

**LEVITICUS 26: ITS RELATIONSHIP TO
COVENANT CONTEXTS AND CONCEPTS**

by

William D. Barrick

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Author: William D. Barrick

Degree: Doctor of Theology

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Adviser: D. Wayne Knife

No other pericope of the Old Testament possesses the affinity which Leviticus 26 has for the Palestinian Covenant (Deuteronomy 27-30). The blessings and curses contained in the two pericopes are the most extensive in the Old Testament. Some Bible expositors have classified Leviticus 26 as a prophetic preview of the Palestinian Covenant. This study tests that hypothesis. A brief consideration of the Mosaic authorship of the pericope and a development of the covenant concept in the book of Leviticus initiates the study. The exegesis commences with a text-critical analysis which supports the reliability of the Massoretic Text and demonstrates the unreliability of the textual apparatuses of *Biblia Hebraica* (Kittel) and *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. The verse by verse treatment of the interpretation of the pericope directs attention to the grammatical, contextual, and literary elements. A comparative analysis of Leviticus 26 and similar extra-biblical materials (the Esarhaddon vassal treaties and the Sefire inscriptions) supplements the exegesis. The writer concludes the study by systematically summarizing the key doctrines of Leviticus 26.

Leviticus 26 is parenetic revelation written in an elevated literary style. It was granted at Sinai on the threshold of Israel's wilderness wanderings. The promulgation of the Mosaic Covenant had caused an apparent tension with the Abrahamic Covenant. After three disturbing apostasies at Sinai, Leviticus 26 was revealed to explain the relationship between the two covenants and to reemphasize the exclusive lordship of Yahweh. The Mosaic Covenant did not nullify the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant. This message in Leviticus 26 antedated Paul's in Galatians 3:17 by fifteen centuries. The Mosaic legislation emphasized the recipients of the land promised to Abraham. The blessings and curses of the pericope are developed with both covenants and their respective emphases in mind. Loyalty to Yahweh would initiate blessings. These are described in terms of the landedness promised by the Abrahamic Covenant. Disloyalty would initiate cursing. This is described as a five-stage process of Mosaic Covenant vengeance with the exile as the ultimate chastisement. The purpose of cursing was to produce confession of guilt, humility, and restitution. The sabbatical principle is deeply involved in the restitution. Circumcision was the seal of the Abrahamic Covenant, but the sabbaths were the seal of the Mosaic. The sabbatical principle is central to Leviticus 26. Yahweh is both the lord of space (the land) and time (the sabbaths). The land-giver and exodus-causer will always be loyal to his covenants. The pericope anticipates but does not reveal the Palestinian Covenant per se.

The extra-biblical treaties were composed seven centuries after Leviticus 26. Leviticus 26, the Esarhaddon vassal treaties, and the Sefire inscriptions were independently written. A mutual stream of covenant materials may have influenced the, but each possesses its own distinctions.

Accepted by the Faculty of Grace Theological Seminary
in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree
Doctor of Theology

D. Wayne Knife
Adviser

John J. Davis
Adviser

James E. Eisenbraun
Adviser

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
<i>Afo</i>	<i>Archiv fur Orientforschung</i>
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
AnOr	Analecta Orientalia
AOAT	Alter Orient and Altes Testament
ASV	<i>American Standard Version</i> (1901)
BAG	W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament</i>
BDB	F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, <i>Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
BDF	F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk, <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament</i>
<i>BHK</i>	R. Kittel, <i>Biblia Hebraica</i> , 1st edition
<i>BHK</i> ³	R. Kittel, <i>Biblia Hebraica</i> , 3rd edition
<i>BHS</i>	K. Elliger, <i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i>
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BibOr	Biblica et Orientalia
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
<i>EJ</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i>
<i>GAG</i>	W. von Soden, <i>Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik</i>
GKC	Gesenius-Kautzsch-Cowley, <i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i>
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament

ICC	International Critical Commentary
IDB	G. A. Buttrick (ed.), <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JNSL	<i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KAI	H. Donner and W. Rollig, <i>Kanaanaische und aramaische Inschriften</i>
KB	L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, <i>Lexicon in Veteris Testament</i> <i>Libros</i>
LSJ	Liddell-Scott-Jones, <i>Greek-English Lexicon</i>
MT	Massoretic Text
NASB	<i>New American Standard Bible</i>
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIV	<i>New International Version</i>
n.s.	new series
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTS	<i>Oudtestamentische Studien</i>
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
s.v.	sub verbo "under the word"; sub voce "under the title"
TDNT	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (eds.), <i>Theological Dictionary of</i> <i>the New Testament</i>
TDOT	G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (eds.), <i>Theological Dictionary</i> <i>of the Old Testament</i>
THAT	E. Jenni and C. Westermann (eds.), <i>Theologisches Handwörter-</i> <i>buch zum Alten Testament</i>
UT	C. H. Gordon, <i>Ugaritic Textbook</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>

VTSUP	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten and Neuen Testament
WTJ	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift fur die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

For the Qumran materials, the following abbreviations were employed:

CD	Cairo (Genizah text of the) Damascus (Document)
1QH	<i>Hodayot</i> (Thanksgiving Hymns) from Qumran Cave 1
1QM	<i>Milhamah</i> (War Scroll) from Qumran Cave 1
11QLev	Leviticus from Qumran Cave 11

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Jewish children once commenced their biblical studies with the book of Leviticus.¹ Today, however, the book has been neglected by the church. Few commentaries are available to the serious student, and few of those make any concerted effort to exegete the book verse by verse. The student of Leviticus will find much of the book uninterpreted in even the best of commentaries and will be required to strike out on his own if he is to uncover its riches. Wenham's well-written commentary² should renew interest in the book of Leviticus because of its clear presentation, bold approach to key subjects (e.g., the clean-unclean and holy-profane categories³), and integration with New Testament truths.⁴ Unfortunately, it also suffers occasionally from exegetical malnutrition. A case in point is the treatment of Leviticus 26.⁵ Leviticus 26 has consistently been the threefold victim of neglect: (1) It has been avoided in the synagogue because of its

¹ Bernard J. Bamberger, *Leviticus*, vol. 3 of *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*, 5 vols. (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1979), p. xix.

² Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979).

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-25.

⁴ Each chapter concludes with a discussion of its relationship to the New Testament and Christianity.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 324-34.

unpleasant subject matter.¹ (2) It has been treated sketchily in the commentaries (past and present, Jewish and Christian). (3) Its covenant affinities are rarely discussed even in materials dedicated to the concept of covenant in the Old Testament. However, there are references to the chapter occasionally, and some of these demonstrate an awareness of the chapter's significance for covenantal studies. Delbert Hillers, for example, places Leviticus 26 on a par with Deuteronomy 28:

In the first place, the prophets did employ much traditional material in composing their threats of doom. This is not a new idea by any means, but it is worth pointing out that the parallels gathered here fully support it. Secondly, this inherited material in the prophets is related to the Israelite tradition of curses as preserved in Deut 28 and Lev 26. Thirdly, these Israelite maledictions resemble, at many points, curses from Akkadian and Aramaic treaties. None of the parallels looks like simple copying, but the possibility of influence of treaty-curses on Israelite literature, or of mutual influence, or of dependence on common sources, cannot be disregarded. After all, we possess only a relatively small body of treaty-curses, and of these only a portion are useful for comparative purposes; in view of this the number of parallels to expressions in the prophets is impressive.²

The significance of Leviticus 26, therefore, may be viewed from several perspectives: (1) its relationship to Deuteronomy 28, (2) its relationship to the Old Testament prophets and their revelations, and (3) its relationship to the treaties of the ancient Near East.

The abundance of similarities between Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 26-28 serves to catapult the former pericope into the same sphere of significance as the latter. Meredith Kline tantalizingly suggests that the curses of Deuteronomy 28 were "anticipated in the promises and

¹ Bamberger, *Leviticus*, p. 290.

² Delbert R. Hillers, *Treaty-Curses and the Old Testament Prophets*, BibOr 16 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1964), p. 78.

threats of a similar section in Leviticus (chap. 26)."¹ The exact nature of this anticipation needs definition--especially as it relates to the concepts of prophetic revelation and progressive revelation.

With this brief introduction to the significance of Leviticus 26 in mind, the following preliminary statements are presented in order to map out the purpose and procedure of this study.

Preliminary Statements

Statement of Purpose

This dissertation is committed to the testing of the following thesis: Leviticus 26 is a prophetic preview of the Palestinian Covenant. In order to facilitate the treatment of the thesis, the following working definitions are offered:

Prophecy is the message of God which he has revealed directly to his chosen spokesman. Thus, prophecy is divine revelation above all else. Prophecy is not being used here in the narrow sense of prediction nor in the strictest form-critical category totally distinct from narrative, law, psalms, and wisdom. The means and form of prophecy may differ radically from prophet to prophet. The time scheme of prophecy may be past, present, or future--at times even overlapping these three frames of reference.²

¹ Meredith G. Kline, *Treaty of the Great King: The Covenant Structure of Deuteronomy: Studies and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972), p. 124.

² There is such a wide range of acceptance of this definition and its factors that it would not serve the purpose of this study to present the biblical bases for the definition. The reader is referred to the following sources for the detailed treatment of the definition and its bases: Richard N. Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1976), pp. 129-33; Edward J. Young, *My Servants the Prophets* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.,

A preview is "a statement giving advance information: FORE-TASTE, GLIMPSE."¹ The verb may have the meaning "to give an overall presentation of (a subject of study) before beginning systematic instruction."²

The Palestinian Covenant is the pact God established with Israel on the plains of Moab (Deuteronomy 27-30). This covenant was entered by Israel's oath in Moab (Deuteronomy 29), confirmed by sacrifice and public deposit at Shechem (Josh 8:30-35), and renewed by common consent at Shechem near the end of Joshua's ministry (24:1-28). Synonyms for Palestinian Covenant include Deuteronomic Covenant and Covenant of the Plains of Moab.³

As this study progresses the problems of contexts must be treated. These include: (1) the general context of the treaty forms of the ancient Near East; (2) the historical-theological context of both the Abrahamic and Sinaitic covenants; and, (3) the prophetic-theological context of the Palestinian Covenant. The first of these contexts will be developed in Chapter IV ("A Comparative Analysis of

1952), pp. 56-75; J. Barton Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973), pp. 3-9; Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), pp. 37-40; Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction*, trans. Peter R. Ackroyd (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1965), pp. 76-81.

¹ Philip Babcock Gove, ed., *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language. Unabridged* (Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam Co., Publishers, 1976),--p. 1798.

² Ibid.

³ Cf. Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1953), pp. 58-59; Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament*, pp. 214-17, 226, 230; S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (New York: The Meridian Library, 1956), p. 71; *TDOT*, s.v. "בְּרִית," by M. Weinfeld, 2:256, 268-69; Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), pp. 59-116; Delbert R. Hillers, *Covenant: The History*

Leviticus 26, Esarhaddon's Treaties, and the Sefire Inscriptions"). The second and third contexts will be treated as they are encountered during the exegesis of Leviticus 26 in Chapter III ("An Exegetical Analysis of Leviticus 26") and in the discussion of the theological emphases of the pericope in Chapter IV ("A Systematic Synthesis of the Theological Concepts of Leviticus 26").

Statement of Pertinence

The subject of the significance of Leviticus 26 has already been introduced in the first section of this chapter.¹ The relationship of the pericope to Deuteronomy 27-30 is indicative of the position it should be granted in biblical studies. The very fact that Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 both contain covenant blessings and curses sets the two pericopes apart from the rest of the Old Testament--not because they are the only such materials, but because they are the most extensive.² Since there is nearly a universal consensus that Leviticus 26

of a Biblical Idea (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969), pp. 58-64, 134-42.

¹ See above, pp. 1-3.

² "In ausgeführter Form belegt ist sie einzig in Dt. 28 and Lev. 26, nur angedeutet ist sie in Texten, die von diesen beiden Kapiteln traditionsgeschichtlich abhängig sind oder in engem Zusammenhang mit ihnen stehen." Jorg Jeremias, *Kultprophetie and Gerichtsverkündigung in der späten Königszeit Israels*, WMANT 35 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1970), p. 165. (Translation: "In an elaborate form it occurs solely in Dt. 28 and Lev. 26, yet it is implied in those texts which are traditio-historically dependent on both of these chapters or stand in close relationship to them.") Cf. Deut 11:8-17, 26-29; 27:11-26; 30:15-20; Josh 8:33-34; 1 Kgs 8:31-53; Dan 9:11; Hag 1:5-11; Amos 4:6-13. See the chart of parallels between Amos 4, Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28, and 1 Kings 8 in Hans Walter Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, trans. Waldemar Janzen, *et al.*, ed. S. Dean McBride, Jr., in *Hermeneia*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Jr., *et al.* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), p. 213.

is closely related to Deuteronomy 28, it must have some bearing on the Deuteronomic Covenant in the latter passage and its immediate context. This covenant is not a minor statement of Yahweh's relationship to Israel. It must be ranked with the Abrahamic and Sinaitic covenants:

Indeed it seems that isolated writers of this school added yet another covenant in the land of Moab to form the third in the series, so that 'the whole structure of the religious relationship now rested on these three covenants as on three massive pillars'. At any rate, Deut. 26.17-19; 28.69; 29.8, 11, 13, 20 point in this direction.¹

Since the Deuteronomic (or, Palestinian) Covenant is of such major import, Leviticus 26 must, by its close association with it, be considered a significant piece of literature in the Old Testament's disclosure of the relationship of Yahweh to his people, Israel. If the covenants made with Abraham and Moses are not to be ignored in old Testament theology, the covenant in Moab and its attendant passages ought not to be ignored.

A caution should be issued regarding the subject of covenant: "the covenant does not explain everything about early Israel."² The relationship of Leviticus 26 to covenant is inherent to the pericope: the Abrahamic Covenant is specified in verse 42 and the Mosaic (or, Sinaitic) Covenant is identified in verses 13-15. Verse 9 ("I will ratify my covenant with you") provides the exegete with the problem of identifying the covenant: Abrahamic? Mosaic? or, Palestinian? The

¹ Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 2 vols., trans. J. A. Baker, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), 1:53; with quote from Richard Kraetzschmar, *Die Bundesvorstellung im Alten Testament in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (Marburg: 1896), p. 138.

² Hillers, *Covenant*, p. 87.

impact on this pericope of covenant concepts and covenant relationships, therefore, is evident. It is also quite true that the materials and concepts of covenant provide one of the most important aspects of Yahweh's relationship to Israel.¹ It behooves the student, however, to walk with care in this area and to seek relevance rather than to create it.² The thrust of this study is in that direction: to seek the concept and context of covenant in Leviticus 26. If that relationship is discovered, it will then be tested and proof given in detail to substantiate it.

It is with regard to covenant relationships in this pericope that the possibility of prophetic anticipation must be investigated. The idea is not novel. R. A. Barclay³ and H. G. Reventlow⁴ view Leviticus 26 as prophetic. Such an identification of the material in this pericope would not be inconsistent with Mosaic authorship since Moses was consistently presented as a prophet by the Old Testament.⁵

The book of Leviticus is arranged in a fashion conducive to the view that Leviticus 26 is in a covenant context. Chapters 1-7 present

¹ R. E. Clements, *Prophecy and Tradition, in Growing Points in Theology* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975), pp. 8, 15.

² Ronald E. Clements, *God's Chosen People: A Theological Interpretation of the Book of Deuteronomy* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1969), p. 28.

³ R. A. Barclay, *The Law Givers: Leviticus and Deuteronomy*, vol. 3 in *Bible Guides*, ed. William Barclay and F. F. Bruce (New York: Abingdon Press, 1964), p. 49.

⁴ Henning Graf Reventlow, "Die Volker als Jahwes Zeugen bei Ezechiel," *ZAW* 71 (1959):40.

⁵ Cf. Hillers, *Covenant*, p. 141. Cf. Deut 34:10, "There has not arisen again in Israel a prophet like Moses whom Yahweh knew face to face."

the sacrificial system which provided for an outward manifestation of the covenant relationship individually and nationally. The sacrifices were to be offered by covenant members only.¹ The sacrifices did not provide forgiveness for breach of covenant (i.e., they did not provide forgiveness for sins or deliver from the consequences of sin). The chief object of the sacrificial system was an exhibition of fellowship with the God of the covenant and with the people of the covenant—continued covenantal communion.²

Chapters 8-10 reveal the ministry of the priesthood. These priests were the caretakers of the covenant relationship--especially as it was to be continually manifested (even on a daily basis) in the sacrificial system. Unfaithfulness to the strict stipulations of this covenant ministry brought the death penalty to Nadab and Abihu (10:1-20).

Chapters 11-15 deal with the purity of life which Yahweh required of Israel in order that the surrounding nations would be able to recognize their identification with him. They were not to identify with any of the deities of the surrounding peoples. By diet, by birth, by treatment of "leprosy," and by personal hygiene, the covenant community was to be distinct from its neighbors.

Chapter 16 brings the covenant relationship to the calendar of Israel by making the day of atonement the focal point of the annual covenant renewal ceremonies. The tone of that day was one of Yahweh's sovereign rule over Israel. The fasting (vv. 29-31) of the day of atonement continued covenantal communion.

¹ Cf. Lev 1:2-3; 2:1; 17:8; 22:18, 25. This covenant community comprised of both native Israelites and proselytes.

² Cf. Exod 29:42-43; Ps 50:16.

was ordained in order to bring every thought into conformity with Yahweh's authority. The divine suzerain blessed his covenanted people by granting them his continued presence (a token of his protection) among them (v. 16; cf. vv. 1-2).

Chapters 17-24 prescribe in detail the ordinances by which the covenant community was bound. This legislation affected the diet, the social relationships, the religious leadership, the calendar, the center of covenant worship, and the abuse of the covenant relationship. The calendar (chapter 23) focused on the seventh month with its three major observances (vv. 23-43). The New Year celebration (the Feast of Trumpets, vv. 23-25) had overtones of kingship and kingdom.¹ It was a time when the sabbatical principle was operative (cf. seventh day, seventh month, seventh year, and seventh seventh year observances). It was a time for the covenant community to recognize formally the suzerainty of Yahweh. Chapter 24 presents ordinances pertaining to the tabernacle (the dwelling place of the visible presence of Yahweh, vv. 1-9) and pertaining to retribution for blasphemy (vv. 10-23). Blasphemy is further emphasized by way of illustration (vv. 10-12, 23). Blasphemy, in this context, is best understood as the appropriation of the divine name in the issuing of a curse without Yahweh's sanction.² Such an appropriation was a treasonous usurpation of covenant authority. This

¹ For arguments against connecting the Old Testament New Year festival to an enthronement festival, cf. Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 2 vols. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), 2:502-6. See, also, Norman H. Snaith, *The Jewish New Year Festival: Its Origin and Development* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1947).

² Cf. Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 311.

record is followed closely by expanded sabbatical legislation (chapter 25) and the formal blessings and curses of the covenant (chapter 26). All of the ordinances (chapters 17-24) involve the covenant at Mt. Sinai (the Mosaic Covenant).

It appears that the overall design of the book of Leviticus may have been influenced by covenant concepts.¹ The following summary of chapters 1-24 reflects this conclusion:

(1) Provision for the continued observance of the ratification sacrifices and meals (chapters 1-7).

(2) Provision for the continued publication of the covenant deposit and the delegation of responsibility to representatives of the suzerain (chapters 8-10).

(3) General stipulations for maintaining the covenant identity (chapters 11-15).

(4) Provision for the annual renewal of the covenant (chapter 16).

(5) Specific stipulations for maintaining the covenant identity (chapters 17-24) .

Chapters 25 and 26 enter at this point to bring the Sinaitic Covenant to a conclusion. This is accomplished by emphasizing the monotheistic and sabbatical principles which are the ultimate cornerstones of the covenant (cf. 25:55-26:3 and Exod 20:2-11). It is not surprising to find chapter 26 as the closing of Leviticus. Blessings and cursings

¹The two terms in this statement are emphasized in order to distinguish this concept from the concept that Leviticus was patterned after covenant or treaty forms. Cf. Hillers, *Covenant*, pp. 29-38.

usually concluded the treaties of the ancient Near East.¹

Chapter 27 forms an appendix to the book. It is positioned logically after the pericope regarding blessings and curses. Yahweh's vows and promises (chapter 26) provide the perfect exemplar for human vows and promises (chapter 27).²

Having viewed Leviticus 26 in its greater context (that of the entire book), it is possible to understand the covenant significance of the pericope as well as its vital contribution to the development of the book. Leviticus 26 may be interpreted more accurately with a proper understanding of the purpose and argument of the book as a whole.

Recent developments in "exile theology"³ have brought even greater significance to this pericope. This area of study involves the exilic prophets' dependence upon Leviticus 26 for some of their covenant materials. "Exile theology" treats the pericope as prophetic.⁴ The motifs of judgment and deliverance are emphasized in the old Testament concept of exile. The exile was to become more than a punitive factor in Israel's history; it was to become a catalyst for the furtherance of their faith (i.e., a rehabilitating factor).⁵

¹ Cf. Dennis J. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant: A Study in Form in the Ancient Oriental Documents and in the Old Testament*, AnBib 21A (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978), pp. 172-87.

² Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 336.

³ E.g.: Thomas M. Raitt, *A Theology of Exile: Judgment/Deliverance in Jeremiah and Ezekiel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977); Ralph W. Klein, *Israel in Exile: A Theological Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979). The relationship of Leviticus 26 to the exile by way of the subject matter of the pericope does not automatically place its composition in the time of the exile. This matter of date will be discussed at a later point in this study.

⁴ Raitt, *A Theology of Exile*, pp. 25-29, 240 n. 36.

⁵ Klein, *Israel in Exile*, pp. 1-8.

The concept of exile is connected closely with the sabbatical principle. This is implied by 2 Chronicles 36:21,

so that the word of Yahweh through Jeremiah might be fulfilled until the land enjoyed the restitution of¹ its sabbaths. All the days of its devastation it rested so that seventy years might be fulfilled.

This reference is commonly accepted as being dependent upon Leviticus 26:34,

Then the land shall enjoy the restitution of its sabbaths all the days of its devastation while you are in the land of your enemies. Then the land shall rest; yea, it shall enjoy the restitution of its sabbaths.

The sabbatical principle's relationship to the land, the exile, and the nation of Israel would be sufficient reason to regard Leviticus 26 as a significant pericope.² The observance of the sabbatical principle (both weekly and annually) brought the promise of blessing (cf. Lev 25:18-21). The failure to observe the principle brought the threat of cursing, indeed, the ultimate of curses: physical death (cf. Exod 31:13-17). Leviticus 26 closely connects the sabbatical principle and the blessings and curses of the covenant. This is consistent with the accentuation of these same aspects elsewhere in the Old Testament covenant materials.

Statement of Procedure

The procedure adopted in this study reflects the writer's convictions with regard to exegetical methodology. The following steps outline the procedure:

¹ The italics in the biblical quotation represent words added to clarify meaning.

² Cf. Niels-Erik A. Andreasen, *The Old Testament Sabbath: A Tradition-Historical Investigation*, SBLDS 7 (Missoula, MT: The Society of Biblical Literature, 1972), pp. 80-81, 203-54.

(1) A text-critical study of Leviticus 26 will be presented first in order to establish the text--the foundation of all exegesis.

(2) An interpretive study of the pericope will follow in order to exegete the established text.

(3) A comparative study of Leviticus 26 with key treaties of the ancient Near East (namely, Esarhaddon's treaties and the Sefire inscriptions) will be pursued in order to evaluate influence.

(4) A conceptual-theological analysis of the pericope will be presented finally in order to systematize the doctrinal contributions to Old Testament theology.

Text-critical analysis

There are two different approaches to be considered with regard to the study of the text of the Old Testament. These approaches involve both the establishment and the interpretation of the text:¹

(1) The textual methodology emphasizes the graphic transmission of the text and characteristically opts to emend the Massoretic Text (sometimes by conjecture) rather than to await philological or linguistic elucidation.

(2) The philological methodology emphasizes the semantic transmission of the text and characteristically opts for cognate elucidation.

The first of these methodologies seems to dominate the majority of commentaries on Leviticus. Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica*² is the leading

¹ Thomas A. Nicholas, "The Current Quest for the Meaning of the Text of the Old Testament," *WTJ* 34 (1972):120.

² BHK³.

edition of the Hebrew Old Testament exhibiting this text-critical philosophy. Although conjectural emendation has not maintained its domination in Old Testament text-critical study,¹ it continues to be an influential viewpoint and practice. In the strictest sense, conjectural emendation is "a reading for which no authority can be found in any text-tradition, direct or indirect, known to us up to the present time."² The ultimate thrust of conjecturalism³ is the text's supposed state of imperfection and its resultant lack of authority.⁴ This philosophy is humanistic and wrongly denies the text its prima-facie status.⁵ Conjecture with reference to the autographa should have no place in "text criticism in *sensu stricto*."⁶ However, such an evaluation of the emendatory approach to the text of the Old Testament should

¹ David Noel Freedman, "Prolegomenon," in *The Forms of Hebrew Poetry*, George Buchanan Gray (reprint ed., New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1972), p. xxiii; Sidney Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study* (reprint ed., Ann Arbor: Eisenbrauns, 1978), pp. 319-20.

² Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study*, p. 20 (with regard to the viewpoint of Joseph Ziegler).

³ Conjecturalism is not limited to textual criticism. It is also exhibited in the exegetical practice of many commentators who conjecturalize interpretations on the flimsiest of grounds. See, M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, "The History of the Bible-Text and Comparative Semitics--A Methodological Problem," *VT* 7 (1957):198.

⁴ Cf. James Barr, *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 68; Bertil Albrektson, "Reflections on the Emergence of a Standard Text of the Hebrew Bible," *VTSup* 29 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978), pp. 62-63; James A. Sanders, "Text and Canon: Concepts and Method," *JBL* 98 (1979):19-20, 24-26.

⁵ See Robert Dick Wilson, *A Scientific Investigation of the Old Testament*, rev. Edward J. Young (Chicago: Moody Press, 1959), pp. 82-83.

⁶ Sanders, "Text and Canon," p. 12.

not be taken to such an extreme that the beneficial effects of the Gottingen school¹ cannot be recognized.

While deploring the mutilating effects on the text of their labors, we may agree that scholars so inspired stimulate response and reaction, and in their way they contribute to progress in the field.²

The second of these methodologies is exemplified by the contributions of men like Mitchell Dahood³ and James Barr.⁴ These men are the chief representatives of two different schools of text-critical methodology: the Rome school and the Edinburgh school,⁵ respectively. The Rome school represents a more extreme approach to the philological methodology. The Edinburgh school is a moderating influence.

Both methodologies have their negative and their positive aspects. Extremism may be found in both conjectural emendation and philological imagination. The external evidence involved in the textual approach cannot be ignored (manuscript and versional evidence). Nor can the internal evidence involved in the philological-linguistic

¹ Gottingen is associated with this particular text-critical school because of the relationship it had to the chief representative of this school, Julius Wellhausen. The title "surgical school" has also been employed (cf. Freedman, "Prolegomenon," p. xxii). The writer has described the various text-critical schools in a research paper: "Old Testament Textual Criticism: Its Current Trends and Tensions" (unpublished research paper, Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, 1980), pp. 8-15.

² Freedman, "Prolegomenon," p. xxiii (emphasis added).

³ E.g., Mitchell Dahood, *The Psalms*, AB (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1966-70).

⁴ Cf. Barr, *Comparative Philology*.

⁵ See above, n. 1.

⁶ Cf. G. R. Driver, review of *Proverbs and Northwest Semitic Philology*, by M. Dahood, *JSS* 10 (1965):113-14; James Barr, "Semitic

approach be ignored (etymological, stylistic, grammatical, and semantic evidence). All the evidence must be considered objectively. The text critic should employ both methodologies, emphasizing one or the other depending on the evidence available for each particular textual problem. Textual emendation must not be ruled out dogmatically, but it should be employed only as the last resort. The Massoretic vocalization should be given priority until the evidence cannot support it.¹ The excesses of pan-Ugaritism or any other panism should be avoided.

The writer's approach, therefore, may be termed eclectic. In other words, he reserves the privilege of pursuing all pertinent avenues of research and of considering all forms of evidence rather than to assume that the prima-facie evidence of the present Massoretic Text is unconditionally vindicated.²

The procedure will be to consider the variants as they appear (verse by verse), giving greater attention to those text-critical problems which have the greater significance to the exegetical process. Since there are no material variants in Leviticus 26, the discussion will be somewhat limited. It is not the purpose of this study to give an exhaustive text-critical analysis of every recurrent variant. The evidence for each variant will be presented in the following order: (1) Massoretic Text, (2) Samaritan Pentateuch, (3) Septuagint and its

Philology and the Interpretation of the Old Testament," in *Tradition and Interpretation*, ed. G. W. Anderson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), p. 51.

¹ Cf. Nicholas, "The Current Quest," p. 127; Barr, *Comparative Philology*, pp. 35-36, 188-222.

² Barrick, "Old Testament Textual Criticism," pp. 25-26.

daughter versions, (4) Qumran, (5) Targums, (6) Syriac, (7) Old Latin, (8) Latin Vulgate, (9) Sahidic, (10) Coptic, (11) Ethiopic, (12) Arabic, and (12) Armenian.¹

Exegetical analysis

In the treatment of the textual evidence some amount of interpretation will have been employed already. Ideally, however, it should be kept to a minimum in order to insure text-critical objectivity. The exegesis will proceed along the lines of a full grammatical analysis of the established text of Leviticus 26. Illustrative materials will be utilized from the Old Testament, extra-biblical documentation, and (where pertinent) New Testament references (e.g., Lev 26:12 and 2 Cor 6:16b). An interpretive outline will be presented as the study proceeds.

Details concerning fine points of grammar or grammatical disputation will be relegated to the footnotes. The writer's grammatical opinions will be reflected in the body of the study. The reader wishing to pursue the writer's lines of reasoning for those grammatical opinions should find the footnotes helpful. In an exegetical analysis of forty-six verses there is little room for extensive discussion or defence of grammatical niceties.

Comparative analysis with extra-biblical treaties

The choice of the Esarhaddon treaties and the Sef're inscrip-

¹ Cf. James R. Battenfield, "Hebrew Stylistic Development in Archaic Poetry: A Text-Critical and Exegetical Study of the Blessing of Jacob, Genesis 49:1-27" (unpublished doctor of theology dissertation, Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, 1976), p. 100.

tions was based upon the agreement of Weinfeld,¹ Hillers,² McCarthy,³ and Wiseman⁴ regarding their importance and relationship to Leviticus 26. This opinion, however, is not held by Bamberger who declares that this pericope "does not present such close parallels to any known document from the Near East, though it too contains some of the stereotyped language of the treaty curses."⁵ In response to Weinfeld's comparison of Leviticus 26 to the Sefire materials, Bamberger also says, "these similarities appear to me slight and superficial, not like the striking parallels between Deuteronomy and the Assyrian treaties."⁶ Obviously, there is a difference of opinion and sufficient ground for reevaluation of the evidence.

Such a comparative study must be based upon a proper understanding of the texts involved. Therefore, this section of the study will follow the textual and exegetical analyses of Leviticus 26. Such preparatory measures are necessitated by the fact that better commentaries are available on Esarhaddon's treaties and the Sefire inscriptions than on Leviticus 26: The following works will provide the base

¹ Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, pp. 59-157.

² Hillers, *Treaty-Curses*, p. 77; and, *Covenant*, pp. 132-40.

³ McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, pp. 112-15, 287.

⁴ D. J. Wiseman, *The Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon* (London: The British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 1958), p. 26 n. 201. Cf., also: R. Frankena, "The Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon and the Dating of Deuteronomy," *OTS* 14 (1965):122-54; F. C. Fensham, "Maledictions and Benedictions in Ancient Near-Eastern Vassal-Treaties and the Old Testament," *ZAW* 74 (1962):1-19.

⁵ Bamberger, *Leviticus*, p. 290.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 338 n. 5. Cf. Clements, *Prophecy and Tradition*, pp. 16-17, 21.

from which the extra-biblical materials will be examined: Esarhaddon--
 Borger¹ and Wiseman;² Sefire--Donner and Rollig³ and Fitzmyer.⁴

Systematic theological synthesis

Since "the historical principle operating side by side with the systematic in a complementary role"⁵ is a proper description of the methodology of Old Testament theology, this study will present both the diachronic and synchronic viewpoints of the doctrinal contributions of Leviticus 26. The synchronic will be inherent in the choice of doctrinal topics or emphases from the pericope itself (e.g., the prohibition of idolatry, the sabbath, law, covenant, blessing, imprecation, exile, the land, guilt, etc.). The diachronic will be presented within each topical discussion. Each subject will be related to the historical perspective (i.e., viewed with respect to progressive revelation).

This particular section of the dissertation will not be treated in great detail. The purpose is not to present an Old Testament theology, but to evaluate the contributions of Leviticus 26 to Old Testament theology.

¹ R. Borger, *Die Inschriften Asarhaddon*, Afo 9 (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1956).

² Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon.

³ *KAI*.

⁴ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire*, BibOr 19 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1967).

⁵ Eichrodt, *Theology*, 1:32 (emphasis his). For practical purposes, this statement by Eichrodt is a description of the concept of progressive revelation. God's revelation not only deals specifically with the needs of a particular time period in which his people live, it also builds upon previous revelation.

General Introduction to Leviticus 26

Date and Authorship

Two major factors contribute to the writer's conclusion that Leviticus (and, thereby, Leviticus 26) was written by Moses: (1) the direct statements of Leviticus to the effect that Moses was the recipient of the revelation contained therein (cf. 1:1; 4:1; 5:14; 6:1 [Heb., 5:20], 8 [Heb., 6:1], 19 [Heb., v. 12], 24 [Heb., v. 17]; 7:22, 28, 38; 8:1; 11:1; 12:1; 13:1; 14:1, 33; 15:1; 16:1, 2; 17:1; 18:1; 19:1; 20:1; 21:1, 16; 22:1, 17, 26; 23:1, 9, 23, 26, 33; 24:1, 13, 23; 25:1; 26:46; 27:1, 34); and, (2) the "considerable degree of uncertainty"¹ about any alternative dating of Leviticus as a whole or in part (especially the Holiness Code of chapters 17-26 and chapter 26 alone²). In lieu of reliable evidence to the contrary, the prima-facie evidence of the document's own claim to Mosaic authorship must be allowed to stand.³ To do otherwise would be to resort to conjecture, as admitted by the

¹ Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament*, p. 238; cf. pp. 233-39.

² Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapters 1-24*, trans. Ronald E. Clements, ed. Frank Moore Cross, et al., in *Hermeneia* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), pp. 46-52. Zimmerli presents an excellent summary of the similarities and differences between Ezekiel and Leviticus 26 (*ibid.*, p. 51) as well as a brief presentation of some of the various views of the authorship of Leviticus 26, including Ezekiel as a possible author (*ibid.*, pp. 46-47).

³ Cf. Wilson, *A Scientific Investigation*, pp. 8, 23-24, 27-57. "In contradistinction to the inquisitorial method is that which presumes a man to be innocent until he is proven guilty. As applied to documents it proceeds on the presumption that a document is to be presumed to be what it purports to be until it shall be proved that it is not." *Ibid.*, p. 27.

writers who question the Mosaic authorship of Leviticus or of chapter 26 itself.¹

Proceeding upon the assumption of Mosaic authorship, Leviticus 26 has as its *mise en scene* the period of time immediately subsequent to the revelation of the Sinaitic Covenant to Moses on Mt. Horeb/Sinai. This setting must be recognized for what effect it has on the revelation in this pericope: exilic statements should not be attributed to prophecy after the occurrence of the event (*vaticinium ex eventu*).

Contextual Considerations

The remote (the book of Leviticus) and the immediate (chapters 25 and 27) contexts of Leviticus 26 were unfolded in the discussion of the significance of the pericope in the book as a whole.² Both contexts indicate the covenant relationship which dominates chapter 26. Chapter 25 belongs with chapter 26 as a single literary unit consisting of two sections: 25:1-55 and 26:1-46. This literary unit is set apart by an inclusion involving 25:1 ("Then Yahweh spoke to Moses on Mt. Sinai") and 26:46 ("These are the decrees, judgments, and instructions which Yahweh presented between himself and the sons of Israel on Mt. Sinai through Moses").

Chapters 25 and 26 share the emphasis of the sabbatical principle

¹ See above, p. 20 nn. 1 and 2. Cf. Wenham, *Leviticus*, pp. 8-13; Peter R. Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration A Study of Hebrew Thought of the Sixth Century B.C.*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968), pp. 84-86. For additional confirmation of an early date for the context of Leviticus 26 (esp. chapter 25), see: Stephen Herbert Bess, "Systems of Land Tenure in Ancient Israel" (unpublished doctor of philosophy dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1963), pp. 118 n. 178, 142.

² See above, pp. 7-11.

while chapters 26 and 27 share the emphasis of the vows and/or promises. The pericope under consideration, therefore, is not an isolated or appended unit lacking significant ties to its contexts. This unity of material is also conducive to the Mosaic authorship of the entire book of Leviticus.¹

¹ For a defence of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (and thus, Leviticus 26), see: Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (revised ed., Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), pp. 105-18, 162-64; G. Herbert Livingston, *The Pentateuch in Its Cultural Environment* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1974), pp. 205-69; M. H. Segal, *The Pentateuch: Its Composition and Its Authorship and Other Biblical Studies* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967), pp. 6-27, 56-57.

CHAPTER II

A TEXT-CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF LEVITICUS 26

Leviticus 26 evidences a stable text presenting only recurrent variants which have little effect upon the exegesis of the pericope. This factor accounts for the seeming neglect of text-critical discussion in most of the commentaries. The text-critical variants of the pericope do offer some instructive perspectives, however. They illustrate current trends in Old Testament textual criticism and reveal the character of text-critical apparatuses in the editions of the Hebrew Old Testament.

The following studies in the text of Leviticus 26 are presented in the order of their occurrence in the pericope. A summary of the types of problems encountered will be presented in tabular form at the conclusion of this chapter.

Verse 2

The Syriac presents a minor variant with *(pwqđny)* "my ordinances" for שבתתי "my sabbaths." This appears to be nothing more than a scribal error (perhaps paramnesia?) resulting from a confusion of memory with either 25:18 or 26:3 where this term is employed with the concept of "keeping" (מצות שמר). Thus, the retroversion of BHS (מצותי) "my commandments") is consistent with the Syriac-Hebrew equivalents in the context but is text-critically irrelevant since the rendering is most likely due to scribal error rather than to a

similar *Vorlage*. It would have been better had *BHS* given only the transliterated Syriac variant (omitting the irrelevant retroversion which might lead one to believe that a different *Vorlage* was probable).

Verse 9

The questionable character of the critical apparatuses in both *BHK*³ and *BHS* manifests itself in the lemma for this verse. Both indicate that Codex Hillel reads **אתם** "them" instead of **אתכם** "you." However, Codex Hillel actually has **אתכם!**¹

Verse 11

The sole dissenting witness from the MT's **משכני** "my dwelling" is the Septuagint's **τὴν διαθήκην μου** "my covenant." However, the testimony is divided among Septuagint manuscripts, some of which read **σκηνή** "tabernacle" in place of **διαθήκη**.² It is again premature (or presumptuous?) of *BHK3* and *BHS* to offer a retroversion (**ברית** "my covenant"). The theological association of the divine residency with the covenant is familiar to the student of the Old Testament (cf. Exod 24:7, 8, with 24:16; Lev 26:9 with 26:11; 1 Kgs 6:19 with 6:13; 8:1, 6, 21, 23, with 8:12; and, especially Ezek 37:26 with 37:27). Several explanations for the Septuagintal reading may be offered before the text critic should resort to retroversion: (1) The scribe accidentally may

¹ *The Pentateuch: Codex Hillel* (Jerusalem: Makor Publishing, Ltd., 1974), 2:297.

² Alan England Brooke and Norman McLean, eds., *The Old Testament in Greek According to the Text of Codex Vaticanus, Supplemented from Other Uncial Manuscripts* (Cambridge: University Press, 1909), 1/2:397.

have altered the MT due to the proximity of Leviticus 26:9 (parablepsis?); (2) the scribe accidentally may have altered the MT due to his theological awareness of the relationship between the divine presence and the divine covenant (perhaps via the Ezek 37:26-27 passage?). In any case, there is no reason to give the impression that some of the Septuagint manuscripts possessed a variant Hebrew Vorlage (as is accomplished by offering a retroversion).

An additional observation is worthy of note: the massorah indicates that **משכני** is found but three times in the Old Testament (**ג**). Such a notation is an indication that this reading has been maintained carefully so that it is not altered by the Massoretic scribes. It is indeed a marvel how often the circellus in the MT appears "precisely over words emended in the apparatus of *BHK* or *BHS*!"¹ The circellus ought, to the contrary, indicate to the textual critic that extreme caution should be observed in order not to alter the text.² Certainly, evidence for alteration in Leviticus 26:11 is not weighty enough to warrant emendation.

Verse 16

In this verse another example of the preserving influence of the massorah is discovered. The MT **בהלה** "immediately" is rendered by some of the Samaritan manuscripts as **בחלה** "with sickness." The variant

¹ Sanders, "Text and Canon," p. 18.

² Ibid., p. 17. For a different viewpoint concerning the massorah, see: *IDB*, s.v. "Text, OT," by B. J. Roberts, 4:586. The notations of the massorah do not establish the text, they merely confirm the reliability of the prima-facie evidence.

may be due to a confusion of the Samaritan script's \aleph () and \aleph ().

Since there is no other witness to support the Samaritan, the MT should be maintained. Sanders expresses succinctly the force of the massorah's lamed (ל) in such cases

A lamed in the mp, keyed by the Massorettes to a word in the line indicated, stands like a soldier to remind the next scribe that the word in question must be copied precisely as written or corrected in the Vorlage. The text critic who takes the massorah seriously and pursues each case far enough soon realizes that there was often good reason for them. The word in question with a lamed in mp is a hapax in the detailed form in the text. There is no other quite like it anywhere else in the Bible and it must be guarded in its particularity; it must retain its peculiarity and not be assimilated to another form of the word more common in the Bible or elsewhere.¹

Verse 17

The major text-critical problem of this verse involves the MT's \aleph \aleph "and they shall rule" in contrast to the Septuagint's $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\delta\iota\omega\acute{\xi}\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\iota$ = \aleph \aleph (?) "and they shall pursue."² This lemma illustrates the need for considering the translation techniques of the Greek versions (especially Aquila's) and for considering the testimony of the massorah. In addition, this lemma demonstrates the failure of *BHS* to give an adequate accounting of relevant variants.³

The Hexaplaric variants unfortunately were omitted by both *BHK*³ and *BHS*. *Alloi* present $\pi\alpha\iota\delta\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\nu$ "they shall chastise" and $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota\kappa\rho\alpha\tau\acute{\eta}$ -

¹ Sanders, "Text and Canon," p. 17.

² Cf. Dominique Barthelemy, *et al.*, *Preliminary and Interim Report on the Hebrew Old Testament Text Project*, 3 vols. (2nd revised ed., Stuttgart: United Bible Societies, 1973-76), 1:204.

³ John Wm. Wevers, "Text History and Text Criticism of the Septuagint," *VTSup* 29 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978), pp. 395-97.

σουσιν "they shall rule over/prevail/conquer."¹ It appears that the Greek version of Aquila should be identified with the latter since he normally rendered ןׁׁׁ by ἐπικρατέω.² Symmachus is credited with καταδουλώσονται "they shall enslave," while Theodotion agrees with *Alloi*.³ All three Greek readings are in harmony with the concept of the MT. The concept of chastisement is interpretive: the subjection of Israel to another nation was a matter of chastisement for disobedience to God.⁴ The concept of enslavement is likewise interpretive since subjection may result in enslavement. However, καταδουλώω may have the meaning, "absolute subjection or the loss of autonomy."⁵ The Septuagint reading may be interpretive also since subjection involves persecution or even expulsion.⁶ The Septuagint may be understood also as an assimilation of this part of the verse to the last section of the verse.

Another text-critical aspect of the reading ןׁׁׁ is the massorah indicating that this form occurs only twice: here and in Isaiah 14:2. The Massoretic notation again preserves the integrity of the text. The MT's circellus alerts the reader to this confirmatory evidence (as in the previously discussed examples at vv. 11 and 16).

¹ Fridericus Field, ed., *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt sive Veterum Interpretum Graecorum in Totum Vetus Testamentum*, 2 vols. (Oxonii: E Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1875), 1:215.

² *Ibid.*, n. 23. Cf. Joseph Reider, *An Index to Aquila*, rev. Nigel Turner, VTSup 12 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966), pp. 92, 309.

³ Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum*, 1:215.

⁴ *TDNT*, S.V. "παιδεύω," by Georg Bertram, 5:606-12.

⁵ *TDNT*, S.V. "δοῦλος," by Karl Heinrich Rengstorf, 2:279.

⁶ *TDNT*, s.v. "διώκω," by Albrecht Oepke, 2:229.

Verse 20

A minor variant exists in the current text of this verse which has been ignored by the commentaries: the substitution of **הַשָּׂדֶה** "the field" for **הָאָרֶץ** "the land" in the last part of the verse. **הָאָרֶץ** is supported by Qumran (11QLev,¹ not noted by either *BHK*³ or *BHS*), Targum Onqelos (majority of manuscripts; incorrectly identified as Targum Jonathan by *BHS*), and the Syriac Peshitta (omitted by both *BHK*³ and *BHS*). **הַשָּׂדֶה** is supported by the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Septuagint, at least four manuscripts of Targum Onqelos, Targum Neophyti I, the Syriac Hexapla, and the Arabic. A number of Hebrew manuscripts also possess this latter reading. The Latin Vulgate chose to omit the term altogether.²

The greatest influence on the variant reading appears to have been verse 4 which is a very close parallel. Both *BHK*³ and *BHS* indicate this situation by "ut 4." The variant could have arisen through unintentional memory error (paramnesia?) or through intentional harmonization.

The infrequency of **הַשָּׂדֶה** in Leviticus (and, in Deuteronomy)³ confirms the MT reading. The combination **הַשָּׂדֶה עֵץ** "trees of the field" occurs only in verse 4 and Deuteronomy 20:19. In Ugaritic the pair

¹ David Noel Freedman, "Variant Readings in the Leviticus Scroll from Qumran Cave 11," *CBQ* 36 (1974):532.

² As in Wenham's translation (*Leviticus*, p. 325).

³ **הַשָּׂדֶה** (25x in Leviticus, 13x in Deuteronomy) vs. **אָרֶץ** (82x in Leviticus, 198x in Deuteronomy): Peter M. K. Morris and Edward James, *A Critical Word Book of Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*, vol. 8 of *The Computer Bible*, ed. J. Arthur Baird and David Noel Freedman (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press and Biblical Research Associates, Inc., 1975), pp. 102, 109, 128, 138.

ars // sd "land // field" occurs in the same context as the combination 'sm *ars* "trees of the land," offering further confirmation of the MT in both verses 4 and 20.¹

Verse 24

Like verse 20 with its attraction to verse 4, verse 24 has been attracted to verse 28 by either paramnesia or harmonization. In this case, the text-critical problem involves more than a single word and has a greater breadth of textual evidence to consider. The MT reads, **וְהִלַּכְתִּי אִי־אֲנִי עִמָּכֶם בְּקִרְי** "then, indeed, I myself shall walk in opposition to you." The Samaritan Pentateuch only alters the particle **אִי** "indeed" to **גַּם** "even," which is a semantic equivalent.² This variant is the only one recognized by either *BHK*³ or *BHS*. Translation *ad sensum* for **קִרְי** "opposition" is manifested in some Septuagint manuscripts (*πλάγιως* "contrary to," *ἐμψηλονεικως* "obstinately," *ἐναντίως* "against"), the Targums (**בְּקִשְׁי** "with difficulty," **מְרִי** "rebellious/contentious/obstinate"), the Syriac (*qry'yt* "contentiously," *ptyl'yt* "obliquely/contrary"), and the Latin Vulgate (*adversus*). All of these renderings have the sense of opposition or adversity.

The majority testimony of the Septuagint, however, reads **θύω** *πλάγιω* "in adverse anger" (or, "in angry/fervent adversity/opposition"). *BHK*³ and *BHS* ignore this reading, however, choosing instead to recognize the lesser variant regarding the particle. The evidence from Qumran appears to lend support to the Septuagint with **קִרְי בְּחַמַּת** "in fervent/angry opposition" (11QLev). Support may be found also in the margin of

¹ *UT* 126:3-6 (p. 193).

² *GKC*, pp. 483 (§153), 484 (§154a n. 1).

Targum Neophyti I: **בַּחֲמָה וּבְקִשְׁיוֹ** "with anger and with difficulty." This reading, however, appears to be conflate. It expands and emphasizes the adverbial phrase in order to express more fully the translator's interpretation of the character of divine opposition.

The term **קָרַי** is limited to Leviticus where it is always found in construction with **הֵלֵךְ עִם** "walk with" and occurs only in chapter 26 (vv. 21, 23, 24, 27, 28, 40, 41). The occurrence of **חֲמָה** "anger" in verse 28 is a *hapax legomenon* in Leviticus. It would appear that verse 28 (**בַּחֲמַת־קָרַי** "with angry/fervent opposition") has been the primary factor in the variant history of verse 24 in both the Septuagint and the Qumran text.

Verse 31

According to Barr, *BHS* has a tendency to "cite 'nonn Mss' or 'mlt Mss' in support of a variation, when these are in most cases late medieval manuscripts" having "no independent evidential value"¹ (when considered in the light of the ancient sources, such as the Samaritan, Septuagint, Qumran, and Syriac witnesses). The Samaritan and the Syriac do support the singular **מִקְדָּשְׁכֶם** "your sanctuary" as opposed to the MT plural **מִקְדָּשֵׁיכֶם** "your sanctuaries." The latter is supported by the Septuagint, Targum Onqelos, and the Latin Vulgate. The context of the verse presents a number of pluralities: "your high places," "your incense altars," and "your cities" (vv. 30-31). Thus, the concept of a plurality of idolatrous sanctuaries is not antagonistic to the immediate context. Indeed, the parallelism of the first portion of verse 31 ("your cities") would seem to require the following plural, "your sanctu-

¹ James Barr, review of *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, in *JTS* 30 (1979):213-14.

aries." The idolatrous practices of the Israelites would one day permeate their entire nation with idol sanctuaries existing in many of its cities (cf. 1 Kgs 12:29; Amos 8:14).

Verses 34 and 35

The text-critical apparatuses of *BHK*³ and *BHS* for these two verses exhibit misleading information. The citation, without explanation, of the Samaritan variant אַשְׁמָה "guilt" (vv. 34 and 35) leaves the reader in a quandary: Is the notation intended to suggest a different Vorlage for the Samaritan Pentateuch in these verses? However, the MT is supported by the fact that the reference to this verse (or, to this verse's concept) in 2 Chronicles 36:21 maintains הַשְׁמָה "its desolation/devastation." The אַ in the Samaritan could be explained by the possibility of a miscorrection of אַשְׁמָה, since the Samaritan is known to have inserted vocalic אַ's from time to time.¹ If this seems to be too far afield, let one consider the possibility that there was virtually no theological difference between the concrete result of Israel's disobedience ("devastation") and the abstract result of Israel's disobedience ("guilt/sin"). In the mind of the scribe(s) they may have been understood as one and the same. Either way, the reading can be explained without resorting to a differing Vorlage.

BHS's notation that the Septuagint adds αὐτῆς "its" is unnecessary. The *Hop'al* infinitive absolute has the third feminine pronominal

¹ Adolf Brull, *Das samaritanische Targum zum Pentateuch*, Anhang 1: *Kritische Studien* (reprint ed., Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1971), p. 19 nn. 40 and 41. The inserted אַ in such a case could be an argument for the pointing אַשְׁמָה (as in 2 Chr 36:21) rather than אַשְׁמָה (Lev 26:34).

suffix appended: $\text{הַשְׁמָה} = \text{הַשְׁמָה}$ "its devastation."¹ The Septuagint, therefore, was merely translating the form accurately, not providing a variant reading. In fact, the Samaritan, Syriac, and Latin Vulgate all accurately include the pronominal suffix exhibited in the MT and the Septuagint.

It should also be noted that the MT includes a circellus over both forms of הַשְׁמָה (vv. 34 and 35). The same is true of בְּהַשְׁמָה "in its devastation" in verse 43 which suffered the same alteration in the Samaritan. The massorah could indicate, therefore, the Massorettes' understanding of corruptions to the text and they took steps to insure that later scribes realized the importance of copying the text accurately here.²

Both *BHK3* and *BHS* note that the Samaritan has a clearly feminine form for וְהָרָצָה "and she shall enjoy" (= וְהָרָצָה). This should not be taken as an indication that the MT does not have the feminine form. The third feminine singular of the perfect (*qtl*) does occur with just the ה ending.³

Verse 39

BHS cites the Septuagint's $\text{διὰ τὰς ἀμαρτίας ὑμῶν}$ "because of your sins" as a variant for the MT's בְּעוֹנֵם "because of/in their iniquities/guilt." The major problem is that of the pronominal suffix since the concept is the same. it is significant that there is Septuagintal

¹ GKC, pp. 182 (§67y), 256 (§91e).

² Sanders, "Text and Canon," pp. 17-18.

³ GKC, p. 209 (§75i).

support for the third person pronominal suffix¹ (a fact not indicated by *BHS*) and that the daughter versions of the Greek Old Testament all support the third person reading.² The ignoring of the manuscript evidence and the daughter versions by *BHS* produces a misconception of the ancient Greek versional evidence.

The most problematic lemma of this verse, however, is אִיבִיכֶם "your enemies." The second masculine plural pronominal suffix is challenged by a *qere* in Codex Muga (a ninth-century codex evidently by the same scribe as Codex Or. 4445 of the British Museum³), a multitude ("mlt" = 20-60)⁴ of manuscripts, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the versions (at least a plurality, if not all).⁵ The reading supported by this array of witnesses is the third masculine plural pronominal suffix ׀ָ "their." Although neither *BHK*³ nor *BHS* state in their apparatuses that this latter reading should be accepted, the very method of citation would have a psychological effect upon a text critic influenced by quantity rather than quality. Even the careful critic might assume that these apparatuses testify to a nearly unanimous witness which has few, if any, contrary voices. However, the following facts surface upon closer scrutiny: (1) Codex Muga is a prejudicing citation since its contribution is but a *qere* and no statement is made concerning Codex

¹ Brooke and McLean, eds., *The Old Testament in Greek*, p. 401.

² Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum*, 1:216.

³ Ernst Würthwein, *Der Text des Alten Testaments* (4th edition, revised, Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1973), p. 41.

⁴ *BHS*, p. xlvi. Cf. *BHK*³, p. 186 ("87 MSS").

⁵ *BHS*, p. xlvi.

Or. 4445 (i.e., whether it, as a manuscript by the same scribe, agrees by text or *qere*). Such information would help in evaluating the evidence. In fact, this piece of evidence may be duplicated in the "mlt" following in the apparatus. (2) *BHK*³ cites "87 MSS" while *BHS* indicates at least 27 less! (3) *BHK*³'s "Edd" (editions) is also a prejudicing citation since these comprise other editors' opinions of a similar nature to those found in *BHK*³ and *BHS*. Editions are not primary evidence, but secondary (or, even tertiary)! (4) Among the versions, Aquila, with his propensity for literal translation, renders the pronominal suffix by **ⲁⲙⲱⲛ** "your" in contrast to his less than literal fellows in the Hexapla who unanimously have **ⲁⲩⲧⲱⲛ** "their."¹ (5) There are dissenting witnesses in the manuscripts of Onqelos' Targum.² (6) Lastly, a circellus is to be observed over the three occurrences of **אִיבֵיהֶם** "their enemies" in verses 36, 41, and 44. The massorah points out that this form does appear these three times in this context.³ There is no inclusion of a like form or notation by the massorah in verse 39. That would seem to indicate that the Massoretes were guarding the occurrences in verses 36, 41, and 44 from a corrupting influence (**אִיבֵיכֶם** "your enemies") found in verses 7, 17, 34, 37, 38, and 39. In addition, the Rabbinic Bible places a circellus over **אִיבֵיכֶם** "your enemies" in verse 39

¹ Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum*, 1:216.

² Alexander Sperber, ed., *The Bible in Aramaic*, 5 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1959-73), 1:214, 4B:282. The Onqelos Targum in the Rabbinic Bible has the second person pronominal suffix. **מְקַרְאֹת גְּדוּלֹת**, 10 vols. (New York: Pardes Publishing House, Inc., 1951), 3:*loc. cit.*

³ *BHS*, p. 205. Cf. Gerard E. Weil, ed., *Massorah Gedolah Manuscript B. 19a de Leningrad*, vol. 1: *Les Listes* (Rome: Institut Biblique Pontifical, 1971), p. 99 (#821). *BHK*³ omits this massorah.

and cites a Sevir:¹ **מטעין בלי איביהם** "in this it is misleading to read **איביהם** 'their enemies'" (or, "occasion for error is given with **איביהם**"). Thus, with these six preceding points in mind, the case for the current reading in the MT is stronger than one is led to believe by either *BHK*³ or *BHS*.

This verse and its lemmas have demonstrated the value of carefully evaluating the text-critical apparatuses of *BHK*³ and *BHS* due to their incompleteness and misleading information. It has also produced additional examples of the values of the massorah and of the Greek daughter versions (especially Aquila).

Verse 41

The first lemma in this verse is presented by *BHS*. *BHS* offers the Septuagint's **καὶ ἀπολω** "and I shall destroy" in place of the MT's **והבאתי** "and I shall bring out" and provides the retroversion **והאבדתי** "and I shall destroy." The citation of the retroversion in *BHS* includes a question mark indicating that there might be evidence of a differing Vorlage. However, the semantic range of **ἀπολύω** includes the meaning of exile or deportation.² The Septuagint, therefore, may be taken as being consistent with the concept of the MT.

The second lemma consists of the double particle **אִם אִם** "whether/if then" which provides several interesting considerations: (1) the necessity for a critical edition of the Syriac Peshitta, (2) the contribution of rabbinic scholarship, (3) the *BHK*³ penchant for emendation,

¹ **גדולות מקראות**, 3:loc . cit. With regard to the Sevirin, cf. Robert Gordis, *The Biblical Text in the Making A Study of Kethib-Qere* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1971), pp. 26-28.

² LSJ, p. 208.

Leviticus volume is yet unavailable.¹ Perhaps it will prove to be of interest and enlightening concerning this problem. Meanwhile, there is no direct evidence that the present Syriac contradicts the MT.

In the Rabbinic Bible the commentaries of Rashi (Rabbi Shelomo Yitzchaki, d. 1105) and Ramban (Rabbi Moses ben Nachman, called Nachmanides, 1194-1270) are included. Both relate this lemma to the use of **לְכִּי** as a conditional particle ("if/whether") in Exodus 21:36.² The grammars do not cite Leviticus 26:41, but they do cite Exodus 21:36 as an example of the conditional use of **לְכִּי**.³ This grammatical identification is not the same as that given by the Hebrew Old Testament Text Project⁴ nor by Elliger⁵ who refer to it as introducing an indirect question.⁶ However, the rendering in GKC ("if perchance")⁷ indicates that the two classifications are quite closely related if not overlapping to the extent that they cannot be adequately separated.

While *BHS* is satisfied with offering a citation of critical evidence, *BHK*³ stepped out on a limb by suggesting an emendation: "1 frt

¹ The Peshitta Institute of the University of Leiden, eds., *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshitta Version* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966-).

² **מִקְרָאֵת גְּדוּלוֹת**, *loc. cit.*

³ E.g., GKC, p. 498 (g159cc); P. Paul Jouon, *Grammaire de l'Hebreu Biblique* (reprint ed., Rome: Institut Biblique Pontifical, 1965), p. 517 (§167q).

⁴ Barthelemy, *Preliminary and Interim Report*, 1:205.

⁵ Karl Elliger, *Leviticus*, HAT 1/4 (Tubingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr/Paul Siebeck, 1966), p. 363.

⁶ GKC, p. 475 (§150i).

⁷ *Ibid.*

cPS 𐤓𐤊(1)" ("read perhaps with Septuagint and Syriac, 𐤓𐤊(1)).¹

This sort of emendatory suggestion has brought justified criticism.

Upon checking the Samaritan Targum,² the writer discovered that the Septuagint's τότε "then" had been transliterated into the Samaritan:

(Hebrew transliteration: 𐤍𐤕𐤕). This sort of occurrence was noted by Brull over a century ago (though he did not cite this particular passage),³ but has received little attention since that time. Tal, in a recent study, emphasized Arabic and Aramaic corruptions of the Samaritan Targum,⁴ but only mentioned Greek corruptions in passing.⁵ The Samaritan Targum, like other witnesses, increase in text-critical value in direct proportion to the increased knowledge and understanding of those witnesses.

Verse 42

BHS and *BHK*³ both note that the Septuagint omits the first person singular suffix of 𐤁𐤓 𐤓𐤊 "my covenant" in this verse. However, they do not note that there are Septuagint manuscripts supporting the suffix (μου "my").⁶ *BHS* indicates that the Syriac insertion of *d'm*

¹ *BHK3*, p. 187.

² Brull, *Das samaritanische Targum*, 3:151. Cf. H. Petermann, ed., *Pentateuchus Samaritanus* (Berolini: W. Moeser, 1872-91), p. 342.

³ Brull, *Das samaritanische Targum*, 1:33, 2:40. occurs in v. 34 (2x) and v. 41 (2x) and other passages in the Pentateuch cited by Brull.

⁴ A. Tal, "The Samaritan Targum to the Pentateuch, Its Distinctive Characteristics and Its Metamorphosis," *JSS* 21 (1976):26-38.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁶ Brooke and McLean, eds., *The Old Testament in Greek*, p. 401.

"with" between **בריתי** and the proper noun following it throughout this verse is equivalent to the Hebrew **עם** "with." *BHK*³ proposes that the Hebrew order be altered from **את־בריתי** to **בריתי את־** on the basis of the Syriac. Both suggestions are unnecessary since the syntax of the phrase in the MT has been translated accurately by the Syriac.¹ The *BHK*³ proposal for the alternation of word order is also contradicted by the massorah (note the circellus over the first **את**). The massorah indicates both the position of the particle near the beginning of the verse and the triple occurrence of that particle within the same verse. Once again, the MT should be maintained in spite of the impressions one might receive from the apparatuses of *BHK*³ and *BHS*.

Verse 43

The comments made above concerning verses 34-35 suffice as an answer to the BHS lemmas regarding this verse.

Verse 44

The triple particle construction at the head of this verse has produced a text-critical discussion due to the apparent difference in some Targum manuscript(s?) cited by *BHS* (but not by *BHK*³). In checking this supposed variation, it is discovered that neither Targum Onqelos (via Sperber:² **ואף ברם דא** "yet nevertheless this"), Targum Yerushalmi (via Sperber:³ **ולחוד ברם בדא** "except only in this"), nor Neophyti I (which actually lacked vv. 42-44 and was reconstructed as **ואף בהדא**

¹ GKC, p. 426 (§131r). The suggestion of a dittography of the ך is unnecessary (cf. GKC, p. 415 [§128d]).

² Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic*, 1:215.

³ Ibid.

"and also in this")¹ contain *BHS*'s citation of the simple *bd'* (בְּדָא "in this"). None of the manuscripts referred to disagree with the MT in their Aramaic translations. More significantly, none of the manuscripts has the same reading in verse 44 as in verse 27--which is offered as the reason for the supposed variation in the Targums by *BHS* and as the reason for the proposed emendation by *BHK*³. To emend וְאִף־גַּם־זֵאת "yet in spite of this" to וְאִף־בְּזֵאת "yet in this" (or, "and even in this") would decrease the emphasis presented by this array of particles.² Also, it would betray the massorah which carefully marked the particle construction in verse 27 (וְאִם־בְּזֵאת "and if in this") for preservation and noted the primary position of וְאִף "yet" (or, "and yet") in verse 44.

The plural בארצות "in the lands" for the MT singular בארץ "in the land" is found in the Samaritan. However, the Samaritan is best explained by the influence of the plural suffixes on the translator.

The *BHS* citation of Septuagint miniscule manuscript(s?) for the second person plural pronominal suffix at the end of the verse in place of the MT's third person plural is significant in that this citation of minor Greek witnesses was employed in a place of editorial advantage. In the preceding discussions it has been observed that such evidence was conveniently ignored when it was contrary to the editorial opinion. This type of subjective recording of textual evidence is not conducive to accuracy and does not merit the trust of students. The massorah's

¹ Alejandro Diez Macho, *Neophyti I: Targum Palestinense MS de la Biblioteca Vaticana*, 5 vols. (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1971), 3:202-3.

² C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *The Pentateuch*, vol. 2, trans. James Martin, in *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament* (reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), p. 478.

circellus over the compound divine title (יהוה אלהיהם "Yahweh their God") indicates that the Massorettes believed this title (including the third person plural pronominal suffix) should be preserved.

Verse 46

The text-critical lemma in this verse concerns the MT's plural והתורה "and the laws" as compared to the Septuagint's singular ὁ νόμος "the law." The Hexapla demonstrates that the Greek daughter versions followed the MT: οἱ νόμοι "the laws." Aquila's version may be considered one of them. His literalness would argue strongly for the MT. The circellus over this form also argues for the preservation of the plural. The use of the ת as a feminine singular absolute termination would be a rarity¹ with little support here. The Septuagint's reading probably exhibits more interpretation than translation.

Summary

It should be evident to the reader by now that the text-critical apparatuses of *BHK*³ and *BHS* have proven quite disappointing to this researcher. The omissions, miscitations, prejudices, and carelessness of the two apparatuses render them practically useless to those unable to check the manuscripts and versions for themselves. This disappointment over the more recent *BHS* is shared by other reviewers. Barr says, "it is sad to have to say that the critical apparatus of *BHS* represents a step backward rather than forward in comparison with *BHK* (which itself was not so very good)."²

¹ GKC, pp. 223-24 (480f-g) .

² Barr, "review," p. 215.

The instruction of Sanders concerning the placement of the circellus has been fruitful throughout this pericope. It has proven to be significant by its consistent presence where emendation has been sought by *BHK*³ or *BHS*. The material presented in this section of the study could be expanded easily by a more detailed survey of the translational techniques of the ancient versions (especially the Septuagint, the Greek daughter versions, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Syriac Peshitta, and the Targums). However, such is not within the scope or purpose of this dissertation.

The following chart is offered as a convenient summary of the nature of the text-critical problems discussed in this study:

1. *Scribal*

1.1 - Error: verses 2 (Syriac), 16 (Samaritan), 20 (Samaritan, Septuagint), 31 (Samaritan, Syriac), 34-35 (Samaritan), 44 (Samaritan)

1.2 - Alteration: verses 11 (Septuagint), 20 (Samaritan, Septuagint)

2. *Editorial* (*BHK*³ and/or *BHS*)

2.1 - Error: verses 9 (Hebrew ms), 20 (Targums), 34-35 (Samaritan, Septuagint), 44 (Targums)

2.2 - Incompleteness: verses 11 (Septuagint), 17 (Greek versions), 24 (Septuagint), 39 (Septuagint, Greek versions, Targums), 42 (Septuagint), 44 (Targums), 46 (Greek versions)

2.3 - Miscellaneous: verses 39 (Hebrew mss, editions, Greek versions, Targums), 41 (Septuagint, Syriac), 44 (Septuagint)

3. *Massorah*: verses 11, 16, 17, 34-35, 39, 42, 44, 46

4. *Miscellaneous sources of solution*: verses 24 (translation techniques), 31 (context), 41 (translation techniques, rabbinics), 42 (syntax)

This chart demonstrates that: (1) The Samaritan text is the most likely to be subject to scribal error in Leviticus 26. (2) The Septuagint of

Leviticus 26 is the freest in its handling of the text. (3) The text-critical apparatuses of *BHK*³ and *BHS* evidence carelessness in several areas, but especially regarding the Septuagint, Greek versions, and Targums. (4) The massorah may be a major factor in the text-critical study of the Old Testament.

CHAPTER III

AN EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF LEVITICUS 26

The Massoretic divisions of the text of Leviticus traditionally have included 26:1-2 with 25:55 and have made these three verses the second half of 25:47-26:2. There is much to be said, however, for a break between 25:55 and 26:1-2. Some commentators believe the break is so certain that they often consider 26:1-2 an insertion.¹ The peculiarity of 26:1-2 argues for annexion to the following pericope rather than isolation from it. Moses purposefully emphasized Israel's legal relationship to Yahweh at the commencement of this section dealing with covenant blessings and curses. These "elemental dimensions of covenant"² provide the ground for the remainder of the pericope. Without verses 1-2, the following verses have no specified antecedent for the "statutes" (תקנה) and "commandments" (מצוות) of Yahweh (cf. v. 3). It is noteworthy that the refrain, "I am Yahweh (your God)," provides "a double formula at the beginning and end of the chapter"³ (vv. 1, 2, 13, 44, 45). The following exegetical analysis, therefore, recognizes the

¹ Cf. J. R. Porter, *Leviticus*, CBC (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 207; Shalom M. Paul, *Studies in the Book of the Covenant in the Light of Cuneiform and Biblical Law*, VTSup 18 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970), p. 34.

² Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), p. 67.

³ Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 327.

unity of Leviticus 26:1-46. The major divisions of the pericope consist of Precept (vv. 1-2), Promise (vv. 3-13), Penalty (vv. 14-45), and postscript (v. 46).¹

Precept (vv. 1-2)

Prohibition of Idols (v. 1)

The apodictic formula of this prohibition emphasizes the absolute responsibility of Israel to obey God in this matter. Idols were not optional. The threefold repetition of the ל preposition underscores the intent of the idol-makers: personal worship (לכם "for yourselves," twice; להשתחוות "to bow down/worship," once). The ל in לכם could introduce a *dativus commodi* (i.e., dative of interest or benefit). The idols were believed to be beneficial, possessing powers which could enrich the lives of their worshippers (both physically and spiritually). These benefits would accrue to the one who acted as a vassal in the presence of his suzerain.² Being a vassal to an idol (or, idols) made it impossible to be a vassal to Yahweh. Either Yahweh was the sole suzerain, or the Israelite had breached the covenant.

The covenant stipulations prohibited the production (לא עשה), the erection (לא קום), and the appointment/designation (לא נתן)³ of

¹ Cf. Elliger, *Leviticus*, p. 363.

² Cf. J. A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), p. 275. השתחוות is an infinitive construct *Histap'el* (or, St-stem) with a causative-reflexive force, from the root חוה. Cf. Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), p. 254 (§181). A discussion of the force and significance of the .t-stem may be found in *GAG*, pp. 122-23 (§94).

³ Cf. BDB, pp. 680-81. נתן has within its semantic range the concepts of designation, assigning, confirming, imputing, and constituting--as with covenants, kings, decrees, ordinances, etc. It is the writer's

idols. The three verbs are not necessarily synonymous. Each verb may be understood as furthering the concept introduced by the previous verb. In this fashion, each verb narrows the focus: making --> raising --> appointing. The focus is on the concept of exclusive authority. Their exclusivity and authority were not actually inherent. These qualities were derived from their worshippers who attributed exclusivity and authority to them as representatives of supernatural beings. The opposite is true of Yahweh, the covenant deity of Israel. His exclusivity and authority are inherent, his suzerainty independent of human attribution and unique in the universe--he alone is God (cf. Isa 43:10-11, 15; 44:6-21; 46:5-11; see, also, 1 Cor 8:4).

Four classes of idols are listed: "idols" (אליל), "images" (פסל), "pillars" (מצבה), and "figure stones" (אבן משכית). The first noun appears to be employed with a pejorative sense as a general term for all idols: "worthless/powerless."¹ The second noun refers to the fact that these idols had been handmade, cut or carved from stone or wood.² The third noun is basically equivalent to a *menhir*, a memorial stone in which a deity was thought to reside.³ The fourth noun seems to present the concept of an attractive carved relief in stone.⁴ As a

opinion that נתן, in this context, conveys the concept of setting up something in such a manner that the observers understand that it is authoritative, that it demands respect and vassalage. Cf. נתן's use for the appointment of a king (1 Sam 12:13), a leader (Num 14:4), a prophet (Jer 1:5), and an idol-priest (2 Kgs 23:5).

¹ *TDOT*, s.v. "אליל", by Horst Dietrich Preuss, 1:285-87. Cf. Targum Onqelos, טע "something causing to go astray."

² BDB, p. 820.

³ Cf., out of many sources, Eichrodt, *Theology*, 1:115-17; de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 2:285-86.

⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, p. 221; BDB, p. 967.

group, these four classes are representative of all idols. These terms also convey the breadth of idolatrous worship in the ancient Near East. Such worship was well-developed and had its appealing aspects.¹

The ultimate reason for the prohibition of idols is succinctly expressed in the *Selbstvorstellungsformel* ("self-introduction formula");² "for I am Yahweh your God." The contrast is self-explanatory. Yahweh's inherent exclusive authority made idols worthless, powerless, anthropocentric, empty, and without spiritually redeeming values. There is no room for divided loyalties. Yahweh insists upon exclusive lordship in the lives of the Israelites. This prohibition of idolatry was "not due to pettiness on Yahweh's part. It has to do with the character of Yahweh and the character of the other gods."³ The *Selbstvorstellungsformel* is the key phrase in Leviticus 18-26.⁴ The awareness of Yahweh's existence, identity, and presence was central to the covenant relationship which Israel enjoyed.

Preservation of Sabbaths and Sanctuary (v. 2)

The change from apodictic prohibition to deictic requirement is heralded by a change in the word order to emphasize the sabbaths and the sanctuary: the direct objects precede the verbs. The employment

¹ For further information on idols, see: Shalom m. Paul and William G. Dever, *Biblical Archaeology*, in *Library of Jewish Knowledge*, ed. Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Jerusalem Ltd., 1973), pp. 272-77.

² John Van Seters, "Confessional Reformulation in the Exilic Period," *VT* 22 (1972):455.

³ Brueggemann, *The Land*, p. 57.

⁴ Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 250.

of the imperfect (*yqtl*) forms as imperatives does not seem to reflect any softening of the force of the commands. Instead, it appears that they were chosen in order to maintain the continuity of force already introduced in verse 1 by the *yqtl* of prohibition.¹

The sabbath observance (v. 2a)

"My sabbaths" (שבתתי) possesses two points of significance the presence of the first person singular pronominal suffix and the employment of the plural. Yahweh identified himself in verse 1. Now, in verse 2, he identifies the sabbaths as being his. Due to the proximity of Leviticus 25, one must consider that the plural in 26:2 includes at least the weekly sabbaths and the sabbatical years. Perhaps the year of jubilee should also be included since it is an extension of the sabbatical principle concerning the sabbatical year observances.

Sabbath observance is theologically rich. It specially signifies God's dominion over Israel.² God's sovereignty over Israel involves his establishment of Israel as a nation, his gift of the land to Israel,

¹ The employment of the prefix tense (*yqtl*) suggests that the prepositive position of the direct objects draws sufficient attention away from the imperatives to cause the writer to utilize a verb form with less emphasis upon the root concept of the verb. The imperative is not preceded by prefixation; therefore, the root concept of the verb remains undiluted. The *yqtl* forms in v. 1, like those in the Decalogue, direct the emphasis to the negative (לא). *Yqtl* prefixation does not affect time, mood, or aspect; it merely allows attention to be focused on something other than the semantics of the root from which it was derived. E.g., תשמרו (you) keep/observe" in v. 2 directs attention to that which is to be observed (שבתתי) rather than to the keeping itself (שמר). The word order aids in this focusing of attention. Had the writer desired to place more emphasis upon the actual observing/keeping, he would have employed the non-prefixed imperative (שמר "Keep:"). Cf. J. Weingreen, *A Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew* (reprint ed., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), p. 76.

² Matitiah Tsevat, "The Basic Meaning of the Biblical Sabbath," *ZAW* 84 (1972) :455.

and his demand upon the time which Israel possessed.¹ The sabbaths were also a means of remembering the sacred history concerning deliverance from bondage.² "Take Time to Be Holy" could serve well as the hymnic theme for Israel's sabbatical observances. Israel's time belonged to God because Israel had been set apart to him. Failure to observe the sabbaths placed the Israelite in the precarious position of denying the lordship of Yahweh over his life.

The sanctuary reverence (v. 2b)

The fact that verse 2 is identical to 19:30 provides the interpreter with a clue to the identity of the sanctuary. In the context of 19:30 the "tent of meeting" (אהל מועד, v. 21) is mentioned. This reference to the Tabernacle demonstrates that it may be included as a "sanctuary" (מקדש), which it is called in 16:33.³ As with "sabbaths" in the first part of this verse, the first person singular pronominal suffix is appended to the noun. As the sabbaths had been identified with Yahweh, so also the sanctuary is identified as his. The sanctuary was not only the appointed place of meeting for the Israelite, it was also the location of the terrestrial manifestation of Yahweh's presence (cf. 16:7, 18; 19:21, 22--especially the employment of the phrase, "before Yahweh," (לפני יהוה)).

¹ Tsevat, "The Basic Meaning of the Biblical Sabbath," p. 455.

² Brueggemann, *The Land*, p. 64. Although Brueggemann states that the Sabbath observance was "for honoring land" (ibid.), such a viewpoint misses the major emphasis of honoring the land-giver, Yahweh. This does not nullify, however, Brueggemann's otherwise noteworthy discussion of the centrality of the Sabbath in Israel's existence.

³ It should be noted that technically the "sanctuary" included both the "tent of meeting" and the "altar" which sat before its door. "Tabernacle" is used here, therefore, in the broad sense of the tent/tabernacle and its grounds--the entire sanctum.

An abbreviated refrain (אני יהוה "I am Yahweh") closes verse 2, serving again to identify the land-giver, the non-idol, the sabbath-lord. Observance and reverence are empty practices without the recognition of Yahweh. Such recognition must be more than assent. It must consist of a heart attitude and a life yielded to his lordship in every realm (including mind, space, and time). The commandments of verses 1-2 "are grounded in the being of God who is the sole measure of holiness."¹ These precepts are derived "from the one divine will which called for the sole response of obedience."² Thus, the sum of holiness is obedience. This principle is universal, transcending both testaments (cf. 1 Sam 15:22 and Jas 1:22). Only with this principle in mind does the following pericope (vv. 3-46) have its proper force and correct interpretation.

Promise (vv. 3-13)

This section of the pericope is highlighted by promise. However, the promise is conditioned upon obedience (v. 3). The promise consists of blessing (vv. 4-12) and is grounded in the historical relationship of Yahweh to the nation of Israel (v. 13).

The Prerequisite: Obedience (v. 3)

Verse 3 is the protasis for a conditional sentence which continues through verse 12. Verses 4-12 comprise the apodosis. Being more interested in the promise of Yahweh in verses 4-12, the commentaries have ignored verse 3 in their exegetical comments. The verse is of

¹ Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), p. 185.

² *Ibid.*, p. 186.

major import for at least four reasons: (1) It is the protasis without which the lengthy apodosis cannot be properly contextualized. (2) It emphasizes the relationship of Israel to the Mosaic Covenant by the employment of **הקח** "statute" and **מצוה** "commandment"¹ in positions of grammatical emphasis (preceding the verb). (3) It is grammatically equal to its lengthy counterpart (though it could be argued that it is not conceptually or logically equal since much more space and thought are given to the apodosis). (4) The form of the conditional sentence (the particle **אם** "if/when" + the *yqtl* verb form) indicates a real (present and/or future, durative or frequentative) possibility² for the apostasy of Israel. In fact, the grammar presents a case for the presence of casuistic law (involved in covenant stipulations?) by the pausal juncture (rather than contextual juncture) of protasis and apodosis--indicating objective (rather than subjective) consequence.³ Yahweh does not allow for apostasy; he forbids it'.

The two terms for "law" (**הקח** and **מצוה**) are mutually reinforcing rather than mutually exclusive. In both terms the emphasis is upon the sovereign demand of Yahweh. The study of the two terms as they occur in Leviticus is instructive.

הקח/תקוח is employed 26 times in Leviticus (12 singular and 14 plural). The singular is always used with the qualifying adjective **עולם** "everlasting" and is used of individual statutes such as the non-

¹ Cf. Georg Braulik, "Die Ausdrücke für 'Gesetz' im Buch Deuteronomium," *Bib* 51 (1970):53-60.

² Cf., out of many, Jouon, *Grammaire*, pp. 513-15 (§167c-h).

³ H. B. Rosen, "The Comparative Assignment of Certain Hebrew Tense Forms," in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Semitic Studies* (Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1969), pp. 217-18.

consumption of blood (3:17), Aaronic sacrificial portions (7:36), non-consumption of alcoholic beverages by Aaronic priests on duty in the sanctuary (10:9), festival sabbaths (16:29, 31, 34; 23:14, 21, 31, 41), nonidolatrous sacrifice (17:7), and the menorah's oil (24:3). The plural is employed as the subject or object of a verb, normally with a pronominal suffix (with the exception of 18:30 and 20:23, which both refer to Canaanite customs and are qualified by terms of derision: "abominable" and "heathen"), and refer to the entire Mosaic legal code (with the exception of 18:3, 30, and 20:23--all referring to the pagan customs to be avoided by the Israelites). The only employment of a pronominal suffix which is not the first person singular is contained in 18:3. There the third person plural refers to the Canaanites. The first person antecedent is clearly Yahweh by context. The usual verb is שָׁמַר "keep/observe" (18:4, 5, 26, 30; 19:19, 37; 20:8, 22). However, הִלַּךְ "walk" is employed in 18:3; 20:23; and 26:3 (the first two of pagan customs, the last of Yahweh's statutes¹). עָשָׂה "do/perform" is used once (25:18) with הִקְנָה as its object although it is often found in the context of the occurrences of הִקְנָה as a summary statement: "yea, you shall do/practice them" (19:37; 20:8, 22; 25:18; 26:3; cf. 26:15). Twice הִקְנָה (in the plural with the first person singular suffix) is employed with negative verbs (מָאָס) "reject," 26:15; '9 "abhor," 26:43).

A note of grammatical interest concerns the employment of verb forms with relation to the position of הִקְנָה as a direct object. When

¹ "Custom" and "statute" are not being employed here to imply some inherent qualitative distinction within הִקְנָה. The English connotation of "custom" is social whereas the connotation of "statute" is legal. Although the pagan הִקְנָה might have been legislated, the הִקְנָה of Yahweh was definitely legislated.

the object is preverbal, the verb is *yqtl* (18:4; 19:19; 26:3, 15); when the object is postverbal, the verb is *qtl* (18:5, 26; 19:37; 20:8, 22; 25:18).¹ The only exception occurs in 26:43, where the verb **געל** "abhor" is employed and where special emphasis is present due to the nature of the statement itself.²

מצות/מצוה occurs only in the plural in Leviticus (10 times).

It occurs with the qualifying adjective **כל** "all" in 4:2, 13, 22, 27; 5:17; and 26:14. It possesses the first person singular pronominal suffix (with Yahweh as antecedent) in 22:31; 26:3, and 15. The usual verb employed with **מצוה** is **עשה** (4:13, 22, 27; 5:17; 26:14, 15), though **שמר** occurs in 22:31 (*qtl* preceding the direct object) and 26:3 (*yqtl* following the direct object).

It is clear from the examination of the usages of **הקה** and **מצוה** in Leviticus, that they both refer to the entirety of the Mosaic legislation. It is also clear that 26:3 employs unusual verb counterparts for the two nouns--perhaps as a means of emphasis rather than mere variety. The grammatical presentation is normal for the style of the author of Leviticus. The pronominal suffix ties this verse and its identification with Yahweh to verse 2 where the same suffix was employed.

The three verbs of verse 3 are mutually reinforcing. They emphasize the concept of obedience. **הלך** "walk" emphasizes the totality of obedience in the various spheres of life's activities.³ **שמר** "keep/

¹ See above, p. 48 n. 1.

² The parallel of **געל, מאס** "reject," is also employed as *qtl* following its direct object, **משפט** "judgment."

³ THAT, s.v. "הלך," by G. Sauer, 1:489-90.

observe" emphasizes the root concept of obedience: preserving the commandment by practicing it.¹ עָשָׂה "do/perform" is but a generalizing term drawing the previous two together in one summary statement. This third term is expressed by *wqtl*. This construction introduces either a result clause or an epexegetical clause (perhaps, in the latter case, with an asseverative force = "yea" or "indeed"). The resumptive² אֵת "them" (i.e., the previously-mentioned statutes and commandments) closes the protasis emphatically--bringing the mind of the reader back to the precepts and their source rather than to the recipients and their obedience. Unless the Israelite recognized theonomy, he could not experience promise (including theophany; cf. v. 12). The legislative revelation of Sinai did not supplant the promises to Abraham. Israel would be responsible for both: to obey the legislation and to claim (or, believe) the promise. The walk of faith involved both the doing and the claiming (or, believing).

The Product: Blessing (vv. 4-12)

The blessings enumerated in the following verses fall into these categories: productivity (vv. 4-5), peace (v. 6), power (vv. 7-8), population (v. 9), provision (v. 10), and presence (vv. 11-12). All were tied to the land which Israel was about to receive from Yahweh. These blessings were to be landed blessings. They would not be experienced in landlessness. The tie with the land which they had not yet

¹ H. Freedman and Simon Maurice, eds., *Leviticus*, trans. Judah J. Slotki, vol. 4 in *Midrash Rabba* (London: Soncino Press, 1961), p. 450.

² See, P. P. Saydon, "Meanings and Uses of the Particle אֵת," *VT* 14 (1964):205. The employment of אֵת with the suffix as the pronominal object of a verb is especially prominent in the body of literature of which Leviticus 26 is a part. This may be due to the desire of Moses, in those portions of the Pentateuch, to use "greater distinctness and precision" (BDB, p. 85).

received points out the revelatory nature of this pericope. The revelation from Yahweh provided information which Israel could not have known otherwise. As such, then, the pericope has the tone of prophecy.¹

This section of the pericope continues the conditional sentence by means of a series of consecutive *qtl* forms. The apodosis with the consecutive *qtl* was employed in the milieu of classical Hebrew in the Mosaic era. Indeed, the Amarna period provides evidence for the conditional function of *wqtl*.² Since the present context (Lev 26:3-12) is grammatically characteristic of *wqtl*, it would be unnecessary to classify *wqtl* in verses 4-12 as *waw*-conversive (or, *waw*-inversive³) forms.⁴ The suffix verb forms (*qtl*) serve here to place greater emphasis on the

¹ See above, p. 3.

² William L. Moran, "The Hebrew Language in its Northwest Semitic Background," in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, ed. G. Ernest Wright (reprint ed., Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1979), pp. 64-65.

³ Cf. Jouon, *Grammaire*, pp. 319-20 (117).

⁴ It is this writer's opinion that there is no validity to the designation "conversive" (or "inversive") since there are no demonstrable reasons for converting (or inverting) the function of a verb form merely because of a prefixed *waw*. Any alteration of time or logical relationship is due to the influence of the context alone--whether or not the *waw* is present. The *qtl* with *waw* is characteristic of prophetic style because of the emphasis on the root concept of the verbs (i.e., the action or event itself rather than the order or sequence of actions or events). The *wyyqtl* (וַיִּקְעַל) is characteristic of narrative style due to the emphasis on the prefixed particle which designates logical or sequential relationship to the context. Cf. J. Wash Watts, *A Survey of Syntax in the Hebrew Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), pp. 53-54, 103-17. The *waw* of *wyyqtl* is best understood as an adverb (or, at least, a non-conjunctive particle). This concept of the *wyyqtl* is presented in a study comparing Egyptian particle usage to the Hebrew *waw*: G. Douglas Young, "The Origin of the *Waw* Conversive," *JNES* 12 (1953):248-52. Cf., also, GKC, pp. 133 (§49b n. 1) and 330-31 (§112b n. 2), which calls the term "*waw* conversive" a "superficial description," "old-fashioned," and "unscientific." See, also, Weingreen, *Practical Grammar*, p. 91; William D. Barrick, "The Basic Verb Forms" (Broomfield, CO: 1978; mimeographed). The Bibliography of this present study (see below, pp. 215-30) contains additional sources for the study of this problem of the Hebrew verbs.

root concepts of the individual verbs rather than on extra-verbal concepts such as negation, subject, object, or adverbial phrases may present.

Productivity (vv. 4-5)

It is not without significance that the first *wqtl* form is נתן "give" in the first person singular. The force of promise is gift. The source of promise is the giver. The resumption of the first person suffix (here on the verb, previously on nouns) reasserts the concept behind the dual *Selbstvorstellungsformel* in verses 1 and 2. Yahweh is the rain-giver.

The Palestinian rains came seasonally in October-November (early) and March-April (latter). The promise of Yahweh was that these rains would be a dependable phenomenon in order that the land might produce an abundant harvest: "And I shall give your rains in their season (עת)." Rashi claimed that the rains would come at times when no one needed to travel (such as the evening before the sabbath).¹ Such interpretation is an example of rabbinic excesses in biblical interpretation. The same blessing was promised again in the Palestinian Covenant (Deut 28:12; cf., also, 11:17 and Ezek 34:26).

As a direct result of the rain-giver's gift, the land would yield its gift (נתן יבול "yield produce") and the trees would yield their gift (נתן פרי "yield fruit"). The triple employment of נתן in this verse emphasizes the concept of gift. The third occurrence, utilizing *yqtl* (as opposed to the *wqtl* of the first two occurrences), is conducive to inclusion in the broader second statement. The "trees of

¹ חומש כולל חמשה חומשי תורה באותיות גדולות מאד (New York : Hebrew Publishing Company, n.d.), p. 134.

the field" are included in "the land." The flow of the concepts in verse 4 is from general to specific: "I shall give your rains in their season so that the land will yield its produce, yea, the trees of the field will yield their fruit."¹ The presence of the same juxtaposition of "the land" and "trees of the field" in verse 20 and Ezekiel 34:27 may indicate dependence upon verse 4. Verse 20 may be a contextual dependence for the purpose of maintaining continuity. Ezekiel 34:27 may be a prophetic exposition of the covenant. Such an exposition indicates the parenetic value of the pericope to the Israelites of Ezekiel's day.

"The time of threshing" (v'J'i) 2 would extend to the "vintage"

¹ Elliger, *Leviticus*, p. 364, identifies v. 4b as parallelismus membrorum. He understands much of vv. 3-12 as poetic parallelism (ibid., pp. 364-69). His identifications may be doubtful at times, but the possibility of poetic style must not be hastily discounted. According to McCarthy (*Treaty and Covenant*, pp. 176-79 nn. 36, 41-44; 272, 275, 279), the poetic literary form is employed in the covenant contexts of Exod 19:3-8 and Deut 28:1-69. He identifies the employment of inclusion, chiasm, and parallelism in Deuteronomy 28. Freedman presents an approach antagonistic to the identification of poetic form in Leviticus 26. He observes that the Hebrew particles אַת (sign of the accusative), אֲשֶׁר (relative pronoun), and הַ (definite article) occur six to eight times more frequently in prose than poetry. The absence or presence of these particles is thereby employed in indentifying the two types of literature. He admits, however, that there are exceptions and some overlapping. See, David Noel Freedman, "Pottery, Poetry, and Prophecy: An Essay on Biblical Poetry," in *Pottery, Poetry, and Prophecy: Studies in Early Hebrew Poetry* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1980), pp. 2-3. In Lev 26:3-12 PK (9x) and הַ (3x; always with אֲרֵץ or שָׂדֵה, in harmony with the pericope's emphasis on landedness) occur. Some striking exceptions to Freedman's theory include: Ezek 15:1-8 (אַת, 5x; אֲשֶׁר, 2x; הַ, 9x); Pss 34 (אַת, 4x; הַ, 4x); 103 (אַת, 4x; הַ, 7x); 105 (אַת, 8x; אֲשֶׁר, 3x; הַ, 2x); 117 (a two-verse psalm; אַת, 1x; הַ, 1x); 135 (אַת, 5x; אֲשֶׁר, 2x; הַ, 3x); 146 (אַת, 4x; אֲשֶׁר, 1x; הַ, 3x); 148 (אַת, 4x; אֲשֶׁר, 1x; הַ, 7x). These examples exhibit high frequencies of occurrence. Many other isolated examples could be offered as well. Emendation is not the answer to the occurrences of these particles in poetry. The literary style of a writer is not always as predictable as Freedman implies.

² Cf. Arnold B. Ehrlich, *Mikra Ki-Pheshuto: The Bible According to Its Literal Meaning*, 3 vols., in *The Library of Biblical Studies*, ed. Harry M. Orlinsky (reprint ed., New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1969), 3:241.

(בציר) and the "vintage" would extend to the time of "sowing" (זרע). The spring and early summer grain harvests (planted in winter) would last until the harvest of the fruit crops at the conclusion of the summer. The fruit crops of late summer and early fall would continue to be harvested till the time of the winter sowing of the grain crops.¹ The concept is one of perpetual harvesting due to bumper crops. A similar figure is employed in Amos 9:13 concerning the period of messianic rule.²

The prepositional phrase לכם "for you" (probably a dative of advantage/benefit) is significant. The promise is directed to the obedient Israelites. The promise of bumper crops (v. 5a), like that of rain and productivity (v. 4), contains a logical progression. The repetition of נשע "extend/reach," like that of נתן in verse 4, is characterized by an alternation of verb form from *wqtl* to *yqtl*. Such alternation of verb forms (especially cognate verbs) may characterize an elevated prose (or prosaic poetry?).³ The resumption of *wqtl* in verse 5b continues the logical progression: "therefore, you shall eat." Israel would eat their own "bread" (employed here of all their food stuffs) until they were satisfied (שבע "satiety/fill/abundance,"⁴ cf. 25:19).

Another *wqtl* presents a further outcome of productivity: "thus you shall dwell (ישב) securely (לבטח) in your land." This is the ulti-

¹ Cf. Porter, *Leviticus*, p. 210.

² Cf. Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, p. 354.

³ Cf. F. C. Fensham, "The Use of the Suffix Conjugation and the Prefix Conjugation in a Few Old Hebrew Poems," *JNSL* 6 (1978):9-18.

⁴ The employment of שבע in a sabbatical context may be significant. See below, p. 113 n. 2.

mate result of the divinely given productivity. The second occurrence of ארץ with the second masculine plural pronominal suffix (cf. v. 1) emphasizes the possession of the land by the Israelites. The land would be theirs, not another nation's. Since the land belonged to them, they would be accountable for its use and the manner in which they live in it. The promise of security evokes the relationship to the observance of the sabbatical and jubilee years in the preceding context (25:18, 19). Such anaphorical usages of terminology tie chapter 26 closely to chapter 25--the sabbatical principle continues to be the leading thought.

Peace (v. 6)

As Wenham remarks, "Food without security is of limited value."¹ The concept introduced in verse 5 by לבטח "securely" is resumed here and developed. The construction *wqtl* continues the apodosis which began in verse 4. It is noteworthy that this second section commences with נתן "give" in the first person singular, just as verse 4 began. As Yahweh was the rain-giver, so, also, he was the peace-giver. The concept of gift continues to pervade the context.

That which was to be given by Yahweh is designated as שלום. The term occurs only here in Leviticus. The immediate context alone must determine its meaning. The concepts of "peace," "wholeness," "welfare," "recompense," and "reward" are all involved in the semantic range of שלום in the Old Testament.² The subsequent context (especially the phrase ואין מחריד "without anyone making (you) afraid"³) would

¹ Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 329.

² THAT, s.v. "שלום," by G. Gerleman, 2:919-35.

³ Jouon, *Grammaire*, p. 488 (g159d).

indicate that שלום ought to be viewed as the opposite of military conflict due to enemy incursions.¹ It cannot be ignored, however, that "the purpose of the covenant is to establish שלום."² Perhaps Malachi 2:5 best exemplifies this relationship: "my covenant was life and שלום for him." Therefore, though the immediate context defines the usage as specifically that of "peace," yet the covenantal context of the usage draws the attention of the reader to an even broader range of which this one specific promise is but a part.

The adverbial prepositional phrase describing the location of the blessing of peace is בארץ "in the land." The blessing is tied to the land. Without the land, there could be no peace for Israel.

ושכבתם ואין מחריד "so that you shall (might?) lie down without anyone making (you) afraid," completes the thought by further explanation of the concept of שלום.³ The change to the second person plural for the verb draws attention to the activity of Israel in response to the gift of Yahweh. The peace-giver would allow Israel to rest.⁴

The second half of verse 6 reverts to the verb in the first person singular with Yahweh as the subject: "and I shall exterminate

¹ THAT, s.v. "U'W," by G. Gerleman, 2:922; Keil and Delitzsch, Pentateuch, 2:470.

² Walther Zimmerli, *Old Testament Theology in Outline*, trans. David E. Green (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1978), p. 49.

³ This continued use of logical progression to present the blessings of this pericope demonstrates the care with which this pericope was composed. Although there appears to be some evidence for logical parallelism, it is not strong enough to follow Elliger's identification of parallelismus membrorum dogmatically (cf. Elliger, *Leviticus*, pp. 364-69). This is definitely, however, an elevated style which borders on the poetic.

⁴ BDB, p. 1012.

the wild beast from the land." This promise is not the extermination of every wild creature, but rather the extermination of those who would prey upon Israel and upon Israel's productive crops. **אָרֶץ** is a reference only to the land of Israel's possession, not to the entire earth.¹ A harmony will exist between Israel and her land. Productivity would not be hindered by the fauna of the land.

The last phrase of this half of the verse is emphatic in its syntactical form: (1) the subject (**חֶרֶב** "sword") precedes the verb; (2) the verb form is altered from the preceding *qtl* to a *yqtl* (**לֹא־תַעֲבֹר** "shall not pass through"); and, (3) **בְּאַרְצְכֶם** "in your land" appears to be involved in a chiasmus which closes this phrase in the same fashion that **בְּאַרְץ** closed the first phrase in the first half of the verse (verse 6 thus ends in the same fashion as verse 5). The alternation of grammatical persons from the first person singular of the first phrases of both halves of the verse is consistent: 6a changes to the second person while 6b changes to the third person. The literary style serves to emphasize a concept found elsewhere in covenant contexts: 'I)1nn I'M "none making afraid", Jeremiah 30:10, 46:27, Ezekiel 34:28, 39:26, Zephaniah 3:13; (nyn) 7"n "(wild) beasts," Ezekiel 5:17, 14:15, 21, 34:28, Hosea 2:20 (English, 18); ann "sword," Deuteronomy 28:22, Ezekiel 5:17, 14:17, 21, Hosea 2:20 (English, 18), Amos 4:10. Perhaps the most fascinating of these parallel occurrences of the covenant concepts is Hosea 2:20 (English, 18):

וּכְרַתִּי לָהֶם בְּרִית בְּיוֹם הַהוּא
עַם־חַיִּית הַשָּׂדֶה וְעַם־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְרִמַּשׁ הָאָדָמָה
וְקִשְׁת וְחֶרֶב וּמַלְחָמָה אֲשֶׁבֶר מִן־הָאָרֶץ
וְהַשְּׂכַבְתִּים לְבַטַח:

¹ Cf. Hans Walter Wolff, *Hosea*, trans. Gary Stansell, ed. Paul D. Hanson, in *Hermeneia*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Jr., *et al.* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), p. 51.

"And I shall make a covenant with them in that day:
with the beast of the field and with the fowl of the heavens and
with the creeper of the ground;
and bow and sword and battle I shall break from the land
so that I might cause them to rest securely."

The Hosean prophecy apparently draws its imagery from the content of Leviticus 26:6.¹ This is not surprising in the light of the dependence of the Hebrew prophets on the covenants of Yahweh with Israel. Leviticus 26 was evidently the earliest and most succinct of the Mosaic statements concerning the nation's relationship to their land. The instruction ("parenthesis) concerning landedness was expanded later in pericopes like Deuteronomy 27-30, but Leviticus 26 maintained its privileged position--perhaps due to its closely knit relationship to the sabbatical principle revealed in its preceding context (chapter 25) and continued in chapter 26.

Power (vv. 7-8)

Having the security of landed existence promised to them, the nation could have confidence in its ability to meet its foes on the field of battle. The basis for such confidence would reside also in the promise of victory. The protection from the enemy sword (חרב) in verse 6 is now revealed in a reverse image: the sword (חרב) of Israel would take the offensive in order to put its enemies to rout.

This section commences with the characteristic *wqtl*: "so you shall pursue" (פדף). However, the grammatical person is not the first singular which the reader has grown accustomed to expect at the start of a section. Instead of the activity of Yahweh, the activity of Israel

¹ Cf. Carl Friedrich Keil, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 2 vols., trans. James Martin, in *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), 1:63; Wolff, *Hosea*, pp. 50-51.

is depicted. It would appear that these two verses are an expansion of verse 6. Verse 9 continues the first person singular concept with four verbs of the *wqtl* type--drawing the attention back to Yahweh in an impressive fashion.

Little is contained in the commentaries concerning verses 7-8. The proverbial¹ מאה "100" . . . חמשה "5" and רבבה "10,000" . . . מאה "100" bear some resemblances to Deuteronomy 32:30 (אלף "1,000" and רבבה "10,000" . . . שנים "2"), Joshua 23:10 (אלף "1,000" . . . אחד "1"), and Isaiah 30:17 (אחד "1" . . . אלף "1,000" and חמשה "5").² The numerical sequences represented in these passages present what may be a pattern:

Lev 26:8	5	against	100	=	1:20	1
	100		10,000	=	1:100	5
Deut 32:30	1	against	1,000	=	1:1,000	1
	2		10,000	=	1:5,000	5
Josh 23:10	1	against	1,000	=	1:1,000	1
Isa 30:17	1	against	1,000	=	1:1,000	1
	5	"	??	=	1:??	?

Although a few other examples of 1:1,000 can be offered (e.g., Judg 15:15, 16; 1 Sam 18:7, 8; Eccl 7:28), these lack the additional figures which provide a ratio of 1/5 (1 Sam 18:7, 8 would only present a 1/10 ratio). It may be significant that there seem to be no parallels in extrabiblical literature to Leviticus 26:8 or Deuteronomy 32:30.³

¹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 2:470.

² The Septuagint inserts πολλοί "many." 25,000 would be required to obtain a ratio of 1/5. The NIV leans toward the Septuagint by the translation "all."

³ I.e., as far as this writer was able to determine. On the other hand, the poetic device of $x + (x + 1)$ has abundant support from extra-biblical materials.

Therefore, it would be the better part of wisdom not to identify the 1/5 ratio as a poetic device.¹

There is a logical parallelism within these two verses. It may be visualized as follows:

7- ורדפתם את־איביכם || ונפלו לפניכם לחרב:
 8- ורדפו מכם חמשה מאה | ומאה מכם רבבה ירדפו || ונפלו איביכם לפניכם לחרב:

7- And you shall pursue your enemies || and they shall fall before you
by the sword;

8- and five from among you shall pursue one hundred | and one hundred
from among you shall pursue ten thousand, || and your enemies
shall fall before you by the sword.

Several observations may be made: (1) The verbs employed in the first and second halves of each verse are identical (נפל "fall" || רדף "pursue").

(2) The direct object of the first half of verse 7 (איב "enemy") is paralleled by מאה "100" and רבבה "10,000" in verse 8, but is also repeated in a chiasmic pattern as the subject of the last half of verse 8. (3) The alternation of *qtl* and *yqtl* in the first half of verse 8 is in keeping with the pattern already discerned in verses 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, and serves to emphasize the unity of the two phrases. (4) איביכם "your enemies" in the last phrase of verse 8 may be understood as a ballast variant in order to offset the weight of the first two phrases of the verse. It also serves to reiterate the antecedent to the numbers employed in verse 7.

The increased productivity of the landed Israel includes an increased population (according to the following verse, 9). Verses 7-8 comprise a transition from verses 4-6 to verse 9. This emphasis on productivity, however, does not mean that the increase guarantees victory

¹ At least until a greater body of evidence could be presented from both biblical and extrabiblical materials.

on the field of battle. The promise to Israel is that their minority would be capable of overcoming the enemies' majority. This could occur because Yahweh (the land-giver, the rain-giver, the produce-giver, the peace-giver) is also the power/victory-giver. There is no natural cause (nor human cause) which could be credited with the promised victory. The ultimate cause would be supernatural (and superhuman). The divine blessing would be the deciding factor. Yahweh's presence would determine the outcome. Israel's ability and landedness would not be the deciding factor. Contrary to humanistic feudalism, landedness is not power. Landedness for Israel was historically a temptation to self-reliance and other-god-reliance rather than Yahweh-reliance.¹ Israel would have to maintain the memory of the historically proven fact that Yahweh + Israel's minority = victory/power. The primary lesson from history was the nation's exodus from the land of Egypt.

Population (v. 9)

As was previously mentioned,² verse 9 is impressive for its array of verb forms in the first person singular. The first phrase, **וּפְנִיתִי אֵלֵיכֶם** "and I shall turn unto you," is clearly a statement of beneficence by context and has been taken as such by all the ancient versions. The most interesting of these is that of Targum Onkelos: **וְאִתְּפִנִי בְּמִימְרֵי לֵאמֹר לַעֲבֹד לְכוּן** "and I shall turn/restore my word in order to do good to you." The second phrase of verse 9 (**וְהִפְרִיתִי אֶתְכֶם**) "so

¹ Brueggemann, *The Land*, pp. 53-59.

² See above, p. 63.

³ Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic*, 1:212.

that I might make you fruitful") is best interpreted as the result of the first. A chiasmus may be observed in this verse:

והפריתי אתכם		-9a ופניתי אליכם
so that I might make you fruitful		and I shall turn unto you
:והקימתי את־בריתי אתכם:		-9b והרביתי אתכם
because I have established/ ratified my covenant with you		and I shall multiply you

"Established/ratified" (הקים) might also be understood as "shall carry out."¹ As in 9a the second phrase is the result of the first, so, also, the first phrase of 9b is the result of the second. Keil and Delitzsch, however, view 9b as a non-chiastic parallel to 9a:

The multiplication and fruitfulness of the nation were a constant fulfilment of the covenant promise (Gen. xvii. 4-6) and an establishment of the covenant (Gen. xvii. 7); not merely the preservation of it, but the continual realization of the covenant grace, by which the covenant itself was carried on further and further toward its completion. This was the real purpose of the blessing, to which all earthly good, as the pledge of the constant abode of God in the midst of His people, simply served as the foundation.²

There are several reasons for maintaining the chiastic relationship:

(1) פרה "be fruitful" and רבה "multiply" are a formal combination found repeatedly in the Old Testament (cf. the Hip'il in Gen 17:20, 28:3, 48:4; and, the Qal in Gen 1:22, 28, 8:17, 9:1, 7, 35:11, 47:27, Exod 1:7, Jer 3:16, 23:3, Ezek 36:11). Therefore, they should be viewed as corresponding members of the chiasmus. (2) פרה and רבה both have objects introduced by את while פנה "turn" and קום "establish" are qualified by adverbial phrases introduced by prepositions (אל "unto" and את "with,"

¹ Cf. BDB, p. 879. The choice of tense for the translation at this point depends upon the interpretation given to the phrase. See below, p. 67.

² Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 2:470-71.

respectively). Thus, there is a form of syntactical parallelism. (3) פָּרַח and רָבַח exhibit a phonetic similarity with the liquid ר, the bilabial פ and ב, and the guttural final ה. This assonance adds to the force of the statement. (4) It appears that the mention of בְּרִית "covenant" was purposefully delayed so as to receive the maximum emphasis. Being mentioned last, it tends to linger in the minds of the readers. McEvenue states that בְּרִית הַקִּים is used "always in the sense of fulfilling an oath taken earlier."¹ All such occurrences do bear out his emphasis (cf. Gen 6:18; 9:9, 11, 17; 17:7, 19, 21; Exod 6:4; Deut 8:18; Ezek 16:60, 62). It is also noteworthy that all occurrences of this covenant-fulfilling phraseology have Yahweh as the subject.² Yahweh is the covenant-fulfiller. This truth is emphasized by the first person singular in the verbs and by the first person singular pronominal suffix on בְּרִית ("my covenant").

The increase in Israel's population was a promise stemming from the covenant with Abraham (cf. Gen 17:6). The phrase בְּרִית הַקִּים is also associated with the Abrahamic Covenant (cf. Gen 17:7, 19, 21; also, Exod 6:4 and Deut 8:18). It seems reasonable, in the light of this evidence, to see in Leviticus 26:9 a reference to the Abrahamic Covenant of Genesis 17. This has been observed by Norbert Lohfink and linked to a theological theme in the Priestly materials.³ While agreeing that

¹ Sean E. McEvenue, *The Narrative Style of the Priestly Writer*, AnBib 50 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1971), p. 74. Cf. Elliger, *Leviticus*, p. 374 n. 17.

² 2 Kgs 23:3 and Jer 34:18 have man as the subject of בְּרִית, but the object is דְּבַרֵי הַבְּרִית "the words of the covenant."

³ Norbert Lohfink, "Die Abänderung der Theologie des priesterlichen Geschichtswerks im Segen des Heiligkeitsgesetzes: zu Lev. 26,9.11-13," in *Wort and Geschichte: Festschrift für Karl Elliger zum*

Leviticus 26:9 is a reflection of the Abrahamic Covenant, this writer chooses not to identify the theme with a secondary hand. Rather, it seems far more consistent with the Pentateuchal materials to consider them as purely mosaic with regard to authorship. The significance of the Abrahamic Covenant is obvious to any reader of the Old and New Testaments. There is no reason to impute its mention to a subsequent editor who, due to an exilic or post-exilic position in time, chose to insert Abrahamic promises of prosperity/hope/landedness into texts related to the mosaic Covenant.¹ Moses was quite able to reveal covenant-promise as well as covenant-law. The hope of Abraham was surely conveyed faithfully to his descendants. Moses was both a descendant of Abraham and a minister of the Abrahamic Covenant (Exod 6:2-8) before he was a recipient of the Sinaitic Covenant.

Leviticus 26:9 may be employed as an example of the distinctions made in this pericope concerning the Mosaic and Abrahamic covenants. The Mosaic Covenant is characterized by the following: (1) The theme of law. (2) The emphasis on human responsibility. (3) The elements of sabbath, sanctuary, and divine sovereignty. On the other hand, the Abrahamic Covenant is characterized by different features: (1) The theme of promise. (2) The emphasis on divine fulfillment. (3) The elements of land, prosperity, and blessing and/or cursing. Verse 9, being placed in the midst of Mosaic Covenant materials, is distinct in its features. It is Abrahamic in vocabulary, phraseology, and theme. Its message to the Israelites was pertinent to the brief span of time

70. *Geburtstag*, hrsg. Hartmut Gese and Hans Peter Ruger, AOAT 18 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1973), pp. 131-36.

¹ The secondary hand theory is proposed by all the recent books written on the subject of exile theology. See above, p. 11 n. 3.

immediately following the revealing of the Mosaic Covenant on Mt. Sinai. In effect, the message was: The newly presented revelation concerning law is equal in authority to the older revelation concerning promise. If Israel desired the promises of Abraham, they would have to obey the legislation of Moses. The legislation would not nullify the promise (cf. Gal 3:17). The legislation would provide the opportunity to give outward evidence of the inward faith in the Abrahamic promises. In other words, the Mosaic Covenant would be the program by which Israel would manifest its faith by its works (cf. Jas 2:14-26).

The population increase promised in this section of the pericope would also be a blessing in the Palestinian Covenant forty years later (Deut 28:4, 11). It is significant, however, that Deuteronomy 27-30 does not contain either the combination **פרה || רבה** or the phrase **ברית הקים**. The concept is there, but not the phraseology. This would seem to indicate mere similarity and not identity. It could also indicate a purposeful avoidance of terminology in the Palestinian Covenant which was the earmark of the Abrahamic Covenant.¹

Provision (v. 10)

As in verse 7, verse 10 begins with a *wqtl* form in the second person plural: **ואכלתם** "so you shall eat." The break in the first person singular seems, therefore, to indicate that verse 10 is explanatory to verse 9. That which Israel would eat is described as **ישן נושן** "the

¹ The interpretation of Rashi is interesting. He identified the covenant in v. 9 as "a new covenant not like the former covenant which you breached" (**ברית חדשה לא כברית הראשונה שהפרתם אותה**). חומש, p. 135. Such rabbinic references to a new covenant seem to be motivated by a concept of nullification of each preceding covenant by the granting of another covenant. Paul clearly disagreed with such an interpretation of the old Testament covenants (Gal 3:17).

old harvest/store which has become stale." In this cognate construction the adjective יָשָׁן "old" serves as a substantive. Of the eight times where the adjective occurs in the old Testament, four are in Leviticus 25-26. Leviticus 25:22 is obviously related to the concept in 26:10 by way of the sabbatical principle:

and when you should say, "How will we eat in the seventh year if we do not sow nor gather our increase?", then I shall command my blessing for you in the sixth year so that it shall produce increase for three years. Thus you shall sow the eighth year and you shall eat from the old increase until the ninth year--until the coming of its increase you shall eat the old (25:20-22).

The former harvest would provide such an abundance that it would be eaten for a long time. It would last even into the next harvest period. In fact, Israel would have to clear out the old harvest in order to make room for the new harvest which would be great enough to require all storage space: "and you shall clear out the old because of the new" (וַיִּשָּׂן מִפְּנֵי חֲדָשׁ תּוֹצִיאַ אֹכֵל). The alternation of verb forms in verse 10 (*qtl* of יִצֵּא to *yqtl* of אֹכֵל) is consistent with the style exhibited in this pericope. It demonstrates the unity of the verse. The inversion of the placement of יָשָׁן from the first half to the second half of the verse indicates its centrality to the theme of the verse. This verse presents the manna theme all over again: when the manna was gathered in abundance, the remainder grew stale and was replaced by the next day's supply of fresh manna (cf. Exod 16:4-36). In fact, the manna was also related to the sabbatical principle (cf. Exod 16:21-30). Yahweh provided an abundance on the sixth day so that there would be no need on the seventh day. Just as he had promised to provide manna on the sixth day for the seventh day, so Yahweh promised to provide in the sixth year what Israel would need for the seventh year.

Verse 10 is best connected with verse 9 rather than verse 5 since

an increased population requires an increased food supply. Even though the population of Israel would become more and more numerous, the provision of Yahweh would always meet their needs. Indeed, there would be an abundance evidenced by the remains of the old harvest when each new harvest would be brought into storage. Yahweh did not promise productivity in the field (v. 5) and then proceed to nullify the prosperity by a subsequent increase in population (v. 9). The prosperity would continue at a rate commensurate with the population explosion. The manna-giver would always be abreast of the needs of his people. The promise-giver would never nullify one promise by the giving of another promise. The land-giver would give to Israel a land which could not be exhausted even though they would increase in numbers. When the sabbath days and the sabbath years came around, the increased population could not be employed as an excuse for non-observance. Yahweh does not demand that for which his grace does not supply. The will of God will never lead where the grace of God cannot keep!

Presence (vv. 11-12)

The final section of promise commences with the expected wqtl in the first person singular: ונתתי "and I shall give" (cf. vv. 4 and 6).¹ The rain-giver and peace-giver is now presented as the presence-granter. משכן does not appear to be a technical reference to the tabernacle or temple, but is a non-technical reference to an "abode" or "dwelling place."² Thus, the promise consists of Yahweh's abiding in

¹ See above, pp. 56, 59.

² Cf. Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into the Character of Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), p. 14 n. 3.

the midst (בְּתוֹךְ) of Israel. This divine presence would be a grant or gift (נָתַן) . The conditional nature of the context (cf. "if," v. 3) does not nullify the concept of gift. The presence of Yahweh would not be earned or merited. From the divine perspective, the presence was an unconditional reality of the fulfillment of covenant promise. From the human perspective, the promise was commensurate with the obedience of covenant stipulations.¹ The alternation of verb forms continues in this verse: *qtl* of נָתַן and *yqtl* of גַּעַל "despise."² "My soul shall not despise you" is roughly equivalent to (or, is the cause of) "I shall grant my abode in your midst."

The drought and famine of Jeremiah 14 is described in terms familiar to the reader of Leviticus 26:

Have you completely rejected Judah? Does your soul despise (גַּעַל) Zion? Why have you smitten us so that there is no healing? (We) look for peace (שָׁלוֹם), but there is nothing good; and for a time of healing, but, behold, dismay'. We acknowledge, O Yahweh, our wickedness--the iniquity of our fathers--because we have sinned against you. Do not spurn us, for your name's sake. Do not treat the throne of your glory with contempt. Remember! Do not breach your covenant with us (בְּרִיתְךָ אִתָּנוּ = בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם). Is there any among the empty ones of the nations who can cause rain (גֶּשֶׁם); or will the heavens grant (נָתַן) showers? Aren't you the one (lit., he), O Yahweh our God? Therefore, we will wait for you because you yourself produce all these things (Jer 14:19-22).³

The principles of promise/punishment revealed in Leviticus 26 manifest themselves in the history of later Israel by the loss of productivity

¹ The distinction of conditional and unconditional covenants in biblical theology is a matter of perspective or semantics more than of biblical statement. In this writer's opinion, all biblical covenants may be considered unconditional from the divine perspective and conditional from the human perspective.

² This alternation deserves a complete study throughout the Pentateuch in order to determine whether it is a characteristic of Mosaic literary style. Its relationship to covenant literary form also needs to be researched with care.

³ Many other parallels between Jeremiah 14 and Leviticus 26 may be offered: Jer 14:4-6/Lev 26:4; Jer 14:12/Lev 26:25-26; Jer 14:13/

and peace. The sense of Yahweh's rejection (despising) of the nation was evidence of the loss of the divine presence. The covenant had been breached because of the nations disloyalty. They had sinned against Yahweh in the same fashion as their ancestors. Leviticus recorded the revelation of the principle; Jeremiah recorded an application.

Verse 12 continues the statement of Yahweh's presence: "Thus I shall walk in your midst so that I shall be your god and you yourselves shall be my people." The logical development is carefully structured as in previous verses:

והתהלכתי בתוכם -12a =	ונתתי משכני בתוכם -11a
"thus i shall walk in your midst" =	"and I shall grant my dwelling place in your midst"
ואתם תהיו לי לעם -12b =	ולא־תגעל נפשי אתכם -11b
"so that I shall be your god =	"and my soul shall not despise you"
and you yourselves shall be my people"	

Several observations may be made concerning the structure of these two verses: (1) Verse 11 has a complete correspondence of terms (though not of equivalent syntax): **בתוכם | אתכם, משכני | נפשי, ונתתי | ולא־תגעל**. (2) **בתוכם** "in your midst" concludes both 11a and 12a. This emphasizes the relationship which the divine presence has to the nation. (3) The conceptual equivalent of **נתתי משכני** "I shall grant my dwelling place" is **התהלכתי** "I shall walk." This supports the conclusion that the meaning of **משכן** is non-technical. It is a reference to Yahweh's dwelling among the people in general. The dwelling is not being limited to a particular geographic location (such as the tabernacle or temple).

Lev 26:6-7; Jer 14:15/Lev 26:25-26; Jer 14:19/Lev 26:44; Jer 14:20/Lev 26:39; Jer 14:21/Lev 26:42, 44; Jer 14:22/Lev 26:1, 2, 12, 13, 44, 45.

(4) As lib is the basis for 11a, so 12b is the basis for 12a. Yahweh's presence would be based upon an identification by Yahweh with his people and his people with him. (5) The common alternation of verb forms occurs in 12b. Therefore, 12ba and 12bs are a single concept. Yahweh being the god of Israel is virtually identical with Israel being the people of Yahweh. (6) 12bβ employs the prepositive emphatic personal pronoun (אתא "you") to designate the subject of the verb. This emphasizes those addressed by Yahweh by expanding the second person masculine plural pronominal suffix (כְּ) employed in all four of the previous phrases in verses 11-12. Thus, the last two verses of the promise section leave the reader with the distinct impression that the nation of Israel is a privileged people: "you yourselves"--as opposed to any other people. They alone are the covenant people. They alone are to be the landed people. Yahweh's land grant to them is unique. They alone are the receivers of all which comes from the giver.

One more aspect of the interpretation of verses 11-12 must be discussed before this analysis proceeds further: that of the New Testament quotation of this passage in 2 Corinthians 6:16. The introductory formula in 2 Corinthians 6:16 is a *hapax phainomenon* in the New Testament and in the Septuagint.¹ However, there does appear to be a rough equivalent to καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι "even as/which also God has said" in the Qumran Zadokite Document (or, Damascus Rule): אשר אמר אל "which/of which God has said" (vi.13 and viii.9).² In the two Qumran occurrences

¹ J. de Waard, *A Comparative Study of the Old Testament Text in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the New Testament*, STDJ 4 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1966), p. 16.

² Ibid. Cf. Eduard Lohse, hrsg., *Die Texte aus Qumran* (zweite, kritisch durchgesehene and ergänzte Auflage, München: Kosel-Verlag, 1971), pp. 78-79, 82-83.

the first refers to a quotation of Malachi 1:10 which has been slightly altered (primarily in grammatical person) to fit the application intended and the second refers to part of Deuteronomy 32:33, which has not been altered. Malachi 1:10 was interpreted literally and contextually; Deuteronomy 32:33 was interpreted allegorically though maintaining the proper contextual reference (to rebellious covenant people). The introductory formula, therefore, does not yield itself to an identification with a specific type of quotation (even if it is associated with the Qumran references).

The quotation is as follows:

Ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐνπεριπατήσω,
καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτῶν θεός, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μου λαός.
I shall dwell among them and walk among (them),
and I shall be their god, and they themselves shall be
my people.

The second part of this quotation is clearly identical to the Hebrew of Leviticus 26:12b. Even the order of the possessive pronouns is consistent: preceding the noun which they modify (just like **לכם** and **ל** in the MT of Lev 26:12b). The pronouns are altered to the third person plural in the New Testament due to the writer's different point of reference.

Ἐνπεριπατήσω differs from the MT only in the omission of the pronominal object concept (which may be supplied by *ad sensum* agreement with the immediate context). The problem arises from ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς. This is obviously intended as the equivalent of Leviticus 26:11a (**ונתתי**
מִשְׁכְּנִי בְּתוֹכְכֶם). The Septuagint offers a variant reading: καὶ θήσω τὴν
διαθήκην μου ἐν ὑμῖν "and I shall establish/set my covenant among you." Reasons for the state of the Septuagint text have already been discussed.¹

¹ See above, pp. 24-25.

the first refers to a quotation of Malachi 1:10 which has been slightly altered (primarily in grammatical person) to fit the application intended and the second refers to part of Deuteronomy 32:33, which has not been altered. Malachi 1:10 was interpreted literally and contextually; Deuteronomy 32:33 was interpreted allegorically though maintaining the proper contextual reference (to rebellious covenant people). The introductory formula, therefore, does not yield itself to an identification with a specific type of quotation (even if it is associated with the Qumran references).

The quotation is as follows:

Ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐνπεριπατήσω,
καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτῶν θεός, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μου λαός.

I shall dwell among them and walk among (them),
and I shall be their god, and they themselves shall be
my people.

The second part of this quotation is clearly identical to the Hebrew of Leviticus 26:12b. Even the order of the possessive pronouns is consistent: preceding the noun which they modify (just like **ל** and **ל** in the MT of Lev 26:12b). The pronouns are altered to the third person plural in the New Testament due to the writer's different point of reference.

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משכני בתוככם). The Septuagint offers a variant reading: καὶ θήσω τὴν διαθήκην μου ἐν ὑμῖν "and I shall establish/set my covenant among you." Reasons for the state of the Septuagint text have already been discussed.¹

¹ See above, pp. 24-25.

The MT need not be altered. The cause of the New Testament paraphrase of Leviticus 26:11a may be found either in Paul's translation technique or merely in his utilization of a conceptual equivalent for the Hebrew phrase. This writer believes that the latter suggestion has the most support. First, the clear emphasis of Paul's use of Leviticus 26:11-12 is the concept of identification with God in 12b. The omission of 11b is a clue to Paul's intention. That phrase (in 11b) does not serve any purpose in Paul's current discussion in 2 Corinthians 6. Since Leviticus 26:11b is omitted, it would not be surprising to find, therefore, that Paul only paraphrased 11a in order to include the concept rather than the quotation. Having established the concept and the context, Paul proceeded to quote verbatim 12b. (This explanation would also provide a reason for the ellipsis of the pronominal object of ἐνπεριπατήσω.) The elaborate discussions of conflation of old Testament texts, "pearl stringing," pre-Pauline usage, and of 4Q LXX Lev^a are made unnecessary by the simple reading of the New Testament text alongside the MT.¹

In the preceding discussion of verses 4-12 the concept of gift has surfaced repeatedly. The constant repetition of the first person singular has also emphasized the identity of the giver. While comparing Ezekiel 34:25-30 to Leviticus 26:3-13, Klein makes the observation: "the blessings according to Leviticus are responses to human obedience;

¹ Cf. de Waard, *Comparative Study*, pp. 16-17; Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975), pp. 112, 115, 116, 130. It is this writer's opinion that there is much work to be done in the study of the New Testament usage of the Old Testament. This is especially true since current studies seem to overlook the plain sense of scripture, comparative syntax, and translation techniques.

in Ezekiel's monergistic theology they are free gifts of God."¹ This is an overdrawn comparison. Not only does Klein miss the emphasis on gift in Leviticus 26, he also misses the indications of human responsibility in Ezekiel 34 (e.g., v. 22: "and I shall judge between sheep and sheep"). The obedient nation is the recipient of divine blessing in both Leviticus and Ezekiel. The disobedient nation likewise is the recipient of divine cursing in both books. Divine monergism is undeniable throughout scripture when man is viewed as the undeserving recipient of divine grace. There is no synergism. Faith on the part of Israel was a response to the divine work and the evidence of the commencement of divine covenant.

Although it must be admitted that Israel never obtained these blessings in their perfection,² it must be emphasized that they did receive at least a partial fulfillment on both individual and national levels. The same degree of fulfillment was also manifested concerning the cursings. The emphasis of the covenant was on the national involvement. Thus, the constant emphasis may be observed with regard to the land. The concept in verse 12 of "my people" is evidence of the corporate emphasis. The blessings and cursings of the covenant documents aimed at the total benefit or total destruction "of the offender, all he is and all he has."³ These formulas are "not limited to the vassal

¹ Klein, *Israel in Exile*, p. 86.

² Cf. Ramban (*Nachmanides*) *Commentary on the Torah*, 5 vols., trans. Charles B. Chavel (New York: Shilo Publishing House, Inc., 1974), 3:458-65; and, *מקראות עדרולות*, loc. cit. Ramban also emphasizes the miraculous in the blessings. They were not natural, but supernatural. His total argument is for an eschatological fulfillment nationally but an immediate fulfillment individually.

³ Hillers, *Covenant*, p. 38.

king but is spread, in widening circles, over his wife and children, to the third generation, his possessions and his country"¹ in keeping with the ancient near eastern milieu. Since the covenant context of Leviticus 26:4-12 has been established as involving both the Abrahamic (as in v. 9) and Mosaic (as in vv. 1-3) covenants, both the eschatological and the immediate fulfillments may be identified. The eschatological are especially evident in relation to the Abrahamic Covenant. The immediate are particularly evident with respect to the Mosaic Covenant. These two emphases may be observed both in the immediate context of Leviticus 26 historically and in the later pronouncements of the prophets of Israel.

The closing statement of Leviticus 26:4-12 concerning the divine presence serves to reemphasize the covenantal concept in this passage. It is found primarily in Jeremiah and Ezekiel,² but is found also in Exodus 6:7 (its first full occurrence) and Deuteronomy 29:12 (a Palestinian Covenant occurrence). Significant uses of **לאלהים יהיה** include Leviticus 11:45; 22:33; 25:38; 26:45; Genesis 17:7, 8; and, Deuteronomy 26:17. **יהיה לעם** is especially noteworthy in Deuteronomy 26:18 and 27:9. All the blessings are related to the identification with Yahweh and his identification with his people by means of his presence among them. It was the centrality of this truth which led Paul to employ it in a New Testament context emphasizing the identification of the New

¹ Ibid. Cf. the writer's "Amos and the Palestinian Covenant" (unpublished research paper, Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, IN, 1976) for a fuller discussion of national vs. individual blessing and cursing in the covenant relationship.

² Elliger, *Leviticus*, p. 374 n. 22; Raitt, *Theology of Exile*, pp. 169-70.

Testament believer with his God (2 Cor 6:14-7:1). Thus, this core-truth remains central even today for those who would be identified with God and his Messiah.

The Premise: Yahweh's Salvation (v. 13)

The *Selbstvorstellungsformel* of this verse is more elaborate than those previously found in this pericope.¹ **אני יהוה אלהיכם** "I am Yahweh your god" is identical to the *Selbstvorstellungsformel* of verse 2. However, the addition of the *heilsgeschichtliche Formulierung* ("salvation-history formula"), **אשר הוצאתי אתכם מארץ מצרים**, "who brought you out of the land of Egypt," connects Yahweh with history. The exodus from Egypt had been specifically emphasized in Leviticus 25 as a basis for the obedience of Israel regarding the sabbatical years (vv. 38, 42, and 55). The common deliverance from Egypt by Yahweh made the nation an identifiable entity with the identical roots. The land-giver was first the deliverer. The land-receivers were joint-recipients of the promises of the covenant. As participants in the covenant, they must never perceive their land "in a social or historical vacuum."² The exodus-causer provided them with a common social and historical identity so that their landedness could be kept in the proper perspective, the Yahweh-perspective: his gift, his authority, his presence, his people.

The following phrase employs **מן** with the infinitive to express a negative consequence:³ **מהית להם רבדים**,¹ⁿ "so that (you) would not be their servants." The antithesis to this phrase is clearly that of

¹ See above, pp. 47, 50.

² Brueggemann, *The Land*, p. 67 (cf. pp. 47-70).

³ Jouon, *Grammaire*, p. 521 (§169h).

verse 12: **ואתם תהי־לי לעם** "and you yourselves shall be my people."

This is the only time that this phrase is employed in the entire old Testament. A similar phrase (likewise connected with the *Selbstvorstellungsformel/Heilsgeschichtsformel*) appears in Exodus 20:2=Deuteronomy 5:6, **אנכי יהוה אלהיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים מבית עבדים**, "I am Yahweh your god who brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of servitude." In the contexts of Exodus 20:2 and Deuteronomy 5:6 the formula is utilized in the promulgation of the Decalogue. As such, it has Sinaitic overtones as far as a covenant is concerned. The *Heilsgeschichtsformel* may exhibit a result of the Abrahamic Covenant (cf. Gen 15:13-14), but it is the basis for the Mosaic Covenant (cf. Exod 19:4).

Two *wyyqtl* forms are employed in the last section of this verse: **ואשבר** "and I broke" and **ואולך** "and I brought out." These forms are characteristic of historical narrative.¹ The historical tone of the *Heilsgeschichtsformel* is undergirded, therefore, by the author's introduction of these forms into a pericope where they are rare. The historical reality of the exodus from Egypt is incontrovertible and essential. Yahweh delivered Israel from a heavy yoke of bondage which would not allow them to stand freely upright.

מטת על "bars of the yoke" is a phrase found only here and in Ezekiel 34:27. Both verses also speak of the breaking (**שבר**) of those bars. The picture is that of "poles which are laid upon the necks of beasts of burden (Jer. xxvii. 2) as a yoke, to bend their necks and harness them for work."² **קוממיות** is a substantive serving as an adver-

¹ GKC, p. 326 (§111a). it is noteworthy that Elliger (*Leviticus*, pp. 364, 366-67) omits any reference to v. 13 as poetic parallelism.

² Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 2:471.

bial accusative of manner: "upright."¹ As the yoke was a symbol of bondage, so the upright walk was a symbol of freedom from bondage.² Thus, the elaboration of the *Heilsgeschichtsformel* by unusual phrases³ stamps Yahweh's seal of approval upon the promises to be granted for obedience to the divine precepts.⁴

The Summary of Verses 3-13

Form

Due to the relationship of verses 6-8 and 9-10, together with the independent nature of verses 3 and 13, the following outline of this section of the pericope emerges:

1. Precept (vv. 1-2)
2. Promise (vv. 3-13)
 - 2.1 - Prerequisite: Obedience (v. 3)
 - 2.2 - Product: Blessing (vv. 4-12)
 - 2.21 - Productivity (vv. 4-5)
 - 2.22 - Peace (vv. 6-8)
 - 2.23 - Population (vv. 9-10)
 - 2.24 - Presence (vv. 11-12)
 - 2.3 - Premise: Yahweh's Salvation (v. 13)

The attempt of Elliger to classify most of verses 1-13 as poetic parallelism may stimulate further research regarding the features of

¹ Ibid.; Jouon, *Grammaire*, p. 379 (§126d); GKC, p. 375 (§118q).

² Targum Onqelos translated **קוממיות** with **חירות** "liberty," a rendering already employed for **דרור** "liberty/release/emancipation" in 25:10. Targum Neophyti I offers a full paraphrase: **ותברית ניר שעבוד יהון דמצריי דהוה קשי עליכון היך נרי פרזלה ודברית יתכון [בקומה] זקיפה מעיכוויכון**

"and I broke the yoke of the Egyptian servitude from upon you, that which was difficult for you like a yoke of iron, and I led you with erect stature" (Macho, *Neophyti I*, 3:195).

³ **קוממיות** is a *hapax legomenon*.

⁴ Elliger, *Leviticus*, p. 374: "Die ausgeffurte Heilsgeschichtsformel . . . druckt Jahwes Siegel unter die Verheissung des Lohnes, der auf dem Halten der Gebote steht."

Hebrew poetry.¹ It is unquestionable that this section of the pericope does exhibit an elevated literary style. Proverbial use of numbers (v. 8), chiasmus (v. 9), inclusion (vv. 1, 2, 13), and several carefully developed examples of logical progression (e.g., vv. 4, 7-8, 11-12) all occur in this section. The alternation of prefix (*yqtl*) and suffix (*qtl*) verb forms is obviously a stylistic feature of the pericope. It may not argue for poetry, but it certainly contributes to the high literary form of the pericope. The intrusion of the *wyyqtl* forms in verse 13 break the flow of the pericope at the most conducive point: the salvation-history formula. The author of the pericope is captivating in his literary style. There is predictability in his employment of verb forms, in the commencing of sections with ונתתי (vv. 4, 6, and 11), and in his repetition of key words (vv. 4, 5, 6, 7-8, 10, and 12). There is also an element of surprise in the manner in which he does the unexpected (e.g., the abbreviated *Selbstvorstellungsformel* in v. 2, the resumptive ואל in v. 3, the insertion of Abrahamic Covenant phraseology in v. 9, the emphatic personal pronoun in v. 12ba, and the employment of *wyyqtl* forms and *hapax legomena* in v. 13). This writer cannot help but think of Acts 7:22, "Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful with words."

*Aim*²

Prior to the departure of Israel from the region of Mt. Sinai, Yahweh sought to establish a summation of the nation's relationship to

¹ See above, p. 57 n. 1.

² This division of the study in hand was inspired by the excellent arrangement of the *Hermeneia* commentaries. The significance of a pericope in scripture is best seen in the light of what the author purposed to accomplish by it.

him. Their relationship to Yahweh involved the past (Abrahamic Covenant), the present (Mosaic Covenant), and the future (Palestinian Covenant). The summation opens with a condensed version of the Decalogue: Observe Yahweh's deity: idol worship is forbidden; and, observe Yahweh's lordship: preserve the sabbatical principles and the sanctuary (vv. 1-2). The present covenant (which had been presented to them just a month or two prior) was thus brought to the attention of the nation. The following conditional statement (vv. 3-12) was based upon this covenant relationship above all others (v. 3).

In verses 4-12 the concepts of covenant relate to the land, a theme emphasized more in the Abrahamic past and looking, by way of preview, to the Palestinian future. Verse 9 was designed especially to remind the people of their Abrahamic heritage since its terminology was limited to that context. The few parallels (terminologically) to Deuteronomy 27-30 were but a lead-in to the more extensive parallels later in the pericope. The future in the blessings is tantalizingly faint. Perhaps the faintness emphasized the present responsibility to obey Yahweh under the terms of the current covenant.

An attitude toward Yahweh is carefully developed by the statements of promise. Obedience must be real. Obedience must be voluntary and sincere. Such obedience comes from realizing the true nature of Yahweh and of Israel's possessions. Yahweh is the exodus-causer, the land-giver, the rain-giver, the produce-giver, the peace-giver, the power-source, and the presence-granter. Israel's identity, history, land, and prosperity were from Yahweh alone. Their national identity was not of their own making. Their exodus from Egypt was not under their own power. Their reception of the land would not be their own gain.

Their landed prosperity would not be their own product. Therefore, all they were and possessed were from God. All they had belonged to God. They were not their own; they were purchased by the price of the exodus. Their liberty from Egypt was a divine gift, not a divine obligation. Their landedness would be another means of identifying with the historical presence of Yahweh and of confirming the reality of the covenant relationship.

In the long years of wandering in the wilderness, these truths would serve to direct the nation toward the fulfillment of landedness. Those years of landlessness would be filled with the pursuit of promise. Such hope would be founded upon their memory of past history (v. 13). That memory would remind them of the nature of their national identity. It would also comfort them with the thought that Yahweh's purpose in causing the exodus was not fulfilled at Sinai. Sinai was but the commencement. Canaan would be the fulfillment.

In a nutshell, verses 1-13 provided Israel with the proof that the new covenant of law (the Mosaic) had not nullified the old covenant of promise (the Abrahamic). Both were authoritative (cf. Paul's use of derivatives of *xupow* "make valid/confirm/ratify" in Gal 3:17). The authority of precept (Mosaic legislation, Lev 26:1-3) did not conflict with the authority of promise (Abrahamic gift, vv. 4-12). In addition, both are consistent with the authority of history (v. 13). The harmony is due to the author of all three: Yahweh, Israel's god. Both covenants were now embodied in the corpus of revelation entrusted to Israel. Israel must believe the promise and manifest that faith by obeying the precept. That obedience would be the avenue of receiving the promise.

Penalty, (vv. 14-45)

Most of Leviticus 26 is taken up with the concept of the curse. cursings are the just retribution for disloyalty. In verses 14-15 the reason for retribution is established as disobedience to the covenant stipulations of Yahweh. Verses 16-38 unfold the retribution in five stages. Each stage seems to be complete in itself. Each allows the chastised community (or individual) to return to the paths of obedience. The purpose of this retribution is restoration. "Israel's God is not a God of vengeance, but a God of didactic love."¹ Yahweh utilized retribution/chastisement to instruct his covenant people regarding their covenant obligations. Because he loved them (an evidence of their election to the covenant relationship, Deut 7:6-8), Yahweh would punish them for their rebellion against the legislation of his covenant (cf. Heb 12:6-11). The final group of verses in this section (vv. 39-45) reveal the prospect of covenant retribution: repentance.

The Cause: Disobedience (vv. 14-15)

As with the conditional form in verse 3, **ואם** + *yqtl* in verse 14 presents the concept of a real possibility.² The casuistic form of legislation is carried over from verse 3. Here it is negative; there it was positive. Here there is the potential of disobedience; there there was the potential for obedience.

ואם־לא תשמעו לי "and if you do not listen to me (or, obey me)"

does not have an equivalent positive statement in verse 3. The full

¹ Elliger, *Leviticus*, p. 374: "Israels Gott ist kein Gott der Rache, sondern ein Gott der erziehenden Liebe."

² See above, p. 51.

effect of the first person singular in verses 1-13 (especially in the *Selbstvorstellungsformel*) is exemplified in this first phrase: as obedience to Yahweh's law was obedience to Yahweh, so disobedience to Yahweh's law was disobedience to Yahweh. As the first major section of the pericope presented the concept of Yahweh's sovereignty by forbidding idols (v. 1), so the second major section manifests the same concept by focusing on the ultimate target of disloyalty: Yahweh.

The second phrase of verse 14 is a conflation of verse 3bc:

וְלֹא תַעֲשׂוּ אֶת כָּל־הַמִּצְוֹת הָאֵלֶּה "so that you do not perform/practice all these commandments." There is no repetition of אִם "if." The syntax seems to indicate a consecutive concept of result or epexegetis. The two phrases complement each other--not as two separate "sins,"¹ but as a doublet presenting the same concept. The Septuagint's translation of שָׁמַע "hear/obey" by ὑπακούω "obey" confirms this interpretation. שָׁמַע is the equivalent of "doing what Yahweh says and wills."² "All these commandments" refers to the entire Sinaitic legislation in the preceding context.³

Verse 15 returns to the conditional protasis by means of UK:

"and if you reject my statutes (מֵאֵס בַּחֻקִּים)." This concept is diametrically opposite the concept of verse 3a. The resumption of the first person singular pronominal suffix (omitted from מִצְוֹת in verse 14) maintains the identification with Yahweh which is the *sine qua non*. The

¹ Cf. Rashi: מֵשָׁלַח תִּלְמָדוּ לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ הָרִי שְׁתֵּי עֲבֵירוֹת "because you do not learn you do not do--here are two sins/transgressions" (Unlit, p. 136).

² THAT, s.v. "שָׁמַע," by H. Schult, 2:980, "Auf Jahwe oder seinen Repräsentanten (z.B. Mose, Josua, einen Propheten [Ez 3, 7:]), 'horen' heisst tun, was Jahwe sagt and will."

³ See above, p. 53.

employment of **מאס** "reject" is the first occurrence of the term in a covenant context in the Old Testament.¹ It sets the stage for a theologoumenon concerning rejection. Rejection of the revelation² of Yahweh is rejection of Yahweh himself (cf. Num 11:20). Rejection of Yahweh brings retributive rejection of the rebel by Yahweh (cf. Lev 26:15, 44; 1 Sam 15:23, 26; Hos 4:6). Two historical pericopes describe Israel's rejection of the divine word and their own subsequent rejection by Yahweh because they failed to keep the sabbath and commenced the worship of idols: Ezekiel 20 and 2 Kings 17. The first is a chronicle of the wilderness experience immediately following the revealing of Leviticus 26 at Sinai. The second pericope is a record of apostasy in the land, including the golden calf cult which originated in the wilderness. Any reading of these two pericopes brings Leviticus 26 to mind because of the consistent repetition of precept (especially pro-sabbath and anti-idolatry), history (especially the exodus from Egypt), land (prospective in Ezekiel 20; possessed in 2 Kings 17), covenant (both Abrahamic and Mosaic), identification (with Yahweh as their god), and promise (including the prospect of restoration to landedness/blessing when they return to obedience). The concept of mutual rejection is also present in both pericopes. Disobedience is disloyalty to the covenant and its suzerain. Chastisement is administered for the breach of covenant. Leviticus 26, by its chronology (given to Moses at Sinai)

¹ **מאס** is employed in the book of Job (which this writer places in the patriarchal period), but not in the context of covenant.

² Terms for revelation which are objects of **מאס** include **חקה/חק** "statute," **תורה** "law/instruction," **דבר** "word," **משפט** "judgment," **דעת** "knowledge," **עדות** "testimony," and **ברית** "covenant."

and its covenant form consisting of blessings and curses, is antecedent to both historical settings. It is also antecedent to both writings containing these two pericopes.

Another **וא** precedes the next statement: "and if (**וא**) your soul despises (**געל**) my ordinances (**משפט**)." This demonstrates that 14b should be considered subordinate to 14a since OR was not repeated there. Here (v. 15) the repetition of **וא** is clearly coordinate. This syntax promotes the association of the two subsequent infinitival clauses with the second **וא** clause. The despising of Yahweh's ordinances is an act of the inner man. It is the spurning of the authority of the lord of the covenant. The evidence of the rebellion is the non-performance of Yahweh's covenant stipulations: **לבלתי עשות את כל מצותי** "not performing all my commandments." The infinitival clause with the negative expresses the direction which the spurning and rejection would take.¹ The disobedience involved the entire body of legislation: "all my commandments."² The next infinitive is an attendant circumstance which might also indicate the motive:³ "**פרר ברית**" "(thereby) breaking my covenant." **פרר** "is not primarily a legal word."⁴ "It governs berit in the sense of abandoning Yahweh completely in Dt 31,16.20; Is 24,5; Jer 11,10; 31,32."⁵

¹ Cf. GKC, p. 348 (§114f).

² This could involve omission as well as commission. The breaking of any aspect of the covenant could also be considered as breach of the entire covenant (cf. Jas 2:10).

³ *ibid.*, pp. 348 (§114f), 351 (§114o). If motives can be legitimately included in the employment of the infinitive here, it would demonstrate a willful and obstinate breach of covenant.

⁴ McEvenue, *Narrative Style*, p. 170. As McEvenue points out, however, it is used of breaking a law (Num 15:31) and includes laws in Lev 26:15, 44; Ezek 44:7; Ps 119:126; and, Ezra 9:14 (*ibid.*).

⁵ *Ibid.*

Usually the sense is that of nullifying an oath (whether it is one's own or another's) when it is associated with **בְּרִית** (cf. Gen 17:14; 30:9, 13, 14, 16; Judg 2:2; Jer 14:21;¹ 33:20-21; Ezek 16:59; 16, 18; Zech 11:10-11).² In other words, the breach of covenant Israel involved the willful disobedience of the law of Yahweh (as revealed in the Mosaic Covenant) and the subsequent nullification of the promise of Yahweh (as revealed in the Abrahamic Covenant and in the immediately preceding context of Lev 26:15, vv. 4-13).

The landless nation of Israel was instructed at Sinai that it must live in the light of Yahweh's promise of landedness/blessing (Abrahamic Covenant), in the light of Yahweh's deliverance of the nation from Egypt, and in the light of the legislation which gave Israel its identity as the people of God (Mosaic Covenant). They were an elect people, a covenanted people. They must demonstrate it by life and deed as well as by word (cf. Exod 19:8, "All which Yahweh has commanded/spoken we will do/perform"). Shalom Paul's evaluation of these motifs is worth repeating:

The leading motifs of early biblical literature, election, redemption, covenant, and law, are closely interconnected: God elected the children of Israel to be his treasured possession; his redemptive intervention into history liberated an enslaved people who became bound to God through a pact whose stipulations demand the utmost obedience; the continued existence of this religious community is completely predicated upon the observance and performance of those principles and injunctions that constitute the charter of its covenant with God. The will of God expressed through the law is the basis of the covenant relationship between God and Israel.³

¹ See above, pp. 72-73 (especially n. 3).

² McEvenue, *Narrative Style*, p. 170.

³ Paul, *Studies in the Book of the Covenant*, pp. 40-41 (italic emphasis added).

The threat of punishment in Leviticus 26:14-45 is given in the light of the tension of wills (Yahweh's will vs. man's will) and the claims of authority (Yahweh's person and deeds vs. man's person and deeds).

The Consequence: Retribution (vv. 16-38)

The unfolding drama of retribution consists of five stages: (1) debilitation and defeat (vv. 16-17), (2) drought (vv. 18-20), (3) devastation by wild beasts (vv. 21-22), (4) deprivation by siege (vv. 23-26), and (5) deportation (vv. 27-38). Each of the stages is introduced by a protasis employing the conditional particle 13M. The protasis for verses 16-17 should be understood as verses 14-15 although that protasis may be considered also as the introduction to the entire section concerning retribution.¹ Stages two through five are characterized by the occurrence of the phrase **שבע על-חטאתיכם** "seven times for your sins" (vv. 18, 24, 28; v. 21 employs **כי** in place of **על**).² The overall effect of these five stages is that of an increasing punishment for transgression of the covenant relationship to Yahweh. These progressive stages first prove the obstinacy of Israel in their sinful ways, then offer repeated opportunities for repentance.

Debilitation and defeat (vv. 16-17)

The emphatic **אני-אף** "yea/indeed/surely I" is employed three times in this pericope (vv. 16, 24, and 41).³ The particle **אף** is employed for

¹ As the preceding outline demonstrates (see above, pp. 85-90), this writer understands vv. 14-15 as the introduction to vv. 16-38 as well as the introduction to vv. 16-17.

² The absence of this phrase in vv. 14-15 argues for their distinct nature. See above, n. 1.

³ **אף** "and indeed" is employed in vv. 39, 40, 42 bis, and 44.

"introducing emphatically a new thought."¹ Such usages are primarily in poetic material or "elevated prose."² Only in verse 16 is **אֶף** utilized in this pericope to introduce an apodosis. It contributes to the sense of urgency in this first series of judgmental threats. It also confirms the wider scope of the protasis in verses 14-15 (i.e., as the introduction to the entire section). The *yqtl* form of the verb follows the emphatic particle and first person singular pronoun. The first person singular of the verb joins with the personal pronoun to emphasize the subject: Yahweh. In the protasis (vv. 14-15) Yahweh had been presented as the one who was not obeyed. He was the one whose covenant had been breached by the disobedient. In the apodosis (vv. 16-17) Yahweh is being presented as the one who executes judgment: "Yea, I myself shall do this to you" (**אֶף־אֲנִי אַעֲשֶׂה־זֹאת לָכֶם**).

וְהִפְקַדְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם בְּהֵלָה "yea, I shall summon against you immediately" is explanatory of the first phrase.³ **פָּקַד** is employed here as it is in Jeremiah 15:3 in the hostile sense of summoning a series of judgments for breach of covenant.⁴ **בְּהֵלָה** is the difficult member of this phrase.⁵ It has been altered (cf. **בְּחֵלָה** "with sickness" in the Samaritan Pentateuch) as well as translated in a variety of senses: **ἀπορία** "distress"

¹ BDB, p. 64. Cf., also, GKC, p. 483 (§153).

² BDB, p. 64. That there is something special about the style of Leviticus 26 has already been demonstrated (see above, esp. pp. 81-82). Elliger repeatedly refers to this section (vv. 14-45) as "rhythmische Prosa" (*Leviticus*, pp. 367, 368, 369, 370).

³ Being explanatory, the second phrase is logically parallel to the first.

⁴ *THAT*, s.v. "פָּקַד" by W. Schottroff, 2:485. The judgments of Jer 15:1-4 are very similar to those in Lev 26:16-38.

⁵ See above, pp. 25-26.

(Septuagint), $\alpha\nu\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\nu$ "immediately/suddenly" ($\Upsilon\text{ΑΛΛΟΣ}$ in the Hexapla),¹
 וְהִלַּל "haste/hastily" (Targum Onqelos),² "dismay/terror"
 (Syriac Peshitta), *velociter* "quickly/speedily" (Latin Vulgate), and
 'aly sur'a "quickly/speedily" (Arabic).³ בְּהִלָּה is
 employed once in the Qumran Cave 1 materials (1QH viii.33) and is
 variously translated "destruction,"⁴ "fear,"⁵ and "confusion."⁶ The
 Semitic background for בְּהִלָּה reveals a wide semantic range including the
 concepts of supplication, execration, communication, revelation, ter-
 rorization, acceleration/precipitation, idiocy, forgetfulness, relaxa-
 tion/cessation, liberation, and insouciance.⁷ Haste and terror, how-
 ever, are its dominant semantic elements in Hebrew and Aramaic.⁸ Jouon⁹
 argues against the usual "sudden terror."¹⁰ His classification of בְּהִלָּה

¹ Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum*, 1:215. Origen offered a conflate reading, believing X157n had not been translated by the Septuagint. He marked it with the Aristarchian asterisk (the $\chi\iota$ περιεστιγμένον).

² This is also the Onqelos rendering of וְהִלַּל "haste" in Exod 12:11. The Aramaic is directly related to the Hebrew.

³ Brian Walton, *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta*, 6 vols. (reprint ed., Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1963), 1:523.

⁴ Lohse, *Die Texte aus Qumran*, p. 145: "Untergang."

⁵ G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (2nd ed., Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc., 1975), p. 178.

⁶ Theodor H. Gaster, *The Dead Sea Scriptures* (revised ed., Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1964), p. 170.

⁷ David Cohen, *Dictionnaire des Racines Semitiques* (Paris: Mouton, 1976), 2:48.

⁸ *TDOT*, s.v. "בְּהִלָּה" by Benedikt Otzen, 2:3-5.

⁹ Jouon, *Grammaire*, p. 269 (§102d); "Notes philologiques sur le texte hébreu," *Bib* 9 (1928):43-44.

¹⁰ Cf. BDB, p. 96.

as an adverb is supported by two major arguments (neither of which he mentions):

(1) The syntax of the clause indicates that **שחפת** "consumption" and **קדחת** "fever"

are the direct objects of **פקד**. The sign of the accusative (**את**) is employed before each of

these nouns but not before **בהלה**.¹ (2) All the remaining uses of **בהלה** in the old

Testament (Ps 78:33; Isa 65:23; Jer 15:8) were translated **συστοσθή**

"immediately/sud-

denly" by the Septuagint. The best sense appears to be that Yahweh would send his

chastisements "immediately."

Yahweh would send **שחפת** "consumption"² and **קדחת** "fever"³ as the chastisements.

The same two terms are employed again in Deuteronomy 28:22 where they are also

covenant curses against disloyal Israel. These two passages are the only occurrences of the

terms in biblical Hebrew. The effects of these two physical debilitators are **עינים מכלות**

"consuming the eyes"⁴ and **מדיבת נפש** "languishing of the soul."⁵ Both verbs are plural

feminine participles. The grammatical agreement in

¹ BDB's (p. 96) statement that the two nouns following **בהלה** are "appositives" is incorrect since PK, in that case, surely would have preceded **בהלה**, too. Cf. John MacDonald, "The Particle **את** in Classical Hebrew: Some New Data on Its Use with the Nominative," *VT* 14 (1964):270.

² In later Hebrew **tr** referred to a wasting, reduction, or loss of flesh. Cf. Marcus Jastrow, comp., *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*, 2 vols. (reprint ed., Brooklyn: P. Shalom Publishing Inc., 1967), 2:1549. Craigie offers the possibility that it means "tuberculosis" (i.e., con-

sumption of the lungs). Cf. Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1976), p. 342.

³ Or, "inflammation of the eye" (Jastrow, *Dict.*, 2:1315).

⁴ Targum Onqelos: מַשְׁכֵּן עֵינָיו "darkening the eyes." Septuagint: σπακελίζοντας τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς "gangrened eyes."

⁵ Cf. דָּאב "languish"|| כָּלָה "consume" in Deut 28:65 and כָּלָה||דָּוָב in 1 Sam 2:33. נַפֶּשׁ "soul" could be understood as a reference to the "life" of the physical body or as the "desire" or emotional drive of the individual to live.

number would require that both effects refer to both of the previously identified debilitators. However, it is also possible to see a correspondence between 16b α and 16b β :

"consumption" (fl)	=	"Consuming (כלה) the eyes"
"fever/inflammation"	=	"languishing of the soul/life"

If this correspondence is accurate, the consumption would be most noticeable or effective in the eyes of the disobedient. The fever would cause the energy to ebb from the body or the will to live to disappear.

The debilitation described in 16ab would increase the nation's susceptibility to invasion. They would sow, but not receive the benefit of the harvest (16c α) since their invaders would devour it (16c β).¹ The first ׀ in 16c is best translated "so that."² זרע לריק "sow to no benefit" describes the resulting state of the nation. The second ׀ is best translated "since" or "because."³ The reason that there is no benefit from the sowing is that their enemies would eat the harvest.

Verse 17 contains a recurrence of the familiar ונתתי (cf. vv. 4, 6, and 11). However, this occurrence is different. It involves forfeit rather than gift. "Thus I shall set (נתן) my face (or, presence, פני)⁴ against you" is a statement concerning the removal of blessing. Divine

¹ This is a theme of covenant curses in the Palestinian Covenant: Deut 28:33, 51. There is a logical progression (and, sociological reality in the ancient Near East) from debilitation to vulnerability, from vulnerability to conquest, and from conquest to pillaging.

² Cf. GKC, pp. 504-5 (§166a). This interpretation is not required by the syntax. It is allowed by the syntax. Even if the concept of result is eliminated and the passage is interpreted as presenting different areas of the Israelite's existence, it must be admitted that each was often the natural cause of the subsequent condition in the ancient world.

³ Cf. GKC, p. 492 (§158a). See, also, BDB, p. 938, concerning ריק.

⁴ See Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:35-39.

presence could be beneficial or hostile. The disobedience of Israel would turn the manifestation of Yahweh on earth against them. The giver of blessing would become the giver of cursing. Both aspects reside in the divine being. He is righteous and must behave rightly toward those who are disloyal as well as toward those who are loyal. Disloyalty, according to the divine word, would bring chastisement. Thus it must be and ever will be. Yahweh would not be just if it were not so. The פנים of Yahweh was viewed as the giver of blessing (ברך), security (שמר), grace (חנן), and peace/welfare/wholeness (שלום) in the Mronic Benediction (Num 6:24-26). The פנים of Yahweh as also associated with rest (נוח, Exod 33:14). However, the פנים of Yahweh could also bring death (Exod 33:20). Due to the description of the "presence" of Yahweh in the accounts of the exodus from Egypt, it appears that the פנים of Yahweh should be interpreted as "a form of the divine manifestation"¹ in the same category as the מלאך יהוה "messenger/angel of Yahweh" and the יהוה כבוד "glory of Yahweh."² Such an interpretation (in the light of passages like Exod 33:2 and Isa 63:9) leads to an identification of the פנים (in at least some passages) with the Yahweh-destroyer of Exodus 12:23 (cf. Exod 11:4; 12:12-13). Other passages (e.g., Gen 19:24, "So Yahweh rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Yahweh out of the heavens") contribute to the conclusion that the פנים of Yahweh possessed a separate identity from other manifestations of the divine essence. In Genesis 19:24 the destroyer is entitled Yahweh as well as the one from whom he received the judgmental elements. The New

¹ Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:38.

² *Ibid.*, 1:214; cf. Zimmerli, *Theology*, pp. 73, 78, 80.

Testament revelation indicates that the theophanies of the Old Testament were, in fact, the presence of the Son of God (cf. John 1:18). Thus, Leviticus 26:17 could be understood as a statement concerning the delegation of judgmental authority to the second person of the Godhead. Such a delegation of judgmental authority is revealed also in the New Testament: "for neither does the Father judge anyone, on the contrary (ἀλλά),¹ he has entrusted (δέδωκεν)² all judgment to the Son" (John 5:22).³

The divine presence in judgment would result in enemy attack: "so that you shall be smitten (ךָגַל) before your enemies." Being beaten by their enemies, the Israelites would be dominated⁴ by their haters (אֲנִי "hater" = אֵיב "enemy"). The domination would be so complete and humiliating that Israel would become fearful of their own shadow: "so

¹ BDF, p. 232 (§448(2)).

² BAG, p. 192. Δίδωμι = יָתַן. The perfect tense of the Greek verb is significant: it presents the concept of past completion.

³ The employment of the New Testament in the interpretation of the Old Testament is too often either misrepresented or abused. It is not an invalid methodology. Divine revelation is progressive in nature. The interpreter is accountable for the total revelation received at the time of his interpretation. He must seek to interpret each part of the Word in the light of its previous revelatory context *and* in the light of its subsequent revelatory context. To say that God did not intend a meaning, which he later reveals as the meaning, is to deny the relevance of later revelation merely because it is later. E.g.: (1) Acts 2:24-32 reveals that Ps 16:8-11 may be interpreted accurately only when the resurrection of the Messiah is understood as its subject matter. (2) Heb 11:19 reveals that Abraham's reasoning in Gen 22:8-14 involved his belief that God could resurrect Isaac. Since God reveals in Hebrews that Abraham believed thusly, the interpreter of Genesis is in error if he denies

it on the grounds that such was not revealed in Genesis. (3) The "land" of Gen 12:3 must be interpreted as the "land" defined in the later revelation of Gen 15:18-21, because that was God's own definition of what he meant by "land" in the earlier revelation. The examples could be multiplied, but the principle is obvious: scripture (even later revelation) is a valid means of interpreting scripture.

⁴ See above, pp. 26-27.

that you shall flee even without one pursuing you (ואין־רדף אתכם)."¹

The structure of verse 17 may be represented as follows:

ונגפתם לפני איביכם	ונתתי פני בכם -17a
so that you shall be smitten before your enemies	thus I shall set my presence against you

ונסתם ואין־רדף אתכם	ורדו בכם שנאיכם -17b
so that you shall flee even without one pursuing you	and your haters shall rule over/dominate you

The elevated style of the pericope is once again demonstrated by the employment of chiasmus in the conceptual arrangement of verse 17.

Peace and security would be removed by the chastisements presented in verses 16-17. It is the opposite of verses 6-8 which presented the blessing of peaceful existence and powerful security. Both the physical and political aspects of שלום "wholeness/peace" would be removed in the chastisement revealed in verses 16-17. The first would be the means of advancing the second: the lack of physical well-being would set the stage for the removal of peaceful existence. Debilitation would lead eventually to defeat.

Drought (vv. 18-20)

The introduction to the second stage of chastisement is contained in verse 18. It consists of a full conditional sentence (protasis and apodosis). The protasis commences with the usual particle, אם, but continues with a construction found only here in the Hebrew Old Testament.² The temporal sense of עד in this context would appear to be "during."³ The antecedent for the demonstrative pronoun (אלה "these")

¹ See above, p. 59 (ואין).

² Note the circelli in the MT and the massorah's ל.

³ Cf. BDB, p. 724 (sub I2ab).

would consist of all the judgments described in the previous context (vv. 16-17). The employment of **לִי שְׁמַע** "listen to/obey me" is reminiscent of the first statement in verse 14.¹ If Israel failed to obey Yahweh before the end of the chastisement consisting of debilitation and defeat, he would continue to deal with them through judgment.

The apodosis presents, for the first time, the concept of degrees or increase in the chastisement: "then I will continue² to discipline/chastise you seven times for your sins" (**וְיִסְפַּתִּי לִיְסֹרָה אֶתְכֶם**) (**שֶׁבַע** על־חַטָּאתֵיכֶם). The employment of **יְסָר** "discipline/chastise" in this pericope is limited to the introduction to stages two, four, and five (vv. 18, 23, and 28). The purpose of divine discipline is presented by Amos (4:6, 8, 9, 10, and 11) as the production of repentance, returning to Yahweh.³ Amos employed the same descriptions or elements of covenantal discipline: disease, defeat, and drought. The "seven" (**שֶׁבַע**) is more than a symbolic number:⁴ "It is an appropriate and evocative number in view of the importance of the seventh in Israelite religion."⁵ It should not be understood as a revelation concerning seven punishments equivalent to seven sins extrapolated from the preced-

¹ See above, pp. 85-86.

² The employment of **יְסָר** with a complementary infinitive having the **ל** prefix is a common occurrence in biblical Hebrew. In such constructions, **יְסָר** may have the sense of "continue." Cf. GKC, p. 350 (§114m).

³ **שׁוּב** "return" is Amos' term for repentance. The Syriac equivalent, *twb*, occurs in the Peshitta's paraphrase of the first half of v. 18.

⁴ Cf. Elliger, *Leviticus*, p. 375: "Naturlich ist 'sieben' eine schematische Steigerungszahl" ("Seven' is naturally a stylized number of intensity").

⁵ Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 331.

distortion of the identity of the land-giver, Yahweh:

The land, source of life, has within it seductive power. It invites Israel to enter life apart from covenant, to reduce covenant place with all its demands and possibilities to serene space apart from history, without contingency, without demand, without mystery.¹

Israel's central temptation is to forget and so cease to be an historical people, open either to the Lord of history or to his blessings yet to be given. Settled into an eternally guaranteed situation, one scarcely knows that one is indeed addressed by the voice in history who gives gifts and makes claims. And if one is not addressed, then one does not need to answer. And if one does not answer, then one is free not to care, not to decide, not to hope, and not to celebrate.²

It would be necessary for Yahweh to deflate the puffed up ego of his people in order to bring them back to covenant stipulations. He would proceed to "smash" (שבר, the same root employed to describe Yahweh's destruction of Israel's yoke of bondage in Egypt, v. 13) their new yoke, "proud might" (גאון עז) or "pride of power."³ This combination is employed by Ezekiel five times (of Israel: Ezek 7:24, 33:28; of Egypt: 30:6, 18; and, with regard to the temple in Jerusalem: 24:21).⁴ Pride is described by the prophets as the central aspect of Israel's sinful transgression of Yahweh's covenant (cf. Hos 5:5; 7:10; Amos 6:8). The root of their guilt was their pride in their military

¹ Brueggemann, *The Land*, p. 53.

² Ibid., p. 54.

³ The Septuagint's τὴν ὑβρίον τῆς ὑπερηφανίας "the wanton violence of arrogance" is very revealing since ὑβρις is the attitude "arising from the pride of strength" (LSJ, p. 1841). Equally interesting to the expositor is the interpretive translation of Targum Onqelos: יקר תקפכון "your precious power." The genitive relationship in the MT's construction may be classified as limitation/specification describing the point where the pride is applied; cf. A. B. Davidson, *Introductory Hebrew Grammar: Hebrew Syntax* (3rd ed., reprint, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973), p. 33 (§24d).

⁴ *TDOT*, s.v. "גאון," by Diether Kellermann, 2:350.

security.¹ Their pride was the evidence of their inability to repent.² Therefore, in order to bring Israel to repentance (or, even to the place where she could choose to repent), God would have to destroy her terrible pride. Such destruction would be gracious. If pride persists in its stubbornness, it leads to complete and final destruction (cf. Prov 16:18).

As a means of smashing Israel's pride, Yahweh would make (נָתַן), the same verb employed in the description of the equivalent blessing, v. 4) the heavens like iron and the earth like bronze. This same figure occurs in Deuteronomy 28:23 (Palestinian Covenant). The rain-giver would be the drought-giver. He would be giving always, but the gift would depend on the obedience or disobedience of his people. Drought was a common means of dealing with rebellious Israel. Yahweh employed drought to chastise Israel in the days of Ahab (1 Kings 17), Jeroboam (Amos 4), Josiah (Jeremiah 14), and Zerubbabel (Haggai 1), just to name a few. In these cases the basis (i.e., the revelatory basis) for the chastening may have been Leviticus 26:19 and/or Deuteronomy 28:23.

The result of the drought and the description of its effect upon Israel's pride is revealed in verse 20: "so that your strength (כֹּחַ) shall be exhausted (*wqtl*, תָּמַם) without benefit (רִיק, cf. v. 16) because your land shall not yield its produce nor the trees of the land their fruit." The entire causal clause is identical to that in 4b

¹ Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, p. 282. The "pride of Jacob" was the object of Yahweh's abhorrence (*hapax legomenon* תַּעֲבֹב=תַּאֲבֹב, Amos 6:8).

² Wolff, *Hosea*, p. 100. Note that Hos 5:5 is in a rib-patterned pericope (cf. v. 1) manifesting breach of covenant. Both in 5:4 and in 7:10, the גַּאֲוֹן of Israel is given as the cause for no "turning/repentance" (שׁוּבוּ) to their god.

(with the exception of the negatives here and the changing of עץ השדה to עץ הארץ).¹

When Israel was disobedient to Yahweh, he would cause the very gift itself (the land) to cry out against them. Landedness with obedience produced a harmonious existence on the land and with the land. Landedness with disobedience and breach of covenant would produce enmity with the land. Estrangement from the land was merely an evidence of estrangement from the land-giver, Yahweh. A spiritual drought (cf. Amos 8:11-13) would bring about a physical drought. In simple terms, the demand on Israel was: Submit to the lord of the land or the prosperity of the land will be withheld.

Devastation by wild beasts (vv. 21-22)

The third stage of covenant cursing corresponds to the blessings of harmony with the land's fauna (v. 6) and of unhindered population increase (v. 9). The protasis is contained in 21a: "and if you walk contrary to me² and are not willing (לא אבה) to obey me."³ The deed and the desire were anti-Yahweh. Rashi unnecessarily explained the term קרי "opposition" as "irregularly (עראי)" obeying the commandments of God.⁴

Verse 21b provides the first part of the apodosis: "then I

¹ See above, pp. 28-29, 56-57.

² For the meaning and employment of the idiom הלך עם קרי, see above, pp. 29-30.

³ See above, pp. 85-86, re: שמע. The mention of willingness demonstrates Yahweh's concern for the internal as well as the external aspects of obedience.

⁴ חומש, p. 138

shall add against you (יִסַּף עָלַי) a plague/blow (מַכָּה) seven times/seven-fold¹ for your sins.² Again, Rashi offers an extrapolation of seven judgments.³ However, the meaning has already been established by its previous employment in verse 18; it is a means of drawing attention to the sabbatical principle which had been violated by the nation. The "plague/blow" is that which smites (being the substantive of the verb "smite," נָכַח), that which inflicts injury or destroys.⁴ The term is employed in two contexts as a reference to the "blow" of Yahweh: those contexts in which he is the exodus-causer (Num 11:33; 1 Sam 4:8) and those in which he is the land-giver (Lev 26:21; Deut 28:59 *ter*, 61; 29:21). Even in those contexts where Yahweh is represented as the land-giver (in Leviticus and Deuteronomy), the contexts express the history of the exodus and Deuteronomy 28:59 relates the "blow" to the plagues of Egypt (cf. v. 60). In other words, if Israel violates the covenant with Yahweh, he will treat them in the manner in which he dealt with Egypt. If Israel lived like uncovenanted Egypt, they would be treated like Egypt.

"Yea, I will send against you the beasts of the field (חַיֵּי הַשָּׂדֶה)" identifies the nature of the "blow/plague" (v. 22a). Rashi⁵ and Onqelos⁶ explained or translated שִׁלַּח "send" by גָּרַי "incite."

¹ Cf. Jouon, *Grammaire*, p. 442 (142q).

² See above, pp. 98-99.

³ חֹמֶשׁ, p. 138, re: וּנְשַׂמוּ דַרְכֵיכֶם, v. 22.

⁴ BDB, pp. 645-47. The verb is employed in Leviticus only four times (24:17, 18, 21; 26:24). In all the contexts in Leviticus the smiting is fatal.

⁵ חֹמֶשׁ, p. 138.

⁶ Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic*, 1:213.

Yahweh will turn the animals of the land against the inhabitants. He will incite those animals to attack both the people and their livestock. In 22b the results are described vividly: "so that they¹ will make you childless (שכל Pi'el), destroy (כרת Hip'il) your cattle, diminish (מעט Hip'il) you, and your roads will become desolate (שמם Nip'al)." All of the verbs in this result clause are of the *wqtl* type. Each explains a different aspect of the plague of wild animals. The verbs are not necessarily in chronological order, though perhaps in logical order.²

The ravaging lions which devoured imported non-Israelites in the early years of the Assyrian captivity (2 Kgs 17:24-26) should not be considered a fulfillment of this covenant (or any covenant made with Israel) since they were not even proselytes. They were not covenant participants.³ However, the account of the forty-two young men of Bethel, whom bears slew because they mocked Elisha, could be connected with the curse of Leviticus 26:22 (2 Kgs 2:23-25). Ezekiel refers to this form of divine, judgment several times in his prophecies (Ezek 5:17; 14:15, 21). When the curse or plague of the wild beasts would be sent by Yahweh, the unfaithful Israelites would lose their children (cf. the forty-two young mockers of Elisha) and their livestock. In that manner, the population would diminish. The young children would become food for the beasts and the remaining Israelites would be starving because their livestock had also been destroyed. They would soon

¹ The third feminine singular of all the verbs in 22b is in grammatical agreement with the subject, הֵי, which is a collective singular.

² Cf. Watts, *A Survey of Syntax*, pp. 53-54, 117.

³ Contra Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 331; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, p. 315. The theological covenants of the Old Testament were all made with the nation of Israel (see Rom 9:4).

be holed up at home for fear of the dangers presented by the beasts along their roads and pathways. The disobedient Israelite's day would pass much as the individual in Amos 5:19: he might flee from a lion in his field, escape from a bear met along the path of flight, arrive home to lean against his wall frightened and out of breath, only to be bit by the poisonous serpent lying in wait for him in the wall! There is no escape from the judgment of Yahweh.

Deprivation by siege (vv. 23-26)

The fourth stage of judgment commences where the third left off: the nation confined to home and city away from the ravaging beasts would be further besieged by human enemies. There is no liberty for the disobedient; there is no rest for the wicked. The heavy wheels of divine justice roll on.

"And if by these things you do not let yourselves be corrected by me (יִסַּר לִי), so that you continue to¹ walk contrary to me" forms the full protasis. The demonstrative pronoun (cf. v. 18) refers to the preceding stages. The verb יִסַּר "correct/discipline" occurs for the second time in an introduction to a judgmental stage.² However, here it is in the unusual *Nip'al tolerativum*³ expressing the subject's allowing something to happen to him or have an effect upon him: "you do not

¹ The context demands this translation not the form. The same form cannot, by context, be translated as a durative or repetitive in v. 9 (הָקִים בְּרִית) or in v. 11 (נִתֵּן מִשְׁכָּן). Thus, Jouon's description of *wqtl* as "repetitive or durative action" is misleading. *Wqtl* may have other kinds of action, depending upon its context. It is not the form, but the context which determines the kind of action. See Jouon, *Grammaire*, p. 335 (§119x): "l'aspect de weqatalti celui de l'action repetee ou durative" ("the aspect of weqatalti is that of repetitive or durative action").

² See above, p. 98.

³ GKC, p. 137 (§51c).

let yourselves be corrected."¹ Jouon emphasizes also the sense of "laisser faire" ("non-interference") and "efficace" (effectual")² in this employment of the *Nip'al*. Israel was to pursue a policy of non-interference with God's chastising work (especially as revealed in stages one through three, vv. 16-22). However, they would not be passive; they would actively resist the changing of their will. They would continue to be obstinate. One day, however, Yahweh's chastening would be effectual: a generation of Israelites will obey him fully and be in the position of receiving the fulfillment of the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Palestinian covenants.³

The translation "by me" (אֲנִי) is in accord with the employment of the preposition לְ following passive verbs.⁴ Above the turmoil of the chastisements, Yahweh sits enthroned as the agent of all of the judgments. He is the author⁵ of the punishments, both with regard to their revelation and their execution. He it is who seeks to correct Israel. His correction is a manifestation of his love for them. He

¹ BDB, p. 416.

² Jouon, *Grammaire*, p. 115 (§51c). This employment of the *Nip'al* of 10) occurs only five times (Lev 26:23; Ps 2:10; Prov 29:19; Jer 6:8; 31:18).

³ See above, pp. 77-78, for a discussion of the perfection of fulfillment eschatologically.

⁴ Cf. BDB, p. 514; GKC, p. 389 (§121f). This particular usage of לְ needs to be pursued among the cognate languages, too. Instead of a vocative-l, perhaps an l of agency would be preferable in contexts like the Ugaritic *lbrknn . ltr . il aby . tmrnn . lbny bnwt* "verily thou wilt bless him by Tor-'il, my father; (yea) beatify him by the Creator of creatures." The primary difficulty in this example is the lack of the passive, but it is an alternative to Gordon's "to." Cf. *UT*, p. 76 (§9.16) (2 Aqht:I:24-25).

⁵ Jouon, *Grammaire*, p. 401 (g132f).

desires their fellowship and their return to the covenant relationship for blessing.¹

The last phrase of verse 23 is a repetition of the first portion of verse 21.² The concept is reversed in the first phrase of verse 24: "then I, yea, I myself, shall walk contrary (or, in opposition) to you" (והלכתי אִף־אני עמכם בקרי).³ The syntax is emphatic. Yahweh will personally oppose the disobedient and obstinately rebellious nation. This may be a reference back to the entrusting of judgment to Yahweh's "presence" (פְּנִים) in verse 17.⁴ In other words, the פְּנִים of verse 17 is the אִנִּי "I" of verse 24. Yahweh, or at least one person of the God-head bearing the title Yahweh, will personally attend to their chastisement. There must also be an indication here of Israel's seduction by other deities (idols). This possibility existed, as evidenced by the necessity of the prohibition of idolatry in verse 1. When no obedience was forthcoming, Yahweh would proceed to act toward Israel as they have acted toward him. Opposition breeds opposition. The nation would reap exactly what they had sown. If they were concerned about the impenetrable earth and heavens, they would have much more with which to concern themselves when Yahweh manifests his impenetrability and obstinacy. If they had worshipped idols in their midst, they would now be faced with the active presence of Yahweh himself. Yahweh could do what the

¹ See above, p. 85.

² See above, pp. 29-30, 102.

³ See above, pp. 90-91, re: אִף־אני. The addition of the ב to קרי also occurs in vv. 27, 40, and 41. There appears to be no discernible reason other than variety for its employment.

⁴ See above, pp. 94-96.

idol deities could not do: he could manifest himself clearly by fulfilling his own word.

"Yea, I shall smite (נכה *Hip'il*) you, indeed, even I, seven times for your sins" (v. 24b). The "blow" (cf. v. 21, מכה)¹ would fall. Yahweh himself would personally deliver it; he would be the smiter. The giver would become the smiter. The healer would become the injurer. The builder would become the destroyer. All the relationships and manifestations would be reversed: blessing would be turned to cursing. Again Israel would be reminded of the sabbatical principle: they who had not rested nor allowed the land to rest would not rest under the smiting hand of Yahweh.

Verse 25 progresses logically from the active first person singular verbs to the passive second person plural verbs:

-25a וּהִבֵּאתִי עֲלֵיכֶם חֶרֶב נִקְמַת נִקְמַת בְּרִית
yea, I shall bring a sword against
you which shall wreak covenant
vengeance,

וְנִאֲסַפְתֶּם אֶל-עָרֵיכֶם
therefore, you shall be gathered
into your cities;

-25b וְשִׁלַּחְתִּי דָבָר בְּתוֹכְכֶם
and I shall send a pestilence in
your midst,

וְנָתַתֶּם בְּיַד-אֹיֵב
thus you shall be given into the
hand of the enemy.

Yahweh declares that he "shall bring . . . a sword (חרב²) which shall wreak covenant vengeance (נקמת נקם- ברית)" upon the nation. The use of

1 See above, p. 103.

2 See above, pp. 61-62. Rashi declared: כל הבאת חרב שבמקרא הוא מלחמת חיילות אויבים "every bringing of the sword which is in scripture is the war of enemy armies" (נקם ברית n, p. 139, re: חומש).

the participle emphasizes the constant or persistent nature of the vengeance to be wrought.¹ The cognate accusative construction is utilized to intensify the concept.² The retributive aspect is unmistakable. There is no escaping the avenging sword; it is tied to the covenant. If the covenant exists, the sword exists; yea, the sword is demanded. The phrase "covenant vengeance" is found nowhere else in the Old Testament. However, there is a possibility that **מסרת הברית** "the bond (or, discipline?) of the covenant" in Ezekiel 20:37 contains a similar concept concerning covenant accountability.³ The concept of "the sword wreaking covenant vengeance was taken from Leviticus 26:25 by the two manuscripts of the Damascus Document (Zadokite Document).⁴ Many features of this phrase have made it stand out in the minds of the Israelites: (1) It is a *hapax phainomenon* outside the scriptures or documents clearly dependent on verse 25 (e.g., CD). (2) The imagery is graphic. (3) The syntax is emphatic. (4) The relationship to the covenant is unmistakable. Yahweh stated it to be remembered. If the nation remembers, it will not feel the effects of the covenant sword. Memory means survival. Those who do not remember will enter the school of the sword.

"Therefore, you shall be gathered unto your cities" is a statement concerning the effect of the avenging sword. As the enemy incursions occur, the people will seek refuge behind protective city walls.

¹ GKC, p. 356 (§116a).

² Ibid., p. 367 (§117q).

³ Elliger, *Leviticus*, p. 376 n. 45. Cf. the full discussion of the textual problems in Ezek 20:37 in Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, p. 403.

⁴ CD (A)i.17 and (B)xix.13 (Lohse, *Die Texte aus Qumran*, pp. 66-67, 102-3).

Their fields will be left for the enemy to plunder and devastate. All will flee to urban areas. The philosophy will be commonplace that there is strength in numbers and safety in fortresses. However, when the enemy besieges the city, cutting off escape, a new enemy will raise its ugly head: "and I shall send a pestilence (דבר) in your midst."

דבר carries with it the concept of great loss of life.¹ The Septuagint always translated it with θάνατος/θανατοῦ "death/to die."² The parallel in the Palestinian Covenant is explicit: יִדְבֹק יְהוָה בְּךָ אֶת־הַדָּבָר עַד כִּלְתוּ אֶתְךָ מֵעַל הָאֲדָמָה "Yahweh shall make the pestilence cleave to you until he has made you vanish from the land" (Deut 28:21). Out of the forty-six times דבר is employed in the Old Testament, it occurs seventeen times in Jeremiah and twelve times in Ezekiel.³ The clearest example of the place of דבר in the setting encountered in Leviticus 26:25 occurs in Ezekiel 7:15, "The sword (חרב) is outside and pestilence (דבר) and famine are inside; he who is in the field shall die by the sword and he who is in the city shall be devoured by famine and pestilence."

In the end, the result is the same: "thus you shall be given (נתן) into the hand of the enemy." The land-giver/peace-giver would become the people-giver (i.e., giving them to the enemy)! During times of obedience, Israel would be the recipient of Yahweh's blessing. During times of disobedience (especially prolonged, obstinate disobedience),

¹ S. R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy*, ICC (3rd ed., reprint, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973), p. 308. Cf. Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, p. 221: "It always refers to a lethal epidemic, and hence it often stands, as here [Amos 4:10], in parallelism with 'sword.'"

² Edwin Hatch and Henry A. Redpath, eds., *A Concordance to the Septuagint*, 3 vols. in 2 (reprint ed., Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1975), 1:623b, 625a, 3:179a, 228c.

³ Gerhard Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum hebraischen alten Testament* (zweite Auflage, Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1958), p. 355.

they could find themselves the received, as a gift to their enemies.

יד "hand" signifies power/control.¹ They could not escape the enemy.

The siege would be complete.

Verse 26 continues the description of siege by giving more details concerning life within the besieged cities' walls: "when I destroy (שבר) your food', supply (מטה־לחם)." The infinitive with the preposition כ is a temporal clause.² Here it precedes the remainder the verse in order to receive emphasis and in order to be descriptive of all the following verbs.³ מטה־לחם "food supply" (or, "staff of bread") occurs only five times in the Old Testament (here; Ps 105:16; Ezek 4:16; 5:16; 14:13). In Psalm 105:16 the construction occurs as an equivalent to רעב "famine." The same parallelism may be identified in Ezekiel 5:16 and 14:13. Clearly, therefore, מטה־לחם completes the triad of sword, pestilence, and famine, which is so frequent in Ezekiel (cf. 5:12; 6:11, 12; 7:15; 12:16; 14:21) and Jeremiah (cf. 14:12; 21:7, 9; 24:10; 27:8, 13; 28:8 [מלחמה "war" in place of חרב "sword"]; 29:17, 18; 32:24, 36; 34:17; 38:2; 42:17, 22; 44:13). The idea conveyed by the grouping of these three curses together is that of the inescapability of judgment.⁴ If this punishment should seem unduly

¹ BDB, p. 3.90.

² GKC, p. 503 (§164g).

³ Samuel Rolles Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew and Some Other Syntactical Questions* (3rd ed., revised, reprint, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 152 (§123β). Cf. a similar ordering of the Hebrew sentence in Gen 3:5 where the temporal clause preceding two *wqtl* forms describes both, not just the first. This fairly common construction enables the author of Lev 26:26 to maintain the series of *wqtl* forms while, at the same time, emphasizing the temporal adverbial modifier by its hanging, prepositive position. This circumlocution maintains the verbal continuity and establishes the correct time sphere for the remaining verbs.

⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, p. 191.

harsh, let it be remembered that disobedience/sin is equally terrible in its nature. Sin is ingratitude, antipathy to Yahweh's nature and will, arrogance, deceit, and irreverence. In short, the nature of sin is the rejection of the divine claims to suzerainty, the pursuit of conduct contrary to covenant stipulations, and the rupture of the highest of human relationships, the father-son relationship with Yahweh.¹ The impugning of Yahweh's character is awful, for it is anti-God. The effects of sin, or judgment against sin, are both immediate and mediate. The immediate effects are the federal consequences which are the direct result of disruption of the created order (e.g., the contraction of disease from sexual promiscuity and homosexuality, the sclerosis of the liver from excessive drunkenness). The mediate effects are the result of direct divine intervention (e.g., the leprosy, so-called, of Miriam, the death of Uzziah as he touched the ark of the covenant, the deaths of Aaron's sons as they offered "strange fire" on the altar). The effects of Israel's disobedience, as described in Leviticus 26, partake of both the immediate and mediate consequences. Sometimes the two cannot be distinguished, for God may choose to supernaturally initiate an effect which is normally immediate at a time and in a manner which is not normal (cf. the death of Herod Agrippa I in Acts 12:23).

The famine would be evidenced by the communal oven and the concomitant rationing of the bread: "ten women shall bake your bread in one oven and they shall return (or, deliver, **שוב** *Hip'il*) your bread by weight (or, rationed, **במשקל**) so that you eat but are not satisfied (**שבוע**)." In times of peace and prosperity, every woman would require an

¹ Cf. Eichrodt, *Theology*, 1:375-76, 383, 466; 2:380-93.

oven for herself and her family. The situation would so deteriorate that one oven could take care of the needs of ten women and their respective families.¹ The food supply would be so meager that the baked bread would be carefully rationed. Rationing would not satisfy the hunger in their stomachs, however. Once they had eaten and had been satisfied (cf. v. 5).² During the siege they would be unsatisfied. If Israel dared to trust idol deities rather than Yahweh and refused to believe that he could supply their needs while they observed the weekly and annual sabbaths, then let their new deities feed them! Let their own labors satisfy them! The withdrawal of Yahweh's beneficial presence would cause Israel's prosperity to cease. Yahweh had given the prosperity and satisfaction of former days. Israel had not obtained their prosperity by their own strength and labors. Yahweh had given and Yahweh could take it away (cf. Job 1:21).

Deportation (vv. 27-38)

As the fifth and final stage of Yahweh's covenant vengeance is revealed, the picture of degrees of chastisement is completed. The progression is increasingly severe: debilitation/defeat(harassment) -->drought/destruction of pride-->devastation by animals/decimation -->deprivation by siege/death(sword)/disease(pestilence)/famine--> dehumanization(cannibalism)/desolation/deportation(exile). They who

¹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 2:474.

² See above, p. 58. With this second occurrence of **שבע**, the thought occurs to this writer that the repetition of **שבע** "seven" and the employment of **שבע** "satisfy" are a form of paronomasia. It contributes to the emphasis on the sabbatical principle as well as indicating the significance of the satisfaction/nonsatisfaction tension.

had been brought into the land would be expelled from the land if they did not repent. The leaving of Egypt was an exodus with *promise*, therefore, *hopeful*. The leaving of Canaan would be an exile with privation, therefore, *hopeless*. Confidence would be turned to despair. Yahweh would reject them.

Introduction (vv. 27-28)

Verse 27 is a conflation of 18a and 23b:¹

והלכתם עמי קרי (23b)	+	ואם עד־אלה לא תשמעו לי (18a)
and you continue to walk in opposition to me		and if, during these, you do not obey me

והלכתם עמי בקרי (27b)	+	ואם בזאת לא תשמעו לי (27a)
and you continue to walk in opposition to me		and if, in this, you do not obey me

The alteration of **בזאת** "in this" for **עד־אלה** "during these" appears to have been influenced by 23a, **באלה** "in these." The singular in 27a would be construed best as a deliberate limitation to stage four (vv. 23-26). This association is further confirmed by another alteration to the phraseology of stage four: **בקרי** "in opposition" was employed previously only in 24a. Stage five, therefore, was entered specifically because of the failure of stage four to bring about the desired effect. The singular **זאת** "this" signals the end of chastisement and patience. If stage four has been ignored, the nation would have reached the point of no return. The ultimate rejection of stage five would be the last of Yahweh's dealings with his disloyal people.

Confirmation of the finality of this stage of punishment is offered also in the continued conflation:

¹ See above, pp. 97-98, 107.

ולֹהֲכַתִּי אֶף־אֲנִי עִמָּכֶם בְּקִרְיִי (24a) + וְיִסְפַּתִּי לִי־סֵרָה אֶתְכֶם שֶׁבַע עַל־חַטָּאתֵיכֶם
 and I shall continue to discipline you seven times for your sins then I, yea, I myself, shall walk in opposition to you.

וְהִלַּכְתִּי עִמָּכֶם בְּחַמַּת־קִרְיִי (28b) + וְיִסְרַתִּי אֶתְכֶם אֶף־אֲנִי שֶׁבַע עַל־חַטָּאתֵיכֶם
 (28a)
 and I, yea, I myself, shall discipline you seven times for your sins then I shall walk in fervent/angry opposition to you

As in verse 27, verse 28 reflects borrowings from the phraseology of stages two and four. Variants in those borrowings are the result of the influence of stage four's phraseology. The "yea, I" of 28b is clearly influenced by the post-verbal **אֶף־אֲנִי** and **גַּם־אֲנִי** of verse 24.

The finite verb form of **יִסַּר** "discipline" in 28b is the direct counterpart of verse 23a, not a reflection of the complementary infinitive of 18b. The intrusion of firm "heat/rage/fury"¹ between **ב** and **קִרְיִי** may have been influenced by the structure of **נִקְמַת־נִקְמַת־בְּרִית** "wreaking covenant vengeance"² in verse 25.³ The following chart demonstrates the continuity of **חַמָּה** "fury" and **נִקְמָה** "vengeance" in similar contexts:

	חַמָּה	נִקְמָה	// ⁴	קָנָא	אָף	בְּרִית	חַרָב	שֶׁבַע	רִיב	אֲדוֹן (גּוֹיִם)	יִשְׂרָאֵל ⁵	
Lv 26:6	28	25	no			25	25	28		no	yes	
Is 34:	2	8	no			5			8	2	5	no
59:	18	17	no	17			21			yes		yes
63:	3	4	no		3					yes	1	no
Ez 24:	8	8	no							no		yes
25:	14	14	no		14	13				yes	12	no
	17	17	no		"	"				"		"
Mi 5:	14	14	no		14				(6:1)	14		yes
Na 1:	2	2	yes	2						yes		no
Ps 79:	6	10	no	5				12		6		no
Pr 6:	34	34	no	34						no		yes

¹ BDB, p. 404. **חַמָּה** could be employed here adjectivally: "fervent."

² See above, pp. 108-9. ³ See above, pp. 29-30.

⁴ // = strict poetic parallelism of **חַמָּה** and **נִקְמָה**.

⁵ Translation for Hebrew words, from left to right: "fury," "vengeance," "jealousy," "anger," "sword," "covenant," "seven," "sue/lawsuit," "nations," "Edom," and "Israel."

⁶ The biblical chapter is given before the colon. The numbers in the chart after the colon are the verse references. Parentheses indicate material or subjects understood but not stated in the pericopes.

Thus **חמה** and **נקם** are related in enough contexts in the Old Testament that their concepts may be considered as nearly equivalent in this particular context. The disciplinary¹ procedure of Yahweh has reached its climax in stage five. The two verses of its introduction indicate a clear continuity with stage four. They also possess a finality of tone. No reader of the Hebrew text can read verses 27-28 (especially after a reading of vv. 14-26) and not feel a chill because of this finality; it is stunning.

Dehumanization (cannibalism) (v. 29)

The content of verse 29 is so horrifying that Rashi made no comment upon it. The simplicity of the style (which is characteristic of this pericope) and the employment of poetic chiasmus emphasize the concept contained in the declaration:

<p>ובשר בנתיכם תאכלו yea, you shall eat the flesh of your daughters.</p>		<p>ואכלתם בשר בניכם Then you shall eat the flesh of your sons,</p>
---	--	---

object	-	<i>wqtl</i>
<i>yqtl</i>	-	object

Such dehumanization of the nation of Israel would be the result of the prolonged siege situation in stage four. The blessing of offspring (v. 9; cf. Deut 28:4, 11) was of prime importance because progeny was the vehicle by which the promised land would be enjoyed continuously:

an Israelite, with his strong sense of family solidarity, looked forward to living on in his descendants; and the extinction of the family was contemplated as the most terrible of calamities.²

¹ See above, pp. 97-99.

² A. F. Kirkpatrick, *The Book of Psalms* (Cambridge: University Press, 1902), p. 657.

As a man had been blessed by Yahweh to produce many children, so a man would be cursed by Yahweh to devour his own children. As awful as the judgment contemplated here, the sin which brought the judgment is more awful. Even more horrifying is the evidence of history to the effect that such cannibalism was practiced by Israelites under siege:

- (1) at Samaria: Syrian siege, ca. 850 B.C. (2 Kgs 6:24-31)
- (2) at Jerusalem: Babylonian siege, 587 B.C. (Jer 19:9; Lam 2:20; 4:10; Ezek 5:10)
- (3) at Jerusalem: Roman siege, A.D. 70 (Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, 6:4.4-5)¹

Such cannibalism was also a curse contained in the Palestinian Covenant (Deut 28:53-57). Jeremiah's lamentation over this terrible scene of covenant vengeance is instructive both for its recognition of Yahweh's sovereignty and its recognition of human responsibility:

Yahweh has done what he had purposed,
 he has carried out his word which he had commanded from ancient
 times;
 he has overthrown unsparingly;
 yea, he has caused the enemy to rejoice over you,
 he has exalted the horn of your adversaries.

Their heart cried out to the Lord:
 "O wall of the daughter of Zion,
 cause (your) tears to flow like a river day and night;
 do not grant yourself (any) respite,
 do not let the 'daughter of your eye' cease!"

Arise, give a ringing cry in the night at the beginning of the
 watches,
 pour out your heart like the waters before the presence of the Lord,
 lift up your hands to him for the life of your children
 who are feeble because of famine at the head of all the streets."

Look, O Yahweh, and behold with whom you have dealt in this way!
 Should women eat their fruit, the children who were tenderly
 carried?
 Should the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of
 the Lord?

¹ William Whiston, trans., *Josephus: Complete Works* (reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1960), pp. 578-79.

The young man and the old man lie on the ground in the streets,
my maidens and my young men/warriors have fallen by the sword;
you slew (them) in the day of your anger,
you butchered (them) unsparingly.

You called my terrors all around as on a feast day,
yea, there was not an escapee or survivor in the day of the anger
of Yahweh,
my enemy exterminated those whom I carried tenderly and brought up.
(Lam 2:17-22)

Desolation (vv. 30-32)

Verse 30a makes a concise, balanced declaration: "and I shall
destroy your high places (והשמדתי את־במת־יכם) and cut down your incense
altars (והכרתי את־חמניכם)." There is no difficulty in understanding
the actions described. The difficulty arises with the identification
of the objects of destruction: *במה* "high place" and *חמץ* "incense altar."
The "high place" is commonly recognized at the present time as an "open-
air installation not intended to serve as a residence for the deity, as
was the case of the temple, but rather as a site that the deity would
visit when invoked."¹ Such installations included the carved images
(*פסל*: cf. v.1; 2 Chr 33:19), stelae (*מצבה*: cf. v. 1; 2 Kgs 23:13-
14), relief images (*משכית*: cf. v. 1; Num 33:52), incense altars (*חמץ*
here; 2 Chr 14:4; 34:4, 7; Ezek 6:4, 6), altars for animal sacrifice
(*מזבח*: cf. Ezek 6:4-6), and a special chamber (*לשכה*: cf. 1 Sam 9:22).
Not all high places were illegitimate. Some were legitimately involved
in worship recognized by Yahweh (cf. 1 Sam 9:11-25; 1 Kgs 3:2-15).

¹ Paul and Dever, *Biblical Archaeology*, p. 63. See, *ibid.*, pp. 61-65; *TDOT*, s.v. "בְּמָה," by K.-D. Schunck, 2:139-45; W. Boyd Barrick, "The Funerary Character of 'High-Places' in Ancient Palestine: A Reassessment," *VT* 25 (1975):565-95; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, p. 186. There are only two references in the Pentateuch to high places: here and Num 33:52. Deuteronomy has no reference to the cultic high places. Deuteronomy may employ *מקום* "place" instead (cf. Deut 12:3). See, Paul and Dever, *Biblical Archaeology*, p. 65.

Leviticus 26:30, however, **המזבח** occurs in close relation to **המזבח** which always occurs elsewhere in relation to idolatrous worship (Isa 17:8; 27:9; Ezek 6:4, 6; 2 Chr 14:4; 34:4, 7).

המזבח generally has been interpreted as an object utilized in sun worship.¹ However, recent consensus is that it was an incense stand or altar:

According to II Chronicles 34:4, its place was on the altar and thus it could not be very large. Its connection with incense was verified by the appearance of the word in a number of Nabatean and Palmyrean inscriptions, one of which is engraved on a small altar whose other side contains a bas-relief of two figures burning incense. Excavations at Lachish have produced small elongated objects whose cup-shaped upper portion bears traces of fire; plausibly these, too, may be classified as examples of a hanmian.²

Confusion over the term evidently arose early since the Septuagint utilized five different terms to translate the eight occurrences of **המזבח**:

βδέλυγμα "abomination" (Isa 17:8), **εἶδωλον** "idol" (Isa 27:9; 2 Chr 14:4), **τὸ ξύλινον χειροποίητον** "carved wooden image" (Lev 26:30), **τέμενος** "sacred precinct/grove/temple"³ (Ezek 6:4, 6), and **ὕψηλός** "high place" (2 Chr 34:4, 7).⁴ The daughter versions of the Septuagint employ **τέμενος** in Isaiah 27:9,⁵ although Aquila evidently employed **ξόανον** "image" in

¹ BDB, p. 329; cf. Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 2:475; Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965-72), 1:471 (but see translation of Isa 17:8 on p. 468!); Charles Lee Feinberg, *The Prophecy of Ezekiel: The Glory of the Lord* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1969), pp. 40-41.

² Paul and Dever, *Biblical Archaeology*, p. 61. Cf. Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 332; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, p. 186; KB, p. 311; *TDOT*, s.v. "**המזבח**," by K.-D. Schunck, 2:143.

³ LSJ, p. 1774.

⁴ Hatch and Redpath, eds., *Concordance*, 2:1419c, lists the text of this occurrence as doubtful.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 2:1345a.

Ezekiel 6:4, 6.¹ The correlation with sun worship appears to stem from Rashi's comment: מִיֵּן עֲבוּדַת כִּי כַבִּים שְׁמַעְמִידִין עַל הַגְּגוֹת וְעִישׁ שְׁמַעְמִידִין "a kind of idol (celestial) which was stood upon the roofs and because these were stood in the sun (חַמָּה) they were called solar columns² (חַמָּנִים)."³

From 30b through 32b there appears to be a change of form from the simplicity of 30a. There are a series of corresponding lines with the following pattern:

30b and 31a: נִתַּן + object + adverbial modifier

30c and 31c: conceptual: divine displeasure, גַּעַל "despise" and
לֹא רוּחַ "do not smell/delight in"

31b and 32a: שָׁמַם "devastate" + object

32b: a summarizing line picking up the assonance of the preceding correspondence by employing שָׁמַם

נִתַּן as a *wqtl* in the first person singular has not been employed in this pericope since verse 19.⁴ There it was used to negate its first use in verse 4: the rain-giver would give iron heavens and a brazen earth. Here it is used to negate its second use in verse 6: the peace-giver would give war and its results, many corpses. It may also be considered as a negation of the third employment of נִתַּן in verse 11: the presence-giver would not despise Israel (לֹא גַעַל), but now, because of their rejection of his presence by their idols (גַּלּוּל), he would despise them (גַּעַל, v. 30c). With this latter negation, the chastisement has

¹ Reider, *Index to-Aquila*, pp. 165, 236, 278. Contra Hatch and Redpath, eds., *Concordance*, 2:1345a.

² Jastrow, *Dictionary*, 1:478, where it is suggested that it was probably a phallus. Targum Onqelos translates חַמָּן with חַנִּיסְנֵס יָא "obscene statuary devoted to the Sun" (ibid., 1:483).

³ חוֹמֵשׁ, p. 139.

⁴ See above, p. 101.

come full cycle from the first stage where the first negative **נתן** was used likewise to contrast the third beneficial use: Yahweh's presence would be manifested in judgment and destruction rather than in blessing and security.

The double employment of **פגר** in 3-b is a bone of contention. Out of its twenty-two occurrences in the Old Testament, **פגר** definitely refers to a dead body, "corpse," nineteen times. However, in Leviticus 26:30 and Ezekiel 43:7, 9, there is the possibility that the meaning "stela" is to be understood.¹ Since it occurs twice in Leviticus 26:30 (**פגריכם על־פגרי**), the phraseology might be a sophisticated paronomasia: "your corpses upon lifeless (corpse-like) stelae."² There seems to be some evidence that Ugaritic *pgr* has the meaning "stela."³ In any case, all three Old Testament situations (Lev 26:30; Ezek 43:7, 9) involve deceased individuals. Therefore, it may be possible only to claim that the use in Leviticus 26:30 demonstrates that the **פגרים** are lifeless like the corpses. The phrase **פגרי גל ול יכם** "corpses(?) of your images" leads one "to think of human or animal-shaped images"⁴ for the

¹ TDOT, S.V. "**בְּמָה**," by K.-D. Schunck, 2:142; UT, p. 466 (§19. 2005); David Neiman, "PGR: A Canaanite Cult-Object in the Old Testament," *JBL* 67 (1948):55-60. The Syro-Hexapla translates:

"and I shall blot out/efface your handmade 'idols upon the corpses' of your idols" (Voobus, *Syro-Hexapla*, plate 100, line 11). The first term for "idol" is Aramaic (**עבִידָה**), "corpse" is Greek (**κῶλον**, the Septuagint's translation of **פגר** in Lev 26:30), and the second term for "idol" is Sanskrit (cf. J. Payne Smith, ed., *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* [reprint ed., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967], p. 471).

² Cf. the *NIV*.

³ In addition to n. 1, above, see Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, p. 125 n. 4.

⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, p. 187.

גל ולים. Thirty-nine of the forty-eight Old Testament uses of גל ולי are in Ezekiel. The term occurs in Deuteronomy 29:16 (Palestinian Covenant) of Egyptian idols. The term is quite often associated with uncleanness (טמא: Ezek 18:5-15; 20:7-39; 22:3-4; 23:7, 30, 37-39; 33:25-26; 36:18, 25; 37:23) and abomination (תעב: 1 Kgs 21:26; 2 Kgs 21:11; Ezek 6:4-13; 8:10-13; 14:3-7; 16:36; 18:5-15; 20:4-8; 22:2-4; 23:36-37; 33:25-26). This association in scripture "indicates an essential feature of impurity."¹ In fact, it appears that "the word may then be a term of reproach, 'things of dung,' which is vocalized similarly to שקוצים ['detested things']"² which is employed in close relation to גל ולים in Deuteronomy 29:16, 2 Kings 23:24, Ezekiel 20:7-8, and 37:23. The גל ולי are plainly images, not buildings nor high places (though they were evidently found on the high places, cf. Ezek 33:25).³

Within the context of Leviticus 26, it is significant that the גל ולי are specified since they occur elsewhere with concepts important to this pericope: corpses (פגור: Ezek 6:4-5; חלל: 6:4, 13), aromatic⁴ offerings (ריח ניחח: 6:13; 20:28), cannibalism (23:37), Yahweh's fury (חמה: 20:8, 13, 33, 34), nonobservance of the sabbath (20:12-13, 16, 19; 23:38), and dispersion (זרה: 36:19). Other examples could be added to these (e.g., rejection of Yahweh's revelation and the subse-

¹ *TDOT*, s.v. "גל ולי," by H. D. Preuss, 3:1-5.

² Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, p. 187.

³ Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service*, pp. 104-5. Haran provides a brief bibliography of those commentators who interpret the גל ולי as structures (ibid., p. 104 n. 25).

⁴ Or, pleasing/delightful. This concept stands in stark contrast to the concept embodied in גל ולי (detestable/impure/dunglike).

quent defilement of Yahweh's sanctuary; on the latter, cf. Lev 26:2), but these will suffice to demonstrate the common contexts and the close relation of Leviticus 26 and Ezekiel's prophecies.¹

Having established the concepts of פגר and גל ול in 30b and having discussed the phraseology of 30c,² the following translation of 30bc may be offered: "and I shall put (נתן) your corpses upon the lifeless forms of your *filthy* idols because my soul despises you."

Verse 31 reads: "and I shall give (נתן) your cities to the sword (חרב) and I shall devastate (שםם *Hip'il*) your sanctuaries³ (מקדש)." The besieged nation not only would have their idolatries destroyed and their bodies strewn over their idols (30ab), they would have their cities destroyed by the conquering armies who would wreck their sanctuaries (30c). Since the high places seem to have been located mainly outside the cities, the description commences with that which the armies would first encounter and destroy: the cultic installations. This could be accomplished in full view of the inhabitants of the cities who would watch these proceedings from the walls.⁴ Having been humiliated and disheartened, the besieged cities would then suffer the full brunt of the siege machines and repeated attacks, concentrating on weak places in the cities' defences. When the breach was made in the wall of the besieged city, the invading armies would work

¹ See above, pp. 2 (quote from Hillers), 11 n. 2, and 20 n. 2. Cf. Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 330.

² See above, pp. 72-73 (געלה נפש).

³ See above, pp. 30-31 ("sanctuaries," plural).

⁴ Paul and Dever, *Biblical Archaeology*, pp. 63-64. Cf. 1 Sam 9:14, 25; 1 Kgs 23:8. The high places (and, other cultic installations) were outside the city walls from which they could be seen.

from street to street, house to house, eliminating resistance, pillaging, raping, and destroying until the city itself was burned and pulled down. The central areas of the city, usually on a prominence, contained the sanctuary (or, sanctuaries). These might be the last to fall, but they would be destroyed. The enemy sword would conquer; Yahweh had decreed it.

Corresponding to 30c ("because my soul despises you") is 31c: "because I do not smell (i.e., delight in) your appeasing aromas." The assonance of this phrase is unmistakable with its repetitious 'פ'. The verb is probably a denominative (from פוּ). It is a *Hip'il yqtl* (a negative precedes the verb) expressing the concept of producing ease/soothing/appeasement/delight.² נִיחַ (from נוּחַ "rest") is used in the Old Testament only in the combination נִיחַ רִיחַ "appeasing aroma," forty-three times in the Hebrew (an Aramaic form, נִיחַוּ, occurs twice without רִיחַ: Dan 2:46 and Ezra 6:10).³ "From an offering there ascends to deity an 'appeasing aroma' and it thus brings the relationship between mankind and god into order."⁴ This combination in the Hebrew is found only four times outside the Pentateuch, all four in Ezekiel (6:13; 16:19; 20:28, 41).⁵ A variation on the origin and

¹ GKC, p. 145 (§53g).

² BDB, pp. 924-26; KB, p. 877.

³ BDB, p. 1102; KB, p. 1100.

⁴ "Vom Opfer her steigt ein 'Beschwichtigungseruch' zur Gottheit auf and bringt so das Verhältnis zwischen Mensch and Gott in Ordnung." *THAT*, s. v. "נוּחַ," by F. Stolz, 2:46.

⁵ The recurrence of Ezekiel chapters 6 and 20 (also, chapters 5 and 14-15) demonstrates their value in coming to an understanding of Leviticus 26.

meaning of the combination was offered by A. S. Yahuda:

נִחַיִּי Gen. 8, 21 and many other passages for want of a better etymology is generally derived from נִחַ 'rest', despite the impossible form נִחַיִּי, and we are still left without a clear conception of what the word really means. In reality it is the Egyptian *nhh* (=נִחַיִּי), a quite common word for 'eternity' used in profane and especially in sacred writings in connexion with sacrifices, libations, offerings, holy foundations, and in benedictory formulas for the eternal salvation of a god, a king, or a dead person. The customary sacrificial formulae נִחַיִּי נִחַיִּי thus means 'savour for eternity' or 'eternal savour'. It was particularly because of the use in Egyptian of *nhh* in ritual matters that נִחַיִּי was thought suitable to be used in kindred sacrificial texts, and this the explanation of its appearance as a specific expression in the terminology of the sacrificial cult in the Pentateuch. . . . This word remained, like other Egyptian borrowings in the Pentateuch, peculiar to ancient use, and did not pass into the ordinary literary language.¹

In either case, the concept is that of acceptability of the sacrifice

by the deity smelling its aroma. Yahweh refused to accept the sacrifices of a disobedient people (cf. 1 Sam 15:22; Jer 7:22-23; Mic 6:6-8; Prov 21:3).

Verse 32 completes the picture of devastation: "thus I myself (אֲנִי) shall devastate (שָׁמַם *Hip'il*, cf. 31b) the land so that your enemies who live in it shall be appalled (שָׁמַם Qal) at it."² There is a threefold emphasis in this verse: (1) The first person (especially the emphatic personal pronoun in 32a) gives additional emphasis to Yahweh's personal participation in the chastisement which has reached such a frightful climax. (2) The verb root שָׁמַם; provides a connection with the same root in 31b and provides an emphatic assonance in this climactic verse, emphasizing the concept of devastation. (3) The final line (32b)

¹ A. S. Yahuda, *The Language of the Pentateuch in its Relation to Egyptian*, 2 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 1:269-70. It should be noted that neither Jouon (*Grammaire*, p. 198 [§88G]) nor GKC (pp. 232 [§84^au], 234 [§84^bk-m1]), provide an equivalent noun derivation for נִחַיִּי.

² See above, p. 120, for the presentation of the place of 32a and 32b in the pattern of vv. 30b-32.

gives threefold attention to the enemy: third masculine plural verb, subject (אֵי "enemy"), and appositional participle (יֹשֵׁב "resident").

Yahweh, devastation, and enemy residents are all one to disobedient Israel. The appealing land of promise shall become the appalling land of perdition. It is significant that the enemies are appalled, not Israel. Israel is too blind to see what the unbelieving nations see.¹ Her devastation shall be a witness to the nations that Yahweh will not countenance breach of covenant.

Dispersion (exile) (v. 33)

Verse 33's initial conjunction should be treated as an adversative because of the preverbal position of emphasis taken by the direct object: "but you yourselves (אתכם) I shall disperse (אֶרְחֵץ *Pi'el*) among the nations." The dispersion (אֶרְחֵץ) is yet another subject common to this pericope and key chapters in Ezekiel (e.g., 5:2, 10, 12; 6:8; 12:14, 15; 20:23). Thus, at Sinai, prior to entering the land covenanted to Abraham, Yahweh warned Israel concerning their complacency in the experience of landedness. Dispersion would be the ultimate disruption of that complacency. If the nation would behave in apathy toward Yahweh and his covenants (especially the Abrahamic and Mosaic), they would suffer landlessness again. They would return to the bondage out of which Yahweh originally delivered them. The return to bondage

¹ שָׁמַד "devastate" has the concept of "appalled" in its semantic range. It basically relates to having one's confidence or state of well being destroyed/devastated. אֶרְחֵץ "appalled" is never used of Israel as a nation in the Old Testament regarding what Yahweh had done to them in judgment. Ezek 4:17 presents the picture of being appalled at the physical appearance of fellow starvees. Jer 4:9 depicts only the priests as being appalled. Ezra 9:3 describes Ezra as being appalled at the mixed marriages of his day. Ezek 4:17, therefore, would be the closest to Israel being appalled by divine chastisement (however, it covers only the one effect of judgment, starvation).

might be a cure for their amnesia. "It is hard enough for landed people to believe land will be lost. It is harder to imagine Yahweh will do it"¹ (cf. Lev 26:32a, 33a). It is yet more difficult to deal with the revelation that "you (yes, you)" are the exiled.

"Yea, I shall unsheath (חַרְבֵי הַיָּם *Hip'il*) the sword (חַרְבֵי) behind you (אֶחָרֵיכֶם)." In all four instances in the Old Testament where the idiom חַרְבֵי אֶחָרֵי "unsheath the sword behind" occurs (here; Ezek 5:2, 12; 12:14) it is preceded by the employment of זָרָה "disperse" and it is always a reference to Israel. חַרְבֵי הַיָּם "unsheath the sword" is employed in three other passages but always in reference to Yahweh's judgment of a nation outside Israel (Egypt: Exod 15:9, Ezek 30:11; Tyre: Ezek 28:7), never with אֶחָרֵי "behind" (cf. עַל "over/against" in Ezek 28:7 and 30:11, and no preposition in Exod 15:9), and never following זָרָה "disperse." This idiom, in this set context, is reserved for Yahweh's dealing with Israel. He will empty (רִיק) his scabbard: an act of hostility. He will place the sword "behind" Israel because, on the one hand, they would be fleeing, and, on the other hand, the path of return would be blocked by the divine sword. Shades of Eden! Adam and Eve were prevented reentry to Eden by the flaming sword of the cherubim (Gen 3:24). Israel would be prevented reentry to Canaan by the avenging covenant sword of Yahweh himself.

The summation of deportation is in 33b: "thus your land shall be (הָיְהוּ) for devastation (שָׁמָמָה) and your cities shall be (הָיְהוּ) for the sword." The simplicity of statement is self-evident. The alternation of *qtl* and *yqtl* (of הָיְהוּ) is characteristic.² The הָיְ of both substan-

¹ Brueggemann, *The Land*, p. 113.

² See above, pp. 73-74.

tives is clearly assonant.¹ The land and the cities would be appointed by Yahweh for devastation and death (the sword). This statement, in its conceptualization (if not its syntax), corresponds to the earlier statement of formal appointment under blessing:

ואתם		והייתי	-12b
תהיו לי לעם		לכם לאלהים	
and you yourselves shall be my people		so that I shall be your god	

ועריכם		והיתה	-33b
יהיו חרבה		ארצים שממה	
and your cities shall be for the sword		thus your land shall be for devastation	

The two deviations from strict correspondence in these two statements

are instructive: (1) The circumlocution for the possessives "your"

(לכם) and "my" (לי) in 12b was employed to emphasize the identification

in the relationship. (2) The specified subject (ארץ "land") in 33b

may be an allusion to Genesis 1:2 (והיתה הארץ תהו ובהו "and the earth

was empty and void"). Such an allusion could serve three purposes:

(1) to remind Israel that Yahweh is historically the lord, the creator,

of all the earth; (2) to emphasize the totality of the dispersion: the

land would be without inhabitants; and, (3) to imply that the disper-

sion was but the commencement of something new which Yahweh would do.

¹ The assonance could be more than elevated style. The suffix may have been assimilated by the feminine ending of שממה, indicating that חרבה may not have been a simple assonant conformity. Each substantive may have possessed this suffix for a syntactical purpose. Could the concept be a more formal usage of the ה-directive (i.e., for appointment or decree) than is recognized by the grammars? The sense (see translation above) of being "for" something is certainly intended by the phraseology and the immediate context. When it is viewed in relation to 12b (see above), one would ask: Is ה in 33b the equivalent to ל in 12b? That would indicate that the syntactical structure of 12b is conducive to that meaning. The question is whether the suffix is a contributing factor to that meaning. If it is, then that form could technically be given that additional possibility in usage, regardless of the failure of the grammars to recognize it and classify its function in the past. To this writer, this alternative seems more consistent with the Hebrew than to explain the ה on חרב as a poetic ornament (cf. GKC, p. 250 [§90f]; Davidson, *Syntax*, p. 99 [§69 R 2]).

The possibility of an allusion to Genesis 1:2 in Leviticus 26:33b is noteworthy for several reasons: (1) It is recognized that "the thought of God's activity as Creator and Giver in the *b^erit* with the prophets--and even in P [including Leviticus 26] as well--was definitely primary."¹ (2) Jeremiah 4:23 employs the very terms of Genesis 1:2 (תהו ובהו "empty and void") to describe the land of Israel following judgment.² (3) It is recognized also that "exile is the way to new life in new land."³

Desertion of the land (vv. 34-38)

The sabbath rest (vv. 34-35). The following pattern of correspondences and emphatic logical development occurs in these verses:

34a:		a ¹	:	b ¹
34b:		b ²	:	a ²
35	b ¹	:	a ³	b ³

Main clauses (a):

שבתתיה	את	אז תרצה הארץ	-a ¹
then the land shall enjoy the restitution of its sabbaths			
שבתתיה	את	אז תשבת הארץ והרצה את	-a ²
then the land shall rest, yea, it shall enjoy the restitution of its sabbaths			
שבתתים	את אשר לא	תשבת	-a ³
it shall rest on account of your sabbaths in which it did not rest			

¹ Eichrodt, *Theology*, 1:63. The liberal theologians' ascription of the creation narratives to "P" cannot be accepted but their association of the two bodies of literature is important to recognize and the reason for the biblical association must be sought in order not to miss the intended message therein. Cf. Klein, *Israel in Exile*, pp. 125-48.

² A significant reference to the "presence" of Yahweh in judgment may be seen in Jer 4:26b if מפני יהוה "from the presence of Yahweh" can be interpreted thus (in spite of the bound form מפני "from before": cf. the next phrase in that context).

³ Brueggemann, *The Land*, p. 122. Cf. Jer 24:4-10.

Temporal clauses (b)

	כל ימי השמה	-b ¹
	all the days of its devastation	
	וְאַתֶּם בְּאֶרֶץ אֹיְבֵיכֶם	-b ²
	while you are in the land of your enemies	
	כל ימי השמה	-b ¹
	all the days of its devastation	
	בְּשִׁבְתְּכֶם עָלֶיהָ	-b ³
	while you were dwelling upon it	

This schematization of the two verses helps to demonstrate the following: (1) The triple chiasmus and the repetition of b¹ keep the temporal clauses together in order to emphasize the time factor in these verses. (2) The repetition of 11-10 "sabbath/rest" adds the element of cult¹ and emphasizes the sabbatical element which had already been presented as a precept in verse 2. (3) By utilizing ארץ "land" as the subject of all three main clauses, the centrality of the land and its relationship to the sovereign decrees of Yahweh are emphasized. (4) The theological equivalence of רצה "enjoy" and שבת "rest" are demonstrated. Indeed, verse 34b is transitional, employing the epexegetical *waw* to join these two terms in the middle member of the construction. It should be noted that verse 34a employs רצה while verse 35 employs only שבת, having made the full transition.

The initial אז "then" of verse 34 sets that verse apart from the preceding context. Since the pericope evidences an elevated style of literature, perhaps אז serves, as it does sometimes in poetry, "to throw emphasis on a particular feature of the description."² If this

¹ Cult is used here only in the sense of a system of religious beliefs and ritual. Nothing pagan, faddish, or mystical is intended by it.

² BDB, p. 23.

is the case, that which is emphasized would be the land's רצה. רצה is variously interpreted "enjoy"¹ and "make or obtain restitution."² The adversely negative concept of "making restitution" would involve the land in the guilt of the Israelites by the nonobservance of the sabbatical year. This does not appear to be likely since the whole context appears to make רצה practically equivalent to שבת.³ The beneficial concept of "obtaining restitution" could be the basis for the enjoyment or rest for the land, however. The land would be "pleased" as a result of receiving "its due portion."⁴ That due portion is defined as "its sabbaths." When will the reception of the due portion be accomplished? The context answers, "all the days of its devastation/desolation."⁵ The employment of שמם "devastate" ties verses 34-35 to the preceding context and its use of the same root to describe the devastation wrought by Yahweh in covenant vengeance (vv. 31-32). The devastation will bring about the sabbatical rest which it had been denied under Israel's plows: "Then (אז) the land shall enjoy the restitution of (רצה)⁶ its sabbaths (שבת) all the days of its devastation (שמם)⁷ while you are⁷ in the land

¹ Cf. *ASV, NASB, NIV, Septuagint, Targum Onqelos, Syriac, Latin.*

² Cf. *BDB*, p. 953 (the land makes the restitution); *KB*, p. 906 (Qal=obtain restitution, HipCil=make restitution); Elliger, *Leviticus*, p. 377; *NASB* margin (make restitution, "satisfy").

³ See above, p. 130, (4).

⁴ "Ihm gebührenden Anteil annehmen." *THAT*, s.v. " רצה," by G. Gerleman, 2:811.

⁵ See above, pp. 31-32, re: השמה.

⁶ The italicized words are supplied here to help bring out the full scope of רצה. This form of notation is employed to contrast it with the underscoring, employed here for emphasis. רצה is a Qal here.

⁷ Are is supplied since it is understood by grammar. The personal pronoun as the subject is the grammatical key.

of your enemies. *Then* (אז)¹ the land shall rest (שבת); yea,² it shall enjoy the restitution of (רצה)³ its sabbaths (שבת)" (v. 34).

"It⁴ shall rest (שבת)⁵ all the days of its devastation (שמם) on account of⁶ your sabbaths (שבת) in which⁷ it did not rest (שבת) while you were dwelling (ישב)⁸ upon it" (v. 35). As the devastation was a necessity due to the defilement of the land, so also the "expulsion of Israel seems to be a cultic necessity."⁹ Leviticus 26 shares with the books of Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel the concept that "cultic sins alone determine the nation's collapse."¹⁰ Idolatry (Lev 26:1) and the sabbatical system (vv. 2, 34-35) are specified here as the key

¹ Note the recurrence of this emphatic particle. This is an additional argument for the equivalency of רצה and שבת since the sentences are equivalent in syntax and concept.

² Emphatic or explicative waw. Cf. GKC, p. 484 (§154a n. 1).

³ *Hip'il qtl* is employed here in contrast to *Qal yqtl* in the preceding phrase. The alternation of tenses is characteristic of the elevated style of the pericope. For the MT form (third feminine singular), see GKC, p. 210 (§75m).

⁴ The subject is contained in the verb and is understood, by the nearest antecedent in agreement, to be the land.

⁵ The *yqtl* is employed here.

⁶ For this employment of ב, see BDB, p. 90 (III.5). The causal usage rather than temporal may be an explanation for the position of בשבתתים. See GKC, p. 457 (§142g).

⁷ אשר "which" is preceded by את, making it the object of the preceding verb. Due to the intransitive English rendering of שבת, the preposition must be supplied.

⁸ Infinitive construct with ב. See GKC, p. 503 (§164g). Note the sibilant + labial assonance between ישב and שבת.

⁹ Hans Eberhard von Waldow, "Israel and Her Land: Some Theological Considerations," in *A Light Unto My Path: Old Testament Studies in Honor of Jacob M. Myers*, ed. Howard N. Bream, et al. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1974), p. 506.

¹⁰ *EJ*, s.v. "Leviticus, Book of," by Jacob Milgrom, 11:147.

areas of disobedience. Of these two, the sabbatical principle receives the greater emphasis in the context of Leviticus 26. The reference in 2 Chronicles 36:20-21 likewise emphasizes this principle as the cause of the Babylonian exile:

And the remnant from the sword (חרב) were carried away unto Babylon so that for him [the king of Babylon] and for his sons they became servants until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, so that the word of Yahweh through Jeremiah might be fulfilled until the land enjoyed the restitution of (רצה *Qal qtl*) its sabbaths (שבת). All the days of its devastation (שמים) it rested (שבת *qtl*), so that seventy years might be fulfilled (מלא).

This raises the problem of dependency and identification of the source which was employed by the chronicler. The following observations aid in establishing the relationships between the chronicler, Jeremiah, and Leviticus 26: (1) Nowhere in 2 Chronicles 36:21 is there a claim that it is a quotation from Jeremiah. (2) "Until the land enjoyed the restitution of its sabbaths" is an adverbial modifier of "might be fulfilled," not the direct object. (3) "Seventy years" is the direct object of the second "might be fulfilled." (4) "Seventy years," therefore, is the content of the concept taken from Jeremiah. (5) Jeremiah does give prophetic announcements of a seventy-year Babylonian captivity (Jer 25:11-12 and 29:10). (6) Both passages in Jeremiah employ מלא "fulfills" which is employed twice in 2 Chronicles 36:21. However, only the second use in 2 Chronicles would be influenced by the vocabulary of Jeremiah. (7) The phraseology (primarily with respect to grammar) in 2 Chronicles 36:21 is distinctly different from both Leviticus 26:34 and Jeremiah 25:11-12 and 29:10.¹ (8) No indication is given that Jeremiah associated

¹ The *qtl* of רצה after the temporal particle עד "until" in 2 Chr 36:21 is unlike the style of Leviticus 26 (including v. 34). Likewise, the *qtl* of שבת after the temporal phrase כל-ימי השמה "all the days of its devastation" is unlike Lev 26:34-35. Jeremiah's use of מלא are both

Leviticus 26:34 with his prophecies. (9) The chronicler alone associated the "seventy years" of Jeremiah with "until the land enjoyed the restitution of its sabbaths." Furthermore, this association was purely one of concepts, not quotations.¹ (10) The association does not claim that the seventy years is an exact accounting of sabbatical years and/or jubilee years unobserved by Israel in the land. In fact, "sabbaths" need not be restricted to the annual sabbaths since the term is not thus defined (especially in Lev 26:2). The association made by the chronicler is between a statement of the chronological extent of the exile ("seventy years") and a statement of the theological nature of the exile ("the land enjoying the restitution of its sabbaths"). The attempt to account for exactly seventy years of sabbatical and jubilee years is an exercise in scripture silence and is susceptible to too many unknown factors (e.g., the number of times Israel was obedient in those observations and the terminuses of the Babylonian exile period itself).²

The stricken remnant (vv. 36-38). This section is divided into two parts: (1) verses 36-37a, highlighted by the third person plural referring to the remnant, and (2) verses 37b-38, highlighted by the second person plural referring to the exiles.

infinitive constructs, but not in a result clause as in 2 Chr 36:21 (Jer 25:12 employs כמלאות as a temporal clause; 29:10 employs לפני מלאות, also as a temporal clause).

¹ The latter phrase, therefore, is not "taken word for word from Lev. xxvi. 34" (C. F. Keil, *The Books of the Chronicles*, trans. Andrew Harper, in *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament* [reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968], p. 514). In addition, the phrase would be taken from v. 35, not v. 34.

² For an example of such mathematical guesswork, see Rashi's comments.

The first phrase of verse 36 is an accusative *casus pendens* (i.e., accusative absolute) serving to isolate and give marked prominence to the object of the sentence.¹ This construction separates this section from the previous verses. The prominent topic, therefore, is "those who are left from among² you" (הַנִּשְׁאָרִים בְּכֶם). This emphasized object is resumed in the pronominal suffixes attached to לִבָּב ("in their heart") and אֹיְבֵי ("their enemies").³ The employment of *wqtl* (rather than *yqtl*) serves to heighten the emphasis.⁴ "As for⁵ those who are left from among you, I shall bring timidity (מִרְךָ)⁶ into their heart in the lands of their enemies." The timidity is subsequently described in view of the result it has in the lives of the remnant: "the sound of a driven leaf (קוֹל עֵלֶה נֹדֵף)⁷ shall pursue them; yea,⁸ they shall flee as in flight from the sword (וְנָסוּ מִנִּסְתַּחֲרָב)⁹ and they shall fall without a pursuer (וְאֵין רֹדֵף)."¹⁰ A panic would come about merely from the rustling

¹ GKC, p. 458 (9143c).

² The context requires a partitive expression in the receptor language. "Left of you" is too ambiguous in the receptor language.

³ This is the retrospective pronominal suffix.

⁴ GKC, p. 458 (§143d).

⁵ "As for" best represents the concept of the *casus pendens*. This overrides the *waw* "and" since the conjunction becomes superfluous.

⁶ The noun מִרְךָ is a *hapax legomenon*.

⁷ Elliger, *Leviticus*, p. 377: "raschelndes Laub" ("rustling leaf").

⁸ Explicative (epexegetical) *waw*.

⁹ The cognate accusative (נוֹס מִנִּסְתַּחֲרָב) strengthens the concept of the verb and is itself strengthened by its construct relation to חֲרָב. Cf. Davidson, *Syntax*, pp. 96-97 (§67(b)).

¹⁰ See above, pp. 59-60, 97.

of leaves. Every ear of the remnant would be straining to catch the slightest sound as they fearfully wait for enemies to ambush them. Every nerve would be so shattered¹ that cowardice² would reign as the entire group attempts to escape the imagined approach of the sword. As they flee, they shall fall.

They shall fall "because³ each man shall stumble over another (אִישׁ בְּאִחִיו)⁴ as before the sword (כַּמִּפְנֵי חֶרֶב) except there shall be no one pursuing (וְאֵין אִיִּי)⁵" (v. 37a). In their haste to flee, they would stumble over each other so that they fall to the ground. Not only would this wreak havoc with the trampling of the fallen, but it would also add to the great humiliation which they already bore. They had been defeated by a nonexistent enemy and would fall over their own soldiers. A stampede initiated by a stirring leaf would bring down the stumbling remnant. By idolatry and sabbath breaking, Israel would demonstrate that their faith had turned to folly. That folly would be punished by Yahweh placing an inordinate fear in their hearts. That fear would result in a disastrous and unfounded flight.

¹ Cf. Targum Onqelos for מִרְךָ: תִּבְרַא "breaking/shattering."

² Cf. Septuagint for מִרְךָ: δειλία "cowardice" (cf. the only New Testament employment of δειλία, 2 Tim 1:7).

³ GKC, p. 492 (§158a).

⁴ Or, "they shall stumble over one another." GKC, p. 448 (§139e).

⁵ Note the reversal of the order of vv. 6, 17, and 36b. This order indicates a verbal predicate rather than a negated substantive. See GKC, p. 480 (§152k-1). Such a noun-clause may be taken as circumstantial-contradictory. See GKC, p. 453 (§141e). "Except" may also be translated "although."

Verses 36-37a are marked by the following forms of assonance:

ורדף...נדף, רדף...רדף
 ונסו...מנסת
 ונסו...ונפלו...וכשלו
 ואין רדף...ורדף אין

The assonance, the conciseness, and the subject matter are reminiscent of the "taunt-song" (משל)¹ best exemplified by Isaiah 14:4, Micah 2:4, and Habakkuk 2:6.² These three taunt-songs exhibit the following characteristics: assonance, conciseness, third person grammar (verbs and pronouns) in a second person context, judgment theme, an interrogative (אין "How?" in Isa 14:4 and Mic 2:4; עד־מתי "How long?" in Hab 2:6), and introduced as משל "proverb/taunt-song." Leviticus 26:36-37a contains all but the last two characteristics. Since the three key examples are from the prophets, perhaps this early similarity was a prototype. Deuteronomy 28:37 employs משל in the context of the Palestinian Covenant to describe how the nations would consider Israel after it had been devastated by the judgment of Yahweh. In the same context, verse 25 (with לִי יִהְיֶה לִי³) describes Israel as "an object of terror" (זועה)⁴ to

¹ Cf. BDB, p. 605.

² George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Numbers*, ICC (reprint ed., Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., 1976), pp. xiv, 344-45.

³ See above, p. 73 (v. 12b).

⁴ BDB, p. 266. Even more striking is the employment of ל with parallels of משל in Jer 24:9 (זועה, רעה "distress," חרפה "reproach," משל "sharp word," קללה "curse") in a context with חרב "sword," רעב "famine," and דבר "pestilence." Cf., also, Jer 29:18 (זועה, אלה "curse," שמה "appalment," שרקה "hissing," חרפה), likewise in context with חרב, רעב, and דבר. The concepts are strikingly similar to both Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 in these Jeremiah passages.

the nations (cf. לְשִׂמָּה הִיָּה "be for an appalment," v. 37) in a context dealing with their flight (נוֹס, cf. Lev 26:36). Therefore, though the form is not as developed as in the prophets, this researcher believes that Leviticus 26:36-37a should be classified as a taunt-song.¹

Turning from the remnant, verses 37b-38 describe the condition of the exiles lest they forget their own dire predicament: "Nor shall there be (וְלֹא־תְהִיָּה) any standing (תְּקוּמָה) for you (לְכֶם) before your enemies." There is a very obvious correlation between the last word of 37a (אֵין "there shall be no") and the first construction of 37b (וְלֹא־תְהִיָּה "nor shall there be"). It is an example of a carefully worded transition, flipping from one subject to the next by means of the same concept but employing different terminology.

תְּקוּמָה "standing," like מִרְיָה "timidity" in 36a, is a *hapax legomenon*. The Targum of Onqelos (תְּקוּמָה) and the Syriac (*qwm*) both employ the same semitic root (קוּם "stand") as the MT. However, the Targum's-term may mean "rising" or "preservation"² while the Syriac may mean "opposition."³ The Septuagint emphasizes the ability to stand (οὐ δύνησθεσθε ἀντιστῆναι. "you shall not be able to resist/stand against") and the Vulgate bears the concept of bringing oneself to resist/oppose (*audebit resistere*). In the Qumran materials from Cave 1, the equivalent phrase employs מַעֲמָד "resistance."⁴ 1QM xiv.8 is the nearest syntacti-

¹ The relationship between Deut 28:25, 37 and Lev 26:36-37a is further supported by the relationship between Deut 28:25 and Jer 34:17 (esp. זִוְעָה) which is in a context concerning the breach of covenant by Israel failing to observe the sabbatical year (vv. 8-22): that Leviticus 26:36-37a should be classified as a taunt-song.

² Jastrow, *Dictionary*, 2:1690.

³ Smith, *Syriac Dictionary*, p. 495.

⁴ מַעֲמָד is never a synonym for תְּקוּמָה in the Old Testament. Cf. BDB, p. 765.

cally: **גבוריהם אין מעמד** "and there is no resistance from any of their mighty men/warriors."¹ Lohse's translation of **מעמד** in 1QM xiv.8 is identical to Elliger's for **תקומה** in Leviticus 26:37b, *geben Standhalten* "give resistance/resist."² Therefore, the better translation appears to be: "Nor shall there be any resistance by/from³ you in the presence of (**לפני**) your enemies."

The result of nonresistance is clear: "so that you shall perish (**אבד** *Qal*) among the nations; yea, the land of your enemies shall devour (**אכל**) you" (v. 38). This summation manifests brevity and simplicity like previous summations in Leviticus 26 (vv. 29, 33b).⁴ The message is emphatic. There would be absolutely no escaping the judgment of Yahweh. Perishing (**אבד**, cf. Deut 28:22, 63) and being devoured (**אכל**, cf. Num 13:32 and Ezek 36:13-14 where land is the devourer) are parallel concepts as are also the nations (**גוים**) and the land of the enemies (**ארץ איבים**). It is not the land of Canaan which devours the exiled captives. The infertility of Israel's land (due to devastation) is not intended.⁵ Nor, for that very fact, could the devouring refer to wars, depopulation, drought, famine, or the chastisements of Yahweh.⁶ The context of Levi-

¹ Lohse, *Die Texte aus Qumran*, pp. 212-13. Cf., also, 1QM xviii. 13 and 1QH v.29.

² *Ibid.*, p. 213; Elliger, *Leviticus*, pp. 362, 377.

³ By opting for "resistance," the employment of **ל** here may be more than mere possession ("you shall not have standability"). It might be a circumlocution of a genitive of means or source ("by/from you"). Cf. GKC, p. 419 (§128x, §129a-b). By not placing the pronominal suffix on **תקומה**, the pronominal concept may be emphasized ("by/from you either").

⁴ See above, pp. 116, 126-29.

⁵ Cf. Gray, *Numbers*, p. 151.

⁶ Cf. Feinberg, *Ezekiel*, p. 207.

ticus 26:38b refers to the physical destruction so clearly that even the concept of spiritual stumbling (becoming entangled in sins)¹ must be ruled out as a viable interpretation. "Their falling under the pressure of the circumstances in which they were placed"² is too vague. What, then, is the meaning? The concept is that of the exiles vanishing. They would be taken from the land Yahweh had given unto them, would enter their enemies' land(s), and not return. They would die and be decimated in a strange land (cf. Amos 7:17, "but you yourself shall die upon unclean ground [or, in an unclean land, עַל־אֲדָמָה טְמֵאָה]). When Yahweh would bring them out of exile, they would be fewer in number than when they went into captivity.⁴ Thus, this exile would not be like the Egyptian bondage when the nation multiplied greatly (cf. Exod 1:7). The entirety of the Abrahamic Covenant would be set aside in the exile which would come upon Israel:

- (1) possession of the land (Gen 12:1; 15:7, 18-21; 17:8) would become dispossession of the land (Lev 26:33-38);
- (2) national greatness (Gen 12:2) would become humiliation, inferiority, and insignificance (Lev 26:29, 32, 36-37; Deut 28:43-44);
- (3) blessing (Gen 12:2; 22:17) would become cursing (Lev 26:14-38; Deut 28:15-68);

¹ Cf. Carl Friedrich Keil, *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Ezekiel*, 2 vols., trans. James Martin, in *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament* (reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968), 2:104-5.

² Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 2:477.

³ Cf. the use of אֲדָמָה "land" in Amos 7:17 before and after this phrase.

⁴ The problems involved in the numbers of captives taken from the land (cf. 2 Kgs 24:16; Jer 52:28-30) and the numbers of the returnees (cf. Ezra 2:64-65; Neh 7:66-67) must be viewed in the light of the remnant (cf. Ezra 1:4; Neh 1:2; Hag 2:3), the necessity of multiplication in exile to survive (cf. Jer 29:6), the male census figures (cf. 2 Kgs

- (4) being a blessing (Gen 12:2-3; 22:18) would become being a cursing (Lev 26:32, 36-37a; Deut 28:25, 37);
- (5) multiplication (Gen 12:2; 15:5; 17:4-6; 22:17) would become diminution (Lev 26:22, 29, 38; Deut 28:18, 20-22, 53-57, 62); and,
- (6) success before the enemies (Gen 22:17) would become defeat by the enemies (Lev 26:16-17, 32, 36-38; Deut 28:25, 31, 48, 52, 68).

Promise would be turned to privation. Covenant vengeance consisted of the removal of all privileges and protection with all of the attendant prosperity.

The Contingency: Repentance (vv. 39-45)

Divine retribution, according to verses 39-45, has the repentance of Yahweh's covenant people as its ultimate goal (vv. 39-41). Their repentance would allow the covenant relationship to be reinstated or reactivated by Yahweh. The reactivation of the covenant must be founded upon a clear understanding of the relationship to the land, the sabbatical principle, and the recognition of guilt by the transgressors (vv. 42-43). Thus the land and the people may be restored to a right relationship with Yahweh, lord of the covenant. Above all else, it must be remembered that Yahweh's covenant promise is sure. He revealed his commitment to restoration in order to reassure his people (vv. 44-45). Yahweh remains loyal to his covenant--even when his covenanted people are disloyal.¹

24:16; Jer 52:28-30), and the later deportations of over 100,000 left in the land (cf. R. K. Harrison, *Old Testament Times* [Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970], p. 256; C. F. Keil, *The Prophecies of Jeremiah*, 2 vols., trans. James Kennedy, in *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament* [reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968], 2:330-31).

¹ Cf. a similar concept in 2 Tim 2:13.

Repentance: Israel's acceptance of retribution (vv. 39-41)

The same *casus pendens* employed in verse 36 is repeated here: "As for those who are left from among you."¹ The anguish (מקק)² suffered by the guilt-ridden Israelites is emphasized here. It had come as a result of contemplating the reasons for their exile and the devastation of their land. Ezekiel best described both the resulting cry of the people in anguish and the answer of Yahweh to their cry:

Now you, O son of man, you say to the house of Israel: "Thus you speak: 'Our transgressions and our sins are upon us so that we are being anguished (מקק) by them. Therefore, how shall we live?'" Say to them: "'As surely as I live,' declares Lord Yahweh, 'I do not delight in the death of the wicked, but rather in the turning (or, repenting) of the wicked from his way so that he lives. Turn (or, Repent)'. Turn from (or, Repent of) your ways, O wicked ones! Yea, why will you die, O house of Israel?'" (Ezek 33:10-11)

Therefore, Leviticus 26:39a says of the remnant of Israel, "they shall be anguished (מקק) by (or, because of) their guilt (יָצַח)³ in the lands of your enemies."⁴ While in exile, the disobedient nation would suffer a terrible guilt trip which would cause them to despair of ever again being able to live before Yahweh. "Yea, they also (אֲנִי)⁵ shall be anguished (מקק) by the guilt (יָצַח)⁶ of their fathers *which⁷ shall be⁸*

¹ See above, p. 135.

² Cf. BDB, p. 596; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, p. 170; Elliger, *Leviticus*, p. 378.

³ Cf. BDB, pp. 730-31; *THAT*, s.v. "יָצַח," by R. Knierim, 2:243-49.

⁴ See above, pp. 32-35.

⁵ See above, pp. 90-91.

⁶ Plural of intensity.

⁷ I.e., the guilt. Cf. Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 2:477.

The third masculine plural is in agreement with the plural of יָצַח which is irregular and takes a feminine ending in the plural (BDB, p. 730).

⁸ Supplied in agreement with the time element of the main verb in the context.

with them" (39b). By moving the verb **מקק** from the first word in its clause (39a) to the last word in its clause (39b), the emphasis upon the anguish is continued. In 39b the preverbal adverbial phrases draw attention to themselves: "by (or, because of) the guilt of their fathers . . . with them." Rashi's explanation for this concept is that "it means that the guilt of their fathers will be with them as those who are holding fast to the practice of their fathers" (**כשעונות אבותם אתם כשאוחזים מעשה אבותיהם בידיהם**).¹ Various theologians offer the explanation that corporate guilt (i.e., the concept of it) was rigid in Israel's early history. In fact, corporate guilt was so rigidly maintained that the responsibility of the individual was ignored until the exile during which it was demonstrated that Yahweh was concerned more about the individual's guilt. This change in theology was to have come about by experience and by the writings of the prophets.² Usually, therefore, Ezekiel 18 is praised as a new light for Israel since it teaches individual responsibility.

The anguish about which Leviticus 26:39b is concerned is that caused by corporate guilt. It concerns the guilt of the fathers. However, 39a clearly established (before them mention of corporate guilt) that Israel would be subject to its own, current guilt. In other words, the generation of Israelites facing the day of retribution was also guilty. This may not identify the *individual per se*, but it does distinguish the guilt of separate generations. This same principle of distinguishing guilt also applies to the concept of individual guilt.

¹ חומש, p. 141.

² Cf. Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:413-43.

In Ezekiel's day and in Moses' day, the way out of the entrapment was repentance (בִּשְׁׁוּׁ, Ezek 33:11) or confession (הִטְּׁ *Hitpa'el*, Lev 26:40a) of personal and corporate guilt: "If¹ they confess (הִטְּׁ *Hitpa'el*) their guilt (וְׁ) and the guilt (וְׁ) of their fathers" (40a). The order is significant. Even though the corporate guilt had caused the greatest anguish because of the "spectre of an irreversible destiny,"² the reply of Yahweh was that the personal required attention first. The now-generation guilt, as opposed to the past-generations guilt, must be admitted if the repentance was to be genuine. This concept of personal guilt does not require a post-exilic date for Leviticus 26, any more than the emphasis on corporate guilt in Daniel 9:1-19 would require a Mosaic date for the composition of that pericope.³ Corporate guilt ceases to be a problem to the individual who has confessed his own guilt. Corporate guilt is not a straight-jacket or a bottomless pit. Escape from it is the same as for personal guilt: repentance. It is not a destiny. It is a lesson. It is a lesson in the history of the faith (or lack of faith). The covenant does not bring only blessing to Abraham's seed. It can also bring cursing, depending on each generation's personal obedience or disobedience. Each generation has the same opportunity to rid itself of a sordid history of disloyalty. Each has the opportunity of being personally loyal to Yahweh of the covenant.

¹ Cf. GKC, pp. 337 (§112kk-ll), 494 (§159g).

² A. B. Davidson, *The Theology of the Old Testament*, ed. S. D. F. Salmond, in *The International Theological Library* (reprint ed., Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961), p. 222. Cf. Davidson's full discussion, pp. 217-27.

³ It is significant that the majority of Daniel's confession was taken up with the "spectre" of corporate guilt. It is theologically naive to date the writings of the Old Testament on a theoretical development of thought moving from the corporate to the personal.

From 40b through 41b a parenthesis is encountered which serves to explain the nature of the guilt and the reason for the nation thus burdened:¹ "because of² their being unfaithful to me (במעל אשר מעל-בי)³ and also because (ואף אשר)⁴ they walked in opposition to me (הלך עם בקרי),⁵ I also (אף)⁶ walked in opposition to them (הלך עם בקרי)⁷ and I brought (בוא Hip'il)⁸ them into the land of their enemies" (40b-41b) .

The only new terminology or concept presented in this parenthesis is that of מעל, which may be translated "act unfaithfully."⁹ It was employed of sacrilege in the case of Achan (Josh 7:1; cf. 22:20). It was also used of the breach of vows (oaths or covenants; cf. Ezek 17:20; Num 5:12).¹⁰ This latter concept appears to be that of Leviticus 26:40b,

¹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 2:477.

² Cf. BDB, p. 90 (111.5).

³ This construction is a cognate accusative with an internal object (cf. GKC, pp. 366-67 [§117p-q1]). There is no retrospective pronominal suffix and אשר introduces the relative clause acting as an attribute for the preceding noun. Note the employment of *qtl* in the relative clause. The emphasis of the expression could be rendered: "being treasonously unfaithful."

⁴ אשר is taken here as causal (cf. BDB, p. 83) after the manner of the Septuagint's ὅτι.

⁵ The *qtl* may have been maintained as a fixed form for this particular phrase. Cf. vv. 23, 24, 27, 28. See below, n. 7.

⁶ See above, pp. 90, 107, 115.

⁷ The only occurrence of this idiom with the *yqtl*. It is particularly significant since there is no *waw* involved either here or in the immediately preceding employment of the phrase in 40b, which uses *qtl*. When 41a is compared to 24a, it is clear that prepositive אף-אני is responsible for the *yqtl* (with *qtl* in 24a it was postpositive).

⁸ Cf. vv. 25 and 36.

⁹ Cf. BDB, p. 591.

¹⁰ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, pp. 313-14.

which deals with covenant treason.¹ Such a concept is also found in its employment in Ezekiel 14:13, 15:8, 20:27, and Daniel 9:7.² All those contexts are similar to Leviticus 26 in both contents and concepts.

The protasis begun in 40a (וְהִתְוַדּוּ "if they confess")³ is resumed here by means of a dual particle construction containing the conditional וְאִם "if/whether" together with the temporal אִז "then":⁴ "If then (אִז-וְאִם) their uncircumcised heart (לִבְבֵי הָעֵרְלִים) is humbled (כִּנְעוּ) and then (אִז) they make restitution (רָצוּהָ) for their guilt (עֲוֹן)"⁶ (41cd). The temporal reference is after the exile and at the time of their confession of guilt. This is the result of Yahweh's working in their heart (cf. v. 36a) while they are in exile. Exile would strip the nation of all pretense of being spiritual. Exile would be the irrefutable evidence that they were displeasing to Yahweh.

The covenant Lord demands heart-consecration which reflects the fulfillment of the consecration sworn in the circumcision oath. Circumcision is an oath-rite. To be uncircumcised would be to place oneself outside the juridical authority of Yahweh and a refusal to consign oneself to the ordeal of the Lord's judgment for the final verdict on one's life--eternal weal or woe.⁷

¹ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, p. 366.

² See above, p. 144. Cf. Dan 9:4-5 (confession, covenant, commandments, guilt, unfaithfulness), 11-14 (Palestinian Covenant!), 15 (exodus history = covenant formula), 16 (guilt of the fathers).

³ See above, p. 144.

⁴ See above, pp. 129-32 (אִם); also, pp. 35-38

⁵ See above, pp. 129-32 (רָצוּהָ) .

⁶ See above, pp. 142-44.

⁷ Meredith G. Kline, *By Oath Consigned: A Reinterpretation of the Covenant Signs of Circumcision and Baptism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1968), pp. 47-48.

Israel's spiritual condition would be that of an uncircumcised heart (cf. Jer 9:25; Ezek 44:6-9; see, also, Jer 4:4). This would be the nation's condition while living in exile among uncircumcised nations who were outside the covenant (cf. Ezek 44:7). Yahweh was, in effect, declaring to the nation: "If you want to live like the uncovenanted nations, then live among them!" Exile was a fitting and just punishment. The confession of guilt (40a) must be sincere. There is no room for pride. The humbling of the nation meant that they would no longer be self-reliant, but rather, trusting Yahweh. כָּנַע "humble" occurs thirty-six times in the Old Testament (nineteen of which are in Chronicles). In the spiritual sense (rather than political or physical) it is used only eighteen times (fourteen in Chronicles, three in Kings, and Lev 26:41c).¹ The employment of כָּנַע in the spiritual sense is always in a context of an invasion of the land by Israel's enemies. Such invasions were in all cases the chastisement of Israel for sinful pride or idolatry. The nations, therefore, would be the instrument of humiliation for disobedient Israel.

The last phrase of verse 41 is the most difficult theologically. The phrase עָוֹן רָצָה "make restitution for guilt" occurs only three times in the Old Testament (here, v. 43, and Isa 40:2). Wenham interprets the phrase in Leviticus 26:41 as meaning that Israel would "accept (the punishment for) the guilt."² Keil and Delitzsch, regarding the same reference, say that Israel "will take pleasure, rejoice in their misdeeds, i.e. in the consequences and results of them."³ In other words,

¹ Cf. Elliger, *Leviticus*, p. 378 n. 72.

² Wenham, *Leviticus*, p. 332 n. 12.

³ Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 2:478.

Israel would rejoice that God was just in awarding what was deserved.¹ However, Delitzsch elsewhere (regarding Isa 40:2) distinguishes between "a satisfactory reception" and "a satisfactory payment."² He interprets Isaiah 40:2 in the latter sense. Edward J. Young takes the phrase in Isaiah 40:2 as a reference to the acceptance of "a sacrifice sufficient to atone for the iniquity."³ He further indicates that such a sacrifice is "more fully revealed in the fifty-third chapter of the book."⁴ Young's view, therefore, is messianic in scope. He makes the concept of the phrase one of absolute soteriology wherein the only acceptable restitution for guilt must be made by God himself in the person of Christ. It would be accurate to say that redemption or freedom from the guilt is not the work of Israel, it is the work of Yahweh (cf. Isa 43:22-28).⁵ However, the phrase **עָן עַל צַדִּיק** is not a statement of soteriological redemption. It is a statement of federal consequence. Conversion or repentance must be manifested.⁶ Conversion must demonstrate a turning away from sin. Conversion focuses "on concrete commands, prescriptions, and rights, contempt for which had called down all

¹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, 2:478.

² Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah*, 3 vols., trans. James Martin, in *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament* (reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), 2:140.

³ Young, *Isaiah*, 3:23.

⁴ *Ibid.*; cf. Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, 2:129.

⁵ Zimmerli, *Theology*, p. 217.

⁶ Cf. the concept of works as the evidence of faith in the epistle of James in the New Testament. The manifestation of conversion ought not to be limited to the active participation in "good works." It must also involve the passive acceptance of the righteous will of God regarding the effects of past sin.

the disasters of the past, and the strict observance of which was therefore essential in order to prove the seriousness of the new change."¹ The making of restitution for guilt, therefore, would be "an evidence of the repentance and expiation,"² not the cause. Such evidence of true repentance also involves the acceptance of the consequences of sin which are not removed immediately: "conversion and the necessity of continuing to bear God's punishment are not mutually exclusive."³ An example of such federal consequences may be seen in the case of Rehoboam's servitude to Shishak (2 Chron 12:1-12). The leaders of Israel "humbled themselves" (כָּנַע as in Lev 26:41c), Yahweh granted them a stay of full execution, but left the nation in subjection to Shishak as a means of teaching the converted leaders the seriousness of disobedience to Yahweh and the pleasantness of walking in obedience (vv. 6-8, 12). The impact of exile would linger on. No matter when this repentance on the part of Israel would take place, the remainder of the exile and the land's sabbaths would have to be fulfilled. Also involved in making restitution for their guilt would be the commencement of obedience to the demands of the law of Yahweh (e.g., regular observance of the sabbaths; cf. Neh 10:28-31 and Isa 58:1-14).

The protasis that is presented in 40a and 41cd consists of three parts: (1) acknowledging before Yahweh the breach of covenant (i.e., confession), (2) subjugating the mind and will (heart) to the God

¹ Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:470.

² *THAT*, s.v. by G. Gerleman, 2:811, "Zeichen der Reue and Busse" (emphasis added in translation).

³ Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:471. Punishment, in this sense, is not the mediate effect, but the immediate effect of the sin. Similarly, the New Testament believer, though forgiven in Christ, yet must die physically. His spiritual (second) death, however, is completely removed.

of the covenant (i.e., humility), and (3) obeying the life-changing commands of the law-giver (i.e., restitution). Thereby the covenant relationship may be reentered.

Remembrance: Yahweh's acceptance of repentance (v. 42)

The apodosis of the conditional sentence begun with 40a is in a carefully constructed form:

וּזְכַרְתִּי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי יַעֲקֹב -42a

and I shall *remember* my covenant with Jacob,

וְאֵף אֶת־בְּרִיתִי יִצְחָק -42b

even my covenant with Isaac,

וְאֵף אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אַבְרָהָם אֲזַכֵּר -42c

yea, I shall *remember* my covenant with Abraham,

וְהָאָרֶץ אֲזַכֵּר -42d

and I shall *remember* the land.

The thrice-repeated verb זָכַר "remember" sets the tone of the apodosis.

The six occurrences of the first person singular (three times as the subject of זָכַר and three times as a pronominal suffix on בְּרִית, "my covenant")¹ indicate that Yahweh himself will respond to the repentance of Israel. The threefold employment of בְּרִית confirms (again) the covenant context of the pericope and of the repentance of Israel.

In addition to the repetitions, the following observations may be made concerning this apodosis: (1) The elevated style of 42abc approaches that of a tristich containing synonymous parallelism.²

(2) זָכַר opens and closes the section in order to maintain the emphasis

¹ See above, pp. 38-39.

² This does not mean that the three men are synonymous. The proper names are but modifiers of בְּרִית. The last phrase of 42 plus the subsequent context confirms that only one covenant is being described. If this is not poetic, it certainly is fastidiously developed so that the logical correspondences (parallelism?) are undeniable.

on remembrance.¹ (3) **וְאֵף** "yea, also/even"² in 42bc continues the concept initiated in 42a and is not employed again at the commencement of 42d. This confirms the individual nature of 42d. (4) The names of the patriarchs in 42abc are the reverse of the usual order.³ The order certainly does not indicate comparative worth in an ascending fashion.⁴ It probably presents a backward look to the original promise to Abraham. The order would serve to confront Israel with the historical foundation of the nation and its covenant relationship to Yahweh. (5) The apodosis is concluded by 42d. It substitutes **הָאָרֶץ** "the land" for **בְּרִית** "covenant" since the central promise of the covenant was the land. It also utilizes the juxtaposition of these two terms since they are the only truly significant concepts. The patriarchs are not the center of attention. The land, as given by Yahweh, is the focus of the verse. That land was granted by the covenant made with Abraham. (6) Verse 42d also duplicates the *yqtl* of **זָכַר** at the end of the line (cf. 42c) to maintain the continuity of thought between 42abc and 42d. Therefore, 42d is a concise summary of 42abc.

¹ Note the typical *wqtl* followed by *yqtl*. The absence of **זָכַר** in 42b aids the employment of the inclusion. Rashi indulges in fanciful speculation to explain the absence of **זָכַר** in 42b. He explains it on the basis of the presence of the ashes of Isaac on an altar before God.

² See above, pp. 90-91, 142.

³ This is a *hapax phainomenon* in the Old Testament. The triad (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) occurs as follows: **זָכַר בְּרִית**, Exod 2:24, Lev 26:42; **זָכַר**, Exod 32:13 (**יִשְׂרָאֵל** "Israel" for Jacob), Deut 9:27; **בְּרִית**, 2 Kgs 13:23, 1 Chr 16:15-18=Ps 105:8-11; **שָׁבַע אֶרֶץ** "the land sworn (to)," Gen 50:24, Exod 6:8, 32:13, 33:1, Deut 1:8, 6:10, 34:4; **שָׁבַע אֲדָמָה** (same as **שָׁבַע אֶרֶץ**), Num 32:11, Deut 30:20; **שָׁבַע דְּבַר** "the word sworn (to)," Deut 9:5; **שָׁבַע הָיָה לְעַם/לְאֱלֹהִים** "sworn to be a people/a god," Deut 29:12; **רָאָה** "(God of . . .) appeared," Exod 3:16, 4:5, 6:3; **אֱלֹהֵי** "God of," Exod 3:6, 15, 16, 4:5, 1 Kgs 18:36, 1 Chr 29:18, 2 Chr 30:6 (**שׁוּב אֵל** "return unto" precedes).

⁴ Cf. Rashi; Freedman and Simon, *Midrash Rabba*, p. 462 (fanciful explanations for many aspects of verse 42).

Repetition: a summary concerning retribution (v. 43)

Retribution is not primarily reformatory, curative, or preventative in nature. Retribution is primarily revelatory. The just punishment of the sinner (the covenant breaker) is a clear manifestation of the holiness and righteousness of Yahweh. Verse 43 emphasizes the reason for the retribution involving the land and people of Israel:

Nevertheless,¹ the land must be forsaken (עזב)² by them (מהם),³ so that it might enjoy the *restitution of* (רצה)⁴ its sabbaths (שבת)⁵ during its desolation (שמם)⁶ without them (מהם).⁷ However,⁸ they themselves (הם) must make restitution (רצה)⁹ for their guilt (עון)¹⁰ simply because (יען וביען)¹¹ they rejected (מאס)¹² my ordinances (משפט)¹³ and their soul despised (געלה נפש)¹⁴ my statutes (חקקה),¹⁵

¹ The adversative *waw* is employed here with the emphasized subject, using the preceding והארץ (42d) as a springboard. Cf. BDB, p. 252 (l.e); GKC, p. 455 (§142a).

² The *yqtl* is interpreted here as a jussive. Cf. Jouon, *Grammaire*, pp. 310-11 (§114j).

³ Ibid., p. 401 (§132d).

⁴ See above, pp. 130-32. The jussive of the first verb is continued here by the form as well as its context. Cf. Jouon, *Grammaire*, p. 316 (§116e); Davidson, *Syntax*, p. 93 (§65 R.6); Driver, *Treatise on the Use of the Tenses*, p. 66 (§62). For "so that," see BDB, p. 254 (3).

⁵ See above, pp. 47-49, 129-34.

⁶ See above, pp. 32, 131. The irregular syncope of the form may be due to an attraction to the preceding word for vocalic assonance: בְּהִשָּׁמָה || שְׁבַת(ת)־יָהּ (unaccented *holem* is very minimal in pronunciation) rather than בְּהִשָּׁמָה. Cf. GKC, p. 182 (§67y).

⁷ Cf. GKC, p. 382 (-§119w).

⁸ Adversative *waw*; emphatic pronoun.

⁹ See above, pp. 147-49.

¹⁰ See above, pp. 142-44, 147-49.

¹¹ Cf. Jouon, *Grammaire*, p. 523 (§170f n. 1); Davidson, *Syntax*, p. 198 (§147 R.2). This phrase occurs only here, Ezek 13:10, and 36:3. One יען occurs in Ezek 20:16, 24, with a similar context.

¹² See above, pp. 52, 86-87.

¹³ See above, p. 88.

¹⁴ See above, pp. 52-53, 72-73, 88, 120, 124.

¹⁵ See above, 51-53.

The structure of verse 43 (together with the preceding line, 42d) may be represented in the following fashion:¹

(1st com. sing.)		אזכר	והארץ	-42d
		I shall remember	and the land	
<hr/>				
(3rd fem. sing.)	מהם	תעזב	והארץ	-43a
	by them	shall be forsaken	and the land	
	מהם	את־שבתתיה בהשמה	ותרץ	-43b
	without them	its sabbaths during its desolation	and it shall enjoy	
<hr/>				
(3rd masc. pl.)		את־עונם	ירצו	והם -43c
		for their guilt	shall make resti- tution	and they
	במשפטי מאסו	יעו וביען		-43d
	they rejected my ordinances	simply because		
	נפשם	ואת־חקתי		-43e
	their soul	despised and my statutes		

The following observations may be made concerning this structure: (1) The repetition of the assonance involving **רצ** in the first member of the first four lines emphasizes the main concern of retribution and restoration, the land. (2) The repetition of guttural+ז (**אז** and **עז**) serves to heighten the correspondence between the opposites **זכר** "remember" and **עזב** "forsake."

¹ Some of the correspondences are conceptual, but most involve assonance which can be observed only in the Hebrew. The English translation cannot convey all the nuances (especially in the interlinear format).

What Yahweh will remember, Israel will forsake. (3) The third person masculine plurals of **והם** **מהם** . . . **מהם** "by them . . . without them, and they" bind the first three lines of verse 43 together. As 42d and 43a began the same (**והארץ**), so 43a and 43b end the same (**מהם**). Then 43c picks up the last concept of 43b to maintain the continuity. The logical progression is noteworthy: forsaken by them --> enjoyed restitution without them --> nevertheless, they must make restitution. (4) In 43b and 43c the commencing verb is **רצה**. The **רצה** continues the assonance of 42d and 43a. The concept of restitution is a key element in 43bc. (5) The repetition of **ענ** in the last term of 43c and the first two terms of 43d binds those lines together by assonance. The concepts presented by the three forms are also related: there is guilt, as is proven by the cause or reason for restitution. In other words, restitution would have to be made because of guilt which existed because of disobedience. (6) **משפט מאס** "reject ordinance(s)" and **חקה געל** "despise statute(s)" are the reverse of verse 15 (**חקה מאס** "reject statute(s)" and **משפט געל** "despise ordinance(s)"), it is significant that both verbs in 43de are *qtl* even though they are preceded by their objects. As mentioned previously, this is the only such example occurring in Leviticus regarding **חקה** and its verbs.¹ The same observation holds for **משפט** and its verbs: when it precedes the verb, the verb is *yqtl*; and when it follows the verb, the verb is *qtl* (Lev 18:4, 5, 26; 19:37; 30:22; 25:18; 26:15). The only exception is verse 43. The departure from the usual syntax of the pericope must be for the purpose of bringing the concepts forcefully to the mind of the reader. Disobedience is the true and emphatic cause for the need of restitution. There is no question regarding Israel's guilt.

¹ See above, pp. 52-53.

There is no doubt that restitution is necessary. (7) The first person singular is the subject of the verb in 42d. Every line of verse 43 has some mention of the third person plural (referring to Israel). However, the third feminine singular (referring to the land) is the subject in 43ab, while the third masculine plural (referring to the people of Israel) is the subject in 43cde.

Therefore, verse 43 presents emphases concerning the land, responsibility/guilt, restitution, disobedience, and Israel. It is truly a negative picture in contrast to that presented by verse 42.¹ The jussives (43abc), however, provide an element of anticipation and decree. *Operation Restitution* would be initiated by Yahweh on the basis of his covenant with Abraham. The Mosaic Covenant would have a role in the process by means of the sabbatical stipulations. The Abrahamic Covenant promised a land and a seed to inherit that land. The Mosaic Covenant promised a nation with a special relationship to Yahweh (Exod 19:5-6). As circumcision was instituted as the seal of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 17:9-14), so the sabbaths appear to have been the seal of the Mosaic Covenant (cf. Exod 20:8-11; Leviticus 25; 26:2; Neh 10:28-31; Isa 58:1-14). The emphasis on land in Leviticus 26 belongs to the sphere of the Abrahamic Covenant, while the emphasis on sabbatical restitution belongs to the sphere of the Mosaic Covenant.²

¹ See above, pp. 150-51.

² Onqelos evidently interpreted the retribution of v. 43 in the light of the blessings and cursings of the Palestinian Covenant, since he substituted the following phrase for **יען וביען** "simply because": **לוטין חלף ברכן איתי עליהון בדיל** "there are cursings instead of blessings distinguished against them."

Reaffirmation: Yahweh's promise to the exiles (vv. 44-45)

In contrast to Israel's treatment of the covenant, Yahweh will not breach his covenant promise. That contrasting behavior is emphasized by the triple particle construction introducing verse 44:

Yet in spite of this (וּאִף־גַּם־זֹאת),¹ I shall not reject (מֵאִס)² them while they are in the land of their enemies, nor despise (לִגְעַל)³ them so as to exterminate (כִּלֶּה),⁴ thereby breaching (פָּרַר)⁵ my covenant (בְּרִית)⁶ with them, because I am Yahweh their god (כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה) (אֱלֹהֵיהֶם).⁷

All of the concepts contained in verse 44 have been employed before in Leviticus 26 except כִּלֶּה "exterminate."⁸ On the basis of this usage of כִּלֶּה together with its employment by Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Raitt makes the following statement:

The failure of chastisement to bring the expected repentance is a theme which runs through Hosea (6:1ff; 7:11-14; 11:5), Jeremiah (5:3; 7:28; 13:22-23; 15:7), and Ezekiel (16:27-29; 23:8-11). Their development of this theme moves their threat of punishment beyond the framework of chastisement to a level *not merely ignored but specifically denied by Leviticus 26*. Both Jeremiah (9:16; 14:12) and Ezekiel (5:13; 13:13; 20:13; 22:31) use the image *kalah*, "consume, bring to an end, annihilate," to express the eventual unqualified character of judgment, while Lev. 26:44 uses the same verbal root to deny that God will "destroy them utterly." And, as we will see below, Lev. 26:44 *denies the rejection which Jeremiah and Ezekiel teach. From this evidence we conclude that Leviticus 26 intentionally repudiates or corrects a prophetic teaching on the intensity and purpose of God's punitive activity.*⁹

¹ See above, pp. 39-40.

² Note the emphatic negative construction (אֵל + *qtl*) and the repetition of the verb used of Israel in v. 43. Cf. Driver, *Treatise on the Use of the Tenses*, p. 18 (§13).

³ See above, n. 2. Note, also, the absence of נֶפֶשׁ "soul" with לִגְעַל.

⁴ Cf. Deut 28:21.

⁵ See above, pp. 88-89. Cf. Judg 2:1-2.

⁶ See above, pp. 66-69, 155.

⁷ See above, pp. 47, 50, 79.

⁸ כִּלֶּה is the root employed in v. 16 to describe the effects of the debilitating disease or fever on the eyes.

⁹ Raitt, *Theology of Exile*, pp. 25-26 (emphasis added).

However, when all the passages dealing with Israel's annihilation/extermi-
nation (כלה) are reviewed, an interesting pattern emerges:

- כלה in/from off the land: Jeremiah 5:3; 10:25; 14:12; 16:4;
Ezekiel 5:12; 13:14; 22:31; 43:8; Hosea 11:6
- כלה among the nations/outside the land: Jeremiah 9:15 (Eng., 16) ;
44:27 (only a small exile group in Egypt!); Ezekiel 20:15, 21
(both of these verses refer to the postexodus wilderness and
are worded as divine intention followed by but . . . , vv. 14,
22); Isaiah 1:28
- לא כלה "not exterminate" among the nations/outside the land: Levi-
ticus 26:44
- לא כלה (absolute): Malachi 3:6

There are only three exceptions to the pattern of annihilation in the
land/preservation among the nations: Jeremiah 9:15 and Isaiah 1:28.
The latter passage refers only to the ultimate annihilation (from off
planet earth) of those who are "forsakers of Yahweh" (עזבי יהוה). The
former passage is apparently unique in all the canonical prophets of
the Old Testament! It may be that, like Isaiah 1:28, Jeremiah 9:15
should be understood as an eschatological reference which also involves
only the disobedient of that day.¹ In any case, Raitt's grounds for
setting Leviticus 26 at odds with Jeremiah and Ezekiel have been anni-
hilated. The reader of scripture must be certain to observe the dis-
tinctions made within each passage and its context. The vast majority
of apparent contradictions are solved in that fashion. Raitt later
makes the concession (concerning the similar treatment of מאס "reject")
that rejection is limited by Jeremiah and Ezekiel to a specific genera-
tion and a specific (short) period of time without any reference to the

¹ Jer 9:10 describes what appears to be a yet unfulfilled degree
of desolation for the city of Jerusalem. Verse 11 further emphasizes the
same desolate conditions. Verse 12 gives the reason for the judgment:
"because of their forsaking (עזב, cf. Isa 1:28) my law." The universal-
ity and futurity of this judgment are stated in vv. 24-25.

people as an entire ethnic/national entity.¹ Perhaps the same concession ought to be made for the concept of "annihilation/extermination" in order to accurately represent the prophets and Leviticus 26. There is no contradiction in scripture. God would exterminate (כִּלְהֵם) from their own land as chastisement for disobedience, but he would never exterminate (כִּלְהֵם) them in their exiled condition. In other words, God would always preserve a remnant in exile to return to the land in true repentance.

The *Selbstvorstellungsformel*² concludes verse 44. This is the manner in which the preceptual section of this pericope concluded (vv. 1-2) and the manner in which the promise section also concluded (v. 13). Its employment in the conclusion of the penalty section, too, demonstrates the unity of the pericope. The pericope is united in context, contents, and covenant concepts. As the pericope commenced, so it is closed, with the identification of the covenant suzerain, Yahweh.

Verse 45 explains succinctly why Yahweh will never reject nor despise Israel completely and absolutely: "Therefore, I shall remember (זָכַר),³ for their benefit (לְהֵם),⁴ the covenant with the ancestors (בְּרִית) (רֵאשִׁימִים)⁵ whom I brought out from the land of Egypt in the sight (לְעֵינַיִם) of the nations to be their god (לְהֵם לְאֱלֹהִים).⁶ I am Yahweh (אֲנִי)

¹ Raitt, *Theology of Exile*, pp. 65, 74, 79-80.

² See above, p. 47.

³ See above, pp. 150-51.

⁴ *Dativus commodi*, GKC, p. 381 (§119s).

⁵ Cf. Deut 19:14; Driver, *Deuteronomy*, p. 235.

⁶ See above, pp. 73-79.

יהוה).¹" Any doubt concerning the meaning of ראשונים "ancestors" is quickly dispelled by the following relative clause, "whom I brought out from the land of Egypt." The covenant described in this verse is the Mosaic Covenant (cf. the Abrahamic Covenant in v. 42). It is the covenant which God made with the nation which he had brought out of Egypt. That covenant had been established within a few months of the giving of the revelation recorded in Leviticus 26. The Mosaic Covenant is the primary covenant in this pericope.² The opening statements (vv. 1-2) were drawn from the stipulations of that covenant. The closing statements of the pericope draw from the history of that covenant.

As Israel had been publicly delivered out of Egypt, so the nation would be publicly desolated for disloyalty to the covenant. It is significant that there is no repetition here of להיות לי לעם "to be my people." The identification described in this verse is one-way, "to be their god." The blessing/promise of verses 4-12 involved a mutual relationship. The cursing/punishment of verses 14-45 is to be unilaterally administered by the only remaining loyal covenant partner, Yahweh. The second *Selbstvorstellungsformel* in this section corresponds to the second one in the first section of the pericope (as, also, the first ones correspond; cf. vv. 1-2, 44). The covenant would be enforced because the covenant enforcer never abandons his covenant. Yahweh had delivered Israel from Egypt; he is able to deliver from exile, too. Yahweh did not bring the nation to Sinai only to forsake them on the threshold of their wilderness experience. In fact, it appears that the

¹ See above, pp. 47, 50.

² See above, pp. 7-11, 79-80, 82-84. The proximity of vv. 42 and 45 underscore the interrelationship of the two covenants (Abrahamic and Mosaic) in this context.

*heilsgeschichtliche Formulierung*¹ is expanded here by giving the manner and purpose of the exodus, in order that the manner and purpose of the exile might be identified with it. The overall concept of verses 44-45 is represented well by Yahweh's declaration in Malachi:

כי אני יהוה לא שניתי
 Since I, Yahweh, do not change,
 ואתם בני־ייקב לא כליתם
 therefore, you, O sons of Jacob,
 shall not be exterminated. (Mal 3:6)

The Summary of Verses 14-45

Form

The structural outline of verses 14-45 is as follows:

- (1. Precept, vv. 1-2)
- (2. Promise, vv. 3-13)
3. Penalty (vv. 14-45)
 - 3.1 - The Cause: Disobedience (vv. 14-15)
 - 3.2 - The Consequence: Retribution (vv. 16-38)
 - 3.21 - Debilitation and defeat (vv. 16-17)
 - 3.22 - Drought (vv. 18-20)
 - 3.23 - Devastation by wild beasts (vv. 21-22)
 - 3.24 - Deprivation by siege (vv. 23-26)
 - 3.25 - Deportation (vv. 27-38)
 - 3.251 - Introduction (vv. 27-28)
 - 3.252 - Dehumanization (v. 29)
 - 3.253 - Desolation (vv. 30-32)
 - 3.254 - Dispersion (v. 33)
 - 3.255 - Desertion of the land (vv. 34-38)
 - 3.2551 - The sabbath rest (vv. 34-35)
 - 3.2552 - The stricken remnant (vv. 36-38)
- 3.3 - The Contingency: Repentance (vv. 39-45)
 - 3.31 - Repentance: Israel's acceptance of retribution (vv. 39-41)
 - 3.32 - Remembrance: Yahweh's acceptance of repentance (v. 42)

¹ See above, pp. 79-81.

3.33 - Repetition: a summary concerning retribution
(v. 43)

3.34 - Reaffirmation: Yahweh's promise to the exiles
(vv. 44-45)

Another revealing analysis of verses 14-45 involves the syntactical relationships, as follows:

Protasis (vv. 14-15)

Apodosis (vv. 16-17)

Protasis (v. 18a)

Apodosis (vv. 18b-20)

REFRAIN (v. 18b)¹

Protasis (v. 21a)

Apodosis (vv. 21b-22)

REFRAIN (v. 21b)

Protasis (v. 23).

Apodosis (vv. 24-26)

REFRAIN (v. 24b)

Protasis (v. 27)

Apodosis (vv. 28-38)

REFRAIN (v. 28b)

Declaration (v. 39)

Protasis (v. 40a)

Protasis (v. 41cd)

Apodosis (v. 42)

Parenthesis (vv. 40b-41b)

Jussives (v. 43abc)

Indicatives (v. 43de)

Promises (v. 44ab)

Promise (v. 45a)

Selbstvorstellungsformel (v. 44c)

Heilsgeschichtsformel (v. 45bc)

¹ שבע על-חטאתיכם "seven times for your sins."

The elevated literary style, observed in verses 1-13,¹ is continued in verses 14-45. From time to time, the writer of the pericope employed various literary devices for emphasis: the refrain (vv. 18b, 21b, 24b, 28b), the *casus pendens* (vv. 26, 36, 39), conflation (vv. 27-28), chiasmus (vv. 17, 29, 34-35), assonance (vv. 33, 36-37, 43), the taunt-song (vv. 36-37a), logical/conceptual/grammatical correspondence (vv. 30-32), and the characteristic alternation of *qtl* and *yqtl* (vv. 29, 33, 34, 35, 40b-41a, 42). Also, the self-introduction and salvation-history formulas (*Selbstvorstellungsformel* and *Heilsgeschichtsformel*) are employed in the closing of verses 14-45 in the same manner as they were employed in the closing of verses 1-2 and 3-13. This binds the pericope together in a form of inclusion. The literary beauty of the pericope cannot be denied. It is a literary masterpiece lacking in superfluous phraseology. Every word, every construction, every correspondence, has been carefully chosen for clarity and effect.

Aim

The time which Israel spent at Mt. Sinai was not merely a time of covenant reception. It was also a time of covenant application. A series of events produced visible covenant retribution. The golden calf incident provoked the public display of shattering the covenant tablets (Exod 32:19). About three thousand died that day (v. 28). Two priests, sons of Aaron, also died at Sinai when they did not follow the instructions concerning the service at the altar (Lev 10:1-2). Later, a man was executed by stoning because of his blasphemous appropriation of the name of the covenant deity (Lev 24:10-23).² These evidences of disobe-

¹ See above, pp. 81-82.

² See above, pp. 9-10.

dience at the very initiation of the Mosaic Covenant demonstrated that the covenant could be breached. These occasions also demonstrated how seriously Yahweh viewed breach of covenant. Covenant transgression/disloyalty was worthy of the death penalty. These incidents confirmed the necessity of emphasis on the prohibition of idolatry (cf. Lev 26:1).

All three incidents are in the context of the sabbatical principle:

- (1) Golden calf apostasy: Cf. Exodus 31:13-18. The last instruction Moses received from Yahweh, before descending the mountain to find the idolatry in progress, concerned the Sabbath.
- (2) Strange fire incident: Cf. Exodus 40:1, 17; Leviticus 8:33; 9:1. The consecration of the Aaronic priesthood commenced on a sabbath and finished on a sabbath. Nadab and Abihu may have offered their fire on the eighth day of consecration, even though they had just spent a seven-day period of consecration between two sabbaths.
- (3) The case of blasphemy: Cf. Leviticus 23:1-44; 24:8; 25:1-55. The contextual setting of the record concerning the case of blasphemy is saturated with the instruction concerning Israel's sabbaths.

The sabbatical principle kept before Israel the concept of Yahweh's absolute sovereignty over his covenanted people. In those first months at Sinai, the nation had already learned that idolatry and the neglect of the sabbatical principle struck at the heart of their covenant relationship to Yahweh. They had experienced firsthand the anger of Yahweh as he wrought covenant vengeance. With this historical context in mind, it is not surprising to find Leviticus 26 dealing with the concepts of curse, penalty, punishment, chastisement, retribution, and restitution.

Judgment, however, leaves behind it the taste of death. It was a bitter experience that Israel faced at Sinai. If it was to be an end in itself, there would be no parenetic value in its instruction or application. However, the judgment described in Leviticus 26:14-45 would be administered with several ends in mind: (1) Chief of all the

ends of chastisement would be the acknowledging of who the covenant deity is: Yahweh. (2) The land would enjoy its just retribution, resting for the sabbaths denied it by the disobedient nation. (3) The nation would repent, making confession of guilt, being humbled in spirit, and making restitution. (4) Yahweh would accept his people. This acceptance is not an emasculation of punishment.¹ The acceptance reflects the relation of punishment to more than the physical existence and its enjoyment. The five stages of divine retribution in verses 14-38 confronted the disobedient Israelite with the disruption of all areas of existence: mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual. If Israel would not repent, there would be no hope of rest or enjoyment in any of those four realms of life.

God will utilize Israel's enemies to execute retributive justice. This is evidence of a universalism in his control of history. God is lord/suzerain of all, even of those who refuse to recognize his lordship. The land given to Abraham's seed has a significant role in the Yahweh-directed history of planet earth. That land was to have its sabbaths. The sabbaths were to be evidence of Israel's recognition of the significance of the land of the covenant. If the covenant people, Israel, do not recognize the historical and eschatological significance of the land, who among the nations will? Yahweh is a god of time (sabbath) and space (land). Israel, by its life, was to manifest that truth before the eyes of the nations who observed Yahweh's deeds at the exodus from Egypt (v. 45).

In the exodus from Egypt, Yahweh had "remembered" his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (cf. Exod 2:24; 6:5). In the future

¹ Contra Raitt, *Theology of Exile*, p. 26.

exodus from exile (specifically the Babylonian exile), Yahweh would again "remember" his covenant with the patriarchs (Lev 26:42). "God's remembering of his covenant is not an abstract phenomenon. Remembering his covenant means the raising of a Moses, the besting of Pharaoh, and the liberation of Israel from Egypt."¹ Likewise, the future remembering of the covenant would mean the raising of a Cyrus (cf. Isa 45:1-7), the humiliation of a Nebuchadnezzar (cf. Dan 4:1-37), the calling of a Nehemiah (cf. Neh 1:1-2:20), and the liberation of Israel from Babylon (cf. Ezra 1:1-5). Any yet future return from worldwide dispersion (cf. Deut 28:64; 30:1-20) will doubtless proceed along similar lines.

It would not be the Abrahamic Covenant alone which Yahweh remembers, however. The Abrahamic Covenant involves the land (Lev 26:42). Yahweh would also remember his covenant with the "ancestors" who were delivered from Egypt (v. 45). The plural, "ancestors," is noteworthy. The covenant was confirmed with many, not just Moses. Both the Mosaic and Abrahamic covenants were confirmed with many, although they were mediated through one key individual. The involvement of the many concerned their identification with Yahweh (v. 45).

The exile rendered all the aspects of the Abrahamic Covenant inoperable.² Likewise, all the aspects of the Mosaic Covenant would be inoperable in exile:

- (1) a special people above all the nations (Exod 19:5; Deut 26:18-19) would become abhorred by Yahweh and the tail of all the nations (Lev 26:30; Deut 28:43-44);
- (2) the kingdom of priests (Exod 19:6) would become sacrificially unacceptable to Yahweh (Lev 26:31);

¹ Klein, *Israel in Exile*, p. 136.

² See above, pp. 140-41.

- (3) the holy nation (Exod 19:6) would become burdened with guilt (Lev 26:39) and characterized by a heathenlike uncircumcised heart (v. 41); and,
 (4) the history of deliverance (Exod 19:4) would become a history of exile (Lev 26:33, 38).

Simply stated, verses 14-45 provided Israel with instruction concerning the perpetuity of both the Abrahamic and Sinaitic (Mosaic) covenants. This instruction was not so much the clarification of their joint authority (cf. vv. 1-13), as the clarification of how the covenants could be "remembered," that is, reactivated. Each covenant contained its own emphasis. The Abrahamic identified a people ("seed") and a land. Circumcision identified the people with the covenant deity. The Mosaic identified a people ("nation") and employed the sabbath as the means of identifying the people with the covenant deity and the covenanted land. Each generation of Israelites would be faced with covenant accountability. They would have to make restitution for their own confessed guilt. If one generation did not see the perfect fulfillment of the covenants, perhaps the next generation would. The generations may come and go, but the covenants of Yahweh would remain. They would operate by blessing or by cursing. The cursing would render all aspects of the blessing inoperable in exile. Yahweh would always stand ready to fulfill the perfection of his promise. He would always plead for repentance. He would always be loyal to his covenants.

Postscript (v. 46)

Verse 46 establishes the historical and geographical setting for the entire pericope. "These are the statutes (חֻקִּים) and the ordinances (מִשְׁפָּטִים) and the laws (תּוֹרָה)¹ which Yahweh appointed (נָתַן) between him and

¹ See above, p. 41.

the sons of Israel on Mt. Sinai through (מֹשֶׁה) Moses." There are five aspects of this verse which require presentation:

(1) "These" obviously refers to at least the contents of chapter 26 since both קָן (קָן) and מִשְׁפָּט are employed in the chapter (vv. 3, 15, 43). The primary reference would have to be to the prohibition concerning idolatry and the command to observe the sabbaths and preserve the sanctuary (vv. 1-2). The constant reference to the sabbaths in the pericope also ties it with the ordinances of chapter 25 (cf. 25:18). Therefore, the reference is to the legislation associated with the Mosaic Covenant.

(2) "Which Yahweh appointed" declares the divine origin of these commandments. The legislation was not from Moses, it was from the god of the covenant himself. The rain-giver, the peace-giver, the presence-giver, the drought-giver, the death-dealer, is also the law-giver. This is the reason for the continuous repetition of "my covenant." Essentially, these are unilateral suzerainty treaties. Yahweh has "appointed." Most theologians readily admit to the unilateral nature of the Abrahamic Covenant since it is obvious that Abraham slept through the covenant ceremony (Gen 15:12-21). However, most overlook the simple fact that at Sinai Yahweh did not engage Israel in a *mutual agreement*. Instead, he spoke of the covenant as already made: "And now, if you will actually obey¹ my voice and keep MY COVENANT,² then you shall be . . ." (Exod 19:5a): Yahweh came to Israel solely for the purpose of announcing the

¹ This translation reflects the employment of a prepositive, intensive, cognate infinitive absolute.

² The uppercase letters employed in the translation indicate the emphasis which the translator (and, writer of this dissertation) wishes the reader to observe.

stipulations of a covenant already appointed. The divine, unilateral, origin of the covenant is the basis for the authority and perpetuity of the Mosaic Covenant alongside the Abrahamic.¹

(3) "Between himself and the sons of Israel" identifies the recipients of the Sinaitic legislation. It is not appointed for any other people. Indeed, it is not merely the appointing of Israel, it is the instrument by which that nation may be made a special people of God apart from all the peoples of the earth (Exod 19:5-6). Since the covenant was appointed for only Israel, then Israel alone is responsible to observe its stipulations. The Old Testament covenants were exclusive: οἵτινές εἰσιν Ἰσραηλεῖται, ὧν ἡ υἰοθεσία καὶ ἡ δόξα καὶ αἱ διαθήκαι καὶ ἡ νομοθεσία καὶ ἡ λατρεία καὶ αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι "who are Israelites, belonging to whom are the son-adoption and the glory and the covenants and the law-giving and the service and the promises" (Rom 9:4).² No other people or nation would suffer the retributive measures or the beneficial gifts of Leviticus 26 since it all involves the covenants.³ if this pericope involves a prophetic preview of the Palestinian Covenant, it must bear the same limitations.

(4) "On Mt. Sinai" establishes the time at which this pericope was revealed. This is not a statement of exilic or postexilic revelation. The time was sometime during the residence at Mt. Sinai. It

¹ See above, pp. 82-84, 162-66.

² In this passage, son-adoption undoubtedly refers to statements like that in 2 Sam 7:14, Isa 43:6, or Hos 1:10. Glory = *sekinah* glory (cf. Ezek 1-10). Covenants (plural) = Abrahamic, Mosaic, Palestinian, Davidic, and New. Law-giving (lit. "law-appointment"!) = the concept of Lev 26:46: Service = tabernacle/temple ministry. Promises = Acts 2:39, 7:17, 13:23, 32, 26:6, Rom 4:13, 15:8, Eph 2:12, and Jas 2:5.

³ Rain, prosperity, drought, and siege may happen to Gentiles, but are not the direct consequence of a covenant relationship.

is subsequent to the initial appearance of Yahweh to Moses and the nation (Exodus 19) and prior to the commencement of the years of wilderness wanderings. Even if the date of the writing was to be placed later, the date of the revelation remains Mosaic. For Israel to know the will of Yahweh, transmit the will of Yahweh, and perform the will of Yahweh, the revelation is required even if a writing is not required (cf. 2 Pet 1:21, λαλέω "spoke," not "wrote"). The content and context of the pericope are irrefutably Sinaitic/Mosaic. The pericope's parenesis would affect the religion of Israel from that time on.

(5) "Through Moses" indicates that Moses was personally present and was the direct recipient of this revelation. Since he received it, there is no viable reason to believe that he could not have inscribed it as well.

Thus, at Mt. Sinai, the god of the exodus presented his people with further instructions concerning their covenant relationship to him (and, he to them). Leviticus 26 is part of that revelation, part of that which "Yahweh spoke unto Moses on Mt. Sinai" (25:1). It was four hundred and thirty years (at least) since the granting of the Abrahamic Covenant. It was thirty-eight years before the giving of the Palestinian Covenant on the plains of Moab. Leviticus 26 was in the historical context of the giving of the Mosaic Covenant--perhaps a few months subsequent. The Mosaic was the most immediate covenant. Therefore, its presence in the pericope is not surprising. The Abrahamic is involved in the pericope because of the need to clarify its relationship to the recently-given Mosaic Covenant. If there are references to the Palestinian Covenant in Leviticus 26, they would have to be considered as anticipatory or prophetic. The Palestinian Covenant was not yet history. The *mise*

en scene thus circumscribed, the recipients of the revelation contained in Leviticus 26 would have in mind the Sinaitic/Mosaic Covenant and the Abrahamic Covenant. The covenant which had been in their hearts and on their minds from Goshen to Sinai was the Abrahamic. They had left the pleasures of Egypt for the promises of that covenant (cf. Gen 50:24; Exod 3:13-17; 4:5; 6:3-8; 13:5). Questions were undoubtedly raised by the new covenant at Sinai. Therefore, this pericope was granted to answer those questions.

The only revelation Israel possessed concerning the relationship between the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants at the time of the commencement of the wilderness wanderings was Leviticus 26. The only revelation concerning the potential of exile from the land yet unpossessed was Leviticus 26. The only revelation concerning the irrevocable sabbath rest of the land was contained in Leviticus 26. The only revelation concerning the potential role of their enemies in retribution while in the promised land was Leviticus 26. Leviticus 5, 16, and 26 comprised the total body of revelation concerning confession of guilt. Leviticus 26 was to be taken by Israel as a wilderness manual preparing them for their promised landedness. They knew what God required of them when they reached the land. They fell short while yet landless because of unbelief (cf. Ps 95:8-11; Heb 3:7-4:11). Leviticus 26 reminded them that repentance could restore the disobedient (Lev 26:39-45), even while they were outside the land.

CHAPTER IV

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LEVITICUS 26, ESARHADDON'S TREATIES, AND THE SEFIRE INSCRIPTIONS

The significance of Esarhaddon's vassal treaties and the Sefire inscriptions to the biblical texts of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 27-28 has been recognized by many scholars.¹ Such significance relates both to form² and content. The biblical materials cannot be properly evaluated or understood to the fullest extent without taking into account the extrabiblical evidence.³ The evaluation of the impact of ancient near eastern treaties on the biblical text of Leviticus 26 must be based upon a clear understanding of the historical relationships so that the direction of influence might be identified.

Dating the Documents

Leviticus 26 has been dated already to the Mosaic period (i.e., the fifteenth century B.C.).⁴ The vassal treaties of Esarhaddon are specifically dated in their colophon: "the 16th day of the month Iyyar, Eponym (*limmu*) Nabu-bel-usur, saknu-official of Dur-sarrukin (Khorsabad)"

¹ See above, pp. 17-18.

² McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, passim.

³ Ibid. , pp. 3-4..

⁴ See above, pp. 20-21, 168-169.

=May, 672 B.C.¹ The Sefire inscriptions present a less clear dating than the Esarhaddon treaties. The three stelas may not have been written at the same time, even though they appear to present the same basic treaty between the north Syrian king of Arpad, Mati'el, and the king of KTK, Bir-Ga'yah.² However, there is a definite *terminus ante quem* of 740 B.C. (the date of Tiglathpileser III's conquest of Arpad).³ For the *terminus a quo*, 760 B.C. is the earliest date offered by the commentators.⁴ Therefore, the dates of the extrabiblical materials are from 650 to 700 years later than Leviticus 26.

The dates for the extrabiblical treaties should not be construed as evidence for a late date for the composition of the biblical materials. "In all periods of Israel's early history there existed channels through which treaty-curses may easily have entered the stream of Israelite literature."⁵ The best approach to these treaties and Leviticus 26 is to view them as being mutually influenced by the common formulas and terminology of treaties/covenants "current throughout the ancient Near East, and that the kings of whose treaties we have knowledge and the biblical writers both drew upon these in their different ways and for their different purposes"⁶ in their different times.

¹ Wiseman, *Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon*, p. 3. Judah's contemporary on the throne would have been Manasseh. Cf. John C. Whitcomb, Jr., *Solomon to the Exile Studies in Kings and Chronicles* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1971), pp. 88, 145 (chronological charts).

² John C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971, 1975), 2:19-23.

³ Fitzmyer, *Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire*, p. 2. Contemporaries would have been Judah's Uzziah, Israel's Jeroboam II, and the prophet Amos.

⁴ Gibson, *Textbook*, 2:19.

⁵ Hillers, *Treaty-Curses*, p. 85.

⁶ Gibson, *Textbook*, 2:23 (emphasis added).

The feature of Leviticus 26 which causes some commentators to date its composition in either the exilic period or the postexilic period is that of exile (vv. 33-44).¹ However, McCarthy makes the observation that, even in the extrabiblical documents, exile references are no evidence for a later addition or composition:

This is the question of *vaticinium ex eventu*. In the extreme application of the idea descriptions of war: invasion, pillage, and especially exile ([Deut] 28, 30-34, 37b, 48-57, 64-68) are supposed to be additions to the text resulting from the experience of a particular event, usually the siege of 587 B.C. and its aftermath. Now, the topic as such is a commonplace. It occurs in Esarhaddon's treaties, at Sefire, in Ashurbanipal's annals etc. where it is not *vaticinium ex eventu* nor indeed necessarily a reference to a particular event. The annals point to the reality: a knowledge of what happened in ancient warfare, a knowledge amply available to Dt (cf. 2 Kgs 6,24-29, and, presumably, the Assyrian siege of Samaria). Such use of past events as models for the future was common in ancient literature. Hence a simple reference to war and exile is no sign that a passage is a *post factum* addition.²

Even though the Hittite treaties are more consonant historically with the Mosaic period,³ and the Assyrian treaties more consonant with the exilic period, the attempts to associate the Sinaitic/Mosaic Covenant with the former and the Palestinian Covenant with the latter are lacking in evidence to seal the matter.⁴ The historical emphasis of the Hittite treaties with their legal aspects and the imprecatory emphasis of the Assyrian treaties with their vassalship aspects are not mutually exclusive.⁵ Both elements and emphases are contained in both the Mosaic and Palestinian covenants as well. Weinfeld's description of the Pales-

¹ Cf. Peter R. Ackroyd, *Israel under Babylon and Persia*, NCB (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 149.

² McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, p. 180.

³ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 25.

⁴ Cf. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, p. 156.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 146-57. Cf. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, pp. 136-40, 149-53.

tinian (Shechem/Plains of Moab) Covenant as a reaffirmation of "loyalty to God, which was so strongly at stake as a result of Canaanite-Israelite amalgamation"¹ should be restated. The Palestinian Covenant was a reaffirmation of loyalty to Yahweh since that loyalty had been so sadly lacking throughout the wilderness wanderings.² After all, the covenant on the plains of Moab was prior to the "Canaanite-Israelite amalgamation." That covenant preceded the Israelite entrance into Canaan. Likewise, a consideration of the reaffirmation of loyalty to Yahweh in Leviticus 26 must take into consideration the Sinaitic apostasies.³ The *Sitz im Leben* for the Palestinian Covenant (and, also, for Leviticus 26) differs from that for the Mosaic Covenant. However, the history of apostasy in the wilderness (and at Sinai) provides sufficient basis for the difference without necessitating the exilic situation.

Dependence in the Documents

Assuming the data concerning the dating of the extrabiblical and biblical materials, the concept of direct dependence is untenable. Leviticus 26 did not employ the treaties of Esarhaddon and/or Sefire. fifteenth-century document cannot be dependent upon eighth- to seventh-century documents: This does not rule out the possibility of mutual dependence upon a stream of treaty formulas conveying the same basic terms and concepts from the third millennium through the first millennium B.C. In fact, the mere absence of treaties for the Mosaic period does

¹ Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, p. 156.

² See above, p. 170. Cf. Ps 95:8-11; Heb 3:7-4:11.

³ See above, pp. 162-63. The influence of Egyptian cults was a large factor in the apostasies between the time of the exodus and the conquest of Canaan. The Canaanite influence is not exclusive to the concept of Israelite apostasy.

not necessitate a date-identifying criterion based upon the division between two sets of treaties because of a break in the continuous stream of evidence.¹

The Esarhaddon Vassal Treaties

These vassal treaties have been reconstructed from more than 350 clay tablet fragments discovered in 1955 at Nimrud (biblical Kalah) in Iraq. They comprise parts of at least nine tablets, each tablet containing the same text but with different vassals. The tablets are perhaps the largest in the Assyrian dialect and the texts the lengthiest of any Assyrian treaty. They are also unique in that they are totally given over to the establishment of the successor of Esarhaddon. They comprise Esarhaddon's last will and testament.² The vassals were from "bordering frontier states in Iran."³ The following is an outline of the text of these treaties:⁴

A. Introduction: identifying participants (lines 1-12)

B. Seal Impressions: authenticating the document

1. Sennacherib's Seal (being utilized by Esarhaddon)

2. Ashur's Seal (the national deity)

3. A Middle Assyrian Royal Seal (Tukulti-Ninurta? dynastic?)

C. Divine Witnesses (lines 13-40)

D. Stipulations (lines 41-413)

1. Ensuring the loyalty of the vassal to the successor (lines 41-129)

¹ McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, p. 153.

² Frankena, "Vassal-Treaties," pp. 122-24.

³ Wiseman, *Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon*,

⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 13-27 (see, also, p. 3); Frankena, "Vassal-Treaties," p. 124.

2. Detailing treatment of rebels (lines 130-211)
3. Preventing usurpation of the throne (lines 212-317)
4. Prohibiting intrigue within the royal family against the successor (lines 318-76)
5. Emphasizing binding nature of the oaths taken (lines 377-413; cf. lines 283-301)

E. Curses (lines 414-668')

1. Invocation of deities bringing curses (lines 414-93)
 - a. Individual deities specified (lines 414-71)
 - b. The deities in general (lines 472-93)
2. Parenthesis: vassal's oath of fidelity (lines 494-512)
3. Invocation of deities bringing curses together with the similes illustrating and emphasizing the curses (lines 513-668')

F. Colophon (lines 669'-674')

Comparison with Leviticus 26

One of the first items of comparison to be noted concerning the vassal treaties of Esarhaddon and Leviticus 26 is the similarity of the overall literary structure. The following outline (employing the headings given in the outline of the vassal treaties) of Leviticus 26 is a possible representation of the organization of its material:

- A. Introduction (25:55)¹
- C. Divine Witness (26:1d, 2c; *Selbstvorstellungsformel*)
- D. Stipulations (vv. 1abc, 2ab)
- E. Curses (vv. 14-38)
- F. Colophon (v. 46)

Obviously, the pericope in Leviticus contains some elements distinct from the vassal treaties: blessings (vv. 3-13), provision for reinstatement in case of transgression (vv. 14-45; esp., vv. 39-45), monotheism,

¹ See above, p. 44.

and covenantal precedents (vv. 42, 45). It should also be noted that Leviticus 26 does not contain imprecations requested by a third party before a mediating deity nor does it contain ritual magic.¹

Grammatically, Leviticus 26 and the Esarhaddon treaties are similar because of extensive conditional constructions:²

	<i>Protasis</i>	<i>Apodosis</i>
Vassal treaties:	lines 62-413 ³	lines 414-668'
Leviticus 26:	v. 3 vv. 14-15	vv. 4-12 vv. 16-38 ⁴

In the contents of their curses, Leviticus 26 and the Esarhaddon treaties also contain some *similarities*:

	<i>Vassal Treaties</i>	<i>Leviticus 26</i>
Disease/Uncleanness	lines 419-21, 455-56, ⁵ 461-63, 470, 480, 626-31	vv. 16, 25
Darkness/Blindness	lines 422-24, 485-86	v. 16
Loss of Goods	lines 428-30	v. 16
Drought	lines 440-41, 528-33, ⁶ 563-66, 652-55	v. 19

¹ Cf. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, pp. 149-51, 294-95 n. 39.

² Cf. Frankena, "Vassal-Treaties," p. 125.

³ All but three clauses/sections (marked off by horizontal lines on the tablets) commence with *summa* "if." Cf. GAG, pp. 212-14 (§161), 240 §185g).

⁴ See above, pp. 90-91, 161.

⁵ Cf. especially Lev 26:25.

⁶ Cf. especially these lines. See, also, Deut 28:23-24.

Famine	lines 444-48, 480, 641-42, 652-55	v. 26
Cannibalism	lines 448-50, 547- 50, 568-72	v. 29 ¹
Defeat	lines 453-54, 534- 36, ² 573-78, 612- 17	vv. 16, 17, 19, 31, 32, 36, 37
Ravaging Animals	lines 599-600, 635- 36	v. 22
Destruction of Cities	lines 545-46	v. 33
Fearfulness/Restless- ness	lines 461-63(?), 487, 637-40	vv. 36-38
Stench(?)/Rejection (sacrificial?)	lines 603-5	v. 31
Sword	lines 456-58 ³	vv. 25, 33, 36, 37

The vassal treaties of Esarhaddon have no mention of exile⁴ although that is the ultimate curse in Leviticus 26. The "uncircumcised heart" of Leviticus 26:41 is the opposite of the vassal treaties' requisite of a faithful or loyal heart (lines 51-53, 98-99, 152, 169, 185, 310, 390).⁵

The legal concept of **ברית הקים** "establish a covenant" (Lev 26:9) is the equivalent of *sakanu ade* "make a covenant" (lines 12, 41-42, 96, 104, 132, 175).⁶ Likewise, the concept of **ברית זכר** "remember a covenant"

¹ Cf. Deut 28:53-57. See Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, p. 128.

² Cf. especially Lev 26:37.

³ Cf. the "flaming sword" (line 458) and "sword" of vengeance (Lev 26:25).

⁴ Line 295, however, could be interpreted as exile (*ana salali* "for carrying away/ravaging/plundering"). Wiseman (*Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon*, p. 52) translates the phrase, "to be carried off."

⁵ Cf. Frankena, "Vassal-Treaties," pp. 140-41.

⁶ Cf. Weinfeld: *TDOT*, s.v. "**בְּרִית**," by M. Weinfeld, 2:260.

(Lev 26:42, 45) is equivalent to *nasaru ade* "guard a covenant" (lines 291-92).¹

Amidst all that appears so similar between Leviticus 26 and the Esarhaddon vassal treaties, there is very little that is identical or demonstrably interdependent. The nearest parallel to unprecedented similarity is the "ground like iron . . . brazen heaven" (*qaqqaru ki AN.BAR . . . AN sa ZABAR*, lines 528, 530) and "heavens like iron . . . ground like bronze" (שמים כברזל . . . ארץ כנחשה), Lev 26:19). The order of the Assyrian is maintained in Deuteronomy 28:23, though Leviticus is different. The forms and the scarcity of the occurrences indicate that the individual occurrences are independent of each other.²

Three similarities between Leviticus 26 and the vassal treaties are helpful in interpreting the biblical pericope: (1) לריק "for no benefit" (Lev 26:16, 20) may be understood as a lack of satisfaction for the stomach by comparing it to *libbikunu liriq* "may your insides be empty" (line 642). (2) דבר "plague" (Lev 26:25) was translated by Targum Onqelos as מותנא and by the Syriac Peshitta as , both of which may be translated "death" or "deadly pestilence."³ Both translations are identical to the Assyrian *mutanu* (line 456). (3) The picture of ten women using one oven in Leviticus 26:26 is paralleled by line 444: "may there be no mill nor oven in your houses."⁴

¹ *TDOT*, s.v. "בְּרִית," by M. Weinfeld, 2:260.

² Cf. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, pp. 116-17; Hillers, *Treaty-Curses*, pp. 41-42.

³ See above, p. 110 (especially the Septuagint translation).

⁴ Other helpful interpretive parallels may occur in the vassal treaties, but these stood out as having the most immediate significance.

The Sefire Inscriptions

These inscriptions are comprised of three stelas from the north Syrian village of Sefire. Stelas I and II were reconstructed from fragments obtained in 1930 from a dealer in Aleppo. These were later housed in the Damascus Museum in 1948. Stela III was made available to the Beirut Museum in 1956. They are related in origin, contents, script, and language. The treaty (or treaties) preserved on these three stelas are between Mati'el, king of Arpad (the vassal), and Bir-Ga'yah, king of KTK (the overlord).¹

The following is an outline comparing the contents of the three stelas:²

	Stela I	Stela II	Stela III
A. Introduction	A 1-6		
B. Divine Witnesses	A 6-14		
C. Curses	A 14-35	A 1?-14?	
D. Inviolability of Treaty	B 1-13?		
E. Stipulations	B 14?-45	B 1?-19?	III 1-30
F. Memorial	C 1-7		
G. Blessings	C ?-16		
H. Preservation	C 16-25	C 1?-17	

Sections A, B, C, and E are similar to sections A, C, E, and D (respectively) of the Esarhaddon vassal treaties.³ Section G is particularly

¹ Fitzmyer, *Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire*, pp. 1-3; Gibson, *Textbook*, 2:18-19.

² The numbering of the lines and sections follow Fitzmyer. The question mark (?) indicates fragmentary lines and sections of unknown extent.

³ See above, pp. 175-76.

of interest regarding the blessings in Leviticus 26:3-13. Though the three stelas are related, there are variations in what has been preserved from the original stelas. Thus, all that remains of Stela III is the section of stipulations which is more extensive in its subject matter than the parallel sections of both I and II.

Comparison with Leviticus 26

As with the vassal treaties of Esarhaddon, there are similarities between the Sefire texts and Leviticus 26. Although there are both blessings and curses in the Sefire and Leviticus texts (as opposed to only curses in the Esarhaddon texts), the overall literary structure of the Sefire inscriptions is different from that of Leviticus 26 (which was similar to the Esarhaddon treaties¹). All of the divergences from the vassal treaties by Leviticus 26 (except the blessings) are true also of a comparison with the Sefire treaties.²

Grammatical similarities between the Sefire stelas and Leviticus 26 include: (1) at least one case of an alternation of *qtl* and *yqtl* in III 20 (אִהְשַׁב . . . הִשַׁב "he has restored . . . I will restore");³ (2) the occurrence of the *casus pendens* at III 7 and III 19;⁴ and,

¹ See above, pp. 175-76.

² See above, pp. 176-77.

³ This syntactical feature is found throughout Leviticus 26. See above, pp. 58, 82, 162.

⁴ This construction is employed in Lev 26:26, 36, and 39, as well as in Esarhaddon's vassal treaties, lines 283, 328?, 606, and 618. See above, pp. 135, 142, 162. See, also, Fitzmyer, *Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire*, p. 170; Gibson, *Textbook*, 2:25.

(3) the employment of mainly *yqtl* in the protases and *qtl* in the apodoses of the conditional sentences.¹

The following may be identified as curse similarities:

Famine/No Satisfaction	Seftre Stelas I A 22-23; II A 1-3	Leviticus 26 v. 26
Ravaging Animals	I A 27, 30-32; II A 9	v. 22
Drought	I A 28-29	v. 19
Defeat	I A 38-39	vv. 16,17, 19, 31, 32,36, 37
Blindness	I A 39	v. 16
Death/Bodies (פגרו)	I B 30; II B 11	v. 30
Extermination (אבדו)	I B 36	v. 38
Sword of Vengeance	III 11-14, 22	v. 25

There is no discernible mention of exile in the Sefire stelas. The number "seven" plays an important role in the stelas (I A 21-27; II A 1-6) as in Leviticus 26 (vv. 18, 21, 24, 28). The reference to "oppressive torment" (לחץ עלב, II C 10) has no equivalent phrase in Leviticus 26, but has the concept of humiliation² by the enemy.³ This is reminiscent of the thought behind Leviticus 26:17, 19, and 37. In Stela II C 10, "oppressive torment" is the means of death.

The most significant parallel between the Sefire texts and Levi-

¹ Fitzmyer, *Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire*, pp. 170, 173. *Qtl* in the protasis occurs in Sefire III 20 and Lev 26:23, 27, and 40.

² Cf. Jastrow, *Dictionary*, 2:1080 (עלב).

³ Cf. BDB, pp. 537-38 (לחץ).

ticus 26 occurs in the mention of the bodies/corpses (פגר) in I B 30 and II B 11 as compared to Leviticus 26:30. The phraseologies appear as follows:

 פגר ופגר ארבא מעל פגר (I B 30)
and I shall pile (lit., multiply) corpse upon corpse

 פגר ופגר . . . על פגר (II B 11)
and corpse . . . upon corpse

 על־פגרי גל וליכם ונתתי את־פגריכם (Lev 26:30)
and I shall put your corpses upon the corpses/lifeless forms
of your *filthy* idols

Interestingly, neither Fitzmyer,¹ Donner and Rollig,² nor Greenfield³ offer any reference to Leviticus 26:30 in their discussions of the Sefire phrases! An additional similarity may be observed in a parallel example of syntax taken from a Mari letter,⁴ in which *nadanu* "give" parallels the biblical נתן "give/put/pile(?)." If Greenfield is correct in his conclusion that the idiom (noun x + "upon" + noun x + verb⁵) means "to add to that already on hand,"⁶ the biblical picture would be of dead bodies being added to bodies already present due to the previous four stages of chastisement.

¹ Fitzmyer, *Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire*, pp. 68-69, 89.

² *KAI*, 2:256, 261.

³ Jonas C. Greenfield, "Three Notes on the Sefire Inscriptions," *JSS* 11 (1966):103-5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁵ *Ibid.* Greenfield's examples include the verb preceding as well as following in the construction. In Lev 26:30 נתן precedes.

⁶ *Ibid.*

Conclusions

Leviticus 26 appears to be most similar in literary structure to the vassal treaties of Esarhaddon.¹ However, the "provincial"² (as opposed to political) features are a little more evident in the Sefire stelas and Leviticus 26 than in the vassal treaties of Esarhaddon. This latter fact reflects the localized treaty in northern Syria by the parties in the Sefire stelas and the emphasis on the land in Leviticus 26. However, it must be admitted that the Esarhaddon treaties also reflect a large amount of curse material related to the land even though the parties are international. On the other hand, blessings are present in the Sefire materials but lacking in the Esarhaddon texts. This mixture of similarity and diversity demonstrates the independent composition of all three materials. There is mutual dependence upon a common literary, linguistic, and cultural milieu drawn upon by the respective writers in their different ways, for their different purposes, and at their different times.

Thus, the diversity cautions against making too much of similarities, whether in form or content. The similarity aids in understanding the concepts and intentions of the respective documents. Leviticus 26 is more clearly understood in the literary, linguistic, and cultural setting of the ancient near eastern treaties. The particular examples of similarity, however, are not from the same historical setting.³

¹ See above, pp. 175-76.

² Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, pp. 123-26.

³ The similarities between the Esarhaddon vassal treaties, Sefire stelas, and Deuteronomy 27-29 (Palestinian Covenant) are discussed in detail by Weinfeld (*Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*). The student is encouraged to look there and in Hillers, *Treaty-Curses*, for those comparisons which would supplement studies in Leviticus 26.

CHAPTER V

A SYSTEMATIC SYNTHESIS OF THE THEOLOGICAL CONCEPTS OF LEVITICUS 26

No study of the biblical text is complete until the teachings of the particular pericope have been identified and the truths have been discussed regarding the effect they were intended to have upon the lives of those who received them. Only then can any valid application be made to the lives of those who receive them today. Those basic truths are best discerned after a thorough examination of the pericope textually, exegetically, and comparatively (i.e., analyzed with respect to its historico-cultural context). Chapters II, III, and IV have provided these analyses in order that the present synthesis might be presented.

Major theological concepts have been touched upon throughout the exegetical analysis of Leviticus 26 (Chapter. IV). However, these concepts and their various internal aspects have been presented in a fragmentary fashion (verse by verse). This chapter will undertake summaries of these major concepts in order to place the fragments into one picture.

The following theological concepts and their related topics will be discussed: (1) Covenant (Abrahamic, Mosaic, Palestinian covenants; land; *Heilsgeschicht*; breach and preservation); (2) Law (relation to covenant; prohibition of idolatry and observance of sabbaths); (3) Yahweh (*Selbstvorstellungsformel*; relation to covenant; presence and

sanctuary); (4) Promise (blessing and curse; obedience and disobedience; guilt; retribution and chastisement; exile); (5) Repentance (restitution); and, (6) Revelation (Leviticus 26 and the New Testament).

Covenant

"Covenant" (ברית) is employed eight times in Leviticus 26 (vv. 9, 15, 25, 42 *ter*, 44, 45). It always denotes a binding relationship of Yahweh to his people Israel. This relationship provided Israel with a life which had a goal and with a history which had a meaning. In all its occurrences in this pericope, "covenant" promotes the concept of the sovereignty of the covenant-giver, Yahweh. In six of the eight uses of the term, the first person singular suffix ("my") is attached. Always the antecedent of the first person is Yahweh himself. This emphasizes the unilateral nature of the ratification of the covenants. Yahweh himself established them, and he alone. Yahweh's personal intervention into the history of Israel is a central theme of the covenants. His lordship is personal. His lordship is absolute. The covenant lays hold of the whole man and demands his unconditional surrender to the will of God. The loyalty to the covenant must be more than an outward acquiescence, it must be an inward reality. The "uncircumcised heart" (v. 41) is the antithesis of this loyalty.¹

Abrahamic Covenant

Yahweh's covenant with Abraham appears to underly the references to "covenant" in verses 9, 42, and 44. The theme of fruitfulness/population is that of Genesis 17:6, 7, 19, 21 (cf., also, Exod 6:4 and Deut

¹ See above, p. 146, quote from Kline, *By Oath Consigned*.

8:18). The specification of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in verse 42 further emphasizes the necessity for recognizing the role of the Abrahamic Covenant in the blessings and cursings of Leviticus 26. That covenant may also be in view at verse 44 in the promise of Yahweh not to cause any breach of the covenant from the divine perspective.

As the blessings of verses 3-12 are at least in part a fulfillment of the covenant made with Abraham, so the curses of verses 4-38 are at least in part a removal of the Abrahamic promises.¹ The basis for Yahweh's historical extraction of Israel from Egypt was the Abrahamic Covenant. As the nation resided at Mt. Sinai, they could remember that covenant as part of their theological heritage. They could see for themselves the commencement of the historical application of its promises to them in reality.

The Abrahamic Covenant demonstrated that Israel's national identity was not of their own making. That covenant provided them with the hope of landedness at a time when they were landless. Verses 1-13 revealed to Israel that the recent covenant given at Mt. Sinai (the Mosaic Covenant) did not nullify the Abrahamic Covenant. The summarizing concept of the Abrahamic Covenant was the land of promise (v. 42). The Mosaic Covenant would not conflict with the landedness promised long before.

Even the phraseology of covenant disloyalty ("uncircumcised heart," v. 41) was a reflection of the impact of the Abrahamic Covenant on the theology and life of Israel. Circumcision was the outward manifestation of inward commitment to the Abrahamic Covenant. Personal

¹ See above, pp. 140-41.

commitment and accountability were implicit even in the unilateral pact which Yahweh made with Abraham while the latter was in a deep sleep (Gen 15:12-21). Divine sovereignty and human responsibility are not opposing concepts in the biblical covenants. Indeed, it was because Yahweh was the sovereign lord that the human vassal must obey him. The human accountability would be nonexistent (at least, nonbinding) if it were not for the divine character. The lordship manifested to Abraham was not altered by subsequent covenants. Since the sovereignty (lordship) of God is not altered, neither are the promises of his covenant with Abraham altered or nullified (cf. Gal 3:17).

Sinaitic Covenant

The prominence of the immediate historical context and the legal character of the terms ("statutes, commandments," v. 3; "commandments, statutes, ordinances," vv. 14-15; "statutes, ordinances, laws," v. 46) direct attention to the Mosaic Covenant made with Israel at Mt. Sinai. The very precepts of verses 1-2 demand that the Mosaic Covenant is in view (prohibition of idols, observance of sabbaths, and reverence for the sanctuary). If there is any doubt, it is removed by the clear statements of verses 15, 45, and 46. This legal emphasis explains the provision for official covenant vengeance in verse 25. It also promotes the sense of lordship which was already present in the Abrahamic Covenant. This covenant at Sinai was based upon the historical deliverance of Israel from Egypt. That deliverance was in accord with the prior covenant (vv. 13, 45). It was intended to identify the people of Yahweh. This supplemented the Abrahamic Covenant's identification of the land. As the outward seal/sign of the Abrahamic Covenant was circumcision, so the seal/sign of the Sinaitic Covenant was the observance of the sabbaths

(cf. Leviticus 25; 26:2, 34-35, 43). The seal/sign of each covenant affected the realm emphasized by the other covenant: the covenant of the land (Abrahamic) was related directly to the people by circumcision, and the covenant of the people (Mosaic) was related directly to the land by the sabbaths. Thus the two aspects of these two covenants (the land and the people) were bound together. The land was for the people, and the people for the land.

The legislation connected with the Mosaic Covenant inculcated a seriousness about submission to the divine overlord. It also inculcated a humility about the unworthiness of Israel to be the special people of God, the chosen people. Right behavior in the people of Yahweh was a means of participating in the testimony before the nations which had begun with Yahweh's miraculous deliverance of the nation out of Egypt (cf. v. 45). The legislation marked Israel as the people belonging to Yahweh, the exodus-causer.

Disobedience to the absolute sovereign of Israel's history would result in the removal of the covenant blessings associated with the Mosaic Covenant as well as those associated with the Abrahamic Covenant.¹ Sinai was but the commencement of this relationship. God and the nation must identify with each other if the wilderness years were to lead to the promised landedness of Canaan. The apostasies of Sinai² only served to remind the nation why Yahweh gave them legislation. They needed standards. Without the order of those standards, there would be chaos and anarchy. Indeed, spiritual anarchy and apostasy are the same. The nation must be prepared for their inheritance, the land. The means

¹ See above, pp. 165-66.

² See above, p. 163.

of preparation would be instruction, parenthesis. Instruction is the primary concept of the Hebrew תורה "law" (v. 46). The emphasis of the parenthesis provided by Leviticus 26 was on identification with the covenant deity/suzerain, Yahweh (cf. v. 45).

Palestinian Covenant¹

The many parallels of Leviticus 26 with Deuteronomy 27-30 present the reader with a problem of relationship. How is this covenant related to this pericope? The similarities of structure (blessing and cursing), the revelation of the ultimate chastisement for breach of covenant (exile preceded by siege which deteriorates to cannibalism), and a time sphere subsequent to the impartation of the Mosaic Covenant demonstrate a relationship in content. However, similarity is not identity. No third covenant is ratified in Leviticus 26. No third covenant is described in terms of a relationship to the past covenant (Abrahamic) and the present covenant (Mosaic). The connotation of a future covenant may be present; however, that connotation could not be identified with Deuteronomy 27-30 by those who received Leviticus 26. Leviticus 26 may be considered a prophetic preview of the Palestinian Covenant only in the sense that the basic theological concepts of that covenant are present in the pericope. However, Leviticus 26 does not specify that covenant per se. Leviticus 26 does not prophetically announce a future covenant on the plains of Moab.

Revelation is progressive in nature. The seeds of one age become the flowers of yet another age. The seed of the Palestinian Covenant are present in Leviticus 26. The blessings and cursings of

¹ See above, pp. 3-4.

Leviticus 26 were transitional. They prepared Israel for the land while in the wilderness. The transitional revelation would be expanded and formalized (in a covenant) upon arrival at the threshold of the land (the plains of Moab). The title deed to the land (the Abrahamic Covenant), the constitution for the people of the land (the Mosaic Covenant), and the rights to the riches of the land (the Palestinian Covenant) would then provide the nation with all the revelation necessary to live within the land itself.

Land

Every gift to the nation of Israel was also a summons to an obligation before the covenant suzerain, Yahweh. The land grant to Israel involved the identification of the people with Yahweh. The land-giver was summoning the people to service. The summons was both beneficial and binding. The benefits were conditioned upon obedience to the command of Yahweh. The enslaved nation was delivered from Egypt and placed within a context of bond slavery to Yahweh (v. 13). The prior bondage differed from the latter in that the latter brought blessing (vv. 3-12). No such rewards occurred as a result of Egyptian bondage.

The land grant predated the existence of Israel per se. The land grant was presented to Abraham at his exodus from Mesopotamia. The national entity of Israel was established under Moses at the people's exodus from Egypt. The order of these factors emphasizes the sovereignty of God in history. "From the roughly 160 cases in which biblical passages speak of Jahweh's giving the land to Israel, more than half contain references to 'the father.'"¹ It is significant, therefore, that

¹ J. N. M. Wijngaards, *The Dramatization of Salvific History in the Deuteronomistic Schools*, CTS 16 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969), p. 73.

"the ancestors" (v. 45) is employed of the Mosaic Covenant in this pericope. This establishes a continuity of covenant. As the Abrahamic Covenant was being claimed by the descendants of Abraham at Mt. Sinai, so, in the future days, an exiled people would repent and claim the covenant made with their ancestors at Sinai. The claiming of the relationship as the people of Yahweh would then restore them to a position from which a restoration to the land itself could be accomplished.

The land was the setting for the blessings (vv. 4-12) as well as for the curses (vv. 14-38). The promises of reward and retribution could not be fulfilled elsewhere. The landedness of Israel was essential to their fulfillment. Israel could not receive landed prosperity without the land. On the other hand, Israel could not be exiled from the land until they had possessed it.

The land was a separate entity from the people. It could be the recipient of the restitution of sabbaths which it had been denied (vv. 34-35, 43). It was a land belonging first to Yahweh. He gave it to Israel. The land was given to Abraham's seed. Any intermediate generation which was disloyal to the covenant could be removed from the land (vv. 33-44). Yet, the land would remain, kept in store for the future generation which would obey the precepts of Yahweh. The people may come and go, but the land would abide as the concrete substance of the covenant of Yahweh with Abraham. The sabbaths of Israel were intended to preserve the fruitfulness of the land (cf. Leviticus 25). Disobedience to Yahweh's sabbatical legislation was a transgression against the land. Even more, it was a transgression against future generations because the breach of the sabbaths was a greediness which would rob the land of its fruitfulness for those future generations.

Landedness brought the perils of self-sufficiency, idolatry, and sabbath breaking. The only remedy for such temptations was to remember the history of the people and of the land. Remembering the covenant deeds of Yahweh would remind the people that the land they enjoyed was an unearned gift. The exiled people, remembering the lord of the land, would confess their guilt and make restitution (vv. 40-41). Their remembering (i.e., preservation of covenant obedience) would result in Yahweh's remembering the land (v. 42; i.e., preservation of covenant blessing).

At Mt. Sinai, the land presented hope. In the wilderness, the land presented hope. In the land, the land presented a challenge. The challenge was to exercise faith in the god of the covenant. That faith had not been exhibited by those who apostasized at Sinai and who fell in the wilderness.

Heilsgeschicht

Heilsgeschicht ("salvation history") was the foundation of the Mosaic Covenant (vv. 13, 45). Yahweh is the god of history. He is the sovereign lord of time and of place. The history of Israel was one of divine deliverance and divine election. Nothing which Israel possessed was a result of her own work. Yahweh as Creator and Giver had associated himself with this nation through grace. The god of history could control all history. He could even move entire nations to chastise the disobedient Israel and to disgorge her in the time of her repentance so that she could be returned to her land. The god of history could prepare the nations for the exiled people (cf. Joseph, Gen 50:20). The nations would receive the scattered Israelites (Lev 26:33) and would make them vanish (v. 38). Yet, Yahweh would preserve a remnant so that

a new history could begin. Israel could trust a god of history who controls all time, places, and nations.

Breach and Preservation of Covenant

Israel might breach (פָּרַךְ, vv. 15, 44) the covenant, but Yahweh could not (v. 44). The "uncircumcised heart" (v. 41) of disobedient Israel reflected covenant disloyalty. Yahweh could never be disloyal. He is always faithful because he is "Yahweh their God" (v. 44).

Israel could breach the covenant by disobeying the stipulations of the Mosaic Covenant (v. 15). Idolatry and sabbath breaking especially constituted a breach of covenant (vv. 1-2). Such a breach would be willful. It would involve the nullification of the promises of blessing associated with the Abrahamic Covenant and the identification associated with the Mosaic Covenant. Any infraction of Mosaic legislation was rebellion against the sovereign will of the suzerain-legislator, Yahweh.

Yahweh, however, "remembers" (זָכַר) his covenants. He preserves the covenants. The covenant contained both blessing and cursing. The blessing was initiated by promise, and the cursing was initiated by legislation. The promise reflected divine sovereignty; the legislation reflected human responsibility. When Israel was unfaithful, Yahweh yet remained faithful. The preservation of covenant by the suzerain clearly identifies the failure of the vassal to submit. The history of covenant confirms both divine dependability and human accountability. The Abrahamic Covenant was identified as a covenant with roots in the history of Israel. It involved Jacob. Before Jacob it involved Isaac; and, before Isaac, it was granted to Abraham. Verse 42 presents this confirmation of prior history. As the Abrahamic Covenant was preserved

(and would continue to be preserved), so the Mosaic Covenant would be preserved for future generations (v. 45). Yahweh's deeds in history illustrate his faithfulness.

Law

Religious enthusiasm is not sufficient for the active participation in the covenant relationship with God. Enthusiasm without identification leads to confusion. Identification produces unity. At Mt. Sinai, the apostasies of the golden calf, the strange fire, and blasphemy demonstrated what an unguided and unstructured religious fervor can produce. The emphasis of the entire law of God is upon Yahweh himself. Any breach of the law is a defiance of the law-giver, Yahweh. The stipulations of the law exhibit the nature and personality of the law-giver. The morality of the law is a reflection of the morality of God. All of the precepts are grounded in the faith of Israel. That faith consisted of God's identity as the creator of the heavens and earth, the promise-giver, the land-giver, the exodus-causer. Every statute was a testimony to the election of the people and a witness to their identification with their sovereign lord, Yahweh.

All the terms employed for law in Leviticus 26 (חֻקֵּי/חֻק "statute"; מִצְוָה "commandment"; מִשְׁפָּט "ordinance"; תּוֹרָה "law/instruction") represent the entire law as promulgated at Mt. Sinai. The law was to be "kept/preserved" (שָׁמַר) , "obeyed" (שָׁמַע) , "walked in/ordering the life" (הִלַּךְ) , and "practiced/performed/done" (עָשָׂה) (cf. vv. 3, 14-15). Therefore, the law did not serve as an ornamentation. It was a constitution. The nation of Israel derived their tangible identity from their observance of Yahweh's commandments.

The legislation promulgated at Sinai was not contrary to the

promise given to Abraham. The legal covenant (Mosaic) supplemented the promissory covenant (Abrahamic). The latter did not nullify the former. The legislation was a means of emphasizing the suzerainty of Yahweh. It reaffirmed his lordship over his people prior to their entry into the land promised to Abraham's seed.

Relation to Covenant

As already observed,¹ law supplemented covenant. Stipulations were a part of the treaty form in the ancient Near East. The suzerain could thereby identify himself as the overlord, the one with the authority to establish the calendar, ordain boundaries, grant life, or deal out death. Without legislation, the authority would not be clarified. Every covenant must have an authority in which it resides, an authority capable of meting out the punishment required for breach of the covenant. A covenant is no more lasting than its ratifier. A covenant is no more binding than the might of the ratifier. A covenant is not wiser or more moral than its ratifier. The ratifier of the covenants with Abraham and Moses was Yahweh himself. The covenants are his covenants (cf. "my covenant," vv. 9, 15, 42, 44), and the laws are his laws (cf. first person singular suffix on terms for law in vv. 3 and 15).

Prohibition of Idolatry

Verse 1 of the pericope clearly prohibited all forms of idolatry. The prohibition emphatically identified the true nature of faith in Yahweh. Such faith recognizes the exclusivity of Yahweh's deity and rule. No idolater can truly worship Yahweh. Yahweh's deity was thus defined as preeminence (as the creator of heavens and earth). All forms of

¹ See above, pp. 188-90, 195-96.

mystical or magical ritual fall short of true worship. Yahweh created and controls all the natural forces of the world. He is the rain-giver and the rain-withholder (vv. 4, 19). He is the controller of wild beasts (vv. 6, 22). He is the controller of the nations (vv. 7-8, 16-17, 33, 38). He knows the heart and its motives (vv. 36, 41). He is the destroyer of idols and idol worship (v. 30). Magic and its attendant rituals in the ancient Near East involved the concept that the divinities were unable to be self-sufficient. In fact, the worshippers of the pagan idols were the manipulators of the divinities behind the idols. Not so with Yahweh--Yahweh is controlled by no man. Yahweh controls history, nature, life, death, and man.

The revelation of the true nature of idols and idolatry initiated the parenthesis in Leviticus 26: Idolatry is powerless/empty; idolatry is man-produced (v.1).¹ Idolatry is blatant, filthy, deadly (v. 30).² Idolatry is doomed to destruction and the idolater is destined to die. Idolatry is the willful rebellion against the person of Yahweh. It is the usurpation of Yahweh's rightful sovereignty. The one engaging in such activities against Yahweh is a covenant breaker, a rebel, an anarchist, and a conspirator. In the treaties of the ancient Near East it was a capital offense to aid in the usurpation of a throne or to engage in intrigue to supplant the true heir to the throne. It is by far a more serious crime to defy the unique sovereignty of the creator of the universe and the god of all history. The idolater has chosen the way of the uncircumcised nations (cf. v. 41), therefore he will be eaten

¹ See above, pp. 45-47.

² See above, pp. 118-23.

up by those nations (v. 38) among which he will be exiled (v. 33). Their guilt, their treason, will cause them great anguish (v. 39). The only way to be restored to Yahweh's favor will be by confessions, humility, and restitution (vv. 40-41). The confession must be to filthy idolatry. The humility must be produced by the realization that they cannot manipulate Yahweh, The restitution must consist of allowing Yahweh and his land the place of priority in their lives.

Observance of Sabbaths

"Sabbaths" is plural throughout the pericope (vv. 2, 34-35, 43). The reference is undoubtedly intended to include all the sabbaths mentioned in the preceding context (chapters 23-25): weekly and annual sabbaths (including the year of jubilee).

"Any Old Testament theology must pay attention to the way in which the faith of the Old Testament hears the commandment of its God in its liturgical ordinances."¹ The calendar of Israel was Yahweh-oriented. Yahweh is the god of time as well as the god of space. The sabbath honored the lord of time. The sabbath entrusted provision to the lord of all things. Lordship was the core of the sabbatical principle. To trust the Lord to provide for the seventh day, the seventh year, and the forty-ninth and fiftieth years, was to recognize his power and wisdom. He who provided in the wilderness also proclaimed the sabbatical principle prior to the wilderness. The instruction for Israel was simple: "Trust me to provide. I am Yahweh. I will not lead you where I cannot care for you." God never demands what man is unable to do. He provides the way of service. He blesses the path of obedience.

¹ Zimmerli, *Old Testament Theology*, p. 125.

Sabbath in the Old Testament was more than an expression of the vertical relationship to the lord of all creation. It was also an expression of concern and care for those who were fellow participants in the covenant (cf. Leviticus 25).

The sabbatical principle was the test, the seal/sign, of the obedience demanded under the Mosaic Covenant. The legal covenant represented the legislative authority of Yahweh. The sabbath represented Yahweh's authority over time. It was the legislation of time.

Even the land needed restitution when the time which Yahweh demanded for it was not granted by Israel (vv. 34-35, 43). Yahweh is lord of the land as well as the people. The land was a promised possession in a time-space continuum. Breach of the sabbatical principle regarding the land was evidence of rebellion against the lord of time and space. The violation of the land by denying its just recompense was a violation of Yahweh's gift of fruitfulness. It was robbery because it denied continued fruitfulness for future generations of Abraham's seed. The liberty proclaimed in the sabbatical principle was an echo of the *Heilsgeschicht*. The god of history delivered Israel from servitude in Egypt so that the people would be free from oppression. To deny that freedom was to deny the lord who brought them out of Egypt (cf. v. 13; 25:38, 42, 55).

Yahweh

Yahweh is clearly the god of the covenants in Leviticus 26. "Yahweh" (יְהוָה) is employed six times in the pericope (vv. 1, 2, 13, 44, 45, 46). Twice it is used absolutely (vv. 2, 46). Four times it is connected directly with or associated by context with "your/their God" (אלהים, vv. 1, 13, 44, 45). In four of these occurrences, Yahweh is

mentioned in relation to the Mosaic Covenant (vv. 1, 2, 45, 46). In two cases, Yahweh is associated with the Abrahamic Covenant (vv. 13 and 44).

Selbstvorstellungsformel

Selbstvorstellungsformel ("self-introduction formula") is a means of setting off this particular pericope. It is often mixed with the *heilsgeschichtliche Formulierung* ("salvation-history formula"). In all cases (vv. 1, 2, 13, 44, 45), it is employed as a conclusion to a section of the pericope. The precepts of verses 1-2 are so marked, the blessings of verses 3-12, and, also, the penalties of verses 14-45. The only mention of Yahweh outside either one of these two formulas is in the postscript (v. 46) where Yahweh is the giver of the laws committed to Moses for Israel. The dual emphasis on Yahweh's identification in the section concerning precept (vv. 1-2) is an obvious contrast to the idolatry forbidden there. Yahweh is the covenant name of the covenant-giver (cf. Exod 3:13-18; also, Gen 12:1, 4; 15:1-8; Exod 20:2, 7). "I am Yahweh" is the divine seal on the covenants involved in Leviticus 26. Covenant preservation is dependent upon Yahweh's identity (vv. 44-45).

Yahweh is the author of the precepts (v. 46; cf. vv. 1-2), the author of the history (vv. 13, 45), and the author of the covenant (v. 44). His authority is absolute. His covenants are dependable. He is the author of both the blessing and the curse, the reward and the retribution.

Relation to Covenant

Yahweh's relationship to the covenants of Leviticus 26 is established by the following: (1) the *Selbstvorstellungsformel*, (2) the *heilsgeschichtliche Formulierung*, (3) the attribution of the source of the laws at Sinai (v. 46), and (4) the first person singular suffixes on "covenant" in the pericope.

Presence and Sanctuary

The presence of Yahweh is referred to by means of "presence" (פָּנִים, v. 17), "walk among you" (הִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּתוֹךְ, v. 12), "sanctuary" (מִקְדָּשׁ, v. 2), and "tabernacle" (מִשְׁכָּן, v. 11). His presence works both weal (vv. 11-12) and woe (v. 17). His presence is both edifice-oriented¹ (vv. 2, 11) and people-oriented (vv. 12, 17). His presence is holy (note the employment of the root קִדַּשׁ "holy" in מִקְדָּשׁ "sanctuary"). That connotation of holiness is particularly striking because it is in a context of the precepts involving prohibition of idolatry and observance of sabbaths. Yahweh is holy because he is set apart from idols and his presence is distinct from idols. Also, he is holy because sabbatical time is set apart for him.

The implication of verses 14-45 is that when disobedient Israel is confronted by the punishment-dealing presence of Yahweh, he has ceased to "walk among" them or to tabernacle among them. Indeed, he is pictured, as "walking in opposition" (הִלֵּךְ עִמִּי קִרְיָ, vv. 24, 28) to them.

Even though his presence or sanctuary is not with the exiles among the nations (at least not in the same fashion as when they were

¹ By "edifice-oriented" the writer does not mean that Yahweh is edifice-limited. The edifice was merely an accommodation to focus attention upon Yahweh's presence among his people. Cf. Ezek 10:3-19, 11:22-23; 43:1-5.

obedient and in the land), yet Yahweh will preserve his covenant with them (v. 44).

Promise

Promise here is being used in a very broad sense of the term. It is being employed to cover both the promise of blessing and the promise to curse. It is in the sense of fulfillment or commitment as much as in the sense of hope or expectancy.

Promise in Leviticus 26 is identified with the solemn divine self-introduction (*Selbstvorstellung*) of the god of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (vv. 1, 2, 13, 44, 45; cf. v. 42). It is a promise preceding the history of deliverance from Egypt (the Abrahamic Covenant) and the entrance into Canaan (the Mosaic and Palestinian covenants). It is not a reference to something inward and spiritual, but a reference to the tangible aspects of covenant life: productivity, peace, population, presence, and land. The promise includes a pledge to bless Israel in their loyalty to the covenant and to curse Israel in their disloyalty. Yahweh, the god of their fathers, the god of their ancestors, promises his own loyalty to his covenant with his people.

Blessing and Curse

The blessings and curses of Leviticus 26 are quite similar to those of Deuteronomy 27-28 as well as to those of the Esarhaddon vassal treaties and the Sefire stelas. The similarities involve both formal structure and traditional phraseology and vocabulary. By their very contexts in the biblical materials, the blessings and curses are distinctly covenantal.¹ The blessings are directly related to the promised

¹ Contra Clements, *Prophecy and Tradition*, pp. 16-17.

blessings and/or privileges of both the Abrahamic and the Mosaic covenants. Likewise, the curses are directly related to the nullification or removal of those same blessings and/or privileges.¹

The blessings and curses do not in themselves indicate the presence of the Palestinian Covenant in Leviticus 26.² Any preview of that covenant in the pericope must maintain a continuity with the two previous covenants. In other words, a third covenant (whether here or in Deuteronomy 27-30) likewise does not nullify the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants.

Obedience and Disobedience

"Obedience to Yahweh, the one God, who delivered Israel out of slavery and is jealous of his own uniqueness, defines the fundamental nature of the Old Testament faith."³ Thus, obedience reflects respect for who and what Yahweh is personally and historically (Lev 26:1-3, 13-15, 39-45). Obedience involves the acceptance of the lordship of Yahweh in one's life in time and space (cf. vv. 2, 34-35, 43). Obedience produces participation in the covenant blessings (v. 9). The precepts reveal the will of God for Israel. The will of man must be yielded to the will of Yahweh in order to be loyal to the covenants (cf. v. 41).

Disobedience is the denial of the identity of Yahweh in history, covenant, and law. It is the breach of the covenant faith (v. 15). It is acting unfaithfully, disloyally, treasonously (v. 40). It is blatant opposition to God (vv. 21, 23, 27). It is nonperformance of his commands

¹ See above, pp. 140-41, 165-66.

² See above, pp. 190-91.

³ Zimmerli, *Old Testament Theology*, p. 116.

(v. 14). It is rejection of his statutes and despising of his ordinances (v. 15). Thus, it is a matter of the inner man (vv. 15, 41, 43; note "soul" and "heart"). Disobedience has frightful consequences. Even cannibalism is not beyond the capability of the disobedient (v. 29). It causes the unacceptability of the sacrifices which were the outward manifestation of faith (v. 31). Disobedience is worthy only of death (vv. 25, 33, 37, 38) and exile (vv. 33, 44). Death would be the separation from the body; exile would be the separation from the land.

Guilt

Guilt (אָשָׁם) is a concept occurring in verses 39, 40, 41, and 43.

It is mentioned only in the context of repentance, confession, humility, and restitution. The guilt resulting from disloyalty to the covenant had to be recognized before the breached covenant could be reinstated. The guilt was twofold: (1) the guilt of the ancestors of Israel ("the father," vv. 39, 40) and (2) the guilt of the current generation of Israelites (vv. 39, 40, 41, 43). Confession of both was required for restoration. Both references to the twofold guilt place the guilt of the current generation first. Unless that generation could recognize and deal with their own guilt, it would be pointless to recognize and attempt to deal with the guilt of their fathers.

This guilt was so burdensome that it led to severe anguish in the exiled peoples (v. 39). The guilt was real. The burden was real. It was not a temporary "guilt trip." The guilt, properly recognized, was an instrument of God to draw them back to the covenant relationship which they enjoyed prior to their willful rebellion against Yahweh. The guilt had to be confessed (v. 40).

Retribution and Chastisement

The application of the curses/penalties of verses 14-45 are highlighted by two factors: (1) the gradation of the punishments in five stages of severity (vv., 16-17, 18-20, 21-22, 23-26, and 27-38) and (2) the recurring refrain, "seven times for your sins" (vv. 18, 21, 24, 28). The stages of chastisement are emphasized also by the occurrence of the term "discipline" (יִסּוּר, vv. 18, 23, 28). The entire process, from start to finish, was intended as a means of restoration. However, the primary purpose was not restoration, but the glorification of the covenant god, Yahweh (cf. vv. 44, 45).

Retribution may be terminal (cf. vv. 25, 30, 38), but chastisement may result in restoration through repentance (cf. vv. 39-45). Both are involved in this pericope. The first is for the unconfessing, but the second is for the confessing.

The refrain is an echo of both the sabbatical principle ("seven")¹ and the covenant context ("sin" חַטָּא). "Sin" is a term found in the vassal treaties of Esarhaddon regarding the breach of covenant. The primary concern, therefore, of this pericope was regarding the seal/sign of the Mosaic Covenant, the sabbaths. This also involved the land (vv. 34-35, 43), so that the Abrahamic Covenant was not left entirely out of the picture. The judgment of Yahweh was not only for the nonobservance of the sabbaths, but for the worship of idols and the defilement of the people among whom God dwelt (cf. vv. 1-2, 29-31). The judgments of God were not detrimental to the covenants (v. 44). Indeed, the judgments established a proper perspective regarding disobedience, sin. Judgment

¹ See above, pp. 98-99.

exposed sin for what it really was: rebellion. Judgment also served to identify the authority behind the covenants: Yahweh. The judgments would increase to such an intensity and nature that there would be no doubt that Yahweh had intervened in the daily affairs of the nation.

Exile

Exile ("scattering among the nations," v. 33) was the ultimate covenant penalty. It meant removal from the land of promise. The landness for which the nation had hoped would dissolve into the landlessness which had characterized the sojourn in Egypt. The servitude which they had left in Egypt would once again engulf them. The "uncircumcised heart" (v. 41) would be set among those who characterized that idiom in every aspect of their lives outside the covenants. Exile was a living death, a living separation from the land of life abundant. Exile meant removal from the position in which the nation could receive the blessings of the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants. The exile, however, need not be terminal. Exile, landlessness, could once again be the condition of hope (vv. 39-45). Landlessness was not synonymous with divine rejection or abhorrence (v. 44). As at Sinai, and in the wilderness, landlessness presented a goal for life and a meaning for history. The landless ones must cast their cares upon the one who would guide them out of bondage to freedom. Even in the land of their enemies, Yahweh was their God (v. 44). The covenant relationship knows no geographical or political boundaries. The loyalty of Yahweh is unaffected by the landedness or the landlessness of his people. He is totally above and through the circumstances of history, working for the repentance of his covenanted people, so that his covenants might one day be fulfilled completely.

Repentance

"Repentance" (נִשְׁוֹב) does not occur in Leviticus 26. However, the concept of repentance is found in a threefold turning of the exiled people to Yahweh: (1) They would confess their guilt and the guilt of their fathers (v. 40), recognizing their personal and corporate culpability. (2) They would humble their "uncircumcised heart" (v. 41), bringing it into subjection to the precepts of Yahweh. Such subjection is the covenant loyalty required of a covenanted people. It is submission to the lordship of Yahweh, the suzerain of the covenants. The subjection must be internal and real. It cannot be a mere compliance externally in religious exercises. (3) They would make restitution for their guilt (v. 41), accepting the federal consequences of sin. Such restitution is not soteriological redemption. It is the evidence, not the cause, of repentance and expiation. The impact of sin would be felt until the land had enjoyed its restitution. Exile would continue after repentance until the time had been fulfilled. Getting right with God does not insure immediate blessing and solution of circumstances. It does guarantee a restoration to the covenant position whereby the blessings might come once the landed position is regained.

Restitution

"Restitution" (נִצָּח) not only involves the full application of the federal consequences of sin, but also the full application of that which is right in the covenanted relationship of Yahweh to the land (vv. 34-35, 43). Restitution, therefore, has a twofold character: positive (that which is right) and negative (that which is the just consequence of sin). The lesson of restitution for Israel involved the inexorable will and way of Yahweh in the covenant within time and space.

Revelation

The concept of the law indicates a communication of the covenant deity with the covenant recipients. Commandments, statutes, ordinances, and laws/instructions must be conveyed since they cannot be intuitively perceived. The concept of covenant itself, in the ancient Near East, demanded a deposit or record of the pact for future generations.

The diversity of covenant concepts and forms in Leviticus 26, as compared with the ancient near eastern treaties, is an evidence of the independent theology of Israel. Among many scholars there is "a remarkable unwillingness to appreciate the creative possibilities of Israel's own religious life and experience."¹ The richness of Leviticus 26 lies, in part, in its uniqueness at that particular stage of progressive revelation. The confluent nature of the revelation (i.e., the drawing upon current vocabulary, style, forms, and cultural milieu) represents a desire on the part of Yahweh for the revelation to be immediately understandable and applicable.

Leviticus 26 claims to be Mosaic in time, content, and composition. The self-witness of scripture must suffice as the prima facie evidence. Unless equally ancient and authentic documentation can be produced to explicitly deny the claims and contents of this pericope, it must be allowed to stand. This must be true of both the historical claims and the theological concepts. The treaties of Esarhaddon and Sefire cannot be offered as contradictory testimony since they were composed 700 years too late and their diversities of subject matter, purpose, and structure disqualify them as legal testimony against the biblical materials of Leviticus 26.

¹ Clements, *Prophecy and Tradition*, p. 21.

Leviticus 26 and the New Testament

The employment of verses 11-12 in 2 Corinthians 6:16 is the only concrete example of the influence of Leviticus 26 on the revelation of the New Testament.¹ The passage from this pericope was employed in order that Paul might better emphasize the concept of identification with God. It is unfortunate that Wenham did not deal with this New Testament employment of Leviticus 26:11-12 at all in his commentary.² Wenham, however, does observe that the blessings and curses of Leviticus 26 are expressed (at least in principle) by the teachings of Christ in his ministry prior to the cross. The chastisement of Israel because of covenant disloyalty was a reality among the Jews of Christ's day. Jesus also spoke of the eschatological reality of that chastisement in the future days. "Many of the horrifying judgments described in Rev. 6ff. find their original setting in the covenant curses of Lev. 26 and Deut. 28,"³ Wenham claims. This is true insofar as they are directly related by Revelation to the nation of Israel. The application of those covenant blessings and curses to the Gentiles is unwarranted. The covenants were made only with Israel.⁴

The principles of God's dealings with the New Testament believers by means of reward and/or chastisement are basically the same as the principles by which he dealt with Israel under the covenants. This must not be construed, however, as meaning that the New Testament saints

¹ See above, pp. 74-76.

² Wenham, *Leviticus*, pp. 329-30, 333-34.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 334.

⁴ See above, p. 168.

are under the same covenant relationship as Israel. The similarity is due to the same God, not to the same covenant. The very nature of God demands the federal consequences of sin in the lives of his people in all ages (cf. Gal 6:7-10; 1 Cor 11:30). The same God provides lessons for believers in all ages based upon his historical deeds (cf. Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 10:11-13). The same God blesses in tangible ways those who are faithful (cf. 2 Cor 9:6-15). The same God is loyal even in the face of the disloyalty of his people (cf. 2 Tim 2:11-13; Phil 1:6). The same God is Lord (cf. 1 Cor 12:3). The same Lord requires confession, humility, and restitution (cf. 1 John 1:9; 1 Pet 5:5-7; Phlm 1-25). The same God promises that obedient service will be rewarded (cf. 1 Cor 15:58). The same God demonstrates that the believer has been delivered from bondage into a servitude that is totally unlike the bondage of fear and curse (cf. Rom 6:12-23; Heb 2:14-15; Acts 26:18; Col 1:12-13). The Lord who revealed to Israel (by means of Leviticus 26) the continued authority and perpetuity of the Abrahamic Covenant after the ratification of the Mosaic Covenant also confirmed that testimony in Galatians 3:17. The New Testament believer must also learn that the authority of one covenant does not annul the authority of the previous. Any exceptions are clearly revealed by God (e.g., Heb 7:11-14). The epistle to the Galatian churches teaches that the requirement of faith in Abraham was not replaced by law under Moses. Therefore, faith is still binding upon any man's relationship to the God of Abraham.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

What then is the conclusion concerning the relationship of the Palestinian Covenant to Leviticus 26? The following relationships may be specified:

- (1) Leviticus 26 does not specify or identify the Palestinian Covenant.
- (2) Leviticus 26 does have similarities to the Palestinian Covenant as found in Deuteronomy 27-30.
- (3) Leviticus 26 explains the relationship of Israel to the land prior to occupation and subsequent to the revelation of the Mosaic Covenant.
- (4) Leviticus 26 does not claim to be prophetic. The provisions of the pericope reveal, however, that which could be understood as prophetic. The exile and subsequent repentance regarding the Mosaic Covenant made with their "ancestors" (v. 45) may be taken as prophetic.¹
- (5) Leviticus 26 emphasizes the Mosaic and Abrahamic covenants by direct reference as well as by terminology and concept. The relationship to these two covenants is so imbedded in the text that any connotation of the Palestinian Covenant must also involve a similar relationship between it and the previous two.

¹ See above, pp. 3, 55, 112, 167-68.

(6) The affinities between Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 27-30 are far more intimate than any similarities between these two pericopes and the extrabiblical treaties. The common entities (subject matter, language, historical context, author, and intent) of the two pericopes tie them together. These affinities are the essence of the preview of the Palestinian Covenant in Leviticus 26.¹ Leviticus 26 is transitional revelation for the nation of Israel between the Mosaic Covenant granted at Mt. Sinai and the Palestinian Covenant granted on the plains of Moab. Being transitional, it does not embody the Palestinian Covenant itself. It embodies only the concepts necessary to prepare the nation for entrance into that covenant at a later date.

The text of Leviticus 26 is stable enough to warrant the conclusion that none of these factors would be influenced by any textual difficulties.

The pericope, viewed in the context of the Sinai revelation and the Sinai apostasies, offers a perspective not found elsewhere in the scriptures. That perspectives regards the theological instruction of the nation of Israel on the threshold of its wilderness wanderings. Unlike Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 4, Leviticus 26 is not a mini-statement of the Mosaic Covenant. It is, instead, a compilation and synthesis of the combined truths of both the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants. The synthesis presents Israel with the parenetic presentation of life requirements from the Lord Yahweh. It provided Israel with another taste of promise tempered by the touch of precept. Leviticus 26 produced for

¹ See above, p. 4.

Israel a new covenant seal/sign with all of its implications: the sabbatical principle. Leviticus 26 is a theological treatise with life implications. It is a parenthesis. It wrapped up the Sinai experience by appealing to a continuity of authority and promise. Many fell in the wilderness because they failed to heed this parenthesis. Because Israel failed so miserably, Paul was instructed to confirm the teachings for New Testament believers struggling with apparent conflict between the Mosaic and Abrahamic covenants (Gal 3:17).

Two areas of covenant were not discussed in this study since they were not explicit in Leviticus 26: (1) the relationship of covenant to kingdom and (2) the relationship of kingdom and covenant to the calendar of Israel. These studies would complement the present discourse. The writer believes that both areas are necessary adjuncts to the theological core of Leviticus 26 if one is to understand properly the relationship of the prophets to Leviticus 26 (and, to Deuteronomy 27-30). The New Year and Enthronement concepts so often presented by nonevangelical writers have been cast aside too often without full and fair consideration. The applications may not be consistent with the biblical data, but the data presented by those writers does have a foundation in biblical distinctives. The data must be gleaned and placed in its proper context in order that it might take its rightful place in evangelical Old Testament theology. Leviticus 26 is explicit concerning the lordship of Yahweh in both time and space. The sabbatical principle should be examined from the interior of the annual calendar of Israel (viz., the seventh month). That examination belongs more properly to an exegesis of Leviticus 23.

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