebellion and breaking of legal relationships.
-So this verse refers to covenant breaking.

v.3 - the awfulness of this rebellion isn't just that Israel rebelled against God, but that the nation of sons rejected a loving father. ("An ox knows its owner ... but Israel does not know, ...")

This condemnation continues throughout the rest of the chap.

v.11: God condemns ritual sacrifices.

-Even though they are doing rituals, their lives betray their immorality and formality in religion.

v.16: Isaiah wants a demonstration of obedience to covenant obligations, not just performance of ritual.

v.17: "Learn to do well (or good)."

-This is covenant terminology:

-cf. 1 Sam.12:23 "I will teach you the good and right way"

-cf. Deut.6:18 "You shall do what is right and good ..."

v.18-20 = An appeal to reason together.

-Young says the verb meaning 'reason' is an imperative form which is a command to appear in discussion where Israel is shown what she is accused of, yet she is also shown that God is willing to forgive.

v.18b "Though your sins are as scarlet..."

-Young comments that "lest anyone think the offer of pardon is applicable without repentance,

v.19 God immediately called Israel to repentance. After the announcement of the possibility of repentance, the Lord gives a choice of blessing or curse."

"If you consent and obey...if you refuse and rebel.."

-Thus there is not a straightforward offer of forgiveness without repentance here.

2:1-4 -> A sharp change in thought from condemnation and judgment to great blessing.

v.1 = Introduction.

v.2-4 = Blessing described.

v.5 = Conclusion.

2:1-4 parallels Micah 4:1-3 almost exactly, but then Micah adds another verse which isn't in Isaiah.

-Micah 4:4 indicates that there will be nothing to make men afraid ("Every man under his own vine and fig tree").

-Micah 4:5 is different from Is.2:5 but helps to clarify: "Though all the peoples walk each in the name of his god, as for us, we will walk in the name of the Lord ..."

-Thus Micah 4:5 is an exhortation to follow the Lord even though others don't.

[NASB has Is.2:5 as the beginning of the next paragraph, but it probably should be with v.1-4, forming a unit.]

2:1-5 is introduced in v.2 by "In the last days" or "in the latter days" or "in the end of the days."

אַחֲרַיִם אֲחֵרִים

-What does this phrase signify?

-Usage of the term in Lisowsky's Hebrew concordance:

-Occurs 13 times in OT. When these are compared,

=> Not to be understood as a technical term which always means the eschatological time.

-It sometimes means: 'after a time', 'in the future,' 'later on'.

-cf. R.L. Harris, "Theological Wordbook of the OT," v.1, p.34: "It usually refers just to the general future."
 "It is possible to use this phrase both for the eschaton and for the general future, because obviously all eschatology is future, but not all future is eschatology."

-eg: Gen.49:1 - Jacob's blessings on his sons ("what will happen in the last days") are fulfilled in OT period.

-Deut.31:29 "evil will befall you in the last days"
 = turning away from God in OT times.

-But this doesn't mean it can't refer to the eschaton.

-eg.: Dan.10:14 "In the latter days" is the eschaton.

Treatment in Commentaries on Isaiah 2:

A-millennial interpretation:

Young's Commentary, p.97: "the phrase 'in the last days' is eschatological. When the latter days appear, they will reveal the Messiah. As Vos indicates, it is strictly eschatological. The NT indicates that the eschaton begins with the 1st advent of Christ.

-Applies to the consummation of the ages: Heb. 9:26 and 1 Cor. 10:11.

-Will close when the Lord returns in glory.

-This has implications for the interpretation of Is.2:

-p.98: Phrase has technical eschatological meaning.

-Employed in OT regarding time when Messianic redemption will be accomplished.

-NT applies to the period of time between the 1st and 2nd advents.

-Vannoy: This is true, but "the last days" is not a strict technical label for this period.

-p.98 footnote: "Some people refer these statements to a millennium after the church age. But then the millennium is after the 2nd advent and is part of the eternal state, when it can't be considered part of the 'last days'."

-p.99 Concludes that "the last days" must refer to the church age.

-p.102, footnote 12: "millennial fulfillment" seems to call for spiritual blessing, implying a fulfillment between the 1st and 2nd advents.

-p.108, footnote discussing 2:4 (which is the crux of the passage): This passage is difficult to interpret. The blessings described will take place within the latter days. This supports Boettner and others => post-millennial since fulfillment must occur between 1st and 2nd advents.

-Problem: But other passages speak of wars continuing to the end. Some like Boettner speak of the world becoming relatively better, but the passage actually refers to an absolute change.

-Post-millennial interpretation doesn't do adequate justice to the other passages. It ignores the evil character of men which is said to continue until the 2nd advent, and will even get worse.

Thus if "in the last days" is taken as a technical term:

-The Pre-millennial interpretation is ruled out, and
-Post-millennial interpretation is hard to reconcile with the passages referring to war continuing until the end.

=> A-millennial interpretation is the only reasonable one.

-But if A-mill. view is taken, how do you interpret v.4?
(this will be discussed later)

The context must determine what the meaning of the phrase should be (i.e. near or far future).

Two post-millennial views:

F. Delitzsch, "Commentary on the OT," p.116.

-v.2-3 are preludes to the future, for what is promised in v.4 is altogether unfulfilled.

-v.4: Since men will submit to "the peace-sustaining word of God, there is no more need for weapons of iron. ... There is also no more need for military practice. ... There is a full, true, God-given and blessed peace. These words will be realized in future centuries when the Gospel overcomes the world."

Joseph Addison Alexander, "Commentary on Isaiah" (1846)

- p.95f. Intro to v.1-4: "In the first, the prophet foretells the exultation of the church and the ascension of the Gentiles. ... He sees war cease and universal peace prevail. ... "mountain" is a figure of the church.
- v.2: "Begins with the abrupt exultation of the church and prediction about the Gentiles coming to it."
- v.3: Motive for the nations coming = desire for instruction. More description of the confluence of the nations.
- v.4: The law-giver in v.2-3 is now the arbitrator of disputes. Knowledge of the art of war is lost when the nations come to the church. Not yet fulfilled. It is conditional on the confluence of the nations to the church so this is a motivation to spread the gospel.

Vannoy: Young's objection to this view [above] has great weight because things are getting worse and worse.

Young's own interpretation of v.2:

- p.101 "By means of this picture, Isaiah wished to express the truth that the worship of the Lord will triumph over all others. In the latter days this religion of Israel (the Gospel) will be known throughout the world.
 - Not all, but a great multitude will know him.
 - In the latter days the church stands out and men can come. Zion = church.
- p.106 In OT, Zion was the source of truth, now the source is the church.
- The only difference between the a-mill and post-mill interpretations is in regard to the results.
- v.4 "Man, born again from the dead, now seeks peace and pursues it so far as he is true to the new nature within him. ... Fulfillment began with the angels' "peace on earth" and the preaching of the gospel."
- There are 2 prevalent resolutions to this prediction:
 1. War may cease entirely in this present age (post-mill).
 2. The prophecy will be fulfilled in the millennium after the return of Christ (pre-mill).
 - This second view "does violence of a serious kind to the general structure of Biblical eschatology."

-Young then addresses them both, p.109:

"Insofar as men are taught of Him, they'll seek to apply in their lives the principle of His government. Consequently, in the present day, insofar as men seek the gospel and pursue it, this prophecy finds fulfillment. But sin is still present and so the prophecy won't be completely fulfilled until the 2nd advent when sin is removed. 'The latter days' are between the 1st and 2nd advents, but the results continue forever. Prophecy can only be understood in light of the general structure of Biblical eschatology."

-p.109, footnote: "Absolutely fulfilled in principle in the latter days, but it won't be totally realized until at the 2nd advent when sin is removed. This has difficulties, but it is all that one can do and yet remain faithful to the Bible."

-Young is locked into the general structure of eschatology.

Calvin's Commentary, p.99: (A-mill)

-v.4: Prophet speaks of the reformation of the church.

-Beneficial results of Christ having brought the Gentiles into the church.

-Christ's people will be meek and peace-loving through mutual kindness.

-This will lead to the end of destructive wars.

-Calvin strongly defended the right of sword to Christian governments, saying that this verse can't be used to support pacifist arguments and against righteous wars.

-The prophet spoke metaphorically (cf. Luke 22:36).

-> "I reply that peace exists among us just as far as the kingly power of Christ is acknowledged ... We are only beginning. The fulfillment of this prophecy in its full extent must not be looked for on this earth. It is enough if we cultivate the beginnings...."

Young followed Calvin. Both take the passage seriously as earthly physical reality.

Laetsch, "Commentary on the Minor Prophets," spiritualizes.

-p.266: Discussion of Micah 4:3 which parallels Is.2:4.

"Micah speaks not of an era of political peace in the world, but speaks of God's kingdom of grace gathering people into one church." He gives an example of a

Christian from Alabama and one from Ohio fighting each other in the Civil War, yet both were still experiencing the fulfillment of this passage, in spite of war, because they were both in the church kingdom and had union in Christ.

Calvin and Young seem to be more honest than Laetsch here in that they admit that they find it hard to literally fulfill the prophecy in this age.

Pre-millennial view = fulfillment after the 2nd advent.

-Take a literal interpretation of the passage.

-v.2-3 "many nations coming..." = Christ's rule will govern all people.

=> cessation of hostility and warfare.

-The added verse in Micah 4:4 ("the vine and fig tree") indicates that conditions will be created such that there will be no reason for men to fear.

J.B. Payne takes a pre-millennial position.

- "To what extent are v.2-3 ("mountain of the Lord") figurative language?"

- "Does v.2 only depict the exaltation of Christ and His rule?"

-Young, Calvin, Delitzsch, and Alexander (post-mill and a-mill) take this figuratively as the prominence of the church.

-Vannoy wouldn't object to this if the passage required it.

-Pre-mill could say it is figurative for the prominence of Jerusalem and the rule of Christ.

-However, Payne in "Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy," p.286 takes v.2-3 literally:

"'The mountain of Yahweh's house shall be established ... above the hills' parallels similar changes in topography that are foretold in Zech.14:4b and 10.

- "Despite the various allegorizing interpretations that have been proposed by both liberals and conservatives for this 'exalting' of Zion, the Biblical teaching appears to be one of 'miraculous geological changes.' Fulfillment 'in the latter days' => 'physical changes,' so that the temple area of Mount Moriah will be elevated above its surroundings."

Conclusion:

- Pre-millennial view has the least problems (the literal rule of Christ after the 2nd advent when war will cease).
- A-millennial view has problems which we've discussed (fulfilled in principle in the church, but not fully until the eternal state).
- Post-millennial view has problems with other passages and world getting worse (spread of the gospel is to bring in the time of peace).

=> earthly reign after 2nd advent is the best idea.

Context also suggests that the pre-mill is best view.

- Micah 4 has a chapter division preceding this parallel passage, but chapter divisions were not in original text and the artificial division here is not helpful.

-Micah 3:12 gives a prophecy of judgment coming on Jerusalem which was literally fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian Captivity.

=> physical Jerusalem, not the Church.

-Then the prophetic discourse moves directly into 4:1 'in the last days...' => still speaking of earthly Jerusalem which will be the center for the rule of Christ.

-This fits with the physical realities of peace (swords into plowshares).

-Note that Micah (speaking of Jerusalem) is in a different context than Isaiah (judgment and blessing in more general terms).

Question: How does "nations will not lift up sword against nation and neither shall they learn war anymore" (Is.2:4, Mic.4:3) relate in the pre-mill model to the time when Satan is loosed and people fight the last battle?

We will determine the meaning of the Hebrew words translated "anymore" by a comparison of the Hebrew words in Is.2:4 with their usage in other passages.

Isaiah 2:4 אִלֵּיךְ לֹא יִלְחָמוּ וְלֹא יִלְמְדוּ מִלְחָמָה וְלֹא יִבְנְאוּ מִצְרֵת וְלֹא יִבְנְאוּ מִצְרֵת

KJV Neither shall they learn war 'anymore'.

NIV Nor will they train for war 'anymore'.

NASB And 'never again' will they learn war.

Exodus 2:3 וְלֹא יִבְנְאוּ מִצְרֵת וְלֹא יִבְנְאוּ מִצְרֵת

KJV And when she could 'not longer' hide him.

-Context of Moses' mother hiding him from Pharaoh.

=> Idea of the Hebrew is not "never again forever," but a lack of continuance.

So Is.2:4 translation suggests more than the Hebrew intends.

- The Hebrew could have been עַלְמָי = forever.
- Thus Is.2:4 should mean 'the Lord will come and they will not continue to learn war.'

Joshua 5:1 $\text{וְלֹא־יָדָעוּ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ$

KJV Neither was there spirit in them 'anymore.'

-Context: After the Israelites crossed the Jordan on dry ground, the nations heard of this miracle and their spirit was broken.

=> The nations were discouraged and their spirit of resistance was broken so they did not continue to resist at that point (but did recover and resist later).

Joshua 5:12 $\text{וְלֹא־יָדָעוּ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ$

KJV Neither had the children of Israel manna 'anymore.'

-Context: When the Israelites had eaten from the produce of the land, the manna ceased.

-Could mean 'never again' but the point of the passage is that the manna ceased.

Conclusion:

Note - Not עַלְמָי = "foreseeable future" but can mean "forever".

=> Not idea of 'never again' but of a lack of continuance.

[End of answer to question.]

Section II: Is.2:6-4:6 (4:2-6)

After the exhortation of 2:5 (based on the motivation in 2:1-4 of why to walk), Isaiah turns back to the sins of the people of his day.

-This is an important dividing point.

-It would be better to have a chapter division after 2:5.

2:10-21 Speaks of the Day of the Lord and judgment on the world rather than of immediate judgment on Israel.

-v.12 "The day of the Lord will be upon the proud."
cf. Is.24-27 further develops "the Day of the Lord."

-v.20-21 Men hide before the terror of the Lord.

2:22-3:15 Isaiah turns his attention to the immediate situation.

-Focuses on the conduct of irresponsible leaders which is leading to the more immediate judgment of the Babylonian Captivity.

-2:22 "Stop regarding man, whose breath of life is in his nostrils; for why should he be esteemed?"

-3:4 The Lord will give children as leaders over Israel resulting in anarchy.

-cf. Historical context - could be reference to Manasseh.
2 Kings 21:2 Manasseh came to throne at age 12.
2 Kings 21:19 Amon began to rule at age 22.

-Young takes 3:4 symbolically - the rulers will be people of no understanding who act as children.

Pronouncement of judgment follows throughout chapter 3: women ruling (perhaps Jezebel and Athaliah).

3:16-4:1 final section where Isaiah denounces the daughters of Zion for their pride and misplaced values.

-v.16-23 They place great value on beauty and things.

-v.24-26 But the day will come when their beautiful ornaments and clothes and their men will be taken away and they'll be left alone.

-4:1 The men of the land will be so decimated by God's judgment that 7 women will ask one man for his name.

-The reproach of widowhood and childlessness will greatly concern these women.

-Have a picture of the contrast of present luxury in Jerusalem and coming situation where all that was precious was taken away (Babylonian Captivity).

Chapter division after 3:26 is poor. Would be better after 4:1 since v.1 concludes the passage of condemnation.

4:2-6 Time of blessing for days ahead.

-Have time designation similar to 2:2.

- "In that day" (also occurs in 3:18 and 4:1).

-Not all have reference to the same day, even though they are close to each other.

- 3:18 and 4:1 = the same day of judgment in near futuro.
- 4:2 = more distant future.
- 4:2 = "In the day about which I am about to speak."
(This is an example showing that one should be cautious of always interpreting something in a technical sense).

v.4 Though there is reference here back to the daughters of Zion, they now have a different character (have been purged).

(2/22/82)

Isaiah 4:2-6 What time of blessing is in view here? How is it to be fulfilled?

- In chapter 4 there is a different situation in view than in 2:2-5.
- 2:2-5 Describes peace and safety, dangers removed, absence of fear and threat.
- 4:2-6 Gives the general impression that there are still threats and things that can be dangerous (v.6) but the Lord is protecting them from it.
- v.5-6 Reminder of Israel in the wilderness when God provided supernatural protection (cloud, etc.).

-This is different from the millennial peace and safety. Here God protects and leads His people through danger and provides for them.

v.2a "The Branch of the Lord" parallels "the fruit of the earth" in v.2b. Possible meanings:

1. Both literal: Orchards and vegetable gardens will be beautiful and glorious for those who are escaped from Israel. Physical prosperity.
2. One figurative and one literal: "Branch" refers to Christ, "fruit" refers to agriculture.
3. Both are figurative and refer to Christ.

The context makes it unlikely that it is merely literal, because v.3-6 describe blessings of spiritual reality, not physical prosperity.

Also: "Branch of the Lord" in other passages clearly refers to the Messiah.

-18 Hebrew words are translated as "Branch" in KJV.

פֶּדָי is used here. Isaiah 11:1 uses לְיֵשׁוּעַ .

-Parallel idea from Isaiah 11:1 lends weight to the Messianic interpretation.

-Messianic passages which use $\pi\delta\gamma$ for "Branch:"

Jeremiah 23:5	"Righteous Branch"
Jeremiah 33:15	"Branch of Righteousness"
Zechariah 3:8	"My servant the Branch"
Zechariah 6:12	"A man whose name is Branch"

-These describe a man who is the divinely sent king of the Davidic line. Thus Jeremiah and Zechariah understood "Branch" to refer to the Messiah, and their usage may have had Isaiah 4:2 in mind.

Some interpreters follow #2 (mixed fig. and lit.):

-But to split this way is unjustified since parallelism is so typical of Hebrew poetry.

-Thus they should be both literal or both figurative.

Best view: Take both as figurative of the coming of Christ.

-Perhaps we have an indication here of the dual aspects of Christ's nature: "Branch of the Lord" => divine, "Fruit of the earth" => human seed of a woman.

-Can not say that Isaiah understood the passage in this way.

-The idea that the Messiah would be both God and man was understood in OT, but not sure this passage supports it.

-But at least v.2 is definitely Messianic.

Who will benefit from this?

-"Those who are escaped from Israel."

=> The true remnant of God; those who will find their ornamentation in Christ, as opposed to the false glory and ornamentation of the women of Jerusalem.

-Young: "In place of false glory and ornament, the genuine and real glory and ornament, Christ Himself, will appear."

Young compares this with Is.28:5 "In that day the Lord of hosts will become a beautiful crown and a glorious diadem to the remnant of His people." => it is Christ in v.5-6 who will provide a covering and protection for his people.

4:2-6 is the same thought as Is.43:2 but using a different figure ("When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you..").

-This imagery seems to best apply to the present age, when the people of God are wanderers in the wilderness of this world experiencing Christ's protection.

[Comment: Isaiah is full of problems in interpretation where it is hard to draw a firm line between the literal and figurative. The guideline of "take it literal unless the context forces otherwise" has some merit but is not universal. In this passage the imagery of v.2-6 seems to lean towards a figurative idea.]

Note that J.B. Payne takes both as literal (#1), applying them to millennial agricultural prosperity.

Hence: v.2a applies to the Messiah.
v.2b Who gets the blessings?

-The true people of God at any time.

-Can "Israel" be taken as a reference to the true people of God? Could it refer to those Israelites who turn back to God but who are distinct from the Gentiles?

-In NT we have references to the church as "Israel:"

Romans 4:13 Abraham is the father of all the faithful.
Gal. 3:26-29 "If you belong to Christ, you are Abraham's seed."
Gal. 6:15-16 "The Israel of God" => church.
Rom. 9:6,8 "The children of promise" = "Abraham's offspring."

-These passages give some weight to the idea that Is.4:2 could refer to the true people of God.

v.3-4 also use the terms "Zion" and "Jerusalem." Can these be figurative? cf. J.B. Payne on 'Jerusalem' in "Zondervan's Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible."

-Ps. 87:4-6 uses Jerusalem in a symbolic sense with the phrase: "this one and that one were born in her [Zion]".

-To be born in Zion appears to refer to the destinies of people; and means to participate in the salvation of those who know God.

-Refers to a moral or religious adoption by the Lord.

Is.4:3 "everyone who is recorded for life in Jerusalem" is a parallel idea to Psalm 87, referring to those spiritual, justified, saints and citizens of Jerusalem.

-Can also see this broad idea in Psalm 46:4.

=> The blessing of v.2 comes to the remnant.

-v.3 furthers this: "those recorded for life in Jerus."

- v.4 contains a previous condition of promise for v.3, where "the LORD has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion."
- Filth and bloodshed have been taken away by the purifying work of the Holy Spirit ("burning").

v.5-6 the Lord then provides protection for these people.

Surely we cannot be dogmatic on this interpretation. It seems to apply to either the present time or the millennium, and since the tone is so different from 2:2-5, this implies a present application.

Note: The hymn "Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken" is taken from Psalm 87 and Isaiah 4. The words of v.2 are clearly taken from 4:4-6 and applied to the church.

D.1.c. Section III. Isaiah 5:1 - 6:13 (6:1 - 13)

We saw that section 1 was millennial (distant future).
Section 2 was nearer (after Messiah, before millennium).

-Section 3 ends with a period of blessing experienced by Isaiah himself (6:1-13 is the call of Isaiah).

-This may imply a progression of blessing from distant to near.

5:1-7 Refers to Israel as God's vineyard which doesn't produce fruit.
-Hence God will destroy it (v.6).

Following this, six (6) woes are pronounced:

- v.8 "Woe to those who add house to house and join field to field...."
- v.11 "Woe to those who rise early in the morning that they may pursue strong drink...."
-v.13 exile is the result of this woe.
- v.18 "Woe to those who drag iniquity with the cords of falsehood...."
- v.20 "Woe to those who who call evil good, and good evil...."
- v.21 "Who to those who are wise in their own eyes...."
- v.22 "Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine...."

v.26-30 are a vague reference to Assyria.

-After this passage of condemnation and judgment, then have a blessing.

Is.6 Blessing for the prophet as well as for the people.

-The call of Isaiah is recorded here.

-His task will not be easy because the people will not respond.

v.11f After the exile and judgment when the land was devastated, there will be a remnant who will return.

v.13 Is difficult to translate; the NIV does the best job.

-Idea: A remnant will be preserved, yet even that remnant will be decimated, yet there will be a remnant that is preserved from which the Messiah will come.

Blessings: Preservation - for the Messiah.
Call of the Prophet.
Return.

D.2. Isaiah 7-12 "The Book of Immanuel"

-One of the more interesting sections in Isaiah.

-Is quoted more than any other passage (except Is.53).

Need to understand the historical background to understand the flow of thought.

7:1-2 Gives a brief statement of the historical background (2 Kings 15 and 2 Chronicles 28 give more details).

-The people of Judah were fearful because of the powerful coalition of Israel (Ephraim) and Syria which wants to remove Ahaz from Judah's throne (v.6).

-Israel was stronger than Judah, Syria was stronger than Israel.

-The time is around 734 BC.

-This is significant because it would have terminated the Davidic dynasty (breaking God's promise to David).

-Reason for the action: Syria and Israel wanted a cooperative king on Judah's throne to support them against Assyria. Ahaz was unwilling to join them.

-So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-Pileser III for aid.

-2 Kings 16:7-9 Ahaz sent presents to Tig-P, making an alliance with Assyria against Syria and Israel. Tig-P then went against Damascus and won.

-This occurred sometime before 732 BC (when Damascus was destroyed), but Is.7 doesn't mention if Ahaz has already done this by the time this chapter was written.

-But in the meantime Ahaz was strengthening his fortifications which is the immediate context for v.3.

7:3 Isaiah was told to meet Ahaz at a specific place with a special message.

v.4-9 Message: Don't fear the kings of Samaria and Israel, because God will protect you from them. They won't succeed and within 65 years Ephraim will no longer be a people.

-v.9 Isaiah doesn't refer to Ahaz' plan to seek assistance from Tig-P, but "if you will not believe, you surely shall not last" => if you seek foreign help, it will result in your downfall.

v.10-16 Apparently Ahaz' response was skeptical because the Lord comes again with a new message: "Ask God for a sign. If you don't believe my message, God will demonstrate its truth."

-v.12 Ahaz dismisses the message with pious sounding statements which really betray that Ahaz did not want to trust God.

-He wanted to trust his own arrangements with Assyria.

v.13-16 The sign of Immanuel.

-Interpretative problem: How do you understand v.14 with respect to Messianic prophecy and the immediate situation?

-Various approaches:

1. This all refers to the immediate situation - relief from an impending attack by Ephraim and Syria.

-> It means a child will be born and before he is old enough to distinguish between good and evil, the enemy kings will be gone.

Objection: This doesn't allow for any element of rebuke to Ahaz which the context (v.13) requires. Ahaz has refused to trust the Lord, but it would seem like a blessing if the kings were gone.

2. This refers entirely to Christ.

-> In view of the unworthiness of Ahaz to sit on the throne of David, God will replace him with one who is worthy of the throne: Immanuel.

-This is a rebuke to Ahaz.

Objections: It lacks sufficient relationship to the immediate situation and

-Gives great difficulty in interpreting v.15-16 which seem clearly to refer to the immediate situation.

The truth is somewhere in the middle unless you go to a dual fulfillment idea.

3. These are words of rebuke to Ahaz and comfort to the godly people of the land.

-This was a public encounter of Isaiah with Ahaz where men working on the aquaduct are present.

-v.13 is a rebuke to Ahaz - the one on David's throne is not interested in God and His promises but is trusting in his ties with Assyria.

-> God will replace this unworthy man with His true representative: Immanuel.

-But this interpretation is difficult because it is not stated when this worthy one is coming.

-The unstated assumption (weakness) is: If Immanuel were to be born within a year, before he was a few years old (v.15-16), the 2 threatening kings would be gone.

-So in v.14 God is saying that He will send a worthy representative and remove the unworthy one.

-v.15-16 doesn't comment on when this representative will come, but takes the life of this child as a basis for measuring time in the immediate situation.

-> Word of comfort is addressed to the godly people, not to Ahaz who is rebuked.

v.14 "Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."

In Matthew 1:22-23 the quotation of Is.7:14 is clearly messianic, but the verse still had historical significance.

Note the context: God was giving a sign.

Interpretations:

-Some say the child was an ordinary human being named Immanuel, born in the time of Ahaz to the king, Isaiah's wife or to someone else then.

1. $\pi\alpha\rho\upsilon\tau\eta$ = "young woman", not "virgin" so it is usually pointed out that this word could refer to the king's or Isaiah's wife.
(almah)

-Not the Hebrew word which is usually translated "virgin".

RSV - translates as "young woman" + footnote "virgin".

NEB - translates as "young woman", no footnote.

NASB - translates as "virgin" + footnote "or maiden".

KJV - translates as "virgin".

2. $\pi\lambda\eta\lambda\eta\tau\eta$ = normally translated "virgin".
 - expresses the technical concept of virginity.

E.J. Young, "Commentary on Isaiah," pp.288-289 notes:

- 1) $\pi\lambda\eta\lambda\eta\tau\eta$ (b'thoo-lah) is not always clear in usage.

-In Joel 1:18 it clearly refers to a married woman.
 -Aramaic equivalents in translations => married woman.
 -If Isaiah had used b'thoo-lah, it would have confused the meaning. Couldn't know if he meant a virgin or a betrothed wife.

-So 'almah' was a deliberate choice of words. It is the only one that definitely means an unmarried woman (virgin). B'thoo-lah doesn't give that same clarity.

- 2) Almah is used only 7 times in OT.

-But never in the context of a married woman.
 -At least 1 time it is clearly used of one explicitly called a virgin (b'thoo-lah) as well as unmarried.

-Gen.24: Abraham's servant finding Rebekah.
 v.16 "The damsel ($\eta\gamma\eta$) was very fair to look upon, a virgin ($\pi\lambda\eta\lambda\eta\tau\eta$), neither had any man known her."

v.43 "when the virgin ($\pi\alpha\lambda\lambda\eta\tau\eta$) comes forth...."

-So this gives an idea of the circle of meaning.

MacRae: $\pi\alpha\lambda\lambda\eta\tau\eta$ = "Young woman of marriageable age, one of whose characteristics is that she is a virgin."

"Maiden" comes closest to being a good single-word translation in modern English.

- "Virgin" is too narrow.

- "Young woman" is too broad.

In LXX of Gen.24, all 3 words in v.16 and 43 for Rebekah are translated by one word, $\pi\alpha\rho\theta\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$ (parthenos) = virgin.

- 3) LXX translators of Is.7:14, writing in the 2nd century BC, translated 'almah' as 'virgin' (parthenos), not 'young woman.'

(2/26/82)

Conclusion: Young states that 'almah' seems to be the only word in the language which unequivocally refers to an unmarried woman. No other word would show this distinction.

Young: "If the mother was an unmarried woman, then is the child illegitimate or not? If he is illegitimate, then would the child be a sign since such a birth would not be unusual? The whole Biblical context rules this out. If the mother is unmarried, then the birth is unusual and extraordinary. If the mother is unmarried and good, so the child is not illegitimate, and such a birth is found in only one case in history (Mary, the mother of Jesus), then it is a special sign."

-Young emphasizes that 'almah' means 'unmarried woman' and also 'virgin.'

v.15-16 Are not a continuation of the rebuke to Ahaz (v.14), but are words of comfort to God's people.
-Although Ahaz is wicked, God will bless and deliver the land.

-v.14 Immanuel is the true deliverer who will sit on the throne as a rebuke to Ahaz.

v.15-16 Promise: It does not say when the one will come, but assuming that the child were to come, the seige will end and the land of the enemies will be destroyed by the time the child would be a few years old => comfort.

v.15 "He will eat butter and honey at thg`time he knows enough to refuse evil and choose good." (NASB)

-Butter and honey = type of food available in a difficult time, but not seige conditions, since they don't require agricultural care.
-This term refers to a time just after a seige is lifted, when simple foods like this are available.

-KJV "that he may know" - Delitzsch says the infinitive with the ל prefix on יָדָע is better translated as "when he will know".

Isaiah 7:17-25: Results of Ahaz' scheme - new section.

-Isaiah describes the ultimate effects of Ahaz' reliance on the king of Assyria.

-In v.17 the king of Assyria is specifically mentioned.

-Bitter results of seeking an alliance:

-Depopulation,
-Suffering agriculture.

-v.20: "The Lord will shave with a razor" -> Ahaz hired Assyria to shave Israel, but God will turn it on Judah.
-So Ahaz got what he wanted, but not in the way he wanted.

- General picture: Agriculture suffers for lack of cultivation, vineyards and fields grow wild. There is plenty of basic food, but not things requiring care.
- The full results of Ahaz' alliance with Assyria are described in Isa.36-39 when the Assyrian army overruns most of Judah and even threatens Jerusalem.
- This occurs in the time of Ahaz' son, Hezekiah.
- Is.36:2 When the Assyrian commander comes to Jerusalem, he stands in the SAME spot as Isaiah stood when he gave his message to Ahaz (Is.7:3). The place was significant for the water supply of the city.

Isaiah 8 - has the same historical background as Is.7.

- v.1-4 -This message was given 1 or 2 years later.
 - A sign is described which is similar to Is.7, but the time period is shorter (before the Assyrians come).
- A child is born to Isaiah who will not yet be old enough to say *אבא* and *אמא* = my father, my mother (very simple Hebrew sounds) by the time the prophecy is fulfilled.
- This child would be younger than the one described in 7.
- 8:1 - Symbolic name to be written by Isaiah on a tablet: "Hasten the booty, speed the spoil."
- v.3 - Isaiah is told to give the child that symbolic name.
- v.4 - Because before the child is a year old (can say my father, my mother) the wealth of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be carried away to Assyria.

734 BC - Threat from Damascus and Israel.
 732 BC - Capture of Damascus, Israel invaded by Assyria.
 721 BC - Capture of Samaria, but Israel was severely weakened by Assyria before this. Note:

- 2 Kings 15:29 In the time of Pekah, Tig-P captured many towns in the Northern Kingdom.
- Hoshea then overthrew Pekah (king of Assyria says he put Hoshea on the throne as a puppet).

8:1-4 The child here is taken by some to be the same child as in Is.7 (Immanuel).
 -Vannoy says that is not a tenable position. Compare:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| -Is.7: Mother unmarried | Is.8: Mother = wife of Isaiah |
| Name: Immanuel | Maher-shalal-hash-baz |
| Time: Messianic | Current history |
| Age at fulfillment: | |
| ment: Few years old | About 1 year old |
- so child is not the same.

But the point of the announcement of both children is that the threat will be removed.

-Young: Is.8 child can be verified => that is a pledge of the promise of the virgin's son of Is.7.

8:5-8 - Results of Ahaz' foolish plan:

-Figurative language: Since Ahaz and the people won't trust the Lord (typified by the soft waters of Shiloah), the Lord will bring a great flood to devastate the land.

-v.6: "Son of Remaliah" = Pekah

"Rejoice in Rezin" = rejoice in their defeat by Assyrians => Judah doesn't need the Lord.

-v.7: Assyria = mighty river which will come thru Judah.

-v.8: "Reach even to the neck" = almost wipe out Judah.

"O Immanuel" => land isn't Ahaz', but Immanuel's.

=> King of Assyria is powerless to do anymore than what God permits.

8:9-10 The nations (Assyria, Syria, Israel) will not succeed in taking Judah. Why?

"For Immanuel" = "For God is with us."

v.10: Close in phraseology to Is.7:7 "it shall not stand."

-Whether the threat is from Rezin and Pekah or later from Assyria, they won't be able to conquer Judah.

-The ultimate fulfillment comes in Is.36-39. Assyria had taken many cities and was laying siege to Jerusalem when God sent the plague on the Assyrian army.

v.11-22 Words of consolation to Israelites in view of the current situation.

-v.12-13 "Don't fear the enemies, fear God!"

-v.14 -> As they feared God, they would be protected.

"Then He shall become a sanctuary."

-v.19-20 "Don't look for guidance from mediums, but from the law (covenant foundation) - God will sustain.

Poor chapter division: Between Is.8:21 and 9:2-3 there is a transition from great gloom to great joy.

8:22 Dimness and darkness.

9:2 Rejoice in great light.

9:1 Area referred to here (Zebulun and Naphtali) is where the Assyrian army first invaded (2 Kings 15:79) and right in this very area a great light will come.

-> In the context there is some connection with Immanuel's coming.

-One who is worthy will replace Ahaz who is unworthy.

-Matt.4:16 Jesus began his ministry in this region to fulfill this.

9:3-5 are difficult. Interpretations:

-Young: v.3 - Shows great rejoicing among God's people since the burden and oppression are removed because a child is born who brings deliverance to the children of God.

-> Deliverance is brought by Christ and the spread of the gospel to multiply the nation.

-v.4: Christ broke the yoke of oppression = symbolic of breaking Satan's power and spreading the gospel.

-Payne: v.3 - Refers to millennial multiplication and joy.

-v.4-5 = Armageddon at 2nd advent (which provided for millennial blessing).

-v.6 - Goes back to the 1st advent - description of the kingdom that is Christ's.

-Payne, Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy, footnote, p.295:
 "If 9:3 be taken with vv.1-2, this 'increase' might suggest 1st-century Gentile engrafting into the Israel that is the church, as in 54:1-8, but its more direct connection appears to be with v.4, and hence with Christ's 2nd coming."

9:6 In Hebrew, the tenses are all perfect = "a child has been born, a son has been given, ..."

-So verbs are prophetic perfect (=> certain fulfillment).

-Names given to child => he is not simply a human being.

-More clear than the name Immanuel.

-The child is to be the Mighty God Himself in human form.

Notice the progression of deity of Christ in this book:

Is.4:2 "Branch of the Lord -- Fruit of the earth."

-A vague reference to deity/humanity.

Is.7:14 Child born of a virgin, named "God with us."

=> deity/humanity of Christ.

Is.9:6 Child born is called "Mighty God."

Is.9:7 His government will eventually end war and evil - not through human achievement but because of "the zeal of the Lord."

["Everlasting Father:" is the 2nd person of the Trinity here being called the Father?

Young's Commentary, pp.338-339: "Father" designates the quality of the Messiah as he acts toward his people. The quality of Father is defined by "eternal" => he is one who is eternally a father to his people.

-Psalm 103:13 "Like as a father pitieth his children"

-He guards and supplies needs, like a good shepherd.]

Isaiah 9:8-10:4 is another unit:

- A poetic section of 4 stanzas.
- Each stanza ends with the same refrain:
"For all this His anger is not turned away and His hand is still stretched out."
- Occurs in verses 9:12, 17, 21, and 10:4.
- Emphasis of this section: rebuke of Israel's sin and a reminder that the Lord will bring judgment on the Northern Kingdom (cf. 10:1 "Woe to those...").

Isaiah 10:5-10:34 is another section.

-Until now in Isaiah we have seen two basic themes:

1. Rebuke to Israel for its sin and rebellion with a warning of the coming judgment.
2. Consolation for those who are true to the Lord with assurances of future blessing for the godly remnant.

-In Isaiah 7-12, theme 1 was centered around Ahaz and his alliance with Assyria.

-Now in Isaiah 10:5ff a new theme appears, to be discussed along with continual reference to the previous two themes:

3. The relation of the wicked power Assyria to the Lord.

-This section was probably written later than the earlier sections, as in 10:11 the king of Assyria boasts that he "will treat Jerusalem as I treated Samaria" => after 721 BC.

Point: Isaiah lived at a time when evil appeared to be triumphant. Assyria, one of the most ruthless world aggressors the earth has ever known, was conquering city after city. Assyria's only "virtue" was bravery.

-In this section, the Lord says that Assyria is merely an instrument in God's hand to punish sinful Israel.

-10:5 "Assyria, the rod and staff of my indignation."

v.6b is a play on Isaiah's son's name (cf. 8:3):
"Maher-shalal-hash-baz" -> booty and plunder.

v.7-14 is a shift in perspective to Assyria's point of view.

- Sees herself as the sovereign ruler of the earth, free to do as she pleases: does not recognize the Lord.
- Unconscious of her instrumental role (v.7).

- v.9-10 is a list of nations which had fallen and been destroyed by Assyria in Isaiah's own time.
 -Are arranged geographically from farthest to nearest.
 -Parallels 2 Kings 18:33-35 (Rabshakeh's boasting before Jerusalem - "Your God won't do any better than the gods of these other nations").
- v.11 Assyria equates the God of Israel with the heathen gods of Samaria and other nations.
- v.12 Assyria will be destroyed for her activity because it is done from wickedness of heart.
 -This will occur after God's purpose for Assyria has been accomplished (the punishment of Jerusalem).
- v.13-14 Reason for Assyria's destruction: Pride and haughtiness (note all the 1st person expressions here).
- v.15 Assyria is compared to an instrument or tool (saw, axe, club, or rod) which God is using.
 -"Should the axe boast itself over the one who uses it?"
- v.16-19 Figurative description of Assyria's coming destruction: like a forest which will be burned up.
 -v.17 "the light of Israel" = the Lord.
- v.20-23 Israel will not always lean on untrustworthy foreign powers (like Ahaz with Assyria), but will lean on the Lord.
 -God will punish Israel, but will preserve a remnant and bless them.
- v.24-27 Despite Assyria's threats, God will deliver Judah and not allow them to be conquered.
 -The burden of Assyria will be taken off your shoulders.
 -A miraculous deliverance is implied (like at the Red Sea and Gideon's defeating Midian).
- v.28-32 Recapitulation:
 -First see a picture of the Assyrian army advancing.
 -Climaxes in v.32 with the army at the edge of Jerusalem.
 -Just when they appear to conquer...
- v.33-34 God intervenes and cuts down Assyria.
 -Again see the figure of a forest applied to Assyria.
- In 10:5-34 we see a picture of the significance to be attached to the rise and fall of Assyria and its threat to Israel.
 -Assyria is an instrument of punishment.
 -Yet God will deliver Jerusalem and preserve a faithful remnant from Assyria.
 -This was all literally fulfilled (Nahum describes the fall of Assyria in 612 BC).

Chapter 11 is well known.

- Chapter 10 ends with the cutting down of the forest of Assyria.
- Chapter 11 begins with contrast: Empire of Assyria has fallen, never to rise again, but the empire of David which has also fallen will bring forth a new branch.
- Both are cut down but Israel will recover and Assyria will not.
- The "branch" is an individual.

v.2-10 describes the results of this branch in coming forth.

- v.2-5 describes his actions and endowment by the Spirit.
- v.6-10 describes the character of his kingdom.

If we reflect on the previous messianic passages in Isaiah:

- 9:6 - "everlasting Father, mighty God"
- 7:14 - "Immanuel"
- 4:2 - "Branch of the Lord"

-These passages stress the deity of the Messiah.

But 11:2 stresses the filling with the Holy Spirit and the righteousness of His actions, rather than His deity.

- Note the 6 aspects of the Holy Spirit's power that rest on him: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, strength, fear of the Lord.

v.3 stresses the righteousness of his judgments.

v.4 describes his activities: judging the poor, smiting the earth.

- These seem to be things which a powerful ruler would do.
- These are not the characteristics of a teacher.

=> These are Christ's activities at his 2nd coming, not the 1st.

Support for the 2nd advent interpretation of 11:4:

1) 2 Thess. 2:8

This idea of the 2nd coming is supported by 2 Thess. 2:8 where Paul alludes to Isaiah 11:4 (Thess: "then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth").

- Note in the context, Paul implies that this has not been fulfilled yet.
- Paul interprets Isaiah 11:4 יִשְׁׁרָאֵל (the wicked [one]) as singular. This is ambiguous in Hebrew as it is common to use an adjective as a substantive to indicate

either singular or plural, although in English we usually use substantive adjectives as plurals.
=> 2nd Advent idea.

2) Revelation 19:11ff may also refer to Isaiah 11:4

John describes the 2nd coming, using the term "sword of his mouth" (Rev. 19:21). Less clear.

Isaiah 11:6ff is a description of the character of the branch's kingdom.

v.9 is a summary: "They will not hurt or destroy."

v.6-8 is a picture of the removal of external danger brought about by the reign of the Messiah.

v.6-10 is describing the same time as Isaiah 2:2-4 and Micah 4:1-4.

-Will be a time when no one fears external attack.

Whether v.6-8 are literal or figurative ("lion and lamb"), external peace and safety are undeniably implied.

-Is clear that the character of the kingdom is that external danger is removed, but should we take these animal references as strictly literal?

-If strictly literal, then a new idea comes in here that the animal creation will share in the conditions of peace and safety.

=> A return to Edenic conditions before the Fall, when there were no hostilities between animals (and man). Many take it this way.

-How far do we press these details ("lion eating straw") since some of them would require physiological changes, and shift the food chain and balance of nature?

-Problem: Was there death in the animal kingdom (and the food chain) before the fall?

-Vannoy: Animals did die in Eden; the fall meant that death now applied to the human race.

(3/3/82)

If Isaiah 11:6-8 is taken in a figurative sense:

-Alexander's "Commentary on Isaiah", p.253f (post-mill):

-"Most Christian writers, ancient and modern, explain this passage as wholly metaphorical and descriptive of peace."

- "It is a description of the change made by Christianity in wicked men themselves."

- Calvin and Hengstenberg take it as a real change, but one caused by the pacific effects of true religion.

- Some people explain it allegorically:

v.7 Cow = Christians who give and receive instruction.

Straw = Divine truth of doctrine.

- "But neither straw nor the animals are sufficient in themselves. But the lion eating the straw makes the difference by showing the revolutionary change which will occur. This is emblematic of the change which the gospel effects on society."

- "Some possible allusion to the ultimate deliverance of creation from its corruption and bondage - i.e. a reference to the New Heavens and the New Earth."

v.8 Jerome: "Casting out of devils by disciples."

Cocceius: "It is Luther, Calvin and Hus who thrust in the hand."

Alexander: "It is a mere continuance of the metaphor in v.7 - a changed society."

Calvin: "Among the people of Christ there will be no disposition for injuring one another."

- Young, v.1, pp.390-391: "Is v.8 a return to paradise? Most of the older writers see the changes are figures to express the change in man himself (cf. Alexander, Calvin)."

- Young: "There will be a change in human nature. At the same time there is a great stress on the animals. Therefore it is impossible for this to be merely figurative (since it is so detailed). Men will know the Lord and this will be reflected in the animal kingdom => cessation of hostility. There is no need to press the details - just see that animals will not prey on one another. There are not necessarily physiological changes."

When will this change in creation occur?

- In the context v.6-9 follows v.4 => chronological.

v.4 describes The Branch striking the earth at the 2nd advent (2 Thess.2:8, Rev.19).

=> v.6-9 follow the 2nd advent.

- Also Rev.20 (the millennium passage where Satan is bound) follows Rev.19 (the conquering passage).

- This parallels with Is.2 and Is.11:6-9 => no danger after the 2nd advent.

[Amillennialists counter with Hosea 6:5 => figurative here. 2 Thess.2 refers to Roman emperors.]

- Post-millennial view: are generally vague on the time of fulfillment.
- Alexander: "To the extent of the spread of the gospel, it will occur."
- Delitzsch, "Commentary on Isaiah," v.7, p.285. "It is a prophecy, however, the realization of which is to be expected on this side of the boundary between time and eternity, and, as Paul has shown in Rom.8, is an integral link in the predestined course of the history of salvation ... There now reign among irrational creatures, from the greatest to the least, - even among such as are invisible - fierce conflicts and bloodthirstiness of the most savage kind. But when the Son of David enters upon the full possession of His royal inheritance, the peace of paradise will be renewed, and all that is true in the popular legends of a golden age be realized and confirmed."
- Young, p.391: "Isaiah said the Messiah is the Prince of Peace. So it will occur as much as men are true to the principles of peace. Insofar as men are true to the word of God in their heart, so far will the blessings be obtained. In its fullness, it will not be realized until the earth is covered with the knowledge which is in the New Heaven and the New Earth. It cannot occur wherever there is sin => can not apply to the millennium since some sin will continue there."
- Payne, "Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy." p.299: Time of "fulfillment: as in Ps.96:12, the joy in nature at Christ's return; cf. Rom.8:21. Yet Scripture seems to limit the curbed conduct of wild beasts to their relations with men and with the domesticated animals of mankind: they are prevented from destroying 'in all My holy mountain.' But elsewhere lions and wolves need be no less carnivorous than they seem to have been prior to or outside of Eden."
- Payne does not think it requires a complete restructuring of nature where no animals destroy others.
 - Limits this fulfillment geographically (parallel with the garden of Eden: an isolated, protected spot).
 - Fulfilled after 2nd advent.
- v.10 is parallel to Is.2:3 and Micah 4:2.
 - Nations will come to Christ and in Him find rest.
- Vulgate has "His sepulcher shall be glorious" instead of "His rest shall be glorious."
- But is a mistranslation of the Hebrew feminine noun meaning "rest."
- No where else is the word used as "sepulcher."

v.11-16 show the enigmatic character of prophecy (it is not history written in advance since is unclear.)

-Refers to events either just prior to the millennium
OR to the regathering of converted Jews to the land of Israel after Christ sets up His future kingdom (cf. Payne).

-Details are extremely difficult to interpret.

-Looks like real circumstances with specific events which the Lord will accomplish.

-Do not expect literal, but equivalent fulfillments.

-If take as symbolical (Young) = preaching the gospel:

v.11 Second time - first deliverance was from Egypt, this second time refers to the church.

v.12 Ensign = gospel; through the preaching of missionaries, people will be converted.

v.13 In Christ distinctions are abolished; true unity results among men.

v.14 True unity of faith takes the offensive against the enemies of God (Philistines).

- "Can not be understood in a literal sense."

-Alexander: "Most writers understand this spiritually as the conquest of true religion. Enemies = heathen of the world."

-Notice that Young ignores the historical setting of how the people of the time understood it.

Isaiah 12 is a brief song of Praise to God for what He is going to accomplish.

Isaiah 13-23: Judgment on foreign nations. Will skip.

Isaiah 24-27: Isaiah Apocalypse - Blessings on the godly, judgment on the ungodly.

VI.D.3. Chapters 28-35 are closely related to chaps. 7-12.

-This material was given at same general time as Book of Immanuel, although ch.28 seems to be addressed to the leaders of the land rather than to the king.

Ch.7 Gave clear historical setting (Isaiah met Ahaz at the conduit of the upper pool).

Ch.28 Gives no clear historical setting but has a similar message.

In Ch.7-12 we saw:

- Ahaz and Judah should not look to foreign alliance for protection but should trust God and be obedient.
- Rebuke to Ahaz for lack of faith and trust in alliance.
- God, in His own time, will replace him with a worthy representative on the throne of David.

In Ch.28-35:

- Message is addressed to the leaders => judgment is not just on the king but also on the leaders.

(3/5/82)

The prophets often presented their message in a very tactful way. For example, Amos did not begin with a denunciation of the sins of Israel but first speaks of the judgment to come on 3 foreign nations, then 3 cousin nations, then Judah and finally Israel. In doing so he gets a hearing by the Israelites. In Isaiah 7, Isaiah is sent to condemn Ahaz, but starts with God's desire to protect Israel rather than with rebuke and condemnation. On the other hand, some prophets were not tactful, e.g. Elijah appears, predicts that there will be no rain, and disappears.

Is.28:1-4 Even though Isaiah is speaking with the leaders Judah, he begins with a denunciation of the drunkards of Ephraim (Northern Kingdom).

- Capital city of Samaria will be trodden under foot.
- => Message given prior to 722 BC.
- Of course, leaders of the S. Kingdom rejoice when Isaiah speaks against the N. Kingdom.
- A storm of judgment is coming upon Samaria and the N.K.

v.5-6 have a contrast between the judgment coming on N.K. and the future time when the Lord Himself will be the crown of glory (not the city of Samaria) and give victory to his remnant. cf. Is.4:2 parallels.

v.7-8 KJV says "But they also have erred" which should be "And also these" since in the Hebrew it is the demonstrative pronoun $\pi \dot{\gamma} \chi \ \bar{\mu} \bar{\lambda} ?$. Isaiah turns his attention and is now speaking of the people who are standing right before him (the leaders of Judah).

v.9-10 gives the response of the S.K. leaders: they become angered with Isaiah. Either these verses are:

- 1) Critical statements made by the leaders of Judah, or
- 2) Isaiah's own view of their mental reaction.

-The nobles are glad for Isaiah's denunciation of the N.K., but don't want to be lectured themselves: "We are not little children to be lectured with moral precepts:"

"Line upon line, precepts upon precept."

-Jerusalem Bible transliterates v.10 in the text.

-NASB gives the transliteration in the margin and notes: "These Hebrew monosyllables, imitating the babbling of a child, mock the prophet's preaching."

-The leaders consider Isaiah's preaching unintelligible.

-New Bible Commentary (Revised) - "almost like our 'blah, blah, blah', but not quite so meaningless."

v.11 Isaiah's response to them: "God will speak to this people through stammering lips and a foreign tongue."

- "Stammering" in KJV and NASB should be "strange lips and another tongue."

=> God has been speaking to them clearly and simply but the people refuse to listen, and mock the teachings as if they were gibberish.

-So God will bring the Assyrians upon them with their language which sounds like gibberish when they attack.

v.12-13 God has given them opportunity to repent (rest and refreshing), but they wouldn't listen.

-Therefore they will hear Him speak through the Assyrians.

-v.13 "So the word of the Lord to them will be" - the future idea is better since this is a waw consecutive.

-NASB note: "Hebrew is the same as in v.10. The Lord responds to their scoffing by imitating their mockery, to represent the unintelligible language of a conqueror."

-This will result in Judah's fall.

v.14-22 A Covenant with death is described which clarifies the interpretation of the above.

-If we only had v.11-13, it would be hard to interpret "stammering lips," etc., but v.14-22 make it clear.

v.15 described the thinking of the leaders of Judah.

-They have made an alliance with the wicked, ungodly nation of Assyria, thinking they'll have protection as the Assyrians conquer since they are allies: "The overwhelming scourge will not reach us when it passes by."

v.16 But God says the only protection for His people is to be found in the cornerstone which He has laid.

-Faith in God's provision is their only security.

- cf. Is.8:14 parallel in same historical context:
 "He shall become a sanctuary; but to both the houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over..."
- Your trust in Assyria will bring disaster. The Lord will be your security if you trust and obey Him.
- The answer is too simple - trust the Lord - Judah won't.

- Trust in God's provision is the only true security. This finds its center and source ultimately in the work of Christ.

- Alexander's Commentary: "This foundation stone is not the temple, the law, or Hezekiah, but is the Messiah."

- Vannoy: Have a veiled reference to the Messiah here.

- NT clearly applies this passage to the Messiah:
 Romans 9:33 - The issue in Romans 9 is a parallel: trust in the Lord's provision, not in one's own works.
 Romans 10:11 - "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed."
 1 Peter 2:6 - Also alludes back to this.

- v.17 The people have refused to receive their help and protection thru God's provision and thus they must receive the judgment of v.17.
 -Is a figurative description of the coming judgment.
 -Similar description as in Isaiah 8:7-8.

- v.18 Covenant with Assyria will prove useless because they will be trampled, although not totally destroyed.

- v.19 Continuing pronouncement of judgment.

- v.20 Illustration of impossibility of securing safety by human resources.
 -New Bible Commentary (Revised) has vivid description.

- v.21-22 Alludes to slaughter of Philistines under David.
 -Then in an interesting change, he speaks of judgment against his people.
 -"His strange act" = defeat of his people.
 -"Decisive destruction on all the earth." Hebrew is 478, which could be either 'earth' or 'land', but 'land' is better in context.

v.23-29 Separate section which is difficult to interpret.

-Agricultural figures of the way a farmer works the land.
=> God is not a workman who does things in a haphazard way,
but He works out His plan in a way that is consistent
with His starting material.

-Illustration: Plowman doesn't plow forever, but after
plowing, he plants, and after that he harvests.
-By analogy, God will move on to the next stage.

v.27-28 Farmer deals differently with different types of
products.

-Perhaps God deals differently with those who are outside
the covenant than with His own people.
-He will chastise and punish His own people, but not
bring final destruction upon them, like He may do with
others.

-See the way God does His work: progressively,
sequentially, and differently.

Isaiah 29 Begins with an obscure term (context helps to
clarify).

-"Ariel" - name used for Zion (Jerusalem).
Etymology is disputed:

- 1) "Lion of God,"
- 2) "Hearth or fireplace of God" - is an Arabic root.

-View 2 fits in best with the context of v.1-4:

v.2 "she shall be like a 'fireplace of God' to me"

v.4 The city will be reduced to dust and ashes.

-> It will be as Ariel because I will besiege it and
reduce it to dust and ashes.

v.1-4 Description of city under seige, crushed almost to
the ground.

v.5-8 Sharp contrast to previous verses.

-Idea: Even though the people of Judah are helpless to
deliver themselves from the Assyrian invaders, God
Himself will protect them and He will cause the enemy to
be gone like chaff.

-To the Assyrians it will seem like the hungry man who
dreams of a feast and it's gone: They'll think they have
got Jerusalem in their grasp and then something will
happen so Jerusalem will get away.

-Some think the language looks beyond the immediate threat (Assyria) to an eschatological threat because:

- v.6 Did an earthquake and other things occur when the Assyrians came?
- v.7 "all the nations."

-But in Isaiah 30:30-31 Assyria is explicitly mentioned with similar language.

=> v.5-8 are not eschatological.

v.9-12 Continues the condemnation of the leaders of the Southern Kingdom.

-Here they are drunk because they have turned away from God (are not drunk with wine).

-They have a book which would give them instruction, but they don't read it because they are not interested:

-Those who can read, don't read.

-Those who can't read, don't bother to take the book to someone who can read.

=> No desire to know the truth.

-The word of God was clear and available but they turned away and were in a blind stupor.

(3/8/82)

Isaiah 29:13-24 is an interesting passage, but difficult to interpret because of the figures used.

-Vannoy: Gives a bird's-eye view of God's future dealing with his people (long range).

v.14 "I will once again do a marvelous work ..."

v.15 Refers to the leader's plan to deliver the land by an alliance with a wicked foreign power.

-Parallels the "covenant with death" in 28:18.

v.16-17 The people act like they are the potter instead of the clay. God will show that He is the potter by overturning and utterly reversing the present conditions.

v.17 Israel was described as God's fruitful field (cf. Ch 5).

-The Gentiles are represented as the forest of Lebanon.

-The marvelous work: Lebanon will become a fruitful field, and Israel will become an unattended forest.

-A reversal of the favored covenant position is in view: Those previously outside God's covenant are now to be treated as if they were inside and vice versa.

-This forest-field figure is also seen in Isaiah 32:15.

=> Should interpret both passages the same way.

v.18 This idea is further developed.

- The wise people who were given the Law refused to read it (cf. lazy responses in v.11-12).
- Now the deaf and blind will be given the privilege to hear. Implied that "deaf and blind" are the heathen who are now brought into the covenant to hear the gospel.
- This concept is seen in Paul's olive tree figure (Rom.11).
- Compare also Isaiah 7, where Ahaz will be replaced with a more worthy Davidic representative (Immanuel).
- Here in Isaeah 28, the emphasis is directed at the wicked leaders, as opposed to Ahaz only. Leaders are rebuked for having no interest in the gospel.
- In Is.29: these leaders will be replaced by those whom they consider to be outside the circle of God's people.

v.20-21 Possible interpretation: A weakening of evil influence caused by the spread of the gospel among those who are outside Israel.

- v.22-23 Jacob is rejoicing, and will see his children, the work of God's hands.
- We expect him to be mourning over the failures of Israel.
 - Implied that Jacob sees true Israel: those children of God (the work of God's hands) who are not his physical descendants.
 - Redemption by God from outside increases the seed of Jacob [Interesting dispensational implications].

- v.24 Conclusion: looking to the more distant future.
- Those wise people who had turned away (God's covenant people) and had erred in spirit will come back.
 - Romans 11 parallel to the final grafting back in of Israel.

Thus v.13-24 are a prophecy of the general course of God's future dealing with God's people, paralleling Romans 11.
-Yet there is so much figure that it is hard to be dogmatic.

J.B. Payne takes an alternate interpretation:

- v.17 Lebanon is to be reduced to a level of weakness, while Israel will become powerful (the forest is more powerful than the field). He sees it as a deterioration of the forest to become a field.
- v.18-24 are then the effects of Sennacherib's advance against the land and Judah's deliverance.
- When God brings miraculous deliverance, the (deaf and blind) people will see the Lord in action and they will be illuminated, and a revival will occur.
 - v.20-21,24 sees conviction arise in the ungodly as a result of the deliverance from Sennacherib.

v.22-24 (Jacob rejoicing) Refers to those who are not destroyed by Assyria.

However, this result (revival) among the people after God's deliverance is not described (2 Kings 18-19). This prophecy must then "supplement" the historical account in Payne's view.

Isaiah 30 is in the same historical setting as the book of Immanuel (Is.7-12) and ch.28-29, though it may be a few years after the Ahaz encounter (Ch.7).

Chapters 30-31 appear to be Isaiah's answer to objections which have arisen in the noble's minds to Isaiah's assertion that the alliance is dangerous.

-The nobles think that they can turn to Egypt for help and play one world power off against the other if Assyria does not hold to the alliance.

-This may have been stated or only be their thoughts.

-This may only be an idea or an actual attempt at seeking help from Egypt.

v.1-7 A rebuke to the people of Judah for failing to seek God's help. Isaiah declares that their efforts to seek help from Egypt will fail.

v.8-17 The people will not listen to God or the prophets. Hence destruction will come.

-v.17 There will be great destruction but a remnant will remain. In context this is probably the Assyrian attack.

v.18-26 A much brighter future is promised after the misery of destruction.

-Probably referring to the peace after 701 BC, when they turned from idolatry and sought the Lord.

-This will last for a period of time, though not for long.

-How well this description fits the period after 701 BC is not clear; v.18-26 may be millennial but then it would break the flow of thought.

v.27-33 Describe the immediate situation. Assyria will be destroyed.

Isaiah 31 is very similar to chapter 30.

Isaiah 32:

v.1 At the end of Is.31, we were told that Assyria will fail. Here, we are informed of a king who will rule in righteousness.

v.2 Still talking about this king even though the terminology changes.

- This man will provide protection from wind and storm (external dangers) when they are present.
- As danger is around, does not appear to be millennial.

=> Referring to blessings which people have in Christ prior to the establishment of the kingdom described in verse 1 (parallels Is.4 where the protection from threats also looks non-millennial).

- The Hebrew in v.2 is ambiguous and could be "and each will be ..." referring back to princes. But then, how do you interpret the storms with respect to princes?
- The princes in v.1 may be God's own people who are ruling with him.

v.3-4 Results of this man's activity. God will give his people eyes to see and understand his truth. (Probably the results of the new birth).

v.5-8 (tough) Have the division of people into 2 classes: vile rogues (non-Christians) and nobles (Christians) as an inevitable result of the preaching of the gospel.

- Moral distinctions will become very evident between those people who accept and those who reject the gospel.

v.9-14 Judgment on women of Zion. Isaiah here returns to the present situation (parallels Is.3).

- Women are now in a time of prosperity and fail to recognize their dependence on God.
- Isaiah forewarns them of the coming famine and peril.
- v.13-14 especially parallel Isaiah 7:12-15.

v.14 "Forever" is the Hebrew דָּלִיּוֹת , which does not always mean eternity but only an indefinitely long period in the future.

- Thus this period is not just the exile but can go beyond the return and rebuilding to include the (2nd) great dispersion among the nations.
- It will last "until" the Spirit is poured out (v.15).

v.15 "Until" here does not necessarily mean the end or terminus of the previous period of time as the conditions of v.13-14 could be continued longer.

- Can interpret v.15a as the Day of Pentecost and v.15b as the spread of the gospel to the Gentiles (wilderness = forest).
- Thus this understanding closely parallels Isa.29:17 as any interpretation should.

-Note v.15b in KJV: "wilderness 'be' a fruitful field."
 Hebrew is הָיָה = become, so "wilderness become ..." is a better idea showing the change in the focus of God's redemptive activity from the Israelites to the Gentiles.
 -This phrase alludes to the spread of the gospel to the Gentiles via the apostles.

-v.15c "The fertile field be counted as a forest."
 Hebrew is חָשַׁב = think, count, esteem.
 So KJV is okay, but the same word in 29:17 is translated "be esteemed" and it should be translated the same way in both passages.

We saw that 29:17 described the overturning God brings because his people turn away. The natural branches will be cut off and wild ones grafted in, as in Romans 11.

Then 29:24 perhaps suggests that at some future time there will be a grafting in again of the natural branches.

Is.32:16 may be alluding to this time when both the wilderness and the fruitful field will be included in God's kingdom.

-v.16b "Righteousness will abide (חָשַׁב) in the fruitful field."

Note the difficulty of interpreting these figures. This is a tough and tentative interpretation.

v.17 A description of the results of God's work in the hearts of those who believe in Him, whether Jew or Gentile.

v.18 Points forward to a time of universal peace for all God's people in the millennium.

-As in Isaiah 2 and 11, all external danger is removed.

v.20 Same picture of tranquility.

v.19 KJV: "When it will hail ..." - Is waw (ו) so better translated as "And it will hail."

-Perhaps this is a description of the great destruction of the power which opposes God.

-Perhaps this occurs in the time of preparation for the millennium.

The crux of the interpretation of Isaiah 28-35 lies in verses 32:15 and 29:17:

-Both refer to the forest of Lebanon and fruitful field.

Summary of Isaiah 28-35: A change of focus.

-Have a bird's eye picture of God's movement and redemptive purpose in dealing with Israel and the Gentiles:

-God will turn away, cut off, and graft in until the millennial kingdom of 2nd advent.

-Principle of Replacement: Replacement of the chosen people with new people.

-OT examples: Jonah to Ninevah, Elijah to widow.

-In the end both will be "grafted back in," cf. Rom.11.

-Note how Payne handles this differently:

-Is.32 - Spirit is poured out - again is the revival idea previously pointed out in Is.29.

VI.D.4. Isaiah 40-66

a. Authorship.

Is a problem of OT Introduction concerning the authorship of the 2nd part of the book of Isaiah.

Liberals: Someone they call Deutero-Isaiah wrote Is.40-66 who is not the same as the author of Is.1-39.

-This is a widespread view and is often thought of as an "assured result" of critical research.

Rachel Margalioth, "The Indivisible Isaiah: Evidence for the Single Authorship of the Prophetic Book."

-Best work in answering critical views; by Jewish author.

"Dual authorship is one of the great achievements of higher criticism. The assumption that the book of Isaiah was written by another man after the exilic period is generally accepted by "all" scholars (is even included in Sunday School literature).

"Division of the authorship of the book was first expressed in 1775 by Doderlein, developed by Christian critics, and followed by Jewish scholars.

-She quotes Krause(?) Commentary on Isaiah: "It is an accepted fact that Is.40-66 is not by Isaiah. It would be a fruitless effort on the part of anyone to show single authorship since it is established by internal evidence."

Grounds for the dual-author assertion (cf. Freeman):

- 1) The concepts and ideas found in Is.40-66 differ markedly from those in the uncontested sections of the 1st part of the book.
- 2) There is a noticeable difference in language and style between the two parts.
- 3) The historical background of Is.40-66 is not that of Isaiah's time:
 - In Is.40-66 Jerusalem and the temple have been destroyed, the people are in exile in Babylon, and most decisive: Cyrus, king of the Persians, is mentioned by name (which critics view as impossible since Cyrus reigns 1.5 centuries later).

Rebuttal to these assertions:

- 1) Is a far from convincing argument since it depends on a subjective evaluation of to what extent the differences in concepts and ideas indicate a difference in authorship.
 - Even if concepts and ideas differ in the 2 parts, it does not prove different authorship.
 - Note: It is not argued that there are contradictions between the 2 parts, so it's not an inconsistency problem.
 - It is very reasonable that in different periods of the prophetic activity of one man that God would communicate different truths to him.
 - This would be reflected in the contents of the book of Isaiah, it does not contain just human ideas, but divine revelation.
 - Why should the theme in Is.40-66 of "The Servant of the Lord" not be given for the first time in the latter part of Isaiah's life?
 - S.R. Driver, "Introduction to the OT," p.242, complains that, "The God concept in Is.40-66 is larger and fuller."
 - But what conclusion do you draw from this? Isn't it reasonable over a lifetime for the prophet's understanding to grow?
 - Driver admits there is no real difference: "Truths which are merely affirmed in Is.1-39 are here (in 40-66) made the subject of reflection and argument."
 - > Some new themes and developments do not require a different author.

- Kaminka, "Development of the Ideas of the Prophet Isaiah and Unity of his Book" (in a French journal).
- Argues for unity on the basis of agreement of concepts and ideas in the 2 sections.
- => Things are not all that clear.

2) Differences in language and style.

- A more important argument.
- cf. Driver's list of words and expressions which occur only in part 2.
- This line of argument is frequently used.
- Words and expressions depend mainly on the subject matter being treated. Since the subject matter of the 2nd part is different from the 1st, we would expect different vocabulary.
- Linguistic oddities: If there were some which belonged only to a later period, then that would support the idea of a later writer.
- Technical and detailed study results.
- Example 1: G.Ch. Aalders, "Introduction to OT."
- He is a conservative.
- "Argument is often made that the difference between the use of 1st person singular pronouns in certain other early and late OT books => a late date for Is.40-66.
- In Is.40-66, אָנִי is used 79x, אֲנִי is used 21 times.
- Critics say the heavier use of אֲנִי => late linguistic usage.
- But Aalders seriously questions this thesis.
- It is true in the post-exilic writings of:

	אָנִי	אֲנִי
Haggai	5x	0
Zechariah	9x	0
But in Ezekiel	162x	few x

- "This should lead to the conclusion that the tendency not to use אֲנִי had not progressed as far in Isaiah's time as in Ezekiel's time.
- => Isaiah is earlier than Ezekiel.
- => Pre-exilic date for Is.40-66."
- Example 2: Points of linguistic agreement in 2 parts.
- "Thus saith the Lord" = כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה (perfect tense)
- A common prophetic expression.

-But in Isaiah alone there is a variant: Imperfect tense
(=> durative action) is used instead of the perfect tense.

-This variant appears in both sections of the book:
Is.1:11,18; 33:10; 40:1,25; 41:21; 66:1.

-So since phrase is common among prophets but then Isaiah
has a variant used in both parts => unity of authorship.

Margalioth on p.42 gives her methodology:

-Classify the whole book by subject.

-Both parts have innumerable like expressions peculiar
only to the book of Isaiah.

-See the same vigor and usage in both parts.

Can follow her logic in the chapter titles of the book:

-Chapter 1: Designations of God.

-Divine titles used only in Isaiah which are common in
both parts.

-Chapter 2: Designations of people of Israel (11 examples
shows same point as above).

-Chapter 3: Introductory Formulas of Prophecy (20 examples)

+15 more exciting chapters!

Note: Trying to prove linguistic differences is hard.

-This kind of argument is not conclusive either way.

3) Historical background rebuttal.

-This is the most important argument.

-It is undeniable that Is.40-66 does reflect a very different background than Is.1-39.

Is.1-39: Characterized by pronouncements of coming judgment and exile.

Is.40-66: Assumes that people are already in exile, and that judgment has already come on sin.

Change in emphasis: From promise of exile to promise of deliverance.

Is.1-39: Many references to Assyrians (despite Ahaz' alliance, they are the great enemy).

Is.40-66: Assyrians is not mentioned, but Babylonians are. Israel is in bondage to them, but soon to be delivered by the hand of God.

These radically different backgrounds can be explained as:

1. (Critics) Is.40-66 was written in exile, at the close of it, by someone other than Isaiah (since Cyrus is king).

2. (Conservatives) Isaiah himself wrote it long before the exile, primarily to give comfort to his countrymen after they had gone into exile by declaring that God would deliver them.

-Divine revelation and inspiration are assumed.

-Revelation is a theme of 40-66: God can tell the future.

If view 2 is correct, then what is the purpose in Isaiah writing something that was only relevant to people living a century later? Is there any immediate relevance of the second part to Isaiah's contemporaries?

-Normally a prophet speaks to his own time and is relevant to both his own time and the future.

-Freeman does not address this question in his discussion of Isaiah, but elsewhere says that not all prophets need to be relevant to their contemporaries.

Yet there is significance for Isaiah's contemporaries.

-In Is.1-39 we saw 2 purposes:

1. Declare to nation its sin and call it to repentance.
2. Proclaim to people that God would punish them for sin by sending them into exile.

-The message was not well received, but some responded.

-But as Isaiah's ministry continued into Manassah's reign (cf. Is.37:38), the people were obviously turning away from God (2 Kings 21 describes worst apostasy).

-It was clear to Isaiah then that the nation was not going to repent and exile is, therefore, imminent. Even the brief period of repentance could not stop the judgment.
-So the godly remnant see that exile is inevitable.

-No longer need a message of judgment, but of comfort so that they would not despair or wonder if the nation was going to be destroyed or if there was any future for the people of Israel.

-Thus Isaiah's message of deliverance is a comfort to his contemporaries and to the remnant in exile later.

In Is.40-66, Isaiah speaks in very general terminology, not precise historical details.

-Exception: Cyrus - his name could be known only by divine revelation. Similar to the man of God from Judah who predicted king Josiah by name.

-Aside from Cyrus, there is hardly any factual historical background which would be unknown to Isaiah.

-Northern Kingdom was already in exile, so the general conditions of exile were known.

-Isaiah knew a similar fate awaited Judah.

The crucial argument rests on ones allowance for divine revelation: is it possible or not?

Is.40-66 presupposes a future historical setting, and coming deliverance.

-> Critics fail to prove multiple authorship.

Strong reasons for maintaining single authorship:

1. There is no manuscript evidence that the book ever existed in any form other than its unified form.

-No extremely early manuscripts, but all unified:
DSS Isaiah scroll - 2nd cent. BC.
LXX translation - 250-200 BC.

-Internal references from Jeremiah and Minor Prophets allude to both "parts" of Isaiah.

-But is difficult to prove whether Isaiah or Jeremiah wrote first.

2. NT witness to Isaianic authorship.

-Passages from both sections of the book are quoted 21 times using Isaiah's name.

-Alexander notes the quotes are from chapters 1, 6, 8-11, 29, 40, 42, 53, 61, 65 - all are noted as "from the book of Isaiah the prophet."

-John 12:38-40 gives 2 quotes: from Is.53:1 and 6:9.
 Then John 12:41 says "these things said Isaiah."
 (Isaiah's name is used 3 times in 4 verses).
 => NT authors considered it to be all by one author.

[R.K. Harrison and N.K. Ridderbos are evangelicals who think Deutero-Isaiah wrote the second part.]

4.b. Symphonic Structure.

MacRae uses a musical analogy to explain the character of the material in Is.40-66.

- Not like formal address or literary treatise, but style parallels that seen in a symphonic musical composition.
- Approach: not a formal logical outline, but what appeals to the emotional needs of people in psychological distress.
- This is accomplished by varying the themes discussed and intermixing them so that multiple themes weave in and out.
- The structure of the flow of thought can be hard to follow.

Major themes of Isaiah 40-66:

1) Comfort

- a. Deliverance (General)
- b. Deliverance (from exile)
 - The people in misery are told to be comforted because deliverance is coming.

2) God's Power

- The emphasis on God's power functions to assure the people that they will be delivered, and His promises be fulfilled.
 - a. His Existence - Their historical situation is not by chance.
 - b. His Creative Power - has created man and universe.
 - c. His Sovereignty in History and Nature - God can do what He promises.

3) The Futility of Idols

- Contrasts God's power with the weakness of idols.
- More stress on the foolishness of idols here than anywhere else in the Bible.

4) God's Omniscience

- Person in misery wants proof of God's power.
- "I predicted the Babylonian captivity; you are in it now."
- "I predicted Cyrus would come; he has."
- => Only an omniscient God can do this => God has the power and is reliable; He will deliver you.

5) Servant of the Lord.

- Introduced early in the section and appears intermittently.
- Climax in Is.53.
- We will trace the servant theme through Is.40-66.

6) Cyrus

4.c. The Overture: Isaiah 40

- Is.40 is a unit in itself somewhat distinct from Is.41ff.
- A similar idea to that of a symphonic overture:
 - It touches on a number of themes which will reoccur in greater detail later.
- In v.12-31 will see intricate nature of the composition, and will look at its carefully crafted structure.

Isaiah 40:1-11

v.1-2 Comfort is to come to Jerusalem which has been suffering.

- "Her warfare has ended" = hard service, compulsory labor to pay off a debt, has been accomplished.
- Is a reference to the deliverance from Babylon.
- But more importantly the statement applies to the deliverance from sin which will be applied to God's people: "her iniquity has been removed."

v.3-5 The idea of deliverance is further stressed.

- Deliverance of God is at hand and the way made straight.
- Could refer to the deliverance from exile.
- But all 4 gospels take this as a reference to John the Baptist: Luke 3:4-6, Matt.3:3, Mark 1:2-3, John 1:19-23.
- v.5: Climax in "The glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together" = incarnation.

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- v.5b See the indirect appearance of the theme here of the Knowledge of God.
- God has given this message and the reader can be sure it will come to pass because "the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
- Elaborated on in Is.41f.

v.6-8 -Sharp transition.

-No direct connection with preceding verses.

-Points out the failure of everything earthly and human to endure.

-Background: Condition of Israel: In exile, subservient to the great Babylonian power, so the people might think, "Who can stand against Babylon?" -> God can.

- "Grass" includes Babylonian strength -> Human efforts can't stand.

- "But the word of our God stands forever."

v.9 Reverts back to the comforting of Jerusalem:

-God will bring deliverance (strength).

-This is expressed in a picture that demonstrates His gentleness (like a shepherd).

v.12-31 Detail with respect to the structure of poetic material.

Strophe = Separate sections of a poetic composition.

Strophe

Content

1	v.12	Question: Who created the universe? 5 aspects to the question - all have the answer "God".	
		Measured waters	Answer that
		" span	is presupposed
NATURE		" dust of earth	is God.
		" mountains	
		" hills	

-These stress the omnipotence of God; man can't do these, only God can.

2	v.13-14	Question: Who was God's helper at creation? 5 aspects to the question. Answer: "No one."	
		Directed Spirit or counseled Him	
		Whom did He consult	
NATURE		Taught Him justice	No one.
		Taught Him knowledge	
		Informed Him	

-Omniscience of God which no man can attain to. Contrasted with man's ability.

Strophes 1 and 2 deal with nature, the universe and the world which God has created. They show His power over nature.

- 3 v.15-17 1st Climax: The nations are as nothing.
(Transition from nature to history.)
HISTORY -Introduced by 2 exclamations "behold" (וַיֵּן).
-Nations of the world, despite their apparent power, are nothing before God.

- 4 v.18-20 Idols do not move (the futility of idolatry).
-Thought of the 1st section is developed by comparison.
-Another transition.

-Omnipotence and omniscience of God are now contrasted with the foolishness of idolatry, so the development of omnipotence and omniscience is more by contrast.
-The section is introduced with the question "To whom then will you liken God?" and then contrasts Him with idols.

- 5 v.21-24 2nd Climax: God is the Lord of nature and history (He rules both).
-This combines the first 3 ideas.

-Striking literary construction:

-In v.21 have 4 repeated uses of "Have you not..." אִי לֹא

-v.22-23 have 3 participial double lines:

1. "He who sits ..." יֹשֵׁב
2. "stretches out ... spreads them out ..." מִפְּתוֹחַ
3. "reduces (NASB) ... makes ..." מִיָּד

-v.24a have 3 verbs introduced by "scarcely" לֹא כִּי

-v.24b "And also" (וְגַם) is a sharp introduction to the conclusion: All nations are as nothing before God.

-This conclusion provides the 2nd climax which makes the 1st one more definite.

-Note the correspondence between the triad of v.22-23 and the first 3 strophes.

v.22 Power of God as creator (sits, spreads) -
cf. Strophes 1 and 2.

v.23 God's work in history (reduces) -
cf. Strophe 3.

- 6 v.25-27 The Lord is incomparable.
-Structurally this idea relates back to Strophe 4 by introducing both strophes with the phrase "To whom then will you liken Me?".

-Given God's power and omniscience, how is it possible to think that God has forgotten His people?
-Even though Israel is in bondage and says that God doesn't see, that is not a reasonable conclusion.
(This also applies to Christians.)

7 v.28-31 3rd Climax: Divine sovereignty over nature and history is the ultimate comfort for God's people in distress.

- Have a parallel between S5 and S7 (v.21 and v.28).
- v.21 Have 4 repeated uses of "Have you not ..."
- v.28 Have 2 uses: "Have you not known? Have you not heard?"

In Is.40 we have a general statement of God's power and deliverance and comfort.

In Isaiah 41ff more specific details are added.

4.d. "The Servant of the Lord" theme.

- We will trace this one theme from its beginning in Is.41 through its progressive development to its climax in Is.53.
- Disadvantage: Miss the interconnection of themes so will lose some of the force of the message, but we only have time to trace one theme.
- This theme contains the messianic idea.
- Preliminary comment on a problem of interpretation of this theme: What is the interrelationship of the prediction of the return of Israel from exile and the prediction of the Messiah?
- The historical setting presupposes that the exile will end soon, but the Servant theme shows up in the sections discussing deliverance from exile.
- Critical scholars say that the servant passages have a separate authorship and were inserted later.
- Their evidence for this are the abrupt transitions to the servant theme.
- Abruptness can be a feature of the symphonic style, also:

4 primary passages relate to the Servant theme:

Isaiah 42:1-7, 49:1-9, 50:4-11, 52:13-53:12.

- But the theme is not limited to these 4 passages.
- It occurs in scattered verses, and is intricately related to the other themes.
- => Is difficult to prove that the theme is a later insertion.

References to the Servant theme:

1st reference: Isaiah 41:8.

- "But you, Israel, (are) My servant ..."
- First occurrence of "servant" with the term "My".
- Not the first occurrence in the Bible, just in Isaiah.
- The term is used widely of Moses, Joshua, Elijah, and godly people in a plural general sense.
- But here in Isaiah it takes on particular significance.
- When the term is first encountered in Isaiah, is not clear what is meant by it, but progressively details are added to make it clearer.

In 41:8 God gives the reason why He will protect Israel (because of Abraham).

- cf. v.14 "'Do not fear, you worm Jacob, ... I will help you,' declares the Lord ..."
- Is hard to define the extent of the servant theme. It may run through v.19.
- But here Israel is explicitly called the servant.

2nd reference: Isaiah 42:1-7

- Picture of the work that the servant will do.
- Not stated here who the servant is.
- v.1 Servant is God's elect, in whom God's soul delights. Spirit is on him; will bring justice to the nations.
- v.2-4 Shows the dignity of servant and the gentleness of his conduct.
- He is not one who must exert violent effort to accomplish his task and he will succeed at that task.
- He will bring justice to the nations => This is something of a world-wide scope.
- v.5 Interruption of the list of accomplishments to answer the question: How is this possible?
- Remember who is behind it: Theme of the almighty creator who can accomplish His plans.

In Is.41:8, the national Israel was called God's servant.

- But how is it possible for Israel to fulfill the great task described for the servant in:
 - 42:6 "Light to the nations."
 - 42:7 Open blind eyes, deliver prisoners.
- How can a people who are themselves in bondage and misery hope to accomplish this?

-The answer is given in 42:19-22:
 v.19 "Who is blind but My servant? Or so deaf ..."
 v.21 Yet the servant's work will be done.
 v.22 Problem: How can Israel fulfill the role when she is robbed and spoiled? She can not do it.

-42:24 tells how Israel came into this condition:
 -They have sinned, so now they are in exile.

-Note that the problem is not resolved:
 -The servant is to bring light and deliverance, but Israel is the servant.
 -Israel is in bondage, so how can she do this?

-> Thus while the theme of deliverance from exile is important, deliverance from the cause of the exile (sin) is much more important.
 -Israel can not fulfill this role of the servant.

-The sin question is introduced at this point in an indirect way.
 -It is the real problem (not exile) that must be faced.

(3/17/82)

Problems:

1. Who is the servant? The nation or an individual?
2. What is the nature of the work of the servant?
 -Only hinted at (judge, light) but not clearly defined.

Is.42:1-7 gives ideas, but is not a sharp clear passage.

3rd reference: Isaiah 43:10.

"'You are My witnesses,' declares the LORD, 'and My servant whom I have chosen ...'"

Context:

- In the early part of Is.43, God says that despite Israel's sin, He will deliver her.
- Example in 43:2 - When they pass through water or fire, God will not let them be overcome.
- In our verse (43:10), Israel is his witness whom he has chosen and in spite of what she has done, she will be the medium through which God will accomplish His mission (42:4,6).
- The latter part of Is.43 contains ideas similar to the latter part of Is.42.
- 43:22-24 = Statement of God's disappointment with His people.
- Same hopelessness as at the end of 42.

-43:25 In spite of this situation, God will not only deliver them from exile, but will also blot out their transgressions and remember them no more.

- How can this be done? (not answered here).
- The sin issue is just touched on here.

4th reference: Isaiah 44:1-2.

"But now listen, O Jacob, My servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: Thus says the Lord ... who will help you ..."

- Seems to be a declaration of the certainty of the fulfillment of the work that God has committed to His servant. Assurance that God will help the servant accomplish his task, so Jacob need not fear.
- v.3-4: Reason: God will pour out His Spirit on Jacob's descendants, bless them, and cause them to spring up.

- Difficult verses to understand.
- Payne, "Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy," p.316: Pouring out = "The Gentile engrafting that follows in the next verse (44:5) suggests that 44:3-4 parallels Joel 2:28-29 in predicting Pentecost."

5th reference: Isaiah 44:21.

- v.22-23 "I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud ..." provide a sharp contrast with the theme of v.15-17 (the futility of idolatry).
- "Don't follow idols, they are unable to do anything. But follow the Lord, His work will be done."
- Deliverance will come not just from exile but from sin.
- The sin of the servant will be taken care of.
- v.21 Use of the prophetic perfect here => certainty.
- v.24f Theme of Cyrus and deliverance from exile is intermixed quickly.
- v.28 Striking example of predictive prophecy.

6th reference: Isaiah 45:4.

- The servant (Israel) theme is related to the Cyrus theme (44:24f).
- 45:1-3 Cyrus will have victory over Babylon.
- v.4 Reason for Cyrus' victories:
 - For the sake of Israel.
 - The servant is the one who benefits.

-Even though Cyrus did not know God, God selected him for this task.

-In v.4 "servant" seems to refer to Israel here.

Isaiah 46-47 refer to Babylon.

7th reference: Isaiah 48:16.

-Not an explicit mention of the term servant.

-Problem of Interpretation:

-Context: v.16 seems to be spoken by the same person who is speaking in v.1 and 12 (1st person pronoun).

-v.1-5: God is speaking, "I have declared ..."

-v.12: "I am the first, I am also the last" = God.

-v.16: "Come near to Me" => "I" is also God.

-v.16b "The Lord God, and His Spirit, has sent me."

-v.16a was spoken by God.

-v.16b But is this spoken by God also?

-Solution: It is spoken by the Servant of the Lord who is Himself God.

-If this is the case, then the deity of the servant (a new idea) is suggested.

-It is not arbitrary to say this:

49:1 "Me" continues to speak.

49:3 "He said to Me, 'You are My servant'."

-> In the overall context, it is legitimate to understand 48:16 as a reference to the servant.

-God is speaking, yet the servant is also God.

[Could Isaiah himself be speaking? It doesn't add to the context, but breaks it.]

8th reference (2nd major passage): Isaiah 49:1-9.

General comments:

-It is quite clear that the Servant is speaking in v.1f:

v.3 "He said to Me, 'You are My servant, Israel'."

-Identity of the servant is made clear in v.3: Israel.

-However, an interesting and significant thing occurs:

v.5 The servant is differentiated from Israel.

-The servant is to bring Jacob back to God and "though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord ..."

v.6 The two are clearly differentiated: The servant will raise up Jacob and restore Israel.

-Note the shift between v.2 and 6:

-How can the servant both be called "Israel" and differentiated from Israel?

-In previous references to the servant, Israel has been called to do the work of the servant (be a light to the Gentiles, and release prisoners from bondage), but Israel is unable to do this because she is weak and sinful so has been sent into bondage.

-Yet God's work will be accomplished - by Israel, His servant.

-Suggestion: the one who will do this work is of Israel and represents Israel, but yet he is one who can be distinguished from Israel.

-This representative will restore and gather Israel, and will be a light to the Gentiles (v.8).

Detailed comments on 49:1-9:

-v.1: Reference to the womb of the mother is connected with the servant.

-Normally the Bible speaks of the seed of the father.

-It is rare to have a reference to the mother.

-But remember the Messianic thread regarding the woman:

Genesis 3:15 "seed of the woman."

Isaiah 7:14 "virgin."

Isaiah 49:1 "from the womb, from the body of My mother."

-v.2: Two ideas are in synonymous parallelism "a b a b".

a = Effectiveness of the servant (sword and shaft).

b = Protection of the servant (concealed in shadow, hidden in quiver).

-Although the forces of the world will attempt to destroy the servant, they will not succeed.

-Israel's and Christ's work will not fail.

-v.3: Identifies the servant with Israel.

-v.4: Various interpretations of "I have toiled in vain."

a. Refers to Israel expressing her inability to fulfill the task assigned to her.

-Vannoy doesn't think this fits.

-The reason for her inability is not that Israel toiled in vain, but is her sin.

b. Refers to the servant himself (the individual who is of and represents Israel, yet is distinct from it).

-Suggests that he sees that his own work would appear to many to be a failure (crucifixion and crying out on the cross).

-Yet he has confidence that his work rested with God and the justice due him would prevail.

=> No reason for discouragement.

- v.5-6: As noted above, the Servant is differentiated from the nation Israel.
 -Servant is out of and from Israel, yet is differentiated from and will help Israel.
- v.5: Servant is to bring Jacob again to the Lord.
- v.6: While the work of the Servant for the tribe of Jacob is important ("It is too light a thing"), it is more important, by comparison, to do a greater task ("I will also make you a light to the nations").
 -Salvation comes to the ends of the earth thru Servant.
- v.7: Humiliation of the Servant is contrasted with his later exaltation: "To the One despised, to the One abhorred by the nation" -> "Kings shall see and arise, princes shall also bow down."
 -Some say this verse refers to Israel, not the Servant. cf. v.3 "My Servant, Israel."
 -But this does not do justice to v.7-9 where the tasks described are beyond the nation's ability to accomplish.
 -Are a repetition of the works of the Servant in Ch.42.
 -Israel cannot do them as she is in exile due to sin.
 -The humiliation of the Servant is a new idea.
 -It will be developed later.
- v.8-9: Servant's work to be accomplished.
- v.10: Description of the blessings which come to those who follow the Servant.
 -Leading his people, protecting them (like Is.4 blessing)
- v.11: Continues v.10 description.
- v.12: Remarkable extent of the work of the Servant is indicated by people coming from the north, west, and land of Sinim => expansion of the gospel.
 -Sinim = East, or China, or place near present day town of Aswan in Egypt.
- v.13: Exhortation to heavens and earth to rejoice because of this blessing.
- 49:1-9 is a clear Servant passage, but we can add v.10-13 as a description of people who come and are blessed by the work of the Servant.
- 9th reference (3rd major passage): Isaiah 50:4-11
 -Term "Servant of the Lord" does not occur in this passage.
 -Yet most accept it as a Servant passage.
 -v.10 makes an indirect reference to the Servant.
 -Content: Can not be Isaiah or Israel, so must be Servant speaking.

General comments:

- In the various places before where it was stated that he will be a light to the Gentiles, set prisoners free, etc., we have not been told HOW he will do these things.
- Now here we have the beginning of the explanation:
 - The means described are not what one would expect.
- In the passage as a whole, we have a picture of the suffering Servant will go through and then something of the results he will accomplish.
- Suffering has not been emphasized previously; new idea.
- Did have a hint of it in 49:7, "despised, abhorred".
- Is this a reference to national sufferings in exile?
Or is this just the individual?
- Answer in v.5: "I was not rebellious" - Can't be Israel.
- v.6: Voluntary giving oneself over to abuse & suffering.
- v.5-6 => definitely not the nation Israel.
- Israel was sent into exile because of her rebellion and sin (Is.42:19,24).
- Is.48:8 Israel is "a transgressor from the womb."
- > Speaker is taking the place of Israel, taking the punishment they deserve.

Specific comments:

- v.4: "tongue of the learned" -> Teaching work of Servant.
Seen in the ministry of Jesus:
John 7:46 "Never did a man speak the way this man speaks."
Matt.11:28: "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."
- 4b: Close relationship between Father and Son: "wakens."
cf. John 5:30 "I do the will of Him who sent me."
- v.5: "I was not disobedient nor did I turn back."
-No one other than Jesus could say this.
- Every other person has failed God, but the Servant was absolutely true.
- v.6: Voluntary suffering which was different from the involuntary suffering of Israel.
- v.7: Servant declares that with the help of God he has set his face like a flint to do the work God gave him.
-Luke 9:53 "He was journeying with His face toward Jerusalem."

v.8-9: Who is speaking?

- Perhaps the Servant is continuing to speak, declaring his confidence.
- Better: Speaker switches to one of those who believes in the work the Servant will accomplish.
- In v.10-11 speaker clearly switches to a believer.

=> Person joyfully proclaims that he is safe to face the adversary because of God's protection. Only those true to the Lord will remain forever. "He is near."

v.10-11: Declaration addressed to 2 classes of people.

1. Those who fear the Lord.
 - Urged to trust the Lord even though they can not see the way ahead. God will bring him through.
2. Those who kindled opposition against Him.
 - Since they try to follow their own way, they will perish in it.

-These 2 possibilities are contrasted: Either accept God's work or oppose it and receive death and sorrow.

10th reference (4th major passage): Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

- Climactic passage on the Servant's work.
- The last time the Servant is specifically mentioned in the book.
- Have later references to "servants", not in singular.
- Is a unit, despite unfortunate chapter division.
- Previously we have seen hints that the Servant is distinct from Israel, especially clear in Ch.49.
- Work was carried out by someone distinct from Israel.
- Up to this point, there has been great emphasis on the return from exile and comfort because Cyrus will come.
- Surprising that here there is no reference to exile.
- No stress on the omnipotence of God or on God's ability to predict the future.
- Servant theme alone stands out.
- Everything previous to this has been leading up to the climax, but then the climax itself does not refer to some of these elements.
- Passage gives God's answer to the greatest problem: Sin.
 - Sin caused the exile.
 - Sin caused all the ills of humanity.

52:7-12: Section preceding the climax: Chorus of joy.

v.13 begins by stating the reason for joy = Success of the Servant in carrying out his work.

-KJV: "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high."

-"deal prudently" = $\text{ל}^{\text{א}}\text{ד}^{\text{א}}\text{ש}^{\text{א}}\text{ל}$ = "shall prosper, he will be wise in doing things in a way that will bring results."

-3 statements of exaltation in the rest of the verse.

-"extolled" = "lifted up" = $\text{ר}^{\text{א}}\text{ש}^{\text{א}}\text{ל}$

-Delitzsch, on the basis of a literal translation says:
exalted = resurrection,
lifted up = ascension,
be very high = seated at the right hand of God.

-Better: An emphasis via parallelism on success.

v.14 Contrast: Jump from exaltation to humiliation.

-Have seen hint of humiliation in 49:7.

-Clearer picture of it in 50:6.

-Now here it is much clearer.

-KJV is not a good translation: "As many were astounded at you; His visage was so marred more than any man ..."

$\text{כ}^{\text{א}}$ = "so" - occurs at the beginning of the 2nd phrase.

Better:

"Just as many were astonished at you, My people (Israel), so his appearance was marred more than any man." NASB

-Are Comparing the humiliation of the Servant with the humiliation of Israel (cf. Prophecies concerning people being startled that the land was so desolate, as in Deut.29:22-28).

-Yet there is an important difference:

-Israel's humiliation resulted from her own sin and is proof of her inability to carry out the work assigned.

-But Servant's humiliation was not due to his own sin.

-v.15a: Why must the Servant undergo humiliation?

-Another $\text{ר}^{\text{א}}$ - "So he shall sprinkle many nations."

Note the structure:

Just as Israel, So Servant, So result.
 $\text{כ}^{\text{א}}$ $\text{כ}^{\text{א}}$

$\text{ר}^{\text{א}}\text{ר}^{\text{א}}\text{ר}^{\text{א}}$ = "to sprinkle"

-Used repeatedly in Leviticus for ceremonial cleansing of objects in the temple.

-Water or blood was sprinkled.

-See the purpose of humiliation: To cleanse many nations, like the temple objects.

v.15 hits the central idea: The Servant will be humiliated with the result of purifying the nations.

-RSV and others read: "startle many nations."

-Footnote: "Meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain."

-The meaning is lost in this translation.

- נזף occurs 24 times, always means "sprinkle."

-Exception in LXX which translates v.15 as:
"nations shall wonder at him."

-Critical commentaries give various reasons for "startle":

1. Just as one causes water or blood to jump when he sprinkles it, so he shall cause nations to jump.

2. Arabic root => startle.

3. Context: "startle" is a better parallel of v.14-15a "astounded" than is "sprinkle."

-Also startle fits better in the rest of v.15.

-This is not a strong argument when you consider the structure noted above: Just as ___ so ___ so ___.

-Here "sprinkle" makes much more sense.

-Kittel follows none of the above.

-Gives footnote for v.15 with LXX reading $\theta\alpha\upsilon\mu\alpha\zeta\omega$ and adds "read perhaps the root נזף "to gaze at" or נזף "to bow down"

or נזף "to be agitated, shake or quiver."

-All of these are purely hypothetical and arbitrary.

Peter's allusion to this verse should clarify it:

-1 Peter 1:2 "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."

v.15b: Result: Prominent people will be effected in an unexpected way. This Servant will provide atonement.

Isaiah 53: Climax of the work of the Suffering Servant.

D.4.e. Isaiah 54:1-56:8 Results of the work of the suffering Servant.

-This section can not be understood apart from Is.53 and the substitutionary atoning sacrifice of the servant in order to bear our iniquities.

- 1). Is.54:1-17: Assures God's people of future extension and blessing as a result of the work of the Servant.
 - (a). Is.54:1-3 The servants of the Lord are to rejoice because great increase is to come to them.
 - (b). Is.54:4-10 The blessing which God has in store for Israel in the future.
 - (c). Is.54:11-17 The stability of God's people.
- 2). Is.55:1-56:2: Gives an invitation to individuals to avail themselves of the free offer of salvation.
- 3). Is.56:3-8: Emphasizes that the gospel invitation is not limited to any race or nation but is open to all.

Isaiah is addressing the people of God who form the godly remnant within the nation (just a small part of Israel).

-Not primarily concerned with the nation but with God's true people.

-Broader than racial or national background because of the work of the Servant who is a light to the Gentiles.

Term "Servant of the Lord" does not occur after Is.53. But "servants of the Lord" does => followers of God's true Servant, those who enjoy the fruit of the accomplishments of the Servant.

- 1). Is.54:1-17: Assures God's people of future extension and blessing as a result of the work of the Servant.

-v.17b: "'This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their vindication is from Me,' declares the Lord."

-Last sentence of section helps us understand the chapter.

=> Promises in this chapter belong to those who partake in the work of the Servant and follow him.

-They have no righteousness of their own, but have God's righteousness via the Servant.

-Even these "servants" are themselves sheep gone astray.

(a). Is.54:1-3 The servants of the Lord are to rejoice because great increase is to come to them.

v.1: Who is the barren woman?

-Suggestions:

1. Israel in exile.

-Married wife is Israel before the exile.

-Is called 'barren' because of her inability to carry out the world-wide mission assigned to her.

2. Gentile nations. Vannoy prefers this.

-Gal.4:26-27 quotes this as referring to the church.

-God did not deal with the nations previously, but their offspring will be greater than Israel's (married wife).

v.2-3: Extension of the people as distant nations and cities become centers of the people of God.

=> Spread of gospel through the work of the servants.

-William Carey used this as his theme in a sermon encouraging people to take the gospel to India.

(b). Is.54:4-10 The blessing which God has in store for Israel in the future.

Isaiah now addresses the married woman (Israel) who was rejected for a time because of sin, but ultimately will be restored.

-Her temporary reproach will be forgotten because of the glory of the Servant.

-v.7: Time of rejection seem like a small moment.

-v.10: A strong statement of the permanence of God's mercy to Israel.

(c). Is.54:11-17 The stability of God's people.

v.2 used the figure of a tent = extension of God's people.

v.11f: Stability is portrayed by the figure of a temple:

-Strong, beautiful, built from precious stones.

=> The building together in firmness and beauty of the people of God.

-Paul uses the same figure in Eph.2:19f.

v.13: Privilege of succeeding generations of God's children.

-God will not only teach but also implant peace (well-being) in their hearts.

- v.14-17: Protection from destruction.
 -Babylonian exile was sent as a judgment on Israel for her sin and was part of God's plan.
- v.15: Now those attacks which are not instigated by God, but by Satan, will not succeed.
 -God will deliver and protect His people.
- v.16-17: All the forces of iniquity can do nothing without God's permission.

Prophetic material is difficult to interpret. Easy to determine principles, but hard to apply them.
 If something is figurative, what is it figurative of?
 Impossible to be dogmatic.

Example: J.B. Payne's view of Is.54:

- v.1-8 = World-wide preaching of the gospel.
 v.9-13 = New Jerusalem
 -Literal structure of and conditions in city.
 (much different from Vannoy's view)
 v.14 = Millennium - peace, safety, security.
 v.15-17 = End of the millennium after Satan's release from abyss.
 -Though Satan will rise, he will fail.

But Vannoy thinks the situation is very similar to Is.4 (protection of God's people).

2). Is.55:1-56:2: Gives an invitation to individuals to avail themselves of the free offer of salvation.

- Rests on the results of the Servant's work in Is.53.
 -Is a gracious invitation to all people.

v.1-3a: The invitation in general terms.

-Stress: While people strive for what won't satisfy, God is giving a free offer of true happiness - contrast.

-Don't learn much about the exact nature of the invitation because figures are used.

-Is not physical bread, milk, etc.

-But is something which can properly be compared with those things yet be spiritual.

-> Supply necessary needs.

cf. John 4:14 "Everyone who drinks the water I give will never thirst."

v.3b-5: "I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
according to the faithful mercies of David."

-Have basis of invitation and reason it is given:

-God offers an everlasting covenant (which may be described as "sure mercies of David") and it is made with those who respond to the invitation.

-What are the "sure mercies of David" offered here?

-The outstanding feature of the covenant with David is the promise concerning his son.

-A continuing line to sit on his throne with the ultimate focus on the Messiah.

v.4: "Behold I have given him as a witness to the peoples."

-Pronoun 'him' refers to the Messiah who is the center focus of the promise, not to David.

v.5: "Behold, you will call a nation you do not know, and a nation which knows you not will run to you ..."

-Pronoun 'you' addresses the Messiah directly.

-Does not refer to the victory of Christ at the beginning of the millennium, but to the ongoing spread of the gospel for the salvation of the nations.

Isaiah 55:1-56:2

55:5 in KJV has plural "nations" where the Hebrew is singular. Does not refer to Christ's victory at the beginning of the millennium, but to the spread of the gospel among the Gentiles.

v.6-7 The gospel invitation is repeated with an emphasis on the feature of pardon.

-In v.1-2, the listeners were not addressed as wicked people.

-Here the necessity of pardon is stressed, which is a vital element in the salvation offer.

v.8-9 Another new idea: "My thoughts are not your thoughts."

-Looking back in the context:

-It is not the attitude of fallen men to forgive, but instead to get even. He would never think of bearing the penalty himself.

-God is different than men.

-Looking forward in the context:

-This idea relates to the assurances found in v.10-11.

-At Christ's first coming, the Jews expected Him to set up an earthly kingdom by force, but instead He suffered and died, and His disciples proclaim His message to the world.

-This method of preaching the gospel looks foolish to the world, but this is God's chosen way.

v.10-11 God's word is powerful and effectual, and He will prosper the preaching of His word.

Thus v.8-9 looks both forward and backward.

-Have the ways of God in context with the power of God.

v.12-13 is a figurative statement of the results of God's mercy in the lives of his people.

-All of nature takes on a new significance with those who are God's children.

-In the hearts of the redeemed thorns and nettles no longer spring up.

-These verses describe the new character of God's people.

-The gospel produces observably changed lives.

From any view point v.12 is figurative; but is v.13 also figurative?

-It is worded in a way which could be literal.

-It could picture a literal change in the processes of growth, which could be millennial.

-But a millennial idea does not fit the context here.

-Can not be dogmatic.

Note that we should avoid two extremes:

1. Neglect the teaching of the millennium altogether (but is difficult to do in Isaiah 2, 11; Micah 4).
2. Find the millennium referred to everywhere, but find no literal or figurative references to the church or church age anywhere.

-We need to look at each passage on its own merit, and not rule out the millennium or the church age a priori.

This passage has as its focus the spread of the gospel, and v.12-13 are describing the accomplishments resulting from God's free invitation.

56:1-2 continues with a closely related idea:

-God's grace results in good works in the lives of His people.

-This is a clear denial of antinomianism.

-Men cannot continue willingly in sin after becoming followers of Christ (Rom.10:6).

v.2 gives the idea that great blessing will come to those who are truly God's people and who follow His commandments.

-Calvin feels that "Sabbath" is a synecdoche for "all that God has prescribed."

-Note that these verses are not at the beginning of God's invitation, showing that man's salvation is not dependent on good works, but they are a fruit of it.

[Why consider "Sabbath" to be a synecdoche?

1. The context includes many things beside the Sabbath, so this law is probably illustrative.
2. There is the problem of how OT regulations regarding the Sabbath are to be applied in the NT, i.e. should observances of the details be continued?]

56:3-8 A third section descriptive of the results of the Servant's work.

v.3 Stresses the universality of the gospel invitation.

-The sons of foreigners and eunuchs are called.

-Alexander: "The essential meaning is that all external disabilities shall be abolished, whether personal or national."

-In Deut. 23:1, eunuchs were excluded from worshipping in the temple. Ammonites and Moabites were excluded also.

-There will no longer be any personal disqualifications.

-Philip the evangelist undoubtedly pointed this passage out to the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8.

v.4-5 "within My walls" (Alexander) "does not refer to Jerusalem or the temple, but to the walls of God's house in a much more ideal sense."

-Not just a free access to a physical sanctuary is in view, but a personal relationship.

v.6-8 Vannoy: The form of expressions here are derived from the ceremonies of the Old economy, are describing true worship in a way which is familiar to Isaiah's hearers.

-Note especially v.7, ("sacrifices and offerings") which describe true worship in OT terminology.

-The nations will worship in spirit and in truth but not necessarily with sacrifices (John 4:23,24).

-This could be argued to be millennial, but it is probably better to not push it as being literal.

-v.7 is like Malachi 1:11 "incense and pure offering in every place," which also seems to be OT descriptions of true worship, representing spiritual sacrifice.

-Liberals say that Mal.1:11 => universalism in that God finds acceptable all forms of religious beliefs by all peoples, as long as they are sincere.

-But Mal.1:11 was not fulfilled by Jewish proselytes or by the dispersed Jews, since they did not sacrifice anywhere but in Jerusalem.

-Thus this seems to be a figure for Gentile Christian worship (again John 4:23,24).

VII. DANIEL.

A. Introductory Remarks.

1. Problems with dating and authorship (p.264-272 Freeman).
2. Problems of interpretation (cf. Freeman for a summary).
3. General remarks on content in relation to its purpose.

-Find some implications here in relationship to date, authorship, and interpretation.

-The book as a whole has two (2) main sections:

1. Chapters 1-6 "Historical section"

-In the sense that this is narrative material.
 -Ch.2 is an exception; it is narrative, but the content is largely prophetic.

2. Chapters 7-12 "Prophetical section"

- Is largely prophetic discourse, background narratives are largely absent.

In what sense are Ch.1-6 historical?

- Not in the normal sense of the word.
- These events did happen, but the style and content of the narrative is not "history."
- It is not a connected history of:
 - Israel (only a few Israelites involved), or
 - Babylon, or
 - Daniel.
- It begins in the middle of events during Nebuchadnezzar's reign (ch.4), and shifts to Belshazzar (ch.5) with no transition.
- Does not give details like how Neb. died, or how Bel. became king => it is not a "classical" connected historical narrative.

(4/7/82)

Survey of the "Historical Section":

Dan.1: God blesses Daniel and his friends for faithfulness.

- Daniel did not want to go against the biblical teaching and eat the "unclean" food of the king. God granted him favor and he received permission not to eat that food.

Dan.2: God is supreme over Nebuchadnezzar and all such rulers.

- Even though Neb. is a great king, God is still more powerful.
- v.47: Neb. was impressed that Daniel could tell Neb. his dream as well as interpret it. This resulted in Neb's confession: "Your God is a God of gods ..."

Dan.3: God is with His people even in times of persecution.

- Neb. commands all to worship his image = idolatry.
- 3 men refuse and are to be thrown in the furnace.
- v.17-18: "God is able to deliver us, ... but even if He doesn't we won't worship you."
- Idea: Not that God will protect you no matter what you do, but that no matter what happens you should follow God because He is greater than men.
- v.28-29: Results in another confession by Neb.

Dan.4: God's supremacy over earthly rulers.

- Neb. declares his greatness and exalts himself with great pride.
- God strikes him with madness, he lives among the beasts until he confesses God's supremacy and is restored.
- v.28-37: Neb. will be humiliated until he recognizes that God rules the world and gives power to whom He will.

Dan.5: God's supremacy over earthly rulers.

- Same idea, different setting.
- Belshazzar is ruler, brings out temple vessels for a party, raises himself up against God who then smites him.
- v.18ff.: Bel. knew what had happened to Neb., but Bel. did not humble himself or glorify God.
- Judgment is given, hand writing on the wall.

Dan.6: God's supremacy over earthly rulers and nature.

- Same idea, different setting.
- Darius made a law that people were to worship only him.
- It was a scheme by others to get rid of Daniel who kept worshipping God anyway.
- God controls nature by keeping the lions' mouths shut and delivering Daniel from the lions' den.
- v.25ff.: Darius recognizes God's power.

Theme of the "Historical Section:" God is supreme.

- This section is not technical history writing, but it is more of a sermon with the theme of God's supremacy.
- God is supreme even though Jerusalem and the temple are destroyed, Israel is in exile, and wicked men seem triumphant.
- Point: God can deliver His people from any difficulty or evil they might face.
- Daniel 1-6 is a series of illustrations of this taken from the lives of Daniel, his friends, and kings.

This theme is of special importance for God's people at particular times in history, especially during times of persecution for their loyalty to God.

Question: Has there been a time when this specific purpose has been of great value to God's people?

- During the exile in Babylon (Daniel's own time) there was not any great persecution of the Israelites.
- Daniel and his friends were accepted in the court.
- The Jews settled down, bought homes and lived a normal life in Babylon.

- In the Persian period of the exile when Cyrus conquered Babylon, there was little persecution.
- Cyrus immediately became the friend of those conquered.
- We learn from inscriptions that he let exiled people return home with their gods.
- We learn from the OT that the Jews were permitted to return home with the temple vessels.

- An exception occurs in the Book of Esther which seems to be an isolated case of attempted persecution.

- Alexander the Great destroyed the Persian empire as he established his empire (336-323 BC).
- But Alex died suddenly and his empire was broken up.
- Palestine was ruled by the Ptolemies for ~100 years.
- No persecutions of the Jews.
- LXX translation was made.

- Then in the war between Seleucids and Ptolemies for the control of Palestine, the Seleucids won.
- Yet there was little persecution until Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 BC).
- He instigated a very severe persecution of the Jews.
- He wanted to wipe out Jewish religion and integrate the Jews into the Hellenistic culture.
- This history is described in 1 and 2 Maccabees.

- Antiochus Epiphanes was looked upon as one of the greatest persecutors of the Jews.
- Much discussion on the book of Daniel by Jewish commentators centers on predictions concerning Antiochus.

Thus the apparent purpose of the Book of Daniel was to prepare the people for the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

- This was one of the greatest persecutions endured by the nation.
- The meaning of Daniel is not exhausted in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, but it also applies to believers today living in China, Russia, etc.

But this was the first great period of persecution since the writing of the book.

- So it is easy to see why the higher critics, seeing the purpose for which Daniel was written, conclude that the book was written during the time of the Maccabees (170-165 BC) just before the death of Antiochus Epiphanes.

We would not deny the appropriateness of the book for Antiochus Epiphanes's time, but this does not imply that the book must have been written at that time.

Norman Porteous' "Daniel" Commentary, 1965, p.16: "The stories in chapters 1-6 are intended to illustrate the qualities of loyalty and endurance which the 2nd century situation called for." => The book was written in that time.

Critics go to an extreme, saying that Daniel relates almost exclusively to the Maccabean Period.

Another extreme: The book deals almost entirely with the eschatological teaching of the 2nd advent and has almost nothing to do with the Maccabean Period.

Best: Much of Daniel was written with the Maccabean Period in view; a number of its predictions refer specifically to the Maccabean Period.

VII.B. Consideration of some of the predictions of Daniel.

1. Chapter 8.

- Is easier to interpret than other chapters.
- Gives a good introduction to the issues in ch.7-12.

v.2: "I looked in the vision, and it came about while I was looking, that I was in the citadel of Susa, which is in the province of Elam"

- Susa (Shushan in KJV) was the place where Daniel received the revelation (according to Vannoy).
- Elam was a province within Belshazzar's kingdom.
- Susa was an insignificant city in Daniel's time.
 - Later became the capital of the Medo-Persian Empire.
 - Was inhabited until the Middle Ages.

v.1-14: The Vision of the Ram and Male Goat.

-Ram with 2 horns, male goat with a horn which breaks off and 4 other horns come up, then 1 horn comes out of one of the four and it stops the sacrifices in the temple.

- The animals are symbols, but of what?
- Interpretation of the vision is given in vv.20f.

v.17: Before the interpretation is given, Gabriel comes to Daniel and says: "The vision pertains to the time of the end."

v.19: "I am going to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation, for it pertains to the appointed time of the end."

- How do we understand these references to time?
 - All eschatological?
 - Some other understanding?

-Young, "Commentary on Daniel":

-These time references refer to the "end of the OT period before the coming of the Messiah."

-"Indignation = latter part of the exile and God's judgment on Israel."

v.20-27: The Interpretation of the Vision.

Ram with 2 horns (v.3) = Kings of Media and Persia (v.20).

-2 horns, one higher than the other, the higher one comes last = Media and Persia, Media is first but Persia is more important.

-Medes became independent of Assyria after 631 BC.

-Persians began as an insignificant section of the Median empire, but eventually rose to control it when Cyrus brought Media under his control, captured the capital of Media, and added to his title: King of the Medes and the Persians.

-Cyrus included many Median government officials in his Persian government after he conquered the Medes.

-v.4 shows the rapid conquest of Cyrus and Darius.

The Goat (v.5) = The Kingdom of Greece (v.21).

The Great Horn (v.5) = The First King of Greece (v.21).

-Alexander the Great came from the west, attacked the Persian empire, destroyed it and set up his own empire.

-1 Maccabees 1:1 describes this.

-Dan.8:5: "The male goat was coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground" => swiftness of Alexander's conquest.

334 Granicus River - Alex's first victory in Asia Minor over the Persian forces.

333 Issus - Alex defeated the main Persian army. This enabled him to go into Palestine and Egypt.

331 Arbela - He destroyed the last of the Persian army, completely destroyed the Persian empire, went east into India, established empire.

4 Notable Horns (v.8) = 4 Kingdoms out of the Empire (v.22).

-At the height of Alexander's power, he died.

-Possible successors:

-An illegitimate child, 2-3 years old.

-Persian wife was pregnant with a child who might one day reign.

-His generals.

-His empire was divided into 4 sections under 4 generals.

Cassander - Macedonia and Greece
 Lysimachus - Thrace and Asia Minor
 Seleucid - Syria and East
 Ptolemy - Egypt and Palestine

A Little Horn which grew exceedingly great (v.9-12) =
 A King of Fierce Countenance (v.23).

-Who is referred to?

-Antichrist?

-Some one who comes at the end of the age?

-Is there any reason to understand it is not Antichrist?

-> v.9 says "out of one of them" => from Alex's empire.

-Context is of Greek empire and its division. Is after
 the division, yet he arises while the 4 still exist.

-Israelites will suffer.

-Antiochus Epiphanes arose in the Seleucid empire.

-Was a strong ruler; almost conquered Ptolemaic empire.

-Considered himself almost a god, a manifestation of Zeus,
 wanted to be worshiped.

-After a humiliating defeat in Egypt by the Romans who
 did not want him to build a larger empire, he vented his
 wrath on Jerusalem.

-Broke down the walls, killed many people, burned Bible,
 banned the Jewish faith and circumcision, set up idols
 in the temple and sacrificed swine on the altar
 defiling the altar, and sprinkled the fat of the
 sacrifice around to defile the whole temple.

-v.11 has a brief allusion to this.

-Is more fully described in Dan. 11:30 - pollute the
 sanctuary, the abomination of desolation.

-v.25: "He will be broken without hands."

-Antiochus Epiphanes died by disease while returning
 from a trip eastward.

-v.12: "And on account of transgression the host will be
 given over (to the horn along) with the regular
 sacrifice; and it will fling truth to the ground
 and perform (its will) and prosper." NASB

-Is difficult to translate and understand.

-Walvoord, "Commentary on Daniel," p.188 says v.12 is a
 recapitulation of Antiochus Epiphanes' activities.

- "A host will be given" = The Jewish people.

- "with" (KJV "against", either possible).

=> The daily sacrifices were also in his power so he was permitted to substitute his own sacrifices.

- The people and their sacrifice were given over to the power of Antiochus E. in order for him to blaspheme.
- Antiochus cast down the law of Moses and practiced his own way which appeared to prosper.

-v.14: "For 2300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be vindicated."

- Do "evenings and mornings" refer to days or to the evening and morning sacrifices regularly offered in the temple?
- If days = 6 years, 110 days.
- If sacrifices = 1150 days = 3 years, 55 days.

-Walvoord notes that "innumerable explanations have been made to make it fit the time of Antiochus Epiphanes who died 164 BC."

- "If 2300 days, then have starting date of 171 BC. The main event of that year was that Onius III (the legitimate high priest) was murdered and an illegitimate line of priests came to power. The best interpretation is 171 to 164 BC."

-Others try to fit a 3+ year interpretation into Antiochus' activities, but this is hard.

(4/14/82)

Daniel 8 is a picture of the rise and fall of Antiochus Epiphanes and a general survey of events prior to him.

- If critics are right, the writer of Daniel wrote in Antiochus's time to show people that they could trust God despite the difficult period they were in which would soon end.
- The stories of 1-6 are the writer's creation, not historical events. They contain many errors.
- => Human book, not trustworthy with respect to past history or future prediction.

-If Daniel wrote it, then it is divinely inspired, and predicts in advance the different empires through the time of Antiochus.

- Purpose: To give comfort to God's people when they encounter persecution (note this is the same as above).
- However, would be genuine rather than false prediction.

Within the conservative orthodox approach, who is the person described in chapter 8?

- Antiochus or Antichrist or both?

-Many fundamental scholars have argued that since the critics see it as Antiochus, therefore we must not agree with them which means it must refer to the Antichrist and is all future.

-Walvoord, "Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation [?]," p.192f notes 4 major views:

1. Historical - All of Daniel 8 has been fulfilled.

-E.J. Young supports this view: "A comparison of the horn of 8 and the little horn of 7 shows they represent different things in the two chapters. Chapter 8 is fulfilled in history."

-Issue: Does the horn of ch.7 (Antichrist) represent the same thing as ch.8 (Antiochus Epiphanes)?

-Walvoord answers: "But this position provides no satisfactory explanation of the phrase in 8:17,19 "at the time of the end."

-Young takes it as the end of the OT period; the end of God's indignation before the Messiah comes.

2. All future => Antichrist.

-The horn of ch.8 is the same as ch.7; both are eschatological.

-G.H. Pember supports this view.

-In ch.7, the horn is from the Roman empire.

-In ch.8, the horn is from the Greek empire which divided into four parts, but he notes that the Greek empires later became part of the Roman empire.

=> Antichrist comes from the Roman kingdom.

3. Dual fulfillment.

-Daniel 8 is intentionally referring at the same time to both Antiochus Epiphanes and the Antichrist who comes at the end of the age.

-See the "Old Scofield Reference Bible" note which says "the prophecy was fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes. v.24-25 go beyond Antiochus Epiphanes and refer to the little horn of ch.7. Both Antiochus and the beast, but the beast preeminently, are in view in v.25."

-Note on v.10-14: "Historically fulfilled in and by Antiochus Epiphanes, but the actions of both horns are blended."

-"New Scofield Reference Bible" has changed most of the material in the note on 8:17: "Two 'ends' seem to be in view here: (1) historically, the end of the third empire (Grecian) of Alexander, out of one of the divisions of

which (Syria) the 'little horn' of v.9 (Antiochus Epiphanes) arose; and (2) prophetically, the end of 'the times of the Gentiles', Daniel's final time of the end."

4. Prophecy is historically fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes, but intentionally typical of similar events and personages at the end of the age.

-Like the third view but without dual fulfillment idea.
-Is viewed as a foreshadowing.

-Walvoord: "It is possible to explain all of the statements regarding the ruler as having been adequately fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes. The main difficulties with a complete fulfillment view are found in the terms "prince of princes" and "time of the end" (time designations)."

-Walvoord's conclusion: "This difficult passage goes beyond Antiochus to foreshadow a future ruler. It may be a double fulfillment, or a type revealing additional facts describing the end of the age."

2. The question of basic approach to the book of Daniel.

-There are many approaches to the book of Daniel but most can be categorized in 3 ways:

1) Critical Approach.

-Daniel was written at the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. cf. Norman Porteous, "Commentary on Daniel," p.13:

"Linguistic evidence, an historically vague knowledge of Babylon, and an increasingly accurate knowledge of the Greek period up to the time of Antiochus (except for the closing events of his reign), suggest that it was written shortly before 164 BC."

"The only element of genuine prophecy relates to the expected death of Antiochus and the establishment of God's kingdom. These were mistaken as they did not happen. Everything else which was 'revealed to Daniel' is historically viewed in retrospect."

"(p.20) Thus the whole book belongs to the period from 171-164 (or 169-164) BC. The book must have been completed before the temple was cleansed and Antiochus died. It cannot be written in the exilic age. This is proven by the author's:

- Vague references to the Babylonian and Persian periods,
- Actual inaccuracies in the Hebrew and Aramaic,
- Use of Greek loan words, and the book's
- Position in the Hebrew canon, and
- Developed angelotry."

- The main argument is linguistic: Greek loan words in the text of Daniel imply that it was written subsequent to Alexander's conquest and the resultant Hellenization.
- Assumption: Daniel could not have known them.

J.B. Payne, "New Perspectives on the OT," article on p.170f by Yamauchi, "Greek Words in Daniel."

- Were numerous contacts between the Greeks, Babylonians, and Palestine long before Alexander. Artisans and musicians were often exchanged.

Yamauchi, in "Evangelical Quarterly," Jan-Mar. 1981, "Daniel and Contacts between the Aegean and Near East before Alexander."

- "The presence of Greek words in an OT book does not prove a late date. Yet current commentaries continue to ignore the evidence."

Summary of the critical position:

- The book relates to past history; it is not prophecy.
- Antiochus Epiphanes is the primary subject of the book.
- The writer expected divine intervention to end the terror of Antiochus, but was disappointed.
- Critics point out that the writer was mistaken since God did not set up his kingdom.

2) Orthodox View: Stressing the 1st advent of Christ.

- An approximate label would be "amillennial," but not exclusively.
- E.B. Pusey, "Lectures on Daniel the Prophet," (1880's).
 - Gave great attention to the critical arguments and countered them well for his day.
 - Find the focus of the book on the birth of Christ.
 - Argues that God's kingdom will be established in Roman times (during the 1st advent).
- Example: In chapter 2, the stone which breaks the image and grows refers to the spread of the gospel and the establishment of the kingdom.
- E.J. Young, "Prophecy of Daniel," (1953).
 - Gives historical background, treats critical arguments.
 - In chapter 2, the stone is Christ, fulfilled in Roman times.
 - In preface, notes that he is "opposing 1) the critical position, 2) a fulfillment in the 7-year period after the 2nd advent (rapture)."
 - (p.75) "Dispensationalism holds that the 4th monarchy is not only the historical Roman empire but also a revived Roman empire, which will be destroyed at Christ's 2nd advent when God's kingdom is established."

3) Orthodox View: Stress on Antiochus and his persecutions, and on the divine intervention in eschatological affairs at the 2nd advent and establishing of God's kingdom (destruction of Antichrist, etc.).

- This is not a direct antithesis to either views 1) or 2).
- There are many writings with slightly differing details within this view.
- Some try to minimize the role of Antiochus (but not very satisfactorily).
- Young objects to the idea of time gaps. This is the critical difference between views 2) and 3).
- Can we jump in time from one period to another without the explicit mention of a gap?
- Can Young consistently maintain his own view without utilizing time gaps himself?

[Two week break for the great Daniel 2 and 9 debates-- see separate sheets].

Daniel 2 - Critical approach.

-Finds center of focus of the book of Daniel in Antiochus.
 -So ch.2 shows the succession of kingdoms up to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes like chaps. 8 and 11.

-The "stone" comes in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes.
 -"Stone" = Jewish uprising that will gain deliverance from Antiochus Epiphanes.

-"Filled the whole world" = The Jews will set up a kingdom that will be world-wide.

-But the writer was mistaken of course since the Maccabean government did not do this.

-Norman Porteous, "Commentary on Daniel", p.46:

-1st kingdom = Neo-Babylonian empire.

-4th kingdom = Greeks, according to the great majority of modern scholars.

-"This is difficult to prove by itself, but when taken with chaps. 7 and 8 it is enough to convince someone who doesn't already hold another view, despite the internal evidence."

-When looking back, we see the stone as the church.

-Evidence points "unmistakably" to Antiochus Epiphanes.

-If 4th kingdom = Greece,

then 3rd kingdom = Persian, then no choice but that

2nd kingdom = Apocryphal Median kingdom, the existence of which there is no historical evidence.

1st kingdom = Neo-Babylonian.

-The Median kingdom of actual history, which joined with the Babylonians to defeat the Assyrians in 612 BC, was incorporated into Persia long before Babylon was conquered. There are contemporary records which show no place between the fall of the Neo-Babylonian empire and the establishment of the Persian empire for a Median kingdom.

-Problems with the Darius the Mede reference (Dan.6:1):

-Critics say he represents the apocryphal kingdom of the Medes.

-Others say that is an alternate title for Cyrus the Persian (known by different names in different areas).

-Possibly he was a governor under Cyrus.

-> Shows there are no satisfactory answers to who he is.

Critics say the writer of Daniel was mistaken on history.

-Porteous continues:

- "The interest of the writer was on the 4th kingdom (i.e. when he was writing) and he hoped for divine intervention to overthrow the oppressive rule.

- 4th kingdom of clay and iron => it will be a composite.

- Iron = Seleucid

- Clay = Ptolemaic, weaker because lost control Palestine in war with the Seleucids.

- Mixture => Intermarriages between the Seleucids and Ptolemies in mentioned further Dan.11.

- These did not lead to a stable friendship.

- Stone cut without hands = Jewish uprising.

- Happened "in the days of those kings" (v.44) => the days of the kings of the 4th kingdom, not of all 4 kingdoms.

- As if the kings of all 4 were present at one time and were crushed.

- But should not press this detail of the statue because Daniel explains it as a chronological sequence."

- Growth = To an eternal kingdom, expected to fill the earth.

Daniel 7 --- Parallels Daniel 2.

v.2-14 The Vision.

v.17-28 The Interpretation of the Vision.

4 Beasts = 4 kings (v.17).

1. Like a lion (v.4).

2. Like a bear (v.5).

3. Like a leopard (v.6) (had 4 wings, 4 heads).

4. Dreadful and terrible beast (v.7-8), 10 horns, little horn dethrones 3 horns.

What do these beasts represent? What is the point of the climax referred to in connection with the fourth beast?

3 different answers to these questions:

A. Critical Interpretation.

-Climax is in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

Porteous: "This chapter is the heart of the book of Daniel. It offers a more explicit explanation of Dan.2. The age of oppressive empires will soon be terminated by God who will let His people, the Jews, rule the earth. We have revealed fiction in the book. The writer looks back from the time of Antiochus Epiphanes schematizing the history from which he looks forward to the end of oppression. He is convinced that God is about to intervene and expects an imminent climax.

-Same 4 kingdoms as in Daniel 2.

1. Lion = Babylonian empire.

- "Lion is a good representative for Babylonia since it is found in Babylonian art and was a symbol for Nebuchadnezzar in Jeremiah."

2. Bear = Apocryphal Median Kingdom - which was known for its ferocity.

- "Raised up on one side" - meaning obscure.

3. Leopard = Persian kingdom.

- 4 wings and 4 heads - "we can not determine the meaning of the symbolism now."

-(But if it is Greece, then obviously they are the 4 parts which Alexander's empire was divided into).

4. Terrible beast = Greek kingdom, Alex and his successors.

10 horns of 4th beast = 10 successive rulers from the time of Alexander on.

Little horn = Antiochus Epiphanes.

-Interpretors have differed as to whether to include Alex and both the Seleucids and Ptolemies in the 10 rulers.

-Probably from Seleucid Nicator, who started Seleucid empire, down through Antiochus Epiphanes.

-No doubt that Antiochus Epiphanes was the little horn.

-3 horns pulled out by the roots? - Endless discussion as to who they were; no clear ideas. But perhaps it does not matter who the 3 horns were.

B. Climax is with the 1st advent of Christ.

1. Lion = Babylonian.

2. Bear = Medo-Persian.

3. Leopard = Greek.

4. Terrible beast = Roman.

10 horns of 4th beast = Divided rule in the time of the Roman Empire.

Little Horn = Succession of Caesars.

-Young takes a 1st advent view of Daniel 2. It says nothing of 10 toes and there is nothing else relating to the 2nd advent in Daniel 2.

-But Young sees Dan.7 fulfilled in the 2nd advent.

-So you can not use his interpretation for 1st advent support.

Calvin takes Daniel 7 as 1st advent.

- 10 horns are not a later development, but are characteristic of the beast from the start.
- Roman power - not one ruler but numerous rulers. Various leaders in different provinces.
- 10 horns => divided rule in the time of the Roman Empire.

Little horn = rise and succession of Caesars.
= Julius, Augustus, Nero, Claudius, etc.

-3 horns pulled out = the way the Caesars took away some of the power of public officials and became all powerful.

- v.10 "The books were opened" = the beginning of the preaching of the gospel.
- v.13 "Son of Man coming" = the coming of Christ on the clouds of heaven to heaven
- the kingdom of Christ begins at His ascension.

-But Calvin does not do justice to the judgment character of the narrative in v.10-11 where the beast is slain and its body thrown in the fire.

-Also vv.18, 22 say the "saints possessed the kingdom" after the judgment.

C. Climax is with the 2nd advent of Christ.

-Same series of kingdoms as 1st advent view.

Two interpretations of the 4th beast:

1. 3 phases or periods of history are depicted.

-Young supports this in his commentary, p.148f.

- a. Beast itself = Roman empire at the time of the birth of Christ.
- b. 10 Horns = 10 nations arising out of the Roman empire, but are a later phase of the kingdom.

-In order to represent unity, horns appear on head.
-v.24 => kings must be from later time, are not contemporaries.

-The 10 nations exist from a Roman origin but do not all necessarily trace immediately back to Rome.

-But they would have more continuity back to Rome than Greece does to Persia.

-Like modern Europe.

-The 10 nations are not necessarily side by side at the appearance of the Little Horn.

-Just that the Little Horn arises from the destruction of the Roman empire.

- Should not press the number 10 too far.
- It is just a symbol for completeness.
- Probably a succession of 10 kingdoms.

c. Little Horn = A nation out of which arises Antichrist.

-The beast and 10 horns are all prior to the Little Horn.

-In these 3 phases of Chapter 7 we have the entire course of history.

(5/3/82)

Note that Young sees ch.7 as covering the entire course of history, but does not see this in ch.2. Once you say that ch.7 applies to the 2nd advent, why not do the same with ch.2? Is it simply a matter of "time gaps" that Young opposes?

C.2. Two phases of history with a gap posited between phase A and phase B of the above view.

A. The beast. -Roman Empire (Christ's time).

>>>>>> GAP

B. 10 horns and little horn -10 nations reviving the Roman Empire and existing when Antichrist arises.

-Not much different from Young's view, but place this gap between phases A and B.

-If one posits a time gap, then you can equate the 10 nations with the 10 (assumed) toes of the statue in ch.2.

-This is held by pre-mills: the kingdom which is set up is the millennium (with Young, is the eternal state).

Daniel 11.

-Is quite complicated. Consider two basic questions:

1. Can we say what vss. 2-20 are talking about? Who are the Northern and Southern kings referred to? What did they do? Do these details fit with history? How well?
-Is there general agreement among liberal and conservative scholars on these interpretations?
2. Who is talked about in vss. 21ff? Do interpreters agree here? If Antiochus Epiphanes is being referred to, do all the details fit the history of Antiochus?

-There is general agreement on number 1, that vss. 2-20 are a detailed description of Near Eastern history from Persian times up to the time of Antiochus.

- v.2 → Persian and Greek Empires.
- v.3-4 → Alexander and the resulting kingdoms.
- v.5-20 → War between the Ptolemies and Seleucids over the dominion in Palestine (Southern and Northern kings).

-There is general disagreement on number 2.

- Critical types say that vss. 21ff refer entirely to Antiochus, but admit that not every item in the section can be correlated with his rule.
- Writer is looking ahead and speculating beyond his current time (attempting to prophesy), and makes mistakes.

-Porteous (p.157) "The longest and most important section (v.21ff) is devoted to Antiochus. After showing how the Romans provoke Antiochus and he turns to attack Jerusalem (~v.30), the writer passes from history to prophecy and forecasts a dramatic end for the tyrant, which, although it actually took place at about the time expected, was not fulfilled regarding the place and manner of death (falsified the reality)."

[Downfall of Antiochus, v.40] "Attempts to reconcile these descriptions with history are a waste of time. The critic is happy for this failure [in prediction], as it allows him to accurately date the writing of Daniel. It must have been written shortly before the death of Antiochus and the rededication of the temple."

- Conservatives are divided on how to divide the details of the v.21ff section.
- All agree that it refers to more than Antiochus and includes the Antichrist.

Walvoord: vss.21-35 refer to Antiochus, with an unspecified gap occurring between 35 and 36. Antichrist is discussed from v.36 on.

Payne: As above, but puts the time gap between 39 - 40.

-Others see the passage as a double reference:

Jerome: v.21ff concerns the Antichrist, but since much fits Antiochus, he must be a type of the future Antichrist. What partially applies to Antiochus completely fulfilled in the Antichrist.

Young: Difficult. Cannot apply all to Antiochus. v.21-35 refer to Antiochus, but in v.36ff Antiochus becomes a type of the Antichrist. In v.36ff not all applies to Antiochus, some applies to the Antichrist. Young puts a gap at 12:1 - 2 to shift to the eschaton events of ch.12.

→ Note that this implies that a time gap is essential.

- Thus in all conservative views, an unannounced time gap is essential in ch.11, as ch.12 refers to the 2nd coming and resurrection.
- There is either a gap at 20/21, 35/36, 39/40, or between 12:1/2 so that we can shift from Antiochus to the Antichrist in the eschaton (resurrection of the dead).
- No one can avoid putting a gap in ch.11.

General concluding remarks on Daniel:

- Have considered 3 approaches to the prophecies of Daniel (liberal, 1st advent, and 2nd advent).

Ch.8: The little horn clearly refers to the rise and fall of Antiochus. The chapter gives a general survey of the history leading up to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes who is a type of the Antichrist.

Ch.2: The stone cut without hands refers to either the 1st or 2nd advent.

- If 2nd, then must either put in a time gap within the 4th kingdom or else say that it continues to today.

- Is it not too artificial to impose a time gap?
- Must see if the statements of ch.2 correspond better to the 1st or 2nd advent events mentioned elsewhere.
- Vannoy: Probably 2nd advent is a better fit.

Ch.7: 4 beasts representing 4 kingdoms with the little horn which is (Antichrist).

- Traces Antichrist's destruction and then establishment of Christ's kingdom.

- Young sees as 2nd advent but with continuous history instead of time gap.

Ch.11: Detailed picture of relationships between Ptolemies and Seleucids until the time of Antiochus.

- At some point makes a transition to the Antichrist.
- Is no way to avoid a gap in Daniel 11, because of the resurrection.

- Thus, if ch.7 is all history up to the 2nd advent, and there must be a gap in ch.11, then we have a good basis for arguing for a gap in ch.2 (is less arbitrary).

- This would make ch.2 and 7 both stress the 2nd advent and parallel each other. Perhaps we can then link the 10 horns with the 10 (assumed) toes.

Ch.9: If everything else has a gap in it, then it is not totally arbitrary to put a gap between the 69th and 70th weeks.

-This would also stress the 2nd advent.

-But we cannot say that there must be gap.

-Ultimately, we must exegete the phrases in ch.9 and figure out which view is better.

-What is the "covenant", "cease", "he"?

-Any decisions must be based on what the phrases mean.

-Vannoy leans to 1st advent of ch.9 but not dogmatically.

-This is not inconsistent with the 2nd advent, premillennial position.

-It is inconsistent with the dispensational view which uses the 70th week to reinstate a special relationship between God and the nation Israel.

-This scheme does stand or fall on this interpretation.

-We must stand on what is clear and not build systems on inferences, especially where the passage is legitimately open to other interpretations.

(5/5/82)

VIII. EZEKIEL.

A. Introductory remarks

Ezekiel is one of the neglected prophetic books in the OT, especially with respect to the other major prophets.

Reasons:

1. To understand the book you have to understand the historical setting in some detail.
2. The first chapter may give the impression that the book is difficult to understand because of symbolic language.

Interest in ch.34-39 is high because it deals with future prophecy and in ch.40f which has a vision of the temple. Most people spend a lot of time on 34f and ignore ch.1-33.

Historical background:

1:1 "In the 30th year" - but year of what?

-Freeman summarizes the views of what 30th year. He concludes that it refers to the 30th year of Ezekiel's life.

1:2 gives date: 5th year of Jehoiachin's exile = 593 BC.

597 BC Nebuchadnezzar took captive many people of Judah, including King Jehoiachin who had reigned only 3 months. Nebuch. placed Zedekiah (Jehoiachin's uncle) on the throne (2 Kings 10:24f).

Zedekiah is often considered the last king of Judah, but many Israelites only considered him a regent, hoping for the return of Jehoiachin and the reestablishment of an independent nation. Zedekiah is often called "prince", not "king."

Many in captivity felt that it would be short. They remained very patriotic.

It was Ezekiel's task to tell them that the captivity would not be short.

- God's judgment and punishment were just beginning.
- Judah would again be overrun; Jerusalem would be destroyed; their homeland will become desolate with most of the people going into captivity in Babylon.
- So people would view Ezekiel as a traitor, unpatriotic (like Jeremiah was viewed in Jerusalem).

Another problem: In polytheistic societies when one nation conquered another, it was looked upon as proving that the conquering nation's god was greater than the god of the conquered nation.

- It would be easy for the Israelite captives to feel that the Babylonian gods (Marduk and Nabu) were greater than their God as they watched celebrations to those gods.
- => If God could not protect His headquarters (Jerusalem), then He wasn't very great.

Further complication in the message:

Ezekiel was to tell them the temple would be destroyed.

- It was a visible sign of God's presence. With its destruction, very little evidence of God's presence would be left.

=> The purpose of the vision in ch.1: Before Ezekiel could forceably present his message, he himself had to be convinced that God's glory, power and strength far exceeded that of the Babylonian's gods.

- The exile happened because God chose to punish His people, not because He was weak and could not defend them.
- The vision strengthened Ezekiel for his task.

Outline of Ezekiel:

- Ch.1-3 Ezekiel's vision of God and his call to the prophetic task.
- Ch.4-24 Messages predicting and justifying God's intention to bring judgment on Jerusalem.
- Ch.25-32 Prophecies against foreign nations.
(When Nebuch. started seige on Jerusalem, Ezk's message changed to cover foreign nations.)

Ch.33-48 Prophecies concerning Israel's future blessing and restoration.
 (When word comes that Jerusalem's destruction is complete, message changes to Israel's future.)

3 deportations to Babylon:

604 BC - 2 Kings 21:1-4 (including Daniel).
 597 BC - 2 Kings 24:10-16 (including Ezekiel, Jehoiachin).
 586 BC - Fall of Jerusalem.

B. General survey of chapters 1-24.

Ch.1-3 Vision and call of Ezekiel.

1:4 Commentators note that it is interesting that the whirlwind comes out of the North.

-Since Babylon is east of Jerusalem, one would expect a vision of representing God to come from the west.

-Suggestion: the home of the Babylonian deities was in the North (Is.14:13). Whirlwind from the North

=> God has defeated these deities at their residence.

1:26-28 Ezekiel sees the appearance of a man in the likeness of the glory of the Lord.

-After this he received his call.

2:1f Vivid description of the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites in very strong language.

-v.5 They will not listen, but will know a prophet spoke.
 -> Point is not their response, but to be a witness.

-v.8 Ezk. is told not to be rebellious himself.

-v.10 He was given an unpleasant message to convey: woe, lamentations, and mourning.

3:3 But "I ate it and it was sweet as honey in my mouth."

-Eat = Ezk. identifies himself with the Word of God.

-Sweet -> Word of God is good, even if message is hard.

-Task is to speak God's message even though they will not respond.

After the call, a surprise:

3:15 Interesting response of Ezekiel: Might expect him to immediately speak, but instead he was overwhelmed by the message and sat for 7 days.

[NASB has an active idea: he overwhelmed the exiles.]

v.17-21 The Lord tells Ezekiel to be a watchman to Israel to warn each person.

- Language of Gen.9 (blood-guiltiness) is used metaphorically in Ezekiel's message.
- Shows the enormous responsibility of the one who brings God's message.

v.25f Ch.2 and first part of ch.3 emphasize Ezekiel's responsibility to speak, but here he will not be able to speak.

- Many feel that we must assume a time between v.21 and 22 when Ezekiel faithfully proclaimed his message which fell on deaf ears.
- Then because they refused to hear, God tells him to stop speaking.
- God will give him another method (performing symbolical actions) to arouse the curiosity of the people so they will listen to the message (cf. Ezk.4f).

Symbolic actions:

Symbol 1: 4:1-8 Siege of Jerusalem portrayed.

Ezekiel was to make a model of Jerusalem and lie on his side before it:

390 days for Israel and 40 days for Judah = 430 days.

Problem of chronology:

1:2 5th day, 4th month of 5th year of Jehoiachin's exile

8:1 5th day, 6th month of 6th year

Total time difference = 1 year, 2 months = 425 days

- So argue that the amount of time is insufficient.
- Also it is impossible to lay that long.

Explanations:

- a) Many feel it was not necessary for Ezk. to lay for 24hr/day, but only for a short time each day.
- b) Some period of time represents a day so he was there for much less time totally (e.g. 1/2 hr. = 1 day).
- c) Textual problem:
LXX reads 190 days instead of 390 days in v.5 and 9.
-Many feel LXX is correct.
- d) 190 or 390 is a total which includes the 40 days of v.6.
Would actually be 150 or 350 plus 40 days.

-v.5 "the years of their iniquity" - What period is being referred to here?

(1) New Bible Commentary Revised, p.668: "The period from the deportation under Tiglath-Pileser in 734 BC (2 Kings 15:29) to the taking of Jerusalem in 586 was 148 years, i.e. roughly 150 years, while the 40 years (general designation of a generation) for Judah roughly corresponds to the period 586 to 536, the time of Judah's exile in Babylon.

(2) G. Ch. Aalders uses the MT (390). Says it refers to the time from Solomon's sin in the latter part of his life when the kingdom divided (931 BC) to 586 = 345 years (approx. 350 years).

(3) Ellison says "it seems impossible to find any adequate interpretation of the figures."

[Perhaps 40 = years of Manasseh's reign, 190 = bad reigns of the kings of N. kingdom].

The symbolical outcome is clear: Judgment is coming, Jerusalem will be destroyed because of long-term sin.

Symbol 2: 4:9-17 Coming scarcity of food.

20 shekels = 9 oz. of food.
6th of hin = ~1 pint of water.

-Ezekiel is to eat a small amount of food for the same number of days that he lies on his side (390 days).

(5/7/82)

Symbol 3: 5:1-17 Fate of inhabitants of Jerusalem.

-Ezekiel was to shave the hair on his head and beard and divide it into thirds.

Disposal of hair, v.2		Meaning, v.12
1/3 burn in fire	-->	die by plague or famine
1/3 strike it with sword	-->	die by the sword
1/3 scatter to the wind	-->	scatter to every wind

also unsheathe a sword after them.

v.3-4 Ezekiel is to put a few hairs in his robe, but then throw some of these into the fire.

-> From the few who do escape, some will perish.

-The true remnant is a very small fragment.

Ch.6-7 Ezekiel's proclamations by word begin again with a theme of destruction, desolation, and judgment.

Ch.8-11 Ezekiel's vision-journey to Jerusalem.

8:1 6th year of Jehoiachin's captivity.

-14 months after his call with the vision of the throne chariot.

v.3 Ezekiel's unique visionary experience: he is lifted out of his body and taken to Jerusalem.

-Sees improper worship, idolatry, abominations within and near the temple.

v.3,5 "image of jealousy" - may be Ashtoreth pole (like in the reign of Manasseh).

v.10f Animal worship with various idols.

v.14 "Weeping for Tammuz" - Sumerian god of vegetation who had died and become the god of the underworld.

v.16 Sun worship

8:17-11:25 Ezekiel sees the judgment that will come, when many people will be slain.

Ch.12 Another symbolic action: Ezekiel carries his belongings out of his house through a hole in the wall.
=> People will flee from Jerusalem.

-Feinberg suggests that Ezekiel is reenacting the scene that the exiles had experienced to show that God will carry out His plan to destroy Jerusalem and exile its remaining residents.

-Note that this is a specific prophecy concerning Zedekiah.

v.10 "Prince of Jerusalem" = Zedekiah.

v.12f He will go through the wall, be caught in a snare, will go to Babylon, but will not see it even though he will die there.

-Fulfilled in 2 Kings 25:1-7 where Zedekiah fled from the city, was taken captive, saw his sons killed, was blinded and led off to Babylon where he died.

-Josephus, "Antiquities," Book 10, ch.7, paragraph 2 discusses Jeremiah and Ezekiel's prophecies about Jerusalem. The two prophets agreed except that Jeremiah said Zedekiah would be taken captive and Ezekiel said Zedekiah would not see Babylon. So Zedekiah did not believe the prophets since he thought they contradicted each other.

Ch.13-24 contains allegories and parables which picture Israel's apostasy and coming judgment.

24:1 Time designation: 9th year, 10th month, 10th day

-v.2 "The king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem this very day."

-cf. 2 Kings 25:1 gives the same day for the siege.

-Ezekiel was in Babylon; could only know this from God.

-v.16 On that same day, Ezekiel's wife dies and God tells him not to show any visible sign of mourning.

-v.21 Meaning given: The terrible nature of the fate about to befall Jerusalem will be such that normal ceremonies will not be able to be carried out and normal mourning will be inadequate.

-> God will profane the sanctuary, destroy Jerusalem, but Ezekiel is not to mourn when this happens.

C. General survey of chapters 25-32 = Prophecies against foreign nations.

At the time of the siege on Jerusalem, the prophecies of coming judgment cease and Ezekiel now speaks against foreign nations.

-Siege lasted from the 9th to 11th year of Zedekiah (2 Kings 25:2).

-During that time, there is no record of Ezekiel speaking against Jerusalem.

-Ez.33:21 when a messenger tells Ezekiel that Jerusalem has fallen, then the message is addressed to Israel again, now speaking of future restoration.

-The content of the prophecies is closely related to historical events.

Ch.26 Tyre and judgment on it.

Many use this to show the reliability of prophecy (Moody Science Film), but others say the opposite.

Oxtoby, "Prediction and Fulfillment in the Bible," 1966: "But Nebuchadnezzar did not take Tyre, the siege failed. Ezekiel knew this so he made up another prophecy later (29:18-19). ... Neb. took Egypt instead. It is a matter of sober historical record that the siege against Tyre lasted 13 years but was unsuccessful. Part of Tyre was on an island which is now connected by a spit. The city was not conquered."

=> Ezekiel was mistaken in his prediction that Neb. would bring Tyre to its final end.

cf. v.12-14 Nebuchadnezzar failed in 3 predictions.
 v.12 He took no merchandise nor threw the debris of the
 city into the water.
 v.13-14 He did not level the city so it was never
 inhabited.

But Oxtoby misread the prophecy.
 v.3 "many nations would come against Tyre".
 v.4 has plural pronoun "they".
 v.7-11 has singular pronoun "he" = Nebuchadnezzar.
 v.12 "they" again -> back to context of "many nations".

The later history of Tyre shows that the mainland city was
 destroyed in 332 BC when Alexander the Great besieged it,
 captured the mainland city and threw its debris into the
 water to build a causeway out to the island to capture it.

cf. Joseph Free, "Archaeology and Bible History," p.263:
 "Many nations supplied ships (220 warships) to Alex for
 the siege of the island. His soldiers dumped the debris
 of the city into the water for the causeway."

But v.13-14 were not completely fulfilled then.
 -Tyre revived under the Seleucids, continued under the
 Romans and Muslims, was taken by the crusaders.
 -It was finally destroyed in 1292 AD by the Saracens
 (Arabs and Muslims) and never recovered.

(Tyre was a significant city in early Christian times.
 Jesus and the disciples visited there as did Paul. In the
 2nd century AD it was the see of a bishop. Origen was
 buried there. Eusebius was there in 323. Muslims captured
 it in 638, the Crusaders in 1124, and the Muslims again in
 1291, destroying it the next year.)

In contrast, notice Ez.28:20-24, a prophecy against Sidon.
 Sidon was a sister city of Tyre. Tyre was to be
 eradicated, but Sidon was to only have a slaughter in its
 streets. Today Sidon is a modern town located in the same
 place. Has a population of 50,000 people.

Chapters 29-30: Prophecies concerning Egypt.

Ezk.30:10f Prediction that Nebuchadnezzar will conquer Egypt in a great slaughter.

-History records that Neb. did conquer Egypt and dominated it for a time.

-Is easy for someone to look back today and say that this was no great prediction. However, Egypt had a long history of independence.

-From beginnings in 3000 BC, were not conquered by non-Egyptians until Hyksos (1750-1570 BC) came in.

-After driving Hyksos out, were independent until 670 BC, when Esarhaddon (Assyria) conquered Egypt.

-Ezk's prediction had little precedent in his time.

v.13f "I will destroy the idols and cause the images to cease from Memphis."

-Memphis was built as the new capital city of Menes after he united the Upper and Lower Egypt (city near the border between the two regions).

-Was either the capital or a very important city in Egypt throughout the rest of Egyptian history.

Note also in v.13: "there will no longer be a prince from the land of Egypt."

-Hebrew here is מִן הָאָרֶץ , literally "from the land" although most translations say "in the land".

History of Memphis and Egypt:

-Nebuchadnezzar conquered and put Babylonian officials in political control of Egypt.

-Then conquered by Persia, which put in Persian officials.

-Alexander drove out the Persians and ruled for a short time.

-General Ptolemy (Greek) claims the region after Alexander dies. Ptolemies represented themselves as Pharaohs of Egypt, but were genetically Greek.

-So far, for 600 years after Ezk's prophecy there have been no Egyptians ruling their own country.

-Romans take over the region for 600 years.

-Arabs displace Roman government in ~600 AD.

-Turks take over rule in Egypt in 1000 AD and hold it until ~1850 AD.

-Egypt declares independence in 1850, but still has a Turkish ruler.

-Finally, Nassar, Sadat, etc. begin to rule.

However, they are Arabs (Semitic), while the native Egyptians are Hamitic (a different race).

=> Still no native rulers to this date.

"Never" is literally "not shall be yet". This does not have to mean "forever", but it has been a long time.

Although Egypt had been independent for so many years, even if we think that Ezk's prediction about Neb. was a good guess, the prediction that there would never again be a native ruler on the throne was certainly more than a guess.

["I will put fear in the land of Egypt" probably refers to change in status for Egypt from being a strong nation (one that is feared) to being one that will be conquered.]

v.14 Prophecies concerning Thebes.

No (Assyrian name) = Thebes (Greek name) = Luxor (modern).

-Thebes is in Upper Egypt, ~500 miles south of Memphis.

v.15 "cut off the multitude of Thebes."

-Today the ruins cover many acres; it is a giant outdoor museum with many palaces, temples, buildings, statues.

-But it is uninhabited.

History:

-A few centuries after Ezekiel's prophecy, the Thebians revolted against the rule of the Ptolemies.

-Ptolemy conquered the city and decided not to let it be rebuilt into anything larger than a village again.

-Was repopulated, but not powerful as before.

-Romans sacked the city in 29 BC, after this it ceased to be inhabited.

If the statement made about Memphis had been made about Thebes, it would not have been fulfilled.

Memphis continued to be a great city for 1000 years after Ezekiel's time. See Encyclopedia Britannica article.

-In Greek times it had a population of 700,000 people and a circumference of 18 miles, with many rich temples.

-It was the capital of the Roman government and continued to be the center of Egyptian political and religious power (many great temples and idols continued there).

-In 640 AD the Mohammedans came in and conquered the region, and built a new city of Cairo about 10 miles from Memphis [where idols had never been worshiped].

-During Middle Ages, Memphis continued to be used as a stone quarry for the building of Cairo.

-Today there is nothing there but a few stones among the palm trees in the desert.

Contrast: Thebes is an outdoor museum, but Memphis has disappeared.

-Ezekiel did not know about the rise of Mohammedism or where they would build.

-God did not give the full data on the city's history (is not history written in advance), saying that Cairo would be built from the stones of Memphis, etc.

-But people in Ezekiel's day could see the short term prediction about Neb. conquering Egypt => Ezekiel was a true prophet => God is trustworthy => the long term prophecies would also come to pass.

D. General survey of Chapters 33-39.

Brief review:

Ch. 1-24 God will destroy Jerusalem. There will be no quick end to the captivity and things will be worse in the future.

Ch. 25-32 Prophecies against foreign nations.

Ch. 33 is a transition chapter.

33:21 Jerusalem falls. Ezekiel does not now say, "I told you so," but begins to prophesy about God's future restoration of Israel.

Ch. 36

v.24 "I will bring you back into your own land."

-What does this mean? Is explained immediately.

v.25-27 "Cleanse ... new heart ... My spirit within you."

-Sounds like a description of the new birth, of the regenerating power of the gospel and its effects.

-How is this related to the context?

v.28 "You will live in the land...."

-Thus we find a reference to the new birth in the context of a return to the land of Israel (v.24 and 28).

-When was or will this be fulfilled?

G.Ch. Aalders: "This is a rich promise of restoration which was fulfilled in the return from the Babylonian and Assyrian captivities. Note the complete reversal of attitude seen in the turning from idolatry at that time." (cf. v.25 mentions turning from idols).

Payne: "The return mentioned in v.24 and 28 is the return from the Babylonian exile. v.25-27 concern the regeneration of post-exilic Jews with an emphasis on the removal of idolatry."

We need to look at the whole chapter to understand this prophecy.

-Earlier:

v.8-15 "Treat you better than at the beginning" (v.11).
 "Land will no longer be a devourer of men" (v.14).
 (cf. Num.13:32 => warfare).

-Was this (v.8-15) adequately fulfilled following the return from exile?

-There were Persian, Greek, and Roman wars in Palestine.

-Later:

v.29-38 "Will become like the Garden of Eden" (v.35).
 -Did the post-exilic prosperity match this description?

Payne divides this prophecy up:

-v.8-11, 29b-30, 33b-38 are descriptive of conditions after the post-exilic return to Palestine in 538 BC and following.

-But note v.35; was this adequately fulfilled? Payne says it is hyperbole explained by v.35b ("garden of Eden" means "inhabited").

-v.12-15 refer to the millennial kingdom, with cessation of warfare. He cites v.11b "better than at the first" as an introduction to the millennial description in v.12-15.

-Vannoy: Better to take "better than at the first" as referring to v.8-11.

-v.22-24 refers to the return from exile (not future).

-v.25, 29a, 31-33a refer to Israel's abandonment of idolatry and renewed dedication to the Lord during and after the Babylonian exile.

-v.26-28 "new heart" => regeneration of post-exilic Jews.

-Vannoy: But vv.25-27 "out of context" look more like a description of the Christian new birth than the sporadic post-exilic revivals.

-It seems like these verses all refer to a single return.

-Fractionation does not do justice to the context.

=> A future return and a future new heart.

=> Future fulfillment.

Aalders takes as an allegory for the church.

Chapter 37:

-One of the best known sections in Ezekiel because of the negro spiritual concerning the dry bones.

v.1-14 Vision of the valley of dry bones.

-Interpretation (given in 11-14): The bones are the whole house of Israel. Resurrection and return to the land predicted. "I will put my spirit within you" (v.14) is similar to 36:25f.

-Has this prophecy been fulfilled? Look at next section.

v.15-28 Parallel prophecy: Sign of the 2 sticks.

-The two sticks represent the N. and S. kingdoms of Israel and Judah being joined together.

-They will be made into one nation in the land (v.21).

-One king will rule over them (v.22).

-No idolatry or other transgression.

-Note v.24-28:

v.24 "David My servant will be king over them"

v.25 "Will live in the land forever; David will be their prince forever; they will never be driven out again."

v.27 "My sanctuary will be in their midst forever."

Interpretation:

Aalders: The dry bones and 2 sticks are both referring to conditions after return from the Babylonian exile.

v.12 "opened graves" => Rising up and returning from exile (thought to be impossible).

-Aalders notes that there is a discontinuity in the passage with v.24-28 if the sticks also apply to the return.

v.24-28 are messianic. There is only a loose connection between the sticks and the Messiah.

-Refers to the "blessings of the Messiah" in the church, but expressed in OT terminology: eternal covenant, etc.

-Thus he moves from a literal to a spiritual interpretation.

H.L. Ellison in "Ezekiel: The Man and his Message."

- Notes that it is one thing to say this passage is symbolic, but quite another to divorce it from what the OT hearers would have understood it to mean.
- Transforms the land of Israel (ch.36) and a national resurrection into an allegory regarding the church.
- Have no right to exclude the idea of a future Israel.

- Regarding the dry bones: "The return from exile was not a restoration of national life, but only of a religious community. Only a minority of Jews lived in Palestine.

- The worst chapter of Jewish history occurred from about 1879 on, with the rise of anti-Semitism and the collapse of Orthodox Judaism.

- This shake-up led to the establishment of an independent Jewish nation for the first time since 63 BC.

- Ellison sees the return to the land as "stage one" of a 2-stage restoration process (first dry bones brought together, then the spirit breathed into them).
- Thus true spiritual life will return once Israel is back in the land. The Spirit will come later.

- "It is difficult to see how the most hardened allegorizer can spiritualize this prophecy."

J.B. Payne's approach: "Divide and conquer".

- v.1-14 -Are fulfilled in the return from Babylon exile.
- v.15-22a -Show the union of the nation after this return.
- v.22b,24 -[king references] 1st advent of Christ.
(Could be millennial, but is no reference of a political kingdom). Christ is both the good shepherd (John 10:11) and the spiritual king (John 18:36) from the NT onwards.
- v.23 -Abandonment of idolatry upon return from exile.
- v.25a -[dwell in land] New Jerusalem (eternal state).
- v.25b -[David prince forever] 1st advent begins fulfillment which continues forever.
- v.26a -[covenant] Constitution of the mill. kingdom.
- v.26b-28 -[Tabernacle] Millennial temple. Conveys a theological truth in typology that continues into the millennium.

- This is unnecessarily complex!
- Is much simpler to consider this all a reference to a future fulfillment.

- "Continuing forever" problem: is no need to force a big break between millennial conditions and the eternal state. Ellison: "The millennium is the ante-chamber to the eternal state." Is less glorious but of the same nature.
- Is best to see v.24-28 as millennial, with the reference to "David" meaning Jesus as the greater son.

Chapters 38-39: The Prophecy against Gog and Magog.

- If ch.36-37 are referring to the future millennial kingdom, then is most logical to take ch.38-39 as being a picture of events after the millennium.
 - Ezekiel may have gone back in 38-39 to before the millennium, but this breaks the logical flow.
 - Note also that ch.38-39 speak of Gog and Magog, and in Rev.20:7, after the millennium, they are referred to. (These are the only 2 occurrences of these names except in the genealogies of Gen.2).
 - Today many interpreters take ch.38-39 as occurring before the millennium.
- Hal Lindsey, "The Late Great Planet Earth," p.62.
- Ch.5 title: "Russia is a Gog."
 - "After the physical restoration, but before the spiritual rebirth, the great northern enemy will invade Israel."
 - Who is the Northern Commander? "The chief prince of Rosh, Meschech and Tubal" (Ezk.38:2).

Hebrew here:

וְתִבְלֹ	דְּשֶׁדֶךְ	רִישׁ	כְּשִׁיפִי
Tubal and	Meschech	head	prince

- "Head" can either be a proper name or refer back as an adjective to "prince."
- Lindsey notes that Kiel and Gesenius think that "head" is not an adjective but is referring to another nation => that they agree with his interpretation.
- Lindsey: "We have the first historical trace of the Russ or Russian nation" (conclusion of Gesenius).

-Lindsey does not comment that Kiel ("Commentary on Ezekiel", p.160) thinks that a link between "Rosh" and Russia is very doubtful. Kiel links "Rosh" with tribes which lived in Asia Minor.

(5/13/82)

-Takes Meschech as "Moscow" and Tubal as "Toblisk" which are cities and regions of Russia.

-Gesenius supports the Russian application, citing Byzantine sources. He refers to an article which Kiel shoots down in his discussion.

-Yamauchi, in JETS 19 (Summer 1976), p.239f is a good review article on these names.

-(p.235) "It is a poor reflection on evangelical scholarship when people hold to Russian associations. Cuneiform tablets have identified these names since the late 1800's. Meschech and Tubal are locations in central and eastern Asia Minor (Anatolia), of importance after the collapse of the Hittite empire."

-Ancient texts with references to these names include Tiglath-Pileser I in 1100's BC and Shalmanesar in 836.

-Good information with a poor conclusion is Ralph H. Alexander in JETS 17 (Summer 1974), p.183f, "A fresh look at Ezk.38-39."

-Has double fulfillment idea which Vannoy disagrees with.

-See also Yamauchi's "Foes from the Northern Frontier: Invading Hordes from the Russian Steppes," Baker, 1982.

Third approach: Is neither a pre- or post-mill reference, but it was fulfilled in the intertestamental period.

-Held by liberals, some conservatives.

Aalders in 2 v. Dutch "Commentary on Ezekiel".

-"Was fulfilled in Seleucids and especially Antiochus E."

-Military defeats in 38-39 may refer to a series of successive events => the series of battles where the Jews defeated the Seleucids.

-39:3 "God himself smote the enemies, by means of the Jews."

-But admits that "perhaps some elements look beyond this to apocalyptic events at the end of the age."

-Especially 38:20-23 are not merely hyperbolic language.

-The Seleucids may be a typological earlier fulfillment of an anti-God world power's eschatological final fulfillment.

New Scofield note on 38:2 refers this to Rev.19:19, => the battle is prior to the millennium.

Old Scofield note on 38:2 refers to both Rev.19:19 and Rev.20:7, the final revolt at the close of the kingdom age => double fulfillment like Alexander sees.

-Why do people put this battle before the millennium?

Because of 39:25-29. This comment at the end refers to a regathering. If chronological, then is after battle. Taking a parallel with Rev.19:19 then seems reasonable, despite fact that Rev.19:19 does not refer to Gog, Magog.

-Alexander shows that structure of ch.33:21 to 39:29 is a series of 6 messages, each with a distinctive introduction. 39:25-29 occurs after these 6 messages as a summary of all 6.

-Thus this final section is not chronological after Gog and Magog, but is a summary of the 6 messages.

Chapters 40-48.

-Differs from the previous visions.

-This one is not explained as the others were (bones, etc.).

-No explanation => we should be cautious in application.

Ch.40-43 - Description, measurement of visionary temple.

Ch.44-46 - Description of temple worship (priests, etc.).

Ch.47-48 - Boundaries and division of the land.

In 40:2 - Introduction to the vision.

Ch.47 - Description of the river.

-Flows to the Dead Sea, which will be healed (will become fresh water).

-Waters come out of temple, flow east, begin at altar, man measures (increasing depth), apparently no tributaries.

-Trees and water have healing quality.

-Note that some regions are not healed (marshes).

-What is the point of this? Is there any parallel to any OT or future worship of Israel which will be like this?

-Or, is this a real physical future river?

-Why all of the details about healing, geography, depth?

Note Rev.22, where a river flows from the throne of God.

-What does the river represent?

-Note differences between Rev. and Ezk., in Ezk. the river does not effect a complete healing (marshy places will be given to salt).

-After the description of the river, Ezekiel moves on to:

-Description of the borders of the land.

(Goes way up beyond Damascus).

-The way the land will be divided in the future.

(Parallel borders between tribes with a special section for Jerusalem).

-Description of the layout of Jerusalem.

-What are the implications of this description of the city, temple, river, and land?

-God is showing Ezk. (at a time after judgment and defeat) a picture of the future that will give hope to Israel.

-Is this a literal prediction, or symbolic of a future greatness?

For literal view:

-Many exact dimensions are given and specific details with reference to priests and sacrifices.

-If literal, is clearly not post-exilic.

-Then must be millennial.

Or: Payne takes as literal but was an injunction, a command to the post-exilic Jews which they should have fulfilled, but did not (only 40-46, 47-48 is millennial).

-Problem here: Vannoy sees 40-48 as a unit.

[Figurative: Buswell puts this into the eternal state, says that we cannot push details (such as a temple).]

-If not a picture of the millennium, but only symbolic of the future in terms familiar to Ezk., then we still have not disproved the idea of a future return to the land.

-Future return and millennium ideas do not stand or fall on any interpretation of 40-48.

-It is possible that in this vision Ezekiel sees both physical and spiritual blessings fused together (with prophetic time perspective).

-Thus is not all one or the other, but both.

-Is a problem to decide which is being referred to.

-The river is stressed: It could be a symbolic picture of the life which flows from the real altar (not the one for bulls and goats). It may picture the influence of the gospel and Christ, starting as a ripple in the Roman empire, growing until it reaches a world-wide scope, having beneficial (healing) social effects but not healing everything (note that this is not a millennial interpretation).

-Is probably best to allow for both symbol and literal.

-Sacrifice in the millennium: Vannoy feels that Freeman's arguments are best.

-Note Ellison, "Ezekiel: The Man and His Message" argues that progressive revelation does not go backwards; would not expect to see free worship anywhere in the world (present system) return to a restricted geographic worship in the millennium.

THE DANIEL 9:24-27 DEBATE: A COMPARISON OF ISSUES.

Verse 24:

1. The 6 infinitives: Were they fulfilled at the first advent, or will they be fulfilled at the second?

1st Advent

2nd Advent

Applies to the atonement

Applies to Israel

Interpretations:

"RESTRAIN AND SEAL"

Christ was "manifested
to put away sin."
Heb. 9:25-26

Will be fulfilled when
Satan is bound.
Rev. 20:2.

"MAKE ATONEMENT"

Clearly 1st

Agreed.

"BRING IN EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS"

Applies to believers.
Christ was "brought in
a better hope."
Heb. 7:19, 10:9-10

Fulfilled when all
Israel is saved at 2nd
coming (Rom.11:25-27).

"SEAL UP VISION AND PROPHECY"

Change in God's method of
communicating with his
people. Heb.1:1-2,
Matt.11:13, John 1:17-18.

Prophecies are fulfill-
ed when Israel is saved
at 2nd coming.
Rom. 11:25-27. Note
the covenant idea.

"ANOINT THE MOST HOLY"

Christ as High Priest
(Acts 10:38, Heb.8:1)
or the heavenly holy place
(Heb.9:11-24, 10:19-22).

The millennial temple.
(No day of atonement in
Ezk.40-45; no mercy
seat to anoint).

Note that certain aspects of these
infinitives are not "absolutely"
fulfilled at the beginning of the 2nd
advent (cf. predictions regarding the
end of the millennium, Rev.20).

Verse 26:

1. What does "after" imply?

1st Advent

The events in v.26-27 occur after the 69th week, and during and after the 70th week.

No gap is expected in the context between v.26 and 27.

2nd Advent

The events in v.26-27 occur after the 69th week, but before the 70th week.

A gap is not expected, but is permissible from observation of other fulfillments (cf. Dan.11). Possible "Prophetic time perspective" (cf. OTP notes for 10/21-10/24).

This prophecy is not introduced with a formula which implies an eschatological sense, as are all others: cf. Dan.2:28, 7:18, 8:19, 10:14. The word "end" is not used in the eschatological formula "time of the end" as in 8:17, 11:35, 11:40, 12:4, 12:9; or as "last end" in 8:19.

Note the parallelism between vv.26 and 27; v.27 is filling in the details of v.26: cut off -- confirm covenant. destroy city -- desolations.

This is subjective. V.27 is not "that" clear itself, as "during" must be supplied.

This is a weakness of both sides: either the clock has stopped, and the destruction occurs during the gap, or it has run out and occurs afterwards.

This is an argument from silence.

The 70th week is not mentioned in connection with the events of v.26.

If "after" implies "immediately after," why is v.26 not more explicit like v.27?

If no gap, then Jerusalem is destroyed after the 70th week has run out.

2. How does Daniel 9:24-27 relate to the other prophecies in Daniel and the NT?

1st Advent

A close-up look at the Jews and Jerusalem and how they will be regathered until the covenant is confirmed. Relatively independent of the other prophecies regarding the Gentile nations.

The "wing of abominations" is not THE "abom. of desolation" spoken of in Dan.11:31, 12:11 (compare Hebrew, note plural, singular, construct state).

The LXX is not inspired.

"Wing of abominations" finds literal historical fulfillment with Titus and Roman idols on the porch of the temple.

Matt.24 and Luke 21 thus do not refer to the "wing of abom." but to other Dan. passages.

2nd Advent

One of several prophecies related to the end times. Is overlapping revelation.

Dan.9, 11, 12 all refer to the same abomination.

LXX supports this idea.

Antichrist will fulfill at a future date.

Luke 21 and Matt. 24 are independent with regard to the 2nd coming (Amen! 1st Adventers agree).

Key passage: verse 27a.

1. What covenant is referred to in verse 27a?

1st Advent

God's covenant of grace (salvation) with Israel. The context shows this covenant was on Daniel's thoughts (vv.4, 9-14).

This is the only covenant spoken of in other Daniel passages, even those where the Antichrist is explicitly discussed (Dan.11:28,30,32).

2nd Advent

The covenant of the desolator (Antichrist).

What about Dan.11:22? (Kiel)

Dan.11:22 is in the context of Antiochus Ephiphanes attacking Egypt. The "prince of the covenant" there is clearly NOT Antiochus. No one knows how this detail of the prophecy was fulfilled historically. Perhaps it refers to a high priest (Kiel).

The verb "higbir" implies a covenant formally ratified or confirmed, but not one initially made.

Is the distinction between "initiation" and "confirmation" that clear? (Feinberg)

Yes, as God's covenant of grace was initiated with Abraham (Gen.15:6, Rom.4:6-13) and was applied to all OT saints. Christ's atonement later ratifies this covenant of grace (Matt.26:28, Luke 22:20, Heb.9:12).

2. To whom does the "he" refer?

1st Advent

The Messiah.

"Prince" is too subordinate in the grammar of v.26 to expect it as the subject of v.27.

2nd Advent

The Antichrist.

Not if v.26c "and its end" refers to the prince: "and HIS end."

Hebrew suffix its/his is ambiguous, could refer to the prince, the people, or the sanctuary! As the sanctuary will be destroyed (26b), perhaps it is best to take 26c ("and its end") as a parallel description of the destruction of the sanctuary.

"Prince" in v.26 refers to Titus. If Antichrist, this allegorizes the past literal fulfillment.

If we take as "and his end," then refers to the Antichrist.

3. To whom does "the many" refer?

The elect of the covenant. The nation Israel.

Verse 27b:

1. In what sense did the sacrifice and offering cease?

1st Advent

Ceased in the sense that
the typology was fulfilled
in Christ's atonement
(Heb.7:12, 8:13, 9:8-12).

Was demonstrated historically
when the veil of the temple
was torn in two (Matt.27:51).

2nd Advent

Will literally cease
when the Antichrist
sets up the Abom.
(Dan.11:31, 12:11).

Both views are compatible with the idea that the temple
will be rebuilt and sacrifices will be reinstated be-
fore the Antichrist appears and the 2nd advent occurs.

Verse 27c: Lou Buses, Herb Rose.

1. Should the last noun be translated as "the desolator" or as "the desolate"?

1st Advent

As the desolate.
Implies the Jews receiving
the covenant curses.

Idea parallels immediate
context (v.26b) which refers
to destruction of the city.

Vowel pointing is not
inspired.
Context is more important
than any individual word.

2nd Advent

As the desolator,
Implies the Antichrist
being destroyed.

Idea parallels other
prophecies, cf. Daniel
7:11, 21, 22, 25, 26.

Defective Polel implies
transitive (desolator).
Admittedly ambiguous,
is also Qal active.
LXX is not helpful.

2. How parallel are verses 26 and 27?

1st advent

2nd advent

Parallel the same events.

Not parallel: time gap.

Vv.26c and 27c both point to desolations which fit the complete destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD better than the plundering which will precede the 2nd advent (Zec.14:2).

V.27c refers to the destruction of the Antichrist.

Any firm conclusions are dependent on the interpretation of v.27a (gap and Antichrist versus more details of the Messiah being cut off in v.26).

Some concluding remarks:

1. The enigmatic nature of prophecy.
2. Historical fulfillment appeals to skepticism while future fulfillment appeals to the imagination (Edom).
3. Some prophecies are clearer than others. We should build eschatological models on the clearest passages (cf. 2 Thess.2).

Valuable commentaries:

1st Advent: Kline (in "The Law and the Prophets," ed. by J. Skilton), Hengstenberg (in "Christology in the OT"), Payne (in "Encyclopedia of Prophecy"), Barnes, Allis (in "Prophecy and the Church"), Young, Calvin.

2nd Advent: Keil, Feinberg (in "Traditions and Testament"), Walvoord, etc.